



Idaho Division of
**VETERANS
SERVICES**

*Caring for
America's
Heroes*

**The Office of Veterans
Advocacy
Bulletin
November 2024**



STATE OF IDAHO

BRAD LITTLE, GOVERNOR

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

JOSH CALLIHAN, CHAIRMAN

ARTHUR L. GIMPEL

JINNY CASH

EUGENE BROWN

DIVISION OF VETERANS SERVICES

MARK TSCHAMPL, CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR

VETERANS SERVICES BUREAU CHIEF

BILL HEYOB

VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS

EMBERLY BERTASSO

ERIC BOBINSKI

PAUL BURGIN

TRACI COLTON

FRANK FABBI

IRIS HIGGINS

RODRIGO MADRIGAL VEGA

KELLY MCCARTNEY

NICK PERCY

JIM PHILPOTT

JT RAMONDETTA

MATT RANSTROM

JOE RIENER

ABEL SILVA

ROBERT SMITH

SCOTT THORSNESS

STACY WHITMORE

To be connected to a VA Suicide prevention and mental health professional, call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Hotline, and indicate you are a veteran.

Call or Text **988** or **(800) 273-8255**

ALL EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES ARE ADMINISTERED IN A NON-DISCRIMINATORY MANNER IN CONFORMANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE EEO AND CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

From Bill's Desk.....	1-5
Veterans Outreach and Community Support (VOCS).....	6
VA Expands Access to Care and Benefits	7
Boise VA Legal Clinic.....	8
VA Extends PACT Act Presumptive Conditions	9-11
VA is Helping to Protect Veterans from Fraud and Scams.....	12-15
VA Expands Benefits for Veterans who Served at K2.....	16
VA Co-pay Exemption ..	17
VA Awards \$4.3M to help Understand and Prevent Veteran Suicide	18
Happenings.....	19-24
Go Green and Get the Bulletin via Email.....	25
Dates to Remember.....	25
The Star Spangled Banner.....	25
Convention Dates.....	26
DAV Van Contacts To and From VA Medical Centers.....	26

*If you've not already done so, please volunteer to receive the bulletin via email
by emailing Tiffany Barrett at
tiffany.barrett@veterans.idaho.gov*



FROM BILL'S DESK

Hello Everyone and Welcome to Fall! We have made it to cooler temperatures, falling leaves and College Football (which is the Greatest Time of the Year!). I want to thank the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Veterans Service for most of the updates that I am providing.

Changes in IDVS Service Officer Locations: We have completed the Office moves for our outlying State Veteran Service Officers. As a reminder, our new locations are:

- Our Team in Caldwell is located at the **Caldwell Veterans Memorial Building**, located at 1101 Cleveland Blvd and is where we have Kelly McCartney and Abel Silva.
- Our Team in Pocatello is now located in the **Idaho State Veterans Home**, located at 1957 Alvin Ricken Dr. in Pocatello and is home to Paul Burgin, Emberly Bertasso and Savannah Lopez.
- We are working on establishing a new location in **Mountain Home** and will be co-located with the **Mountain Home VA Medical Center Community Based Outpatient Clinic**. This location should be fully operational by the middle to end of November 2024.

Personnel Changes- Since our last bulletin, Wes McAuslan has left our office for new opportunities. Wes has been a member of our Team for nearly nine years, and we wish him the best of luck. We also welcome Traci Colton to our Team and she will be working in the Mountain Home location. Traci is a Retiree of the Idaho Army National Guard and has been working as the Elmore County Veteran Service Officer for over eight years.

The **2025 Cost of Living Allowance** Increase for Social Security, VA Awards and DOD Retirement payments are **2.5%**

The new rates have been released for the VA's **Non-Service-Connected Burial Benefit and Plot Allowance Rate** for a Veteran that passed away on or after October 1, 2024. The new rate is \$978.00 vice the previous amount of \$948.00. To be eligible, the Veteran must have been receiving a monetary benefit from the VA (Service-Connected Disability at 10% or higher or in receipt of Non-Service-Connected Pension) and passed away from a Non-Service-Connected Issue. Example- Veteran service connected for tinnitus at 10% disability and passed away from complications of a stroke. A Veteran would also be eligible for a Non-Service-Connected Burial Allowance if they passed away in a VA Medical Facility. ** Reminder, there is a 2-year time limit to apply for a Non-Service-Connected Burial Benefit. If a Veteran is eligible to receive the Non-Service-Connected Burial Allowance and is interred in a private cemetery, the family can also claim the Plot Allowance Rate of \$978.00. The VA does not pay the Plot Allowance Rate if a Veteran is interred in a National or State Veterans Cemetery (as the family is not charged for the internment of a Veteran) or if a Veteran is entitled to the Service-Connected Burial Allowance of \$2,000.

The VA has released a **new Stressor Statement for Disability Compensation Claims for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**. Previously, the VA used two different forms, the 21-0781 and the 21-0781a (if the claim was due to Assault or Military Sexual Trauma). The new form 21-0781 (dated March 2024) combines both forms into one. In December 2024, the VA will be releasing a **new rating table for traumatic mental health disabilities** which will assign a disability rating based off how the mental health condition impacts the ability to work vice granting a rating based off of the severity of symptoms (which is how the current rating table works). Any Veteran who currently has a rating based off of the current rating table will keep that rating and will only see a change if they file a claim for increase when the new rating table goes into effect.

In December 2024, the VA is planning on releasing a **new rating table for sleep apnea** which will evaluate the condition based on residual impairment after treatment instead of rating based on the treatment itself. The other big change will be for the condition of **Tinnitus**. Instead of granting a disability rating for tinnitus as a standalone condition, it will be evaluated as a symptom of an underlying service-connected condition- such as hearing loss. If a Veteran already has a service-connected disability rating for sleep apnea or tinnitus, they will continue to have that disability under the old rating criteria. These changes will impact anyone filing claims for these conditions after the change goes into effect.

VA expands access to care and benefits for some former service members who did not receive an honorable or general discharge- On April 25th, 2024, the Department of Veterans Affairs posted a final rule amending its regulations regarding character of discharge determinations, expanding access to VA care and benefits for some former service members discharged under other than honorable conditions or by special court-martial. When former service members with other than honorable discharges and bad conduct discharges (adjudged at special court-martial) apply for VA benefits and services, the VA carefully reviews their records to determine if they can provide them the requested care and benefits. This process helps ensure that VA can provide services to deserving former service members – including certain individuals who faced discrimination, survived sexual assault or harassment, struggled with their mental or physical health, or faced other challenges while serving in the military.

VA’s new regulation will expand access to care and benefits for certain former service members by:

- Eliminating the regulatory bar for “homosexual acts involving aggravating circumstances or other factors affecting the performance of duty” as a bar to benefits. While VA had already taken steps to ensure full and fair access to benefits for former service members discharged based on homosexual conduct, gender identity, or HIV status, this move further solidifies VA’s commitment to reducing disparity for these groups in the adjudication process.
- Creating a “compelling circumstances exception” for certain former service members: For certain former service members discharged for “willful and persistent misconduct” or an “offense involving moral turpitude,” VA will now consider and determine if a compelling circumstances exception will permit VA to nonetheless provide care and services. Under this exception, VA will consider the former service member’s length and character of service, mental and cognitive impairment, physical health, combat-related hardship, whether the person was the survivor of sexual abuse/assault or discrimination, and more. This new exception creates a new path for VA to provide benefits and services to deserving former service members.
- Opening the door for previously denied service members to reapply: Because of these changes, former service members previously found ineligible for VA services may now be eligible for benefits and are encouraged to re-apply.

