

VFW SERVICE OFFICER NOTES FOR THE-HUT MAY 2018

Have You Visited Our Website Lately?

If you haven't visited our website lately, I highly encourage you do so. Besides having lots of good information regarding our post activities, there's several links to obtain information of interest for veterans. I encourage you to establish an account with the National Headquarters so you can receive the most current information regarding veteran's issues. Click on this link <http://www.vfwpost1287.org> and browse around our site.

ATTENTION TO ALL KOREAN VETERANS WHO SERVED IN OR NEAR KOREA AFTER 28 JUL 54 UNTIL A DATE YET TO BE DETERMINED

This notification is SUPER IMPORTANT!!! Read closely. Are you eligible?

Korean Defense Service Medal

The KDSM was authorized by Section 543, National Defense Authorization Act, 2003. It is authorized for award to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who have served on active duty in support of the defense of the Republic of Korea. If you are entitled and have not received your service medal, as so many of our Korean Veterans are not even aware of it, here is information as to entitlement and instructions to get yours.

To apply for your medal and correct your records to reflect award of such medal and have left the service before 2002, fill **out the SF 180** and send it to:

National Personnel Records Center (NPRC)
Military Personnel Records
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO 63138-1002

NPRC will add the Korea Defense Service Medal to the records by correcting the DD214 to include it and will issue a DD FORM 215 (CORRECTION TO DD FORM 214, CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY). If you have in your possession a copy of current military records that show service that entitles you and send them along with it to possibly expedite the process. (DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS OR THE ONLY COPY YOU HAVE)!

For additional details refer to this website: <http://www.koreanveterans.org/medals.html>

For your convenience you can print your SF 180 from your computer from the website above or go to this website:

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html#sf>

If you served between 1Oct 66 30 Jun74 you will be qualified to receive the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. Read the following provisions. **Special provisions:** Service members

qualified for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal by reasons of service between 1 October 1966 and 30 June 1974, in an area for which the KDSM was authorized subsequent are eligible for both the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the KDSM. Award of the KDSM for this time period is a one-time exception to policy to comply with section 543 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2003, Public Law 107–314.

Bill to Protect Veterans From Scams Passes House Submit a letter to our Senators (Sens. Klobuchar <https://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-amy> and Smith <https://www.smith.senate.gov/content/contact-senator>)

Do you ever get those annoying phone calls or emails of people or organizations wanting **YOUR** money? I have, and I'm sure I'm not alone.

The House of Representatives unanimously approved the "Preventing Crimes Against Veterans Act" (H.R.506), bipartisan legislation sponsored by Congressman Thomas J. Rooney (Fla.) and Congressman Ted Deutch (Fla.) to protect veterans from scam artists targeting them for profit. Financial predators have increasingly targeted veterans in recent years—particularly elderly veterans— living in low-income housing or assisted living facilities, to defraud them out of their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits.

Although it is currently illegal for unauthorized individuals to charge veterans for helping them receive their benefits, there are no legal or financial repercussions for people who violate this law. As a result, scammers often get away with charging veterans exorbitant fees while the veteran has no guarantee they will receive any help getting their VA benefits.

If enacted, the bipartisan bill would close this loophole by levying a heavy fine, imposing prison sentences up to five years (or both) on any individual who blatantly engages in schemes to defraud veterans or their immediate family members of their benefits.

Congressman Rooney is an Army veteran and a member of the House Appropriations Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee. Congressman Deutch is a senior member of the House Judiciary Committee. The bill now goes to the Senate for further consideration.

ATTENTION FEMALE VETERANS

The Deborah Sampson Act has stalled on Capitol Hill (S. 681). This bill was introduced in May 2017 by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee ranking member Jon Tester. A House Veterans' Affairs Committee member Elizabeth Esty has introduced a companion bill (H.R. 2452). Both of these measures seems to have "stalled" in the legislative process and have not progressed beyond hearings. If enacted, these pieces of legislation would require the VA to establish a peer-to-peer assistance program for female veterans; create a centralized location for information on female veterans benefits and services; provide legal services for homeless female veterans; address specific VA infrastructure needs to support the care of female veterans; expand post-delivery care services for female veterans who are receiving maternity care; collect data on VA programs and services by gender and minority status; and ensure specific staffing levels and training for

women's health providers and VA's female veteran program managers. It's time to move on this legislation so write our elected officials and tell them to ACT!

THE PRESIDENT SIGNED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER (No. 13822), FOR ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR TRANSITIONING VETERANS

President Trump signed an executive order directing the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security to develop a plan to ensure all veterans have access to mental health care for at least one year following their separation from service.

