



# Veterans-*For*-Change Newsletter

*A Voice of the Veterans*

**Week Ending Sunday, March 06, 2016**

**Volume 7, Issue 10**



## ***This-N-That***

Homeless Veterans and wait lists are still on the hot list of issues the VA is failing to address, or at least address them expeditiously.

Some cities across the country have various programs to help our homeless Veterans, and some with really good results being shown, others well, they're just not trying or not addressing it in a manner that would honor and respect those who served.

And the VA is very, very slowing even beginning to show signs of action being taken to help address the issue.

There are a small handful of people who just went out on their own to help, and have been doing very well building small mini-homes and able to keep costs to \$8,000 or less in some cases, and a whole new company has popped up who is producing these mini-homes from old cargo shipping containers and have produced some really amazing small homes for around \$8-12,000.

The latter idea is one the VA should be looking into and I mean seriously as they will go about their way and end up spending millions if not billions to handle a relatively small group of homeless Veterans, where with these mini-homes constructed from old shipping containers would be far more cost effective, and take up small foot prints yet provide good, affordable, and self sufficient homes for our Veterans.

And the VA certainly has more than sufficient land to build mini Veteran villages using these homes and from what I've seen could easily provide homes for 1,000 to 2,500 at most locations, and if they even tried hard enough could even negotiate with various cities to buy up additional land surrounding VAMC's to put up even more homes.

And the choice to use VAMC land would also serve the Veterans better by being so close to medical services, thus transportation costs would also be cut, readily available medical care is easier, and in most cases shopping is close by and most major cities have public transportation and some of those cities provide transportation to disabled persons free of cost.

Waiting lists are still a hot button issue for me as it still goes on to this day!

Over the past couple of weeks I have met six different Veterans, one whom I spent a little more than four hours with yesterday.

This Veteran was an Army NCO who retired with 29 years, an Afghanistan and Iraq Veteran who was wounded while in service. Fortunately the injury was not life threatening, and did not cause him to lose a limb, but it still does cause him a fair amount of pain and limited his mobility a little in that he has a pronounced limp.

He was telling me about his most recent trip to the Loma Linda VA Medical Center emergency room.

He arrived at 9pm and when checking in was told there would be a 12 to 14 hour wait!

Excuse me, but what does ER stand for? EMERGENCY ROOM, meaning you have a problem that is causing you a lot of pain, heart attack, stroke, doesn't really mean anything but you should be seen fairly quickly, not hours and hours later.

My last trip to the ER (myself being a civilian), I walked in at about 8:15pm, and yes the waiting room was indeed packed wall to wall and only standing room available, but I was still seen with 45 min., then sent to X-Ray, back to the waiting room for another 15-20 minutes, then called back into see the doctor, review the X-Rays, provided a sling, two prescriptions and given direction to see my primary care doctor within 48 hours.

I was in and out in less than three hours, that's how fast that Emergency Room team moved to care for what I counted to be 73 people.

So what in the heck is wrong with our VA Medical Centers that they too can use and implement the same practices and procedures and provide the best care available?

If you have experienced something like this when you have visited a VA Emergency Room, please write to me and let me know your experience.

The majority of our readers are Veterans, and most if not all of you have served on foreign soil at one point in your career and I'm sure that when it came time for mail call you witnessed one or more fellow soldiers in your unit whose names were never called.

Operation Mail Call is designed to address that problem and a little more!

Betty Hidalgo who is the director of VFC's Operation Mail Call Program does her level best to bring a little joy to all those on foreign soil by sending them care packages which she is working all the time to fill them with a little bit of home with cards, letters, baked goods, candies, and sometimes little gag gifts, anything she can find to bring a little joy to their daily lives where they are.

Where we need help most are cards and letters letting them know all those here at home appreciate them, and support them.

A little further down in this newsletter there is a web link which will take you to the information on where you can send cards and letters which will be included in many of the boxes that go out weekly.

We'd appreciate anything you can do to help us bring a little joy to them, maybe even put a smile on their faces even if only for a few moments.