VA encourages former service members with other than honorable discharges and bad conduct discharges (adjudged at special court-martial) to apply for VA care and benefits today. Over the past 10 years, VA’s eligibility determination rate for these former service members has been 75% – meaning that VA provided care or benefits to 75% of them (57,000+ former service members)

VA has conducted extensive outreach to service members with other than honorable and bad conduct discharges adjudged at special court-martial in recent years, increasing the number who applied for VA care or benefits from approximately 1,700 in 2012 to more than 10,000 in 2023.

The VA character of discharge determination does not change the Armed Forces' characterization of service and has no effect on the former Service member's military discharge status. VA's determination is for VA benefits and services eligibility purposes only.

Any discharge characterized as “honorable” or “general – under honorable conditions” satisfies the character of discharge requirement for basic eligibility for most VA benefits. Former service members who did not receive those discharges are not automatically disqualified from receiving VA care or benefits. However, barring a ruling of insanity, VA does not provide benefits to service members who are discharged with a “dishonorable discharge;” service members who were discharged for desertion, mutiny, going AWOL for 180 continuous days, or espionage; or service members discharged by sentence of a general court martial, discharged in lieu of trial, discharged as a “resignation by an officer for the good of the service,” or discharged as a conscientious objector. VA does apply compelling circumstances exception for AWOL when appropriate.

Claims Predators: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and VA accredited representatives, like the Veteran Service Organization partners, are combining forces to ensure Veterans benefits are protected. Veterans and their beneficiaries are often targets of companies and individuals known as claims predators. Claims predators often try to unlawfully charge Veterans and their families a fee to “help” them prepare and consult on their claims with VA. Aggressive communication via emails, phone calls, and/or text messages is used in an effort to get Veterans to sign legally binding contracts that are not to the Veteran’s advantage. They advertise expedited claim processing times and/or guarantee higher disability ratings

in exchange for their paid services. These fraudulent schemes target Veterans hard-earned benefits and may subject them to excessive fees. Veterans need to be aware that ONLY VA accredited attorneys, claims agents and VSO representatives may assist them with their initial benefits claims.

Only VA accredited attorneys and claims agents may charge a fee to:

- Consult or advise VA claimants seeking review of or to appeal their claims
- Collect evidence for a supplemental claim or an appeal
- Prepare and file a supplemental claim
- Submit requests for higher level review
- Submit an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals

What is VA Doing to Help? They are working to raise awareness of unlawful predatory practices used to exploit Veterans and their loved ones while providing resources to safely claim VA benefits. These actions include working to make connecting with VA accredited representatives easier for Veterans and their families, collaborating with our federal partners such as Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Social Security Administration, and developing communication to spread awareness of the rising threat of claims predators. They launched a communications campaign to educate Veterans about claims predators and encourage the use of VA accredited representatives who offer free services to support their initial benefits claims.

What Can You Do to Help VA? The VA requests assistance from Veteran-centric organizations, such as your own, to share information from their Claims Predators Communications Campaign with the Veterans you serve and their beneficiaries. With your help, the VA can ensure Veterans have the knowledge to understand the threat of predatory practices, identify claims predators, find VA accredited attorneys, claims agents, and VSO representatives to support their benefits claims, and report claims predators. Attached is a visual tool with an overview of claims predators, warning signs, protective measures, best practices and reporting resources.

What Can a Veteran Do If They Suspect Fraud? If a Veteran suspects a representative acted unlawfully or unethically while assisting them in filing a VA benefits claim, they should file a report at www.vsafe.gov or by calling 833-38V-SAFE, a new government-wide website and call center designed to protect Veterans, service members, and their families from fraud and scams. To learn more about fraud, predatory practices targeting the Veteran community and how to protect their benefits from fraud, visit [Protecting Veterans From Fraud | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/protecting-veterans-from-fraud/). These tools will inform Veterans and their families about common fraud schemes, and help protect themselves, and provide an outlet for reporting and further assistance.

The VA is set to revolutionize access to benefits and care for **veterans who served at Karshi-Khanabad (K2) base in Uzbekistan post-9/11**. The VA is taking decisive action to acknowledge the hazardous conditions these veterans faced, paving the way for long-overdue compensation and healthcare benefits. VA's press release includes plans to reclassify veterans who served in Uzbekistan as Persian Gulf Veterans, granting them the right to file claims for Gulf War Illness or Medically Unexplained Chronic Mult Symptom Illnesses. Additionally, VA plans to take steps to officially recognize K2 exposures as toxic exposure risk activities (TERA), a critical step in ensuring these veterans receive the benefits and care they deserve. VA Claims processors and examiners will now undergo specialized training on service at K2, with a focus on the contaminants K2 veterans were exposed to. They will also be required to consider these factors when providing opinions or deciding a K2 veteran's claim. The VA will also conduct an additional review before finalizing any K2 veteran's claim, ensuring that every relevant detail, including exposures, is thoroughly considered. This extra layer of scrutiny applies specifically to original claims tied to exposure, not unrelated issues like knee conditions, for example. Although the full plan is yet to be unveiled, this announcement sends a clear message: the VA hasn't forgotten the sacrifices made by K2 veterans and is committed to ensuring they receive every benefit they've earned.

VA extends presumptions of service-connection for three new cancer types- The Department of Veterans Affairs is including three new cancer types in the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to military environmental exposure under the PACT Act. This announcement marks the continued commitment under the Biden-Harris administration's Unity Agenda and the Biden Cancer Moonshot to support the nation's Veterans. Through a sub-regulatory

policy letter published to the Federal Register on 17 June 2024 the following three cancer types have been included in the list of presumptive diseases:

- Male breast cancer.
- Urethral cancer.
- Cancer of the paraurethral glands.

This policy establishes presumptions of service-connection for eligible Gulf War and post-9/11 Veterans who deployed to Afghanistan, Somalia, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan, and the entire Southwest Asia theater of operations, which includes Iraq. Presumptive service connection means VA automatically assumes service connection for the disease and provides benefits to eligible Veterans who have submitted claims with evidence of a diagnosis.

Any veteran who currently has or previously had one of the listed cancers at any time during military service or after separation may be entitled to disability compensation benefits dated back to Aug. 10, 2022, the date the PACT Act was signed into law. VA will review all claims from impacted veterans and survivors who previously filed and were denied for these three conditions on or after Aug. 10, 2022, to determine if benefits can now be granted.

VA Burn Pit Registry Update- As of October 1, 2024, Veterans no longer have to log into the VA's Burn Pit Registry. The update automatically registers Veterans in the Burn Pit Registry based on Department of Defense Records which show that a Veteran served in a qualifying location. Veterans who do not want their information in the Burn Pit Registry may opt Out if they choose to do so.

VA Home Loan Benefit- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced that eligible veterans, active-duty Service members, and surviving spouses who use the VA-guaranteed home loan benefit can pay for certain real estate buyer-broker fees when purchasing a home beginning August 10, 2024. The change will help ensure that veterans remain competitive and are not disadvantaged on the homebuying market due to changes that may result from a key class-action settlement involving the National Association of REALTORS®, which is slated to take effect later this summer. Previously, veterans could not pay their buyer-broker fees when using their home loans benefits.

VA modification to The Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act added a new section that prohibits VA from imposing or collecting a copayment for the first three mental health care outpatient visits of a veteran in a calendar year, if the veteran would otherwise be required to pay a copayment. The determination of the first three mental health visits is expected to be complex due to a variety of issues, including the need to consider whether care is service-connected or otherwise exempt, how to handle veterans with multiple appointments in the same day, and administrative requirements. The following considerations will be accomplished:

- **First**, the VA will evaluate the clinic where the appointment occurred. If the clinic is a mental health, psychiatry, psychology or substance abuse clinic, the VA will exempt the copayment if it is one of the first three appointments in a year.
- **Second**, if the visit was not performed in such a clinic as listed above, the VA will review what provider completed the appointment to determine if the visit applies for a copayment exemption. If the provider is a psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed professional mental health counselor, marriage or family therapist, or social worker, and if the medical service provided is an evaluation and management visit, mental health visit, group therapy visit, or psychiatric diagnostic assessment, VA will exempt the copayment if it is one of the first three visits in a year.

