



Veterans-*For*-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, August 16, 2015

Volume 6, Issue 33

This-N-That

For a few weeks now we've posted a few articles on how the VA was going to take away personal weapons or rescind VA benefits, a "gun or Benefit buy back" meaning you could have one or the other but not both.

Veterans deemed mentally incompetent or financially incapable are finally speaking out about the errors in the system and the fearful harassment they and their families face from the federal government. And it all starts when Vets go to the VA to get medical help.

Another new trick the VA is using is sending Veterans a letter offering free gun locks. This is their sneaky way of finding out how many weapons you own.

And just a week ago one Veteran got wind that the local police, FBI and ATF were going to be coming to his home to confiscate his weapons,

The towns people know the man very well, and he's not mentally incapable of handling his own affairs, has gone hunting many times with several people from the town, well they all showed up in force to surround the Veterans home to prevent anyone from coming near the house or entering to take the mans Weapons.

Pictures I saw were where ATF literally had snipers all around to take the Veteran down if there was a "problem!"

"Under the current practice, a VA finding that concludes that a Veteran requires a fiduciary to administer benefit payments effectively voids his Second Amendment rights - a consequence which is wholly unrelated to and unsupported by the record developed in the VA process!"

So needless to say should you receive one of these letters, DO NOT respond to it, SHRED or BURN it! Don't allow yourself to become a victim of this illegal practice.

Recently we've learned that 35,000 combat Veterans who had applied for VA benefits and care had all been denied due to a "computer error!" We find this to be total and utter bull crap!

"The VA has created an illegal, artificial barrier for people to access care," Davis said. "We're not talking about people who didn't get care because they didn't want it. We're talking about people who turned in applications and VA said, 'No, go into a backlog because you didn't give us financial information.'"

VA spokeswoman Walinda West confirmed that combat Vets aren't required to provide financial information to be enrolled in health care.

"VA is actively taking action to enroll and further reach out to these Veterans (by telephone and letters) due to the length of time some of these applications have been pending," West said.

But what we believe is this was no human or computer error, but a blatant attack on Veterans to avoid providing benefits or care!

And now that it's in mainstream media, we wonder how long it will take to correct this, if ever!

We've added another 900+ documents to the website, some were re-installs but many are new documents to VFC that have all been uploaded.

So visit again you might find what you've been looking for and if not do let us know and we will search for the documents and upload as quickly as we can.

As a subscriber (FREE) you can also access the many forums available!

Betty, our Director of Operation Mail call is prepping more packages to go out, and we need people to write cards and letters to be included in goodie boxes being shipped out weekly to our troops on foreign soil. We're not asking for anything special, just cards and letters to include and trust me this excites them more than the goodies we send.

And if you have children, even hand made cards from the children makes their day!

More information and a link to where you can send cards and letters to be included in each week's shipments are further down in this newsletter.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Volunteers nationwide, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder & CEO

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

House Passes Two Vet Focused Bills

The House recently passed two pieces of VA reform legislation. [The VA Accountability Act of 2015](#) passed with a vote of 256 – 170. [The Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015](#) passed with a vote of 385 – 34. A statement by House Committee on Veterans Affairs Chairman Jeff Miller on both of these bills is available on the [House Committee on Veterans Affairs website](#). For more on military legislation that affects service members and veterans, and to contact your local representatives, visit the [Military.com Legislative Center](#).

Veterans VA Healthcare Survey

Veterans VA Healthcare Survey, please complete as much information as possible. Will help VFC to determine what is most important when communicating with members of Congress.

<https://www.justsurvey.me/56657a0c6579>

VA Can Help Veteran Struggling Homeowners

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

Thought you'd like to know ... help for struggling homeowners is often closer and more attainable than they think.

Some Veterans experiencing financial hardship may be unaware of the programs and services available to help them avoid foreclosure, even for home loans not guaranteed by VA. It's easy to become discouraged after falling behind and receiving daily collections phone calls. Remember that a mortgage servicer's goal is not to take anyone's home from them. Servicers would much rather see hardships resolved and borrowers resume making payments or otherwise avoid foreclosure. There are many VA resources to help Veterans do those things.

Did you know that the inability to afford your mortgage does not mean that foreclosure is inevitable? Modifying your loan to a more affordable interest rate, being placed on a forbearance plan to obtain additional time if your financial situation is expected to improve down the road, or even deeding the property back to the mortgage servicer are all potential options to avoid foreclosure.

