



## VERMONT VETERANS' HOME

April 8, 2021

Ms. Donna Jerry  
Green Mountain Care Board  
100 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Ms. Jerry,

The Vermont Veterans' Home (VVH) is requesting a jurisdictional determination for our Security and Access Control Project.

The Vermont Veterans' Home is an agency of the State of Vermont and is located on 84 acres in Bennington, VT. VVH is a 140,000 square foot, one level, 130-bed skilled nursing and 8 bed resident care level III facility. The facility has 5 "neighborhoods"; four for nursing home beds and one for the residential care beds. Founded in 1884, VVH cares for Veterans, their spouses/widows and gold star parents. The facility is licensed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Veterans Administration (VA). The care and services provided are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, the VA, commercial insurances, and private pay. Although on a main thoroughfare in Bennington the facility sits back from the main road limiting the ability for the public to notice unusual or illegal activity on facility grounds. Approximately two years ago VVH noticed an increase activity of individuals not employed by VVH and suspected illegal activity happening in the late evening and overnight hours. These activities raised serious safety concerns for the individuals living and working at VVH. To immediately address our concerns, we entered a contract with the local sheriff's department to provide onsite coverage security during the late evening and overnight hours. VVH does not currently have a security system and only a handful of doors have card access leaving our residents and staff at risk.

The overarching goal of this project is for VVH to remain a welcoming and hospitable home for our residents, staff and visitors while maintaining suitable safety and security for all who use and visit the facility. This project will evaluate the safety and security needs and determine goals and objectives that meet current practices, codes, ADA rule, federal regulations, and to address VA inspection deficiencies related to interior fire door concerns. The internal fire doors are aging and do not seal properly when closed; they require replacement. With poor exterior lighting for our employee parking area and 60 exterior entryways, most without secure card access and easily breached when locked; the facility must replace the exterior doorways, evaluate the 560 internal doorways, add secure card access, and breach alarms to ensure the safety of those that work and reside at the home. The project will include the installation of a comprehensive electronic security system that would include access control, CCTV, door locks, monitoring systems,

emergency call boxes, and intrusion alarms. Remote ability to notify local law enforcement will be included in this project, this is especially important for after normal business hours when a receptionist and administrative staff are not available in the event of an emergency.

This project will cost \$2,623,375.00. Based on an approved State Home Construction Grant award from the VA the VA will be responsible for 65% of the project costs, \$1,705,193.75, and the State of Vermont will be responsible for the remaining 35%, \$918,181.25. The State of Vermont has secured this funding and it was included in Act 72 (H.542) of 2019 Sec E.342.1 Vermont Veterans' Home Safety and Access Control Upgrades "(a) The Vermont Veterans' Home is authorized to use \$918,750 as 35 percent State match for its VA grant to address safety and access control."

Thank you for taking the time to review our request. I am available to answer any questions or concerns the Board may have about this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa A. Jackson MBA, FACHCA". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Melissa A. Jackson, MBA, FACHCA  
Chief Executive Officer