

Veterans Affairs would get one of largest increases in Obama's proposed 2011 budget

By Ed O'Keefe, Washington Post

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The Department of Veterans Affairs would receive \$57 billion in additional spending, a 20 percent jump from 2009 and one of the largest increases for any federal agency.

The request includes \$50.6 billion in advance [appropriations](#) for the VA's medical care program through 2012 to provide continuous medical care not threatened by potential budget delays.

The spending plan also accounts for the enrollment of more than 500,000 moderate income veterans by 2013 who were not previously eligible for some VA care. It also increases funding for specialized medical and counseling services for the growing number of female veterans.

About \$5.2 billion would be spent to expand inpatient, residential and outpatient mental health programs, and \$799 million would be used to expand services to homeless veterans by expanding VA partnerships with local governments, nonprofits and the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Labor.