Are you concerned that your property value is so upside-down that you will never get out from under it? A Compromise Sale, or short sale, may be a great option, potentially allowing you to sell the home for less than you owe.

To see the stories of some of the more than 450,000 Veterans whom we have been able to help, watch the "VA Alternatives to Foreclosure" on website at http://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/resources_video.asp.

These are only a few of the many options available. If you are more than two payments past due and have a VA home loan, a VA Loan Technician has already been assigned to assist you. If not, or if you do not have a VA loan, knowledgeable VA staff can offer financial counseling to determine how VA can help and what loss mitigation options might work best. If you have a VA loan, VA staff can even speak directly with your mortgage servicer on your behalf.

Please call (877) 827-3702 to reach your nearest VA Regional Loan Center, or you may visit our web site at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/> to obtain information about the VA Home Loan program.

Additionally, Veterans who feel they may be facing homelessness as a result of losing their home can go to <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/NationalCallCenter.asp>, or call (877) 424-3838 to receive immediate assistance from VA.

In addition to the resources offered by VA, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers assistance to homeowners by sponsoring local housing counseling agencies. To find an approved agency in your area, please search online at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm> or call HUD's interactive voice system at (800) 569-4287.

V/R

Curtis L. Coy
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
Veterans Benefits Administration
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VFC's OPERATION MAIL CALL



Operation Mail Call needs your help! We need cards and letters to send to our troops currently serving on foreign soil.

Doesn't have to be anything special, just words of support and thanking them for their service!

For more information visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/4727-operation-mail-call>

Possible Repeal of "Cost-Plus-5%" Pricing

Defense officials appear ready to ask Congress to repeal a law that commissaries must sell products at cost plus five percent, a formula that for decades has ensured commissary shoppers everywhere pay the same prices. Officials have drafted a replacement formula that would allow prices to vary from store to store to meet a new twin goal: reducing taxpayer support for commissaries while maintaining still attractive savings for patrons. Variable pricing would seek to keep savings consistent across the commissary system by pegging local commissary prices for a market basket of goods at some target percentage level below prices of "lowest-price" competitors nearby such as Wal-Mart stores.

VA Hospital Dumps Patient Records

An employee at the Hot Springs campus of the VA Black Hills Health Care System in South Dakota (<http://www.blackhills.va.gov>) has thrown into a trash bin the records of more than 1,100 patients that contain Social Security numbers and other personal information. The VA Black Hills Health Care System blamed the breach on an employee who mistakenly tossed the patient files into a dumpster on May 15 during a regular office move. The records were found two days later by another employee who fished them out of the trash and notified hospital security guards. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has alerted the 1,100 military veterans of the breach by letter. The letter informed recipients they could request a free credit report to ensure their personal data was not being misused.

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports

Medicaid: Additional Reporting May Help CMS Oversee Prescription-Drug Fraud Controls. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-390>

Federal Supply Schedules: More Attention Needed to Competition and Prices. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-590>

Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle: The Air Force Needs to Adopt an Incremental Approach to Future Acquisition Planning to Enable Incorporation of Lessons Learned. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-623>

Defense Contracts: DOD's Requests for Information from Contractors to Assess Prices. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-680>

Immigrant Investor Program: Additional Actions Needed to Better Assess Fraud Risks and Report Economic Benefits. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-696>

Electronic Health Records: Outcome-Oriented Metrics and Goals Needed to Gauge DOD's and VA's Progress in Achieving Interoperability. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-530>

Southeast Asia: Trends in U.S. and Chinese Economic Engagement. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-724>

President Signs the Veterans Entrepreneurship Act

President Obama recently signed into law the Veterans Entrepreneurship Act. The new law waives the upfront guarantee fee for veterans applying for 7(a) express loans through the Small Business Administration (SBA), helping recently discharged service members and other veterans with opportunities to start new businesses. According to the SBA, one out of 10 small businesses across the U.S. is veteran-owned. For information on resources available for veteran-owned businesses, visit the Small Business Administration website at www.sba.gov/content/veteran-service-disabled-veteran-owned and VA's Veteran Entrepreneur Portal at www.va.gov/osdbu/entrepreneur/. Read the text of the new law at www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr2499.