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](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)

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### ***Adopt a Military Working Dog***

The Department of Defense (DoD) Military Working Dog Adoption Program is managed by the 341st Training Squadron, United States Air Force. For additional details and information about completing an adoption packet, visit the DoD Military Working Dog Adoption [website](#).

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### ***Investigation Looks at Delayed Veteran Care***

The Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has found that a VA clinic in Colorado Springs was incorrectly reporting veteran appointments. The Inspector General reviewed 450 appointments over a one-year span and determined that there were 60 cases in which the VA said a veteran had scheduled an appointment within the government's 30-day target, even though in actuality it took longer. Sixty-four percent of the appointments showed that

veterans did not receive timely care. The VA Inspector General's report is available on the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General [website](#).

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### ***New Vet Health Care Program in NJ***

Rutgers University has launched a program to help New Jersey veterans obtain timely medical and mental health care. The Veterans Total Care Initiative is a six-month pilot program supported by a \$5 million grant from the New Jersey Department of Health. The call center, which manages three 24/7 peer support lines for veterans and military personnel and their families, offers this resource to veterans who need health care and call 866-838-7654. When a veteran calls, a peer support specialist will discuss their current needs and then work with the caller on various options. Veterans can get an appointment within a few days and sometimes even on the same day. After the initial call, the peer counselor stays in touch with the veteran. Peer counselors also offer support with non-medical issues such as financial, housing or employment concerns.

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### ***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!

Operation Mail Call has successfully moved into it's new location:

For more information visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/5439-operation-mail-call-2>

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### ***Virginia Habitat for Humanity Seeks to Help Vets***

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro (SAW) Virginia Habitat for Humanity is planning to have a Veterans Build and wants to find military veterans to help build their homes. SAW Habitat for Humanity is also looking for residents living in Staunton, Augusta County or Waynesboro for at least a year who qualify to live in their Habitat for Humanity homes. There are special qualifications. Income from all sources for the program is a minimum of \$16,000 annual gross income for one person to a maximum gross income of \$25,080. A family of four must have a minimum annual gross income of \$24,550, but not more than \$35,760. For more information on how to apply for a Habitat home, or to volunteer to help build a home, contact SAW Habitat for Humanity at (540) 886-1944.

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## ***Legal Advice for Vets in New York***

The Central New York Veterans Outreach Center in Utica, New York is offering free legal advice to veterans. The meetings are by appointment only. A former Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) attorney with 30 years of military service and some law students from Syracuse University will answer questions on anything from child support to some aspects of criminal law. The Veterans Outreach Center offers this service twice a month; give them a call at (315) 765-0975 to make an appointment.

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

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## ***African American History Month***

February is National African American History Month. Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. History. The event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. President has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. For more information, visit the Library of Congress African American History Month [website](#).

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## ***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 2,100 and 3,000 visitors per day and have had **2,614,293** 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](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)**

- Documents Library with over **140** different libraries and over **14,417+** documents
- FAQ's (**1,662** on-line now) (**Updated 02/20/16**)
- Forums (**with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator**)
- Job Postings and Job Fairs (Updated **02/28/16** **26** New Jobs and **0** New Job Fairs and **1** Business Opportunity)
- Memorial Pages (**Updated 01/02/16** added **17**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **5,555** articles on-line)
- Polls Added **02/08/16**
- Web Links (**3,428** Active Links)(**Updated 02/07/16** added **1** New Links)

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](mailto: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.

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### ***Space-Available Air Travel***

On February 15, 2016, Senator Dean Heller of Nevada introduced S. 2596. This bill would permit veterans who have service-connected, total and permanent disabilities to travel on military aircraft in the same manner and to the same extent as retired members of the armed forces are entitled to such travel.

This bill would afford priority to totally disabled veterans for transportation on scheduled and unscheduled military flights within the continental United States and on scheduled overseas flights operated by the Air Mobility Command, on a space-available basis. This bill is in accordance with DAV Resolution No. 094, seeking legislation to extend space-available air travel aboard military aircraft to all service-connected veterans entitled to receive compensation at the 100% rate to the same extent and under the same conditions as is currently provided to retired military personnel.