VETERAN CARDS NOW AVAILABLE – AGAIN...

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently started accepting applications again for the VA issued Veterans Identification Card (VIC). The intent of this card is to provide proof of military service in lieu of having to carry around your DD-214. This card was authorized by Congress in 2015. As most of you know the process was originally commenced this past November but had to be stopped due to the overwhelming number of applications that caused the website to crash – thus the VA halted the application process in order to correct these issues. The system is now on-line and ready for you to apply. Just go to www.vets.gov/?next=%2Fveteran-id-card%2F. You should receive your card within 60-days. You can check the status of your card by going to: www.vets.gov.

JUDGE RULES BURN PIT SMOKE CAUSED LUNG DISORDER

A judge in the U.S. Department of Labor's Office for Workers' Compensation Programs ruled vapors from open-air-burn pits are connected to lung disease. The ruling could allow Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits for the tens of thousands of service members who signed onto the VA's Burn Pit Registry over the course of the conflicts in the Middle East. These burn pits – where trash, abandoned hardware, and other waste were burned – occurred throughout U.S. military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those downwind from the pits believe they were exposed to chemicals released during the burning of toxic items.

DENTAL BILL CAN BE EXPENSIVE – DENTAL INSURANCE FROM THE VFW

In case you haven't read in the March 2018 issue of the VFW magazine, there is an important member benefit available through the VFW. This benefit applies to you and your family members. This plan covers a wide range of services at a reasonable cost. Regular visits to the dentist's office are not something to look forward to, but are necessary for maintaining good health. Besides, dental services can be EXPENSIVE without dental insurance. For more information and details on affordable dental care, call the VFW Member Benefits Department at 1.800.821.2606, option 1.

Recognizing Women Veterans with PTSD: A Small But Growing Population

The VA reports there's approximately 200k women currently serving in America's Armed Forces. PTSD can be caused from a variety of causes: Military Sexual Trauma (MST), being

Direct Combat Exposure, etc. When diagnosed with PTSD, Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Physician Assistants (PAs) are encouraged to refer female veteran patients to women's mental health services offered by their closest VA hospital. This ensures that the patient receives the best individualized, evidence-based care that focuses on this particular population. Women veteran patients need to be educated and reassured that there are available and abundant culture and gender-sensitive resources geared towards their population at the VA to help manage and treat PTSD effectively. These patients can also be directed towards the Veterans Affairs website: http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/PTSD-overview/women/womens_mental_health_services.asp.

EXPLORE THE VA FOR YOUR BENEFITS AND THOSE AVAILABLE TO YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS

VA recognizes that when you serve, your family serves as well. May is designated as "Month of the Military Child." The VA honors the sacrifices made by military families every day.

VA offers several benefits for the children of Veterans:

- [Education benefits](#) – Service members may transfer the GI Bill to their dependent children before leaving service.
- [Health care](#) – CHAMPVA provides coverage to eligible dependent children.
- [Life insurance](#) – Family coverage is available to members insured under Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI).
- [Memorial benefits](#) – Minor or unmarried adult children may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery.

In addition, specific benefits are available for children of service members who died or were seriously injured in the line of duty.

Find out which benefits you and your children may be eligible for by visiting Explore.VA.gov or clicking on the button below.

Certain Adoption Expenses Reimbursable

VA has amended its regulation to provide reimbursement of qualifying adoption expenses incurred by veterans with a service-connected disability that results in infertility. Covered veterans may request reimbursement for qualifying adoption expenses incurred for adoption finalized after Sept. 29, 2016. With this rulemaking, funds are authorized to provide reimbursement for qualifying adoption expenses incurred by a covered veteran in the adoption of a child less than 18 years of age. [More information is available here](#). VA Form 10152, Reimbursement Request for Qualifying Adoption Expenses, can be [downloaded and printed here](#).

Education Information

For any service member or veteran looking to pursue their educational goals through the use of the GI Bill, there is an important tool offered by VA. The [GI Bill Comparison Tool](#) allows users to compare different programs and institutions that accept the GI Bill. In the past few years, some student veterans have been impacted by the abrupt closures of the schools they were attending. These schools were using predatory business practices and had numerous complaints against them. The GI Bill Comparison Tool gives users the ability to check on the schools they wish to attend, and provides up to date data received from current and past students, helping GI

Bill users make better, more informed decisions about where to attend school, and hopefully avoid programs that offer little to no value.