Veterans that are exempt from paying copayments based on Priority Group or service connection should see no difference in their copayment status as copayment is already exempt; and If the veteran has multiple appointments in one day, including a visit that qualifies for this exemption, the copayment for the visit that does not qualify for this exemption will still apply.

NCA adds options for commemorative plaques and urns- Beginning June 10, 2024, families of deceased and cremated veterans can apply to receive commemorative plaques or urns from VA if they do not want to inter their loved ones in a VA National Cemetery or receive a government-furnished headstone, marker or medallion for placement in any cemetery. It's important to note that, if a family chooses a plaque or an urn to commemorate a veteran, VA is prohibited by law from interring that veteran's remains in a VA National Cemetery or from providing a headstone, marker or medallion for placement in any cemetery. Families should be certain of their choice because if the family chooses to receive a plaque or an urn to commemorate their veteran, their decision cannot be undone.

VA Life Insurance (VALife)- VALife is the VA's first new insurance program in nearly 50 years and since January 1, 2023, the VA's Insurance Service has received over 42,000 applications and has issued over \$1 Billion in coverage. VALife is on track to be one of the VA's most inclusive benefits, providing life insurance to more service-connected Veterans than ever before. P.L. 116-315 authorized Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife) as

- **Guaranteed Acceptance Whole Life Insurance** coverage available to **all service-connected Veterans aged 80 and under** at all disability ratings: **0 to 100%.**
- Veterans who apply for a new disability rating before age 81 and get that rating for a new condition after turning 81, can apply for VALife within two years of rating notification.

Important things to know about VALife:

- Fully automated online application and approval process.
- No medical underwriting.
- Builds cash value after 2 years.
- Death within first 2 years pays out premiums plus interest.
- No waiver of premiums.

Veterans can apply and manage their VALife policy online and the Veteran's accredited fiduciary may also apply via DocuSign.

Check eligibility and enroll in VALife at <https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/>.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact our offices and enjoy the Great Fall Weather and associated activities.

Lastly (but not least importantly)- Happy Birthday to all Marines and our Navy Corpsmen who will be celebrating the 249th Birthday of our Corps on November 10th!

Semper Fidelis

Bill Heyob

SgtMajor/USMC (Retired)
Bureau Chief/State Veteran Service Officer
Office of Veterans Advocacy
Idaho Division of Veterans Services
Boise VA Regional Office

Hello Idaho Veterans, Family Members & Community Partners,

I'm excited to announce that we have a new mission/Bureau to further increase the incredible support and services we already provide to Idaho Veterans and their families. The new Bureau is called **Veteran Outreach and Community Support (VOCS)**. The VOCS mission is to reach veterans across the state of Idaho and to connect them to services and benefits through Veteran Service Organizations and also community partners when the need of the veteran falls outside of traditional benefits. This is done through various programs, direct support and engagement, and events.

Mitzi Cheldelin assumes the role of Director for Veterans Outreach & Community Support, operating from Boise and extending her reach across Idaho to connect veterans and communities with vital resources.

Congratulations to **Marisa McCarter**, who has been promoted to Community Resource Coordinator, focusing on organizing community events, managing the Idaho Veterans Guide, implementing pillars of the Governor's Challenge, and spearheading special projects.

Please welcome **Jason Legler** as the newest addition to our team, serving as the Community Resource Specialist for Northern Idaho. Based in Post Falls, Jason will cover the region from the Canadian border to Grangeville.

Expect to see our dedicated team at various events across the State, actively engaging with communities, while simultaneously working behind the scenes to support veterans in need. These folks will ensure IDVS can help any Veteran, with any need, anywhere, at any time!

Meet the Team!



Jason Legler
Community Resource Specialist



Mitzi Cheldelin
Director of Veterans Outreach and Community Support



Marisa McCarter
Community Resource Coordinator



FAIRY GODMOTHER

MITZI CHELDELIN
Director
IDVS Veterans Outreach & Community Support

208-957-3633 (cell)
mitzi.cheldelin@veterans.idaho.gov
www.veterans.idaho.gov
351 N Collins Rd. Boise ID 83702

"CARING FOR AMERICA'S HEROES"



ARMY VETERAN

MARISA MCCARTER
Community Resource Coordinator
IDVS Veterans Outreach & Community Support

208-870-1373 (cell)
marisa.mccarter@veterans.idaho.gov
www.veterans.idaho.gov
351 N Collins Rd. Boise ID 83702

"CARING FOR AMERICA'S HEROES"



ARMY VETERAN

JASON LEGLER
Community Resource Specialist
IDVS Veterans Outreach & Community Support

208-985-6632 (cell)
jason.legler@veterans.idaho.gov
www.veterans.idaho.gov
1182 S. Clearwater Loop, Post Falls ID 83854

"CARING FOR AMERICA'S HEROES"



Mark A. Tschamp
Director, Idaho Division of Veterans Services
208-780-1304
mark.tschamp@veterans.idaho.gov
www.veterans.idaho.gov

"Caring for America's Heroes"

VA proposes new legal services grant program to help Veterans upgrade their military discharge status and increase access to earned benefits

October 1, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs proposed establishing a first-of-its-kind grant program aimed at increasing access to VA programs and benefits. The proposed program would fund entities that provide legal support to help Veterans and former service members access VA programs, improve their military discharge status or characterization of service, and seek a review of a military record before a board of correction for military or naval records.

The aim of this new program would be to increase access to VA programs and benefits — including compensation and pension, education, health care, loans, national cemetery matters, and VA character of discharge determinations.

VA and the Biden-Harris Administration are committed to ensuring every Veteran gets the care, benefits, and representation they deserve — a commitment that is a key pillar in President Biden’s Unity Agenda for the nation. Earlier this year, [VA amended its regulations on character of discharge determinations](#) to ensure the department can provide services to deserving former service members — including certain individuals who faced discrimination, survived sexual assault or harassment, struggled with their mental or physical health, or faced other challenges while serving in the military. This change opened the door for former service members who had previously been found ineligible to reapply for VA care and benefits.

