American Community Survey (ACS)
Why We Ask: Veteran Status, Period of Service and VA Service-Connected Disability Rating

We ask about a person’s military service to create estimates of veterans and their needs at the community level. Though the Department of Veterans’ Affairs maintains veterans’ records, ACS statistics are able to provide federal program planners, policy-makers and researchers with additional statistics about all veterans, regardless of whether they utilize VA services. Statistics about where veterans are moving throughout the country, their ages, and their VA service-connected disability rating status, help communities plan for future health care and nursing homes, statistics about whether veterans are in school or working help plan and fund job training, and statistics about veterans’ homes help improve the home loan guarantee program.

Examples of Federal Uses
- Required to estimate the number of nursing home and domiciliary beds necessary to accommodate the projected demand for VA extended care services by age 65+ veterans.
- Required to enforce against employment discrimination.
- Used to estimate the usage for all major VA medical care construction projects.
- Used, with market-level information on both income and mortgages, to understand the effect of the VA Home Loan Guarantee program on housing cost burden and foreclosure.
- Used to assess the eligible population for federal programs benefiting veterans, such as health care and job training, and the effect of those programs on participants.

Examples of Other Uses
State and local agencies use these statistics to determine what kinds of social services might be needed in a community. Advocacy groups use these statistics to understand current and future challenges and to advocate for policies that benefit their groups. Businesses may use these estimates to understand potential employees or trainees.