Don't Waste Your VA Loan Benefit

Don't waste this great benefit. Rates are at near-historic lows but they will rise this year and qualified borrowers don't have to pay PMI or have a large down payment; plus you can get financing up to \$417,000. [Use your VA Loan Benefit today.](#)

Veterans fought for us; we continue to fight for our veterans!

AF Offers Career Path Resources

The Air Force recently launched an improved Career Path Tool called MyVector, which encourages mentorship between Airmen at all levels. The first step in the success of MyVector is for Airmen to volunteer to be mentors and share their experience and expertise with other Airmen. MyVector has a real-time mentoring plan, discussion forums, a bullet tracker to document accomplishments, and the ability to dialogue online with your mentor. A resource page is also available to assist both parties with mentoring questions and relationships. Also, the "Mentoring Checklist" in *Air Force Manual 36-2643, "Air Force Mentoring Program,"* at static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a1/publication/afman36-2643/afman36-2643.pdf outlines how to plan for the different mentoring sessions. For more information, visit the MyVector webpage at afvec.langley.af.mil/myvector.

VFC Website Update

If you've not visited our website, maybe you should visit today! Since going on-line on 10/28/12 we have been averaging between 2,800 and 5,000 visitors per day and have had **2,316,097** visitors to date.

Visit today and subscribe, it's 100% **FREE** of charge to all! Just be sure to use a valid E-Mail address so the system can send you an authentication E-Mail. Becoming a subscriber will show you all the various forum's, added libraries, and more.

We have the largest One-Stop-Shop Veterans website available that is user friendly, offers a host of information on many topics, Several forums, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, a massive Documents Library with more than 12,900 documents, various VA and DoD forms.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **140** different libraries and over **12,953+** documents (**966** total New Docs)
- FAQ's (**1,567** on-line now)
- Forums (with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator)
- Job Postings and Job Fairs (Updated 08/04/15 –51 **NEW** Listings)
- Memorial Pages (**Updated 04/19/14**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **5,110** articles on-line)
- Web Links (**1,583** Active Links)(**Updated 08/04/15**)

The documents library has many different categories and contains more than 55 million pages of information and forms.

There are forums for all Eras of service and one just for Women Veterans, which is locked to use by women only. Another for Men Veterans which is also locked to men only.

In the documents and forums we provide information pertaining to women and the ability speak freely in the forums to other women about the same issues and problems you face.

The Memorial Pages are open, and if you have a loved one or a buddy you've lost and would like for them to be added to our Memorial Pages, please send a photo, First and Last Name, Rank, Branch of Service, DOB and DOD, and allow us 2-3 days to install on the proper page. (Send to: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

You also have the ability to comment and rate all NEWS articles which would be very helpful for us so we know the types of information you'd like to see on our website.

Minnesota Organization Helps Vets

The Pain Free Patriots organization offers free treatments for pain such as muscle and nerve therapy and spinal balancing. Since it was started five years ago, more than 450 veterans have been through the program. The mobile units of Pain Free Patriots come equipped with over \$250,000 in technology. Potential clients must show evidence of military service, either their discharge papers or a military identification, and fill out a one-page questionnaire about their ailments. The veterans are provided grants that average about \$5,000 for their treatments. For more information, visit the Pain Free Patriots website at painfreepatriots.org, e-mail info@painfreepatriots.org, or telephone 952-746-3174.



Are you seeking employment? Been looking forever and not found the right job?

Well Veterans-For-Change is working very hard to bring you more information on Job Fairs and Job Postings available across the country.

Click on the link below, and find all the jobs available, Job Fairs coming up, locations, details, etc.

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/167-job-fairs-job-postings>

If you have a job position open, and are willing to hire a Veteran, please send an E-Mail to: JIM.DAVIS@VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE.ORG there is never any fee involved, this is a 100% free service in order to help thousands of Veterans nationwide to gain full time employment.