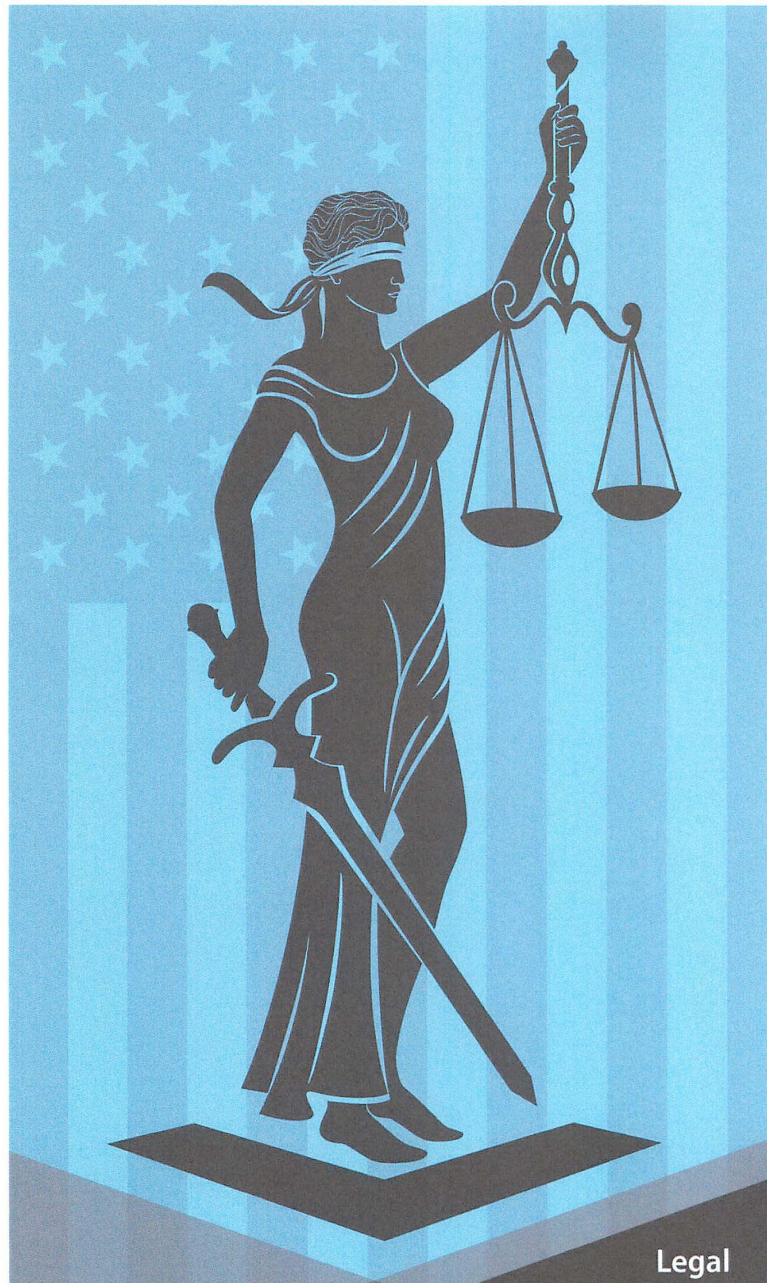
“We encourage former service members with other than honorable discharges to apply for VA care and benefits today. Although VA cannot change your discharge status, we want to provide you with any health care or benefits we can — and we will work with you every step of the way to do exactly that,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “We also know that the process to navigate the review boards and determination process can be daunting — but access to legal support can make all the difference, and we believe this new grant program will help fill that gap.”

This proposed program is a part of VA’s continued efforts to support and expand access to certain former service members with other-than-honorable and bad conduct discharge statuses. VA has conducted extensive outreach to these former service members in recent years, increasing the number who applied for VA care or benefits. Over the past 10 years, VA has granted eligibility to 75% of former service members with other-than-honorable discharge status, equating to over 57,000 individuals.

In certain circumstances, individuals with an other-than-honorable discharge status can qualify for VA programs and services if they receive a favorable outcome through a military service discharge review board, a board for correction of military or naval records, or VA’s character of discharge determination. Key to this new proposed program would be providing former service members the legal assistance they need to navigate these processes.

VA recognizes legal support can be critical to breaking down barriers to access VA services. VA’s new [Legal Services for Homeless Veterans and Veterans At-Risk for Homelessness Grant Program](#), for instance, [recently awarded \\$11.5 million in grants](#) to 79 public and non-profit organizations in fiscal year 2024.

The rulemaking can be viewed in the Federal Register under [public inspection](#), and will be published and open for comment beginning Oct. 2, 2024 (findable by searching for the rule on VA’s Federal Register [webpage](#)). VA anticipates a notice of funding opportunity for this grant program to be published following publication of the final rule.



VA | Boise VA
Medical Center



2024 VETERANS LEGAL CLINICS



FREE TO ATTEND
FOR VETS & SPOUSES

Legal Clinics are held from 2PM to 4PM in Bldg. 54 at the Boise VA Medical Center 500 W. Fort St. Boise, ID 83702.

Assistance with Estate Planning & Wills are not included at these Legal Clinics.

Please contact the Veterans Justice Outreach team at (208) 422-1064 to register.

*Space is limited.
You must register to attend!*

July 18, 2024

Aug 15, 2024

Sep 19, 2024

Oct 17, 2024

Nov 21, 2024

Dec 19, 2024

VA extends presumptions of service connection for three new cancer types

June 14, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is including three new cancer types in the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to military environmental exposure under the [PACT Act](#). This announcement marks the continued commitment under the [Biden-Harris administration's Unity Agenda](#) and the [Biden Cancer Moonshot](#) to support the nation's Veterans.

Through a sub-regulatory policy letter published to the [Federal Register](#), the following three cancer types have been included in the list of presumptive diseases:

- **Male breast cancer.**
- **Urethral cancer.**
- **Cancer of the paraurethral glands.**

This policy establishes presumptions of service connection for eligible Gulf War and post-9/11 Veterans who deployed to Afghanistan, Somalia, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan, and the entire [Southwest Asia theater of operations](#), which includes Iraq. Presumptive service connection means VA automatically assumes service connection for the disease and provides benefits to eligible Veterans who have submitted claims with evidence of a diagnosis.

“We are working with urgency to deliver on the promise of the PACT Act to provide health care and benefits to as many toxic-exposed Veterans as possible — we’re leaning in wherever we can,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “VA is working with one goal in mind: getting today and tomorrow’s Veterans and their families the benefits they deserve as fast as possible.”

Any Veteran who currently has or previously had one of the listed cancers at any time during military service or after separation may be entitled to disability compensation benefits dated back to Aug. 10, 2022, the date the [PACT Act was signed into law](#). VA will review all claims from impacted Veterans and survivors who previously filed and were denied for these three conditions on or after Aug. 10, 2022, to determine if benefits can now be granted. Veterans enrolled in VA health care can obtain cancer screening and treatment at VA, which recently announced [expansion of cancer care services](#) closer to where Veterans are.

VA has granted its [1 millionth PACT Act-related disability compensation claim](#) and awarded over \$5.7 billion to Veterans and survivors since President Biden signed the bill into law.

Veterans and survivors can apply or learn more about the PACT Act by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](#) or by calling 1-800-MYVA411.

There is no charge to file a claim with VA. For further assistance with the disability claims process, Veterans are encouraged to work with a [VA-accredited representative](#) or contact their [state Veterans affairs office](#).

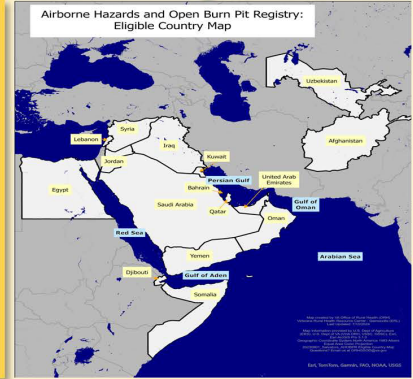
For more information about VA cancer care, visit [cancer.va.gov](#).