GET AN ANSWER WITHIN 30 DAYS FROM SUBMITTING YOUR VA CLAIM

Are you considering filing a claim for an increase in your disability compensation? VA's new Decision Ready Claims (DRC) program delivers decisions within 30 days.

A Marine Corps Veteran was urged to apply for VA disability compensation because of an injury to the upper back that occurred during boot camp.

This veteran said, "The only thing that helps are massages, so I use the money for that. It goes towards normal living expenses too, because it is more than I expected. "It has made my life a lot easier to have that extra income."

In addition to claims for increases, DRC covers certain claims related to direct service, presumptive service and secondary service connections. Surviving spouses can file certain claims under DRC, and transitioning service members can use DRC to file pre-discharge claims less than 90 days from leaving the military.

To file a DRC, Veterans must work on the submission with an accredited Veteran Service Organization (VSO). This preparation allows claims processors to make a decision within 30 days. The VSO representative will work with you to ensure you have the required supporting evidence, such as military service records and medical exams.

Whatever small thing you have right now that you did get from the military can snowball into something greater down the line. The compensation can provide security.

Visit [Explore.VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/explore) to learn more about all VA benefits and apply, or click the button below to get started on your DRC.

VA Caregiver Benefits

A understands that care giving can be a tough job. That's why VA's Caregiver Support Program offers training, resources and tools to help you take on this important role.

Curtis, a Marine Corps Veteran, medically retired after an injury and needed around-the-clock care. His wife, Jenna, became his caregiver. "I've had to learn to be his eyes and his ears," she says.

Through VA's Caregiver Support Program, caregivers have access to a local Caregiver Support Coordinator. This licensed professional is devoted to providing useful information and connecting caregivers in the community. The program also provides peer support mentoring, a support phone line and a website with a wealth of resources on family care giving. The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, a program specifically for eligible Post 9/11 Veterans and their caregivers offers additional supports and services, including access to health insurance and financial assistance. The primary family caregiver must meet certain criteria, but is not required to be the Veteran's spouse.

Jenna's role has changed over the years, but VA's program has given her the resources she and her family need. "If it weren't for the VA, there are times I honestly don't know what we would do," she says.

Visit [Explore.VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/explore) to learn more about VA benefits and how to apply, or click on the button below to learn more about the Caregiver Support Program.

Need to Cancel Your Appointment? Just Let the VA Know

Help the VA give your spot to another Veteran

Have you ever found yourself unable to make a doctor's appointment? We have all been there-- we accidentally double-book ourselves, or work issues and family emergencies come up. If you need to cancel, just give your doctor, nurse, therapist -- a heads-up. This helps another Veteran get care even sooner. Instead of your appointment going unused, your health care facility can offer that time to another Veteran.

How can I manage My VA Appointments?

Managing your appointments is now easier than ever, especially with modern technologies supplementing the usual cancellation methods.

You can logon to My HealtheVet to cancel your VA primary care appointments online if you:

- Are cancelling your appointment with a VA medical facility that accepts online scheduling, *and*
- Have had a primary care appointment at that VA facility within the last 2 years, *and*
- Have a My HealtheVet Premium or DS Logon Premium account.

You may also be able to use My HealtheVet to cancel specialty appointments, such as outpatient mental health, optometry and audiology, at participating facilities.

If you *do not* have a Premium account, [start the process](#) or contact a My HealtheVet Coordinator at your nearest VA facility. Update your contact information - especially your mobile phone and e-mail - with your clinic to ensure the correct information is available.

[Login to My HealtheVet to Schedule or Cancel a VA Appointment Online](#)

The *VA Online Scheduling* tool on My HealtheVet allows you to do much more than cancel appointments. You can:

- **Self-schedule** primary care appointments at participating VA facilities where you have had a primary care appointment in the past two years.
- **Request help scheduling primary care appointments** at participating VA facilities where you receive care.
- **Self-schedule or request help scheduling specialty appointments**, such as outpatient mental health, optometry and audiology, at participating facilities.
- **View** appointments and requests.
- **Track** the status of appointment requests.
- **Send** messages about requested appointments.
- **Get notifications** about appointments.

Currently, online scheduling is available at more than 115 VA facilities and their associated Community Based Outpatient Clinics. If your facility does not currently participate in online scheduling, please know that we are working to expand access to additional medical centers. We are also working to add additional appointment types. If you need to make or cancel an appointment immediately, you can still call the [VA health facility](#) where you want to receive care.

Read More

[Veterans Can Now Schedule Appointments Online](#)

[VA Appointments](#) *(User Guide)*