To be updated 08/14/15 by 7pm PST

Links to other Stories

- 1) [A Simple Way to Reduce VA Waiting Lists](#)
- 2) [Approach to homeless Veterans care changing](#)
- 3) [Boxer, Feinstein back plan to move homeless Vets to VA campus](#)
- 4) [DHA director discusses advances in trauma care](#)
- 5) [Doctor charged in overdose deaths of 3 Indiana patients](#)
- 6) [Durham trying to house 80 homeless Veterans](#)

- 7) *Fight Disease Before it Starts*
- 8) *High-risk medical devices backed by few studies*
- 9) *House Veterans chairman: VA should fire bad workers faster*
- 10) *Housing for Homeless Veterans Is Planned for Ex-Walter Reed Site*
- 11) **Leaked Document: 35,000 Combat Vets Denied VA Health Care Enrollment Due To Computer Error**
- 12) *McCain bill would let all Veterans seek care outside VA*
- 13) *Mindfulness-Based Therapy for PTSD Trumps Usual Care*
- 14) *Navy Veteran, at risk of homelessness, battles red tape to find help*
- 15) *Rep. Charlie Dent: Veterans deserve to choose their health care treatment*
- 16) *Rep. Charlie Dent: Veterans deserve to choose their health care treatment*
- 17) *The Story Behind the POW/MIA Flag*
- 18) *VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare works to expand specialty care access*
- 19) *VA Choice would expand under McCain proposal*
- 20) *VA Healthcare Reform: Senators Propose Radical Changes To Give Veterans The Care They Need*
- 21) **VA may pay disability for some illnesses linked to Lejeune**
- 22) *VA Medical Center strives to improve Veterans access to care*
- 23) **VA officials send Veterans' medical info to FBI, ATF to facilitate gun seizures**
- 24) *VA reaches out to bring home homeless Vets*
- 25) *Whistleblowers blast new VA watchdog*

You can help Veterans-For-Change by reading the articles posted, and comment at the bottom and rank the article. If you don't have an account, sign-up today, it's **FREE**. Your comments and rankings help us to better determine the type of information you'd like most to see.

Check us out today: www.veterans-for-change.org

Tuition Benefits in Connecticut

Veterans who use their service-related tuition benefits to attend the University of Connecticut (UConn) or send their dependents will no longer face a three-year deadline to enroll under the in-state rate, thanks to a new policy. Now, any qualified veterans and dependents whose legal residency is outside of Connecticut and who use veterans' educational benefits can receive the in-state rate at any time after discharge — even many years later. For more information, contact the Office of Veteran Affairs and Military Programs at the University of Connecticut. It is located in Arjona Room 345, and can also be reached via email at Veterans@uconn.edu, by telephone at 860-486-2442, or at the UConn Veterans Affairs and Military Programs webpage at <http://veterans.uconn.edu>.



America's Veterans United

Is an advocacy group on Yahoo Groups developed to fight for the benefits, care, facilities, caring and compassionate fully licensed medical professionals, updated and properly operated VA Medical Facilities.

Are you sick and tired of the "business as usual" attitude, or the "delay, deny, until they die" attitude?

Are you able to give 30-60 minutes of your time per month to help develop and send letters to all 535 members of Congress each month in an attempt to force Congress into getting off their seats and actually doing something for Veterans vs. their usual lip service?

And are you sick and tired of all the other organizations who say they are fighting for you, but have shown decades of really not doing much for you?

Then join us, we do more than use membership numbers to fight, we actually have you working with us in the fight. Take control of your health and medical care and help us fight for you.

If interested, check out our page on Yahoo Groups:
https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Americas_Veterans_United/info

If you're not a member of any Yahoo Group, and not familiar with the system but want to join in the fight, you can do so via E-Mail as well:
americas_veterans_united-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

One really good thing about America's Veterans United, it won't cost you one thin dime, no membership dues, no postage costs, just your time and your computer.

Help us to help you and your fellow Veterans in the fight!

To Contact your Members of Congress

To Call your Representative:	202-225-2305
To call your Senator:	202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553
To call different members of Congress:	202-224-3121
Toll FREE Number:	866-272-6622

~ We Proudly Support Our Military Personnel & Families ~

Senior Veterans Showcase Benefits of Sports During National Veterans Golden Age Games

More than 800 Veterans ages 55 and older are expected to compete in the 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games, Aug. 8-12 in Omaha, Neb. The official kick-off starts at 6:30 p.m., August 8 at the CenturyLink Center Arena.

Participants will compete in 14 events including swimming, cycling, horseshoes, bowling, field events and air rifles. Veterans also will participate in four exhibition events, including racquetball, 3-on-3 basketball, bocchia and blind disc golf.

"When it comes to sports, age is just a number," said Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "VA research and clinical experience shows that physical activity plays an integral role in maintaining good health, speeding recovery and improving overall quality of life. These games also serve as a way for participants to continue in local senior events in their home communities."