AIRBORNE HAZARDS

Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures

Did you serve or know someone who served in

- Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, Yemen or the airspace above any of these locations during the Persian Gulf War, from September 19, 2001, to the present, **OR**
- Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, The United Arab Emirates (UAE), or the airspace above any of these locations of operations from August 2, 1990, to the present, were exposed to:



- Smoke and fumes from open burn pits
- Sand, dust, and particulate matter
- General air pollution common in certain countries
- Fuel, aircraft exhaust, and other mechanical fumes
- Smoke from oil well fires

Diagnosed with one or more of these conditions

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Male Breast Cancer | • Gastrointestinal Cancer | • Sarcoidosis |
| • Urethral Cancer | • Glioblastoma | • Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the trachea or larynx |
| • Cancer of the Para-Urethral Glands | • Granulomatous Disease | • Adenocarcinoma of the trachea |
| • Asthma (<i>that was diagnosed after service</i>) | • Head Cancer of any type | • Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea |
| • Brain Cancer | • Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) | • Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung |
| • Chronic Bronchitis | • Kidney Cancer | • Large cell carcinoma of the lung |
| • Chronic Rhinitis | • Lymphatic cancer of any type | • Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung |
| • Chronic Sinusitis | • Lymphoma of any type | • Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung |
| • Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) | • Melanoma | • Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung |
| • Constrictive Bronchiolitis or Obliterative Bronchiolitis | • Neck Cancer | • Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type |
| • Emphysema | • Pancreatic Cancer | |
| | • Pleuritis | |
| | • Pulmonary Fibrosis | |
| | • Reproductive Cancer of any type | |

If you are a veteran with an honorable discharge and served during the time mentioned above, and you are diagnosed with one of these conditions, you may be entitled to service-connected disability benefits from the VA.



**A
I
R
B
O
R
N
E

H
A
Z
A
R
D
S**

Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures

Surviving Spouse of a Veteran?

Or

**Know a Surviving Spouse of a Veteran
Who Passed Away from One of the Conditions Above?**
(or one of the above conditions was listed as contributing
factor in the Veteran's death on the death certificate)

If you are the surviving spouse of a qualifying Veteran who passed away due to one of the conditions listed above, or due to complications from those primary conditions, you may be entitled to *Dependency and Indemnity Compensation* benefits based on the Veteran's death.

Please Call Us Today to See if You May Qualify!

Idaho Division of Veterans Services

Office of Veterans Advocacy

444 W. Fort Street, Room 140

Boise, ID 83702

(208) 780-1380



VA and the Biden-Harris Administration announce new government-wide website, call center to protect Veterans from fraud and scams

August 9, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Biden-Harris Administration announced the launch of [VSAFE.gov](https://vsafe.gov) and 1-833-38V-SAFE (1-833-388-7233) — a new government-wide website and call center designed to protect Veterans, service members, and their families from fraud and scams.

These new resources will help inform Veterans and their families of common fraud schemes, give them tools to protect themselves, and provide an outlet for reporting and further assistance. Launched as part of the White House VSAFE (Veterans, Servicemembers, and Families Fraud Evasion) interagency Policy Council effort, the call center and website combine resources from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of Defense, Department of Education, Department of State, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Trade Commission, Internal Revenue Service, Office of Management & Budget, and Social Security Administration to ensure that there is no “wrong door” approach for Veterans and service members to access reporting tools and resources to combat fraud.

Fraud prevention resources are particularly critical at a time when VA is delivering more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before under the PACT Act, which was signed into law by President Biden two years ago tomorrow. This influx of new benefits may make Veterans, service members, and families targets for bad actors. VA and the entire Biden-Harris Administration are laser-focused on getting these heroes the tools they need to avoid fraud and scams.

“This new call center and website are a one-stop-shop for Veterans, service members, and their families to help avoid fraud and scams,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “We know that more Veterans than ever before are now receiving VA benefits, which sadly means that more bad actors are trying to steal those benefits. That’s why we’re launching these tools: to give these heroes every tool at the federal government’s disposal to protect themselves and their families.”

“Predatory actors are constantly looking for new ways to exploit new and evolving technologies to target service members, compromising their personal data and financial stability as well as their military readiness,” said **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Rohit Chopra**. “The VSAFE initiative is a key component of a whole-of-government collaboration to protect veterans from fraudsters and scammers, and the CFPB is committed to working with our partners in this important effort.”

“Under President Biden, the Department of Education has taken seriously its role in preventing and responding to scams and fraud targeting servicemembers, veterans, and their families in the federal student aid programs. We have stepped up enforcement efforts, expanded partnerships with other state and federal agencies, and issued a number of new regulations—including closing the 90/10 loophole that encouraged predatory colleges to target veterans and servicemembers. Today, we are pleased to join the White House and other partner agencies across the federal government in standing up a new central hub for servicemembers and veterans to report fraud and connect with the proper agency to assist them,” said **Under Secretary of Education James Kvaal**.

“The White House’s scam and fraud evasion campaign has provided the Department of Defense an opportunity to connect with twenty-six federal agencies to coordinate, collaborate and create long term partnerships to identify and prevent scams and fraud. The comprehensive website and toll-free helpline will provide centralized, vetted, information from across the Federal government for Service members,

veterans and their families,” said **Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Ashish Vazirani**.

“This initiative will bring together the expertise from across the federal government in support of veterans, service members, and their families. The FCC is proud to be a part of this important work to combat fraud that too often targets these households,” said **FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**. “To that end, the FCC continues to work with its federal partners to protect veterans, service members, and their families from scammers pushing misleading ‘debt relief’ robocalls. We have put these bad actors on notice that they can’t target people with this junk and take advantage of their efforts to build a better financial future for themselves.”

“The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ establishment of this essential website and hotline is a proactive measure to help protect veterans, service members, their families, and consumers alike from vicious scams. These centralized resources will help consumers better safeguard their assets, obtain accurate information, and report fraud,” said **Acting Social Security Administration Inspector General Michelle Anderson**. “In collaboration with SSA, the Office of the Inspector General is excited support this initiative and collaborate across government, as we have successfully done with our Slam the Scam Day initiative over the last five years. We know firsthand that partnerships exponentially increase public awareness and significantly help to combat scams and fraud.”

“The FTC stands shoulder to shoulder with its sister agencies, fully committed to serving veterans, servicemembers, and their families. Protecting military consumers from fraud and other illegal practices has long been a priority for the Commission — from cases like Harris Jewelry and Career Step, to rulemakings to address scams and illegal business practices that target those who serve our nation, to data analysis of military reports to the FTC’s Consumer Sentinel, to our education and outreach work at MilitaryConsumer.gov and co-leading Military Consumer Month with DoD’s Office of Financial Readiness and the CFPB’s Office of Servicemember Affairs. We’re proud of the Agency’s work with our VSAFE partners. By collaborating to create a centralized hub for fraud prevention resources, we’re ensuring veterans, servicemembers, their families, caregivers, and survivors get the access to the help they need right when they need it. We look forward to these efforts deepening the ability of all member agencies to better serve the military community,” said **FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection Director Samuel Levine**.

“The Internal Revenue Service is proud to partner with other agencies to help veterans and their families impacted by fraud or identity theft. Making it easier for those who have served and sacrificed is the right thing to do. We look forward to the ongoing collaboration and partnership,” said **IRS Taxpayer Services Chief Ken Corbin**.

Key new resources include:

- **Launching a centralized website for support and reporting:** VSAFE.gov is a fraud prevention, response, and reporting information hub. Information from across federal agencies can be accessed in one place, making it easy for Veterans, service members, and their families to find out more about different kinds of fraud, to get assistance, and to report.
- **Opening a centralized call line for Veteran and service member complaints:** VSAFE is standing up a single shared call line, 833-38V-SAFE, to aid in the “no wrong door” approach. Veterans, service members, and their families and survivors can call one single number to get help with fraud, scam, and predatory practice related concerns. Depending on the kind of issue facing the caller, callers will be routed to the correct federal agency to address their specific concerns.

- **Creating common call center training materials to ensure Veterans and service members are routed to the relevant agency no matter which federal agency they initially call:** Even if individuals do not utilize the centralized call line, all VSAFE agency fraud call centers have been trained to connect callers to the best agency to handle their report and provide help. These coordinated responses are guided by joint reference materials utilized by agency representatives. This approach minimizes confusion, and gets Veterans, service members, and their family members routed to the best support as effectively and efficiently as possible.

VA encourages Veterans, transitioning service members, and their families to remember they do not need to pay anything to apply for VA health care or benefits. Instead, at no cost, they can safely apply directly with VA through VA.gov or with a [VA-accredited service representative](#).

This is just one component of the government-wide effort to protect Veterans from fraud. VA is also launching a strategic communications campaign to spread awareness of the rising threat of claims predators and conduct outreach to Veterans, and their family members, caregivers, and survivors in order to equip them with information and guidance to protect their earned benefits. Additionally, VA is sending cease and desist letters to predatory actors, conducting public outreach to educate Veterans about the risks, launching this new one-stop-shop resource page for Veterans, creating a [Veteran fraud protection resource kit](#), and much more.

All Veterans, service members, and their families are encouraged to visit [VSAFE.gov](#) to learn more and what to do if experiencing fraud.



DON'T FEED THE SHARKS



DontFeedTheSharks.org

What is a "Claim Shark"?

- A Claim Shark is an individual or company that charges hefty fees to "assist" or "consult" veterans with filing their VA benefit claims – this practice is illegal!
- Claim Sharks are not VA accredited, meaning they aren't required to adhere to the well-established professional and ethical standards of VA accreditation, so their advice can often be misleading or even fraudulent.
- Like a "Loan Shark," once you're in, you can't get out, and may be subject to new and hidden fees whenever you get a new rating, no matter who does the work.

Some of their predatory practices are:

- Promising or guaranteeing an increased disability rating or percentage increase.
- Advertising expedited VA claims decisions.
- Requesting login credentials to access a veteran's personal information through secure VA websites like eBenefits or VA.gov.
- Using confusing tactics or ambiguous language to mislead claimants or coerce them into signing a contract.
- Telling veterans to forego VA exams and offering health consultations within their own network of doctors.

Who are the Claim Sharks?

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • Trajector Medical | • Patriot Angels |
| • Vet Benefits Guide | • Veteran Care Services |
| • Veterans Guardian | • VetComm |
| • VA Claims Insider | • VA Claims Academy |
| • Telemedica | • Vet Assist |

Veterans can protect themselves by:

- Always working with VA accredited representatives.
- Attending all exams ordered by VA.
- Not signing contracts.
- Not agreeing to fees or payments from future benefits.
- Not agreeing to pay for medical consultations or opinions.
- Not providing access to Protected Health Information or Personal Identifiable Information.

Who is NOT a Claim Shark?

- VA accredited veterans service organization representatives, like the VFW
- VA accredited claims agents
- VA accredited attorneys
- Attorneys assisting with Camp LeJeune lawsuits who do not charge excessive fees



VA takes steps to expand access to benefits for Veterans who served at K2 and their survivors

August 9, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced several steps to expand access to VA benefits for Veterans who served at Karshi-Khanabad (K2) base in Uzbekistan after Sept. 11, 2001, as well as their survivors. These steps include:

- **Making chronic multi-symptom illness a presumptive condition for K2 Veterans:** VA plans to take steps to consider Veterans who served in Uzbekistan as Persian Gulf Veterans, therefore making undiagnosed illness and medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illness (also known as Gulf War Illness) presumptive conditions for Veterans who served at K2. This will lower the burden of proof required for Veterans who served at K2 to receive presumptive benefits for these conditions.
- **Recognition of exposures at K2 as toxic exposure risk activities (TERAs):** VA also plans to take steps to acknowledge that Veterans who served at K2 were exposed to several contaminants of concern — including for example jet fuel, volatile organic compounds, particulate matter and dust, asbestos roofing tiles, and lead-based paint. VA continues to work with the Department of Defense to conduct research to identify any additional exposures.
- **Ensuring that toxic exposures are fully taken into account when processing K2 Veterans' claims:** VA will provide information and training about service at K2, including a list of the contaminants that Veterans were exposed to while serving there, to all claims processors and examiners. This will mean that every time a K2 Veteran submits a disability claim, VA claims processors and examiners will take those K2 exposures into account.
- **Pre-decisional review of K2 claims:** Before a decision is made on a K2 Veteran's claim, it will go through an additional review to ensure that all relevant information (including exposures) was taken into account, and that all benefits to which the Veteran is entitled have been granted. This will apply to any original claim for conditions that could be tied to exposures (for example, there would not be a review for a knee injury).

Importantly, in addition to these steps, all Veterans who served at K2 and meet [basic eligibility requirements](#) are already eligible to enroll in VA health care to get world-class, low-cost care for all their health conditions – without needing to apply for disability compensation first. These Veterans are also eligible for presumptive benefits for the more than 300 conditions [covered by the PACT Act](#), meaning that they do not need to prove that their service caused their condition to receive benefits for it; instead, VA automatically assumes service-connection for the condition and provides benefits accordingly.

Moving forward, VA will continue to evaluate additional ways to support K2 Veterans and their survivors. VA encourages all Veterans who served at K2 to apply for VA [care](#) and [benefits](#) by visiting VA.gov or calling 1-800-MYVA411.

“At VA, our goal is to provide *every* Veteran who served at K2 with the care and benefits that they deserve for their service to our nation — and that’s what this effort is all about,” said **VA’s Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs**. “In addition to these important steps forward, we want all Veterans who served at K2 to know that they are currently eligible both to enroll in VA health care (without first applying for VA benefits) and for presumptive benefits for the more than 300 health conditions under the PACT Act. We encourage these Veterans — and their survivors — to apply for VA [care](#) and [benefits](#) by visiting VA.gov or calling 1-800-MYVA411. We will do everything in our power to get to yes and get you the care and benefits you deserve.” VA is conducting extensive outreach to K2 Veterans and their survivors to ensure they get the care and benefits they have earned. Partly due to these efforts, 13,002 K2 Veterans of the approximately 16,000 known K2 Veterans are currently enrolled in VA healthcare and 11,801 are service-connected for at least one condition.

Through 2027, Veterans no longer need to pay copays for their first three outpatient mental health care visits of each year

May 29, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that Veterans no longer need to pay copays for their first three outpatient mental health care and substance use disorder visits of each calendar year through 2027. This benefit expands Veterans’ access to mental health services and lowers their out-of-pocket costs.

This copayment exemption benefits dates back to June 27, 2023 and—by law—will end Dec. 29, 2027. To be eligible for this exemption, the outpatient visit must be with a qualified mental health professional at VA or provided through VA’s network of community care providers. VA will automatically refund Veterans for any copays paid to VA on or after June 27, 2023 for these appointments, with no further action required by those Veterans.

VA and the entire Biden-Harris administration are committed to providing all Veterans with the timely, world-class mental health care they deserve. VA is currently delivering mental health appointments to more Veterans, while [reducing mental health wait times](#) for new appointments. Additionally, Veteran trust in VA outpatient care is currently at 91.8% — an [all-time high](#) — and VA has recently outperformed non-VA care in [peer reviewed studies](#), [hospital ratings](#), and [patient satisfaction surveys](#).

“We want every Veteran, regardless of their financial status, to have access to the mental health care they deserve—and that’s what this copayment exemption is all about,” **said VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “We are constantly working to expand access to mental health care, and we won’t rest until every Veteran has access to care whenever and wherever they need it.”

In addition to this copayment exemption, VA launched a [new policy](#) in 2023 allowing [eligible Veterans and certain former service members](#) in acute suicidal crisis to go to any VA or non-VA emergency facility for no-cost emergency health care. Since then, more than 60,000 Veterans and former service members have used this benefit — providing them with lifesaving care and saving millions of dollars in health care costs. The policy increased access to no-cost emergent suicide care for up to 9 million individuals, because eligible individuals do not need to be enrolled in the VA system or go to a department facility to use this benefit.