The National Veterans Golden Age Games is sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs and hosted by the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System. The health care system provides care for more than 55,000 Veterans from 101 counties in Nebraska, western Iowa and portions of Missouri and Kansas. The event is open to all U.S. military Veterans ages 55 or older who are currently enrolled for any VA care.

For more information visit www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov and follow VA Adaptive Sports on Twitter at @VAAdaptiveSport or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vaadaptivesports.

Change to Where Some TRICARE Beneficiaries Obtain Prescriptions

Beginning on Oct. 1, TRICARE beneficiaries will have to obtain refills for certain drug prescriptions through the mail, or at military treatment facilities, according to a [new interim final rule](#) from the Defense Department.

The new policy affects refills of non-generic prescription "maintenance medications," or drugs that people take on a regular basis for chronic conditions, such as high cholesterol or blood pressure. The change does not apply to medications for sudden infections or illnesses. The head of the Defense Health Agency will maintain and update a list of covered medications, available online or by telephone, and agency will contact eligible beneficiaries about the change, stated the rule, published on Aug. 6 in the *Federal Register*.

The change, mandated by the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, aims to save money for the department and TRICARE enrollees by avoiding the higher drug co-payments associated with many prescriptions medications in retail pharmacies. The department estimated that the change would save the government roughly \$88 million annually, while TRICARE beneficiaries will save about \$16.5 million per year because of cheaper co-payments.

Source: NAUS

VA Says System Did Not Improperly Deny Health Care

The VA is denying that a computer glitch caused some 35,000 combat veterans to be denied VA Health Care saying that the problem rests with incomplete applications.

"The computer system is operating as it was designed and according to VA policy," spokeswoman Walinda West said.

What is happening is that some veterans did not answer questions on income eligibility or, alternatively, agree to cover applicable co-pays for non-combat related care. "If a combat veteran declines to provide income information, there are two questions that must be answered related to paying copays for non-combat related care," she said. "If these last two questions are not answered during the intake process, the application is placed into a pending status."

Scott Davis, a program specialist at the VA's Health Eligibility Center in Atlanta Georgia [told The Huffington Post in a story](#) published Wednesday that a computer system error has kept more than 35,000 combat vets from getting care. The Health Eligibility Center verifies eligibility for department health care benefits.

Davis, who testified as a VA whistleblower before Congress in 2014, provided the Huffington Post with an agency analysis of the number of veterans listed as pending for health care enrollment because they didn't complete the financial questions. About 16,000 veterans have been on the pending list for more than five years and about 19,000 have anywhere from a month up to five years, according to the report.

Davis called the questions "an illegal, artificial barrier" to combat veterans accessing care.

West said the financial questions are partly intended to ensure that veterans with less means get additional benefits, including travel for beneficiaries and exemptions for co-pays for care not related to military service.

They are not required to fill out the income questions, she said, but if they decline to do so they are asked to agree to cover any non-military service related care co-pays. If they do not complete the last part after declining to provide income information, she said, the applications goes into pending status.

She said the VA makes "multiple attempts" to reach veterans and get the information if their applicators end up in pending status, but did not say how frequently. She said VA is currently trying to reach combat veterans on the pending list "by phone and mail."

She also acknowledged that the department has identified a problem with "frontline employees" communicating directly with veterans, and that it is developing teaching aids to help them improve.

Source: NAUS

If you received this Newsletter as a forward or as a Courtesy Copy and would like to continue to receive this FREE weekly newsletter, click on link below:

<https://app.expressemailing.com/survey.aspx?sfid=121170>

Complete all information, and select the appropriate box at the bottom of the form. You will then receive an automated authentication E-Mail, follow the instructions and you will then be added to the weekly distribution list.

Or if you prefer you can sign up to the Yahoo Groups VFC-News page and receive our weekly newsletter by sending an E-Mail to: VFC-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Our mailing list is never sold, traded or shared with anyone ever, and is held in the strictest of confidence.



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter is a once weekly publication deadline for submission is 5:00 PM PST on Thursday!



"A lie doesn't become truth, wrong doesn't become right, and evil doesn't become good, just because it's accepted by a majority."

~author unknown~

Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today
www.veterans-for-change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass to all your Veteran friends and family!

Distribution	
Express Mail:	14,430
Face Book Pages:	2,920
Yahoo:	102
Twitter:	28
Linked-In:	19,119,596
Other Social Media:	8,595
Courtesy Copies:	3,500