To maximize access to world-class mental health care, VA has been aggressively hiring mental health professionals nationwide. Over the last three fiscal years, VHA hired more than 9,000 mental health positions including psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, licensed professional mental health counselors, peer support specialists, mental health nurses and mental health physician assistants — including 2,000 hires during fiscal year 2024. Additionally, our retention rates for VHA employees — including mental health professionals — are at all-time record highs and outperform private sector benchmarks.

The copay exemption benefit is part of the [Cleland-Dole Act of 2022](#). For more information on mental health care at VA, visit our [mental health website](#).

VA awards \$4.3M in cooperative agreements to states, territories to help understand and prevent Veteran suicide

September 27, 2024

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced it will award more than \$4.3 million in cooperative agreements to states and territories to help fund and provide technical assistance to suicide mortality review committees, which aim to identify and characterize local suicide deaths to better inform Veteran suicide prevention strategies.

This [fiscal year's cooperative agreements](#) will support 10 states and two territories in establishing local understanding of Veteran suicide, identifying populations or locations of special concern, and informing data-informed suicide prevention strategies for Veterans. These awards advance VA's [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#), the Biden-Harris Administration's [strategy to reduce military and Veteran suicide](#), and the newly published [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention Federal Action Plan](#).

"It is our responsibility to be at the forefront of researching the drivers of Veteran suicide, all with the goal of ensuring no Veteran is lost to suicide," said **Under Secretary for Health Shereef Elnahal, M.D.** "We are working with our intergovernmental partners to establish suicide mortality review committees, which will tailor our efforts to the unique and diverse needs of all Veterans."

These agreements help advance President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation and are part of VA's broader efforts to prevent Veteran suicide, and contribute to the objectives of the [Governor's and Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families](#) — an effort between VA and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to create enhanced suicide prevention action plans across 50 states and five U.S. territories. This month, VA [awarded another \\$52.5 million in grants](#) to community organizations implementing tailored suicide prevention programs and services for Veterans and their families. VA has also launched a [new webpage](#) with resources for suicide loss survivors. VA intends to award up to an additional \$10 million through the Suicide Mortality Review Cooperative Agreements program in FY 2025. Learn more about the [program and the Governor's Challenge](#).



Veterans Day



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

November 11, 2024

www.va.gov





FREE Dental Services for Veterans

Are you a veteran who could use some dental work but do not have insurance, or know a veteran who could?

Through **We Serve Day**, several local dental offices are offering free services to those who served our country and don't have insurance. Free services include, extractions, cleanings, exams, night guards, fillings, partials, and crowns.

WHEN: Saturday, November 9th

Veterans interested can schedule an appointment at the following

- **Emerald Smiles Dentistry** – 675 N. Milwaukee St., Boise, ID (208) 593-3221
- **Meridian Smiles Dentistry** - 2274 N. Eagle Rd., Meridian, ID (208) 839-5440
- **Eagle Smiles Dentistry & Orthodontics** – 6700 N. Linder Rd. (208) 895-8555

Thank You for Your Service!





WARHAWK AIR MUSEUM 2024 EVENTS

KILROY COFFEE KLATCH

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

THIS EVENT IS FREE FOR ALL VETERANS! COFFEE AND DONUTS ARE SERVED AND A GUEST SPEAKER IS FEATURED.

ROSIE THE RIVETER DAY

MARCH 17TH

ROSIE THE RIVETER DAY CELEBRATES AND HONORS THE WOMEN OF WORLD WAR II WHO REDEFINED WHAT IT WAS TO BE A WOMAN IN THE WORKFORCE. HANDS-ON STEM ACTIVITIES INCLUDE LEARNING TO RIVET JUST LIKE ROSIE! DRESS LIKE ROSIE AND GET IN FREE.

SPRING BREAK

MARCH 19TH - 29TH

\$5 ADMISSION FOR STUDENTS.

MOMS FREE DAY

MAY 11TH

MOMS GET IN FREE THE SATURDAY BEFORE MOTHER'S DAY.

MEMORIAL DAY

MAY 27TH

ADMISSION IS \$5 ON THIS SPECIAL DAY TO LEARN, REFLECT, AND HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES SERVING IN THE U.S. ARMED FORCES. WEATHER PERMITTING WARBIRDS WILL BE FLYING IN TRIBUTE TO THOSE WE HAVE LOST.

DADS FREE DAY

JUNE 16TH

DADS GET IN FREE ON FATHER'S DAY.



EDUCATE | HONOR | PRESERVE

LABOR DAY

SEPTEMBER 2ND

ADMISSION IS ONLY \$5.

WARBIRD ROUNDUP

SEPTEMBER 7TH-8TH

THIS TWO DAY EVENT FEATURES WARBIRDS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY. VISITORS CAN WATCH THEM FLY WHILE KNOWLEDGEABLE ANNOUNCERS TALK ABOUT THE WARBIRD'S HISTORY, INTERESTING FACTS, AND IMPORTANCE TO OUR COUNTRY. A SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER IS FEATURED AND VISITORS GET FULL ACCESS TO THE MUSEUM AND DISPLAYS, ACTIVITIES FOR BOTH ADULTS AND KIDS, AND FOOD TRUCKS.

SEPTEMBER SWING

SEPTEMBER 28TH

THIS EVENT FEATURES LIVE MUSIC SWING, DANCE LESSONS, FOOD, AND DRINKS. 1940S ERA / INSPIRED CLOTHING IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED. THIS IS AN 18 AND OVER EVENT.

VETERANS BREAKFAST

NOVEMBER 9TH

OUR VETERANS BREAKFAST IS OUR WAY OF HONORING OUR VETERANS. PRICE OF YOUR BREAKFAST ALSO GETS YOU FULL ACCESS TO THE MUSEUM FROM 8 A.M. - 12 P.M.

VETERANS FREE

NOVEMBER 12-17

FREE ADMISSION FOR VETERANS.

WARHAWK WINTERFEST

NOVEMBER 29TH-DECEMBER 1ST

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL HOLIDAY SCAVENGER HUNT, CRAFTS, AND EVEN A VISIT FROM SANTA!

MORE INFORMATION:



IDAHO VETERANS



WREATHS

TO HONOR & REMEMBER
THOSE LAID TO REST AT THE

Idaho State Veterans Cemetery

SAVE THE DATE!
December 14, 2024

"To honor the service and sacrifice of our Idaho veterans by annually placing wreaths on their graves and speaking their names."

Idaho Veterans Wreaths is a community-based initiative organized by several veteran support organizations under the non-profit direction of Idaho Veterans Network (IVN). This new initiative replaces the former Wreaths Across America program.

Our mission is to honor the service and sacrifice of our Idaho veterans by annually placing wreaths on their graves and speaking their names while promoting a sense of remembrance and gratitude within our community for these heroes. All donation revenue will be kept in Idaho to provide critical support and aid to our living veterans and their families facing hardships.



Thank you for your support!
To donate, scan this QR code or visit
www.IdahoVeteransWreaths.org
or mail to:

Idaho Veterans Wreaths
P.O. Box 63, Eagle, ID 83616



HOLIDAY SPONSOR PROGRAM

The Veteran Holiday Sponsorship Program is open for sponsors and veteran nominations now through December 6.

Gifts will be available for pickup or delivery the week of Christmas. If you would like to sponsor a veteran or nominate yourself or another veteran please contact Tammy at (208) 422-1175 or Justin at (208) 422-1176.

Completed forms can be dropped off at Voluntary Service or emailed to boivoluntaryservice@va.gov

Application forms can be found at the Boise VA Information Desk and online at: www.va.gov/boise-health-care/work-with-us/volunteer-or-donate/





VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



MARINE CORPS RESERVE



**DONATION BOXES ARE IN THE
LOBBY OF THE VETERAN
SERVICES CENTER.
NEW, UNWRAPPED GIFTS CAN
BE DONATED. NO TOY
WEAPONS OR FOOD ITEMS.**



Donations accepted until 12/15/24.
Questions contact: Sean Burlile
208-426-3754 or sean.burlile@va.gov

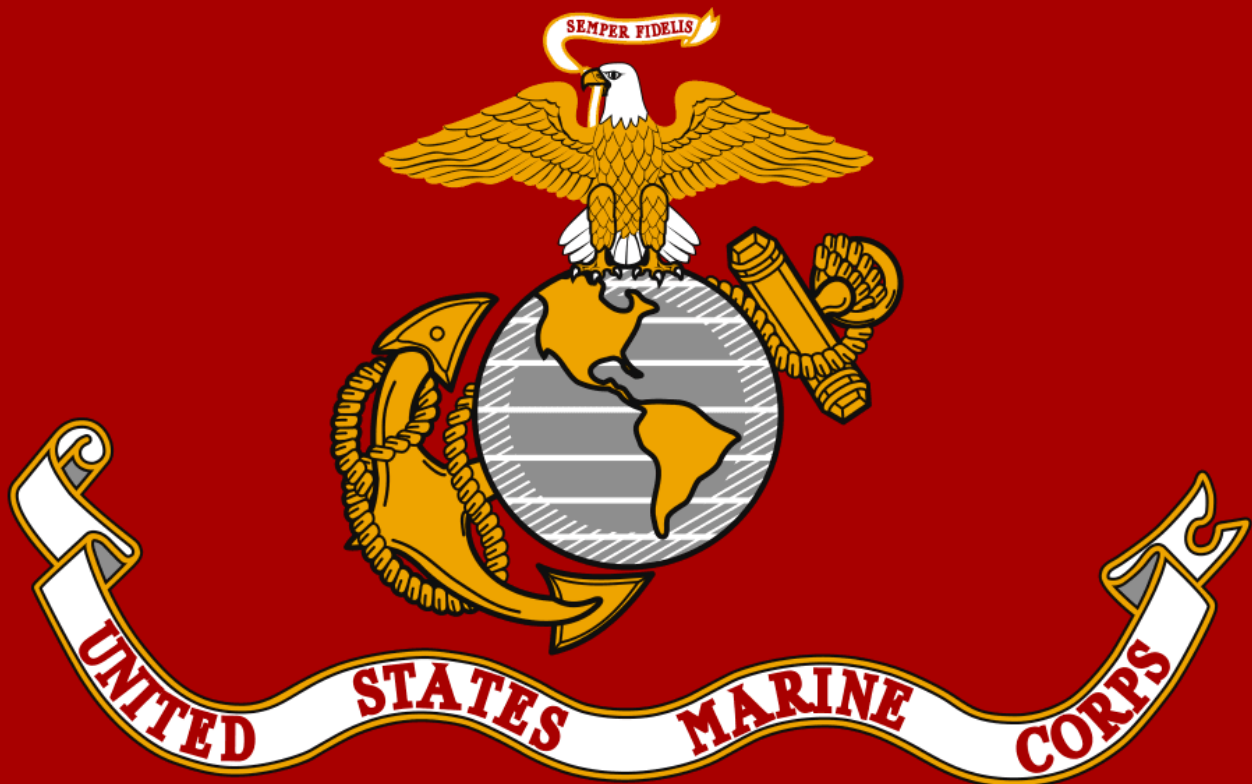


BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
U.S. MARINE CORPS



249th



GO GREEN AND GET THE BULLETIN VIA EMAIL



In our continual effort to reduce costs and lessen our “ecological footprint,” the Office of Veterans Advocacy is again asking for your help. In order to reduce printing and mailing costs, as well as the amount of paper used, we are asking you to volunteer to receive the bulletin via email.

The bulletin will arrive in your in-box every quarter as a Word document, which will allow to you forward or print and disseminate as many copies as you like. In addition to receiving the quarterly bulletin, you will also receive our annual Veterans Resource Directory via email.

If you can help us with our goal of reducing costs and the saving paper, please email Tiffany Barrett at tiffany.barrett@veterans.idaho.gov. Thanks for your help with this most worthwhile endeavor! And don't forget you can always view and print the Bulletin and Resource Directory by visiting our website at www.veterans.idaho.gov.

DATES TO REMEMBER



- October 13U.S. Navy established, 1775
- October 14Star Spangled Banner adopted as National Anthem, 1931
- October 14Columbus Day
- November 5.....Election Day
- November 10U.S. Marine Corps established, 1775
- November 11Veteran’s Day
- November 28Thanksgiving Day
- December 7Pearl Harbor bombed, 1941
- December 14Wreaths Across America Day
- December 25Christmas Day

The Star-Spangled Banner



Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
 O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
 And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
 O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

And where is that band who so dauntingly swore
 That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
 A home and a country should leave us no more?
 Their blood has wiped out their foul footsteps' pollution.
 No refuge could save the hireling and slave
 From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
 Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
 What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
 As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
 Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
 In full glory reflected now shines on the stream:
 'Tis the star-spangled banner! O long may it wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
 Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
 Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
 Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
 Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
 And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
 And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.



CONVENTION SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

☆☆

American Legion

Mid-WinterJanuary 10-12, 2025, Boise, ID
StateTBD
National.....August 22-28, 2025, Tampa Bay, FL

AMVETS

National.....August 19-23, 2025, Greensboro, NC

Disabled American Veterans

National.....August 9-12, 2025, Las Vegas, NV

Marine Corps League

National.....August 11-15, 2025, DFW Airport, TX

Military Order of the Purple Heart

National.....TBD

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Mid-WinterJanuary 9-12, 2025, Boise, ID
StateJune 11-5, 2025, Lewiston, ID
National.....August 9-14, 2025, Columbus, OH

☆☆

DAV VAN CONTACTS TO AND FROM VA MEDICAL CENTERS

BOISE & SURROUNDING AREA TO BOISE VAMC

All appointments for rides must be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, call Tami McMurtry or Phil Johnson at (208) 422-1177.

LEWISTON & SURROUNDING AREA TO SPOKANE VAMC

All appointments for rides must be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, call the DAV Transportation Office at the Spokane VA Medical Center (800) 325-7940.

LIBBY & SURROUNDING AREA TO SPOKANE VAMC

All appointments for rides must be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, Call the DAV Transportation Office at the Spokane VA Medical Center (800) 325-7940.

COEUR D'ALENE & SURROUNDING AREA TO SPOKANE VAMC

All appointments for rides must be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, Call the DAV Transportation Office at the Spokane VA Medical Center (800) 325-7940.

SANDPOINT & SURROUNDING AREA TO SPOKANE VAMC

All appointments for rides must be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, call the DAV Transportation Office at the Spokane VA Medical Center (800) 325-7940.

LEWISTON TO WALLA WALLA VAMC

Thursdays: Walla Walla VA Medical Center Van. 8:00 a.m. departure from the CBOC at 1630 23rd Avenue, Building 2. Arrives at Walla Walla at 10:00 a.m. Departs Walla Walla at 1:30 p.m. Arrives Lewiston at 3:30 p.m.

If your appointment runs past the departure time of 1:30, there is no alternative for returning to Lewiston.

POCATELLO, IDAHO FALLS, & SURROUNDING ARE TO SALT LAKE CITY VAMC

All appointments for rides should be made 72 hours in advance.

For the schedule or an appointment, call the VTS/DAV Transportation Office at (800) 613-4012 ext. 2003 or 1027.