Please use the prepared e-mail or draft your own message to request that your Senator support this important bill and ask that the measure be brought to the floor for a vote and passed as soon as possible.

Thank you for all you do for veterans and their families.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/pCHfyX7ZkFiUNokv7U00Q>

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### ***What Will Patients Gain From Higher TRICARE Fees?***

As they review the Defense Department's latest plan to raise TRICARE fees and co-pays, particularly for working-age retirees and their families, key congressional panels are asking what beneficiaries can expect in return. Faster appointments, more evening clinic hours, more physicians spending more time seeing patients, more base hospitals operating at full capacity were some answers given this week by military healthcare leaders. For more details, see [this Military Advantage post](#).



<http://veterans-for-change.org/>

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***DoD Launches MilitaryChildCare.com***

The Department of Defense (DoD) is rolling out [MilitaryChildCare.com \(MCC\)](http://MilitaryChildCare.com), a new website designed to simplify and improve the process for military families seeking child care. Available March 16, the site provides one-stop access to comprehensive information on military-operated and military-subsidized child care options worldwide, across all branches of service. After creating an account and personal profile, families can search and request the child care that best fits their needs, including part day and full day options in facility-based and home-based programs for children from birth through age 12. For more information, or to learn about the types of child care programs offered, visit the Military Child Care [website](http://MilitaryChildCare.com); contact the Help Desk toll-free at (855) 696-2934; or email [FamilySupport@Military-ChildCare.com](mailto:FamilySupport@Military-ChildCare.com).

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### **Salute4Vets**

A new program created by the University of Southern California (USC) School of Social Work, Salute4Vets, will provide free education to 120 veterans who qualify for the post-9/11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon scholarship. These scholarships are provided to allow veterans to come to USC to receive a free master's degree in social work with a military specialization. The program is funded between the scholarship initiative itself and the funds offered by the Yellow Ribbon scholarship from the Veterans Administration. The remaining funds for this program will be raised by donations. The program's motto is, "Helping one veteran helps 100 more." The program's website [website](http://Salute4Vets.com) features a donations component. Graduates from the University of California School of Social Work with a Military Specialization have already helped over 235,000 veterans.

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### **Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports**

Federal Vehicles: Composition and Management of Agency Fleets. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-455T>

Credit Reform: Current Method to Estimate Credit Subsidy Costs Is More Appropriate for Budget Estimates Than a Fair Value Approach. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-41>

Federal Health Care Center: VA and DOD Need to Address Ongoing Difficulties and Better Prepare for Future Integrations. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-280>

Immigration Detention: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen Management and Oversight of Detainee Medical Care. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-231>

Data Center Consolidation: Agencies Making Progress, but Planned Savings Goals Need to Be Established. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-323>

Navy and Coast Guard Shipbuilding: Navy Should Reconsider Approach to Warranties for Correcting Construction Defects. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-71>

Nonemergency Medical Transportation: Updated Medicaid Guidance Could Help States. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-238>

DOE Loan Programs: Information on Implementation of GAO Recommendations and Program Costs. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-150T>

Explosives Detection Canines: TSA Has Enhanced Its Canine Program, but Opportunities May Exist to Reduce Costs. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-444T>

Rare Diseases: Too Early to Gauge Effectiveness of FDA's Pediatric Voucher Program. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-319>

Emerging Infectious Diseases: Preliminary Observations on the Zika Virus Outbreak. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-470T>

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**Follow Veterans-For-Change on Twitter**



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

### **Family Line Offers Support**

For 50 years, the Naval Services Family Line (NSFL) has been empowering Navy families to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle with information, resources and mentoring. The organization provides information and support to Navy spouses worldwide. Information booklets and a protocol handbook can be downloaded from the NSFL [website](#). The organization offers four elements: The Guideline Series, Spouse Courses, COMPASS and CORE online. For more information, or to make a contribution, visit the NSFL website.



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](mailto: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 by 03/05/16 @ 6pm PST**

<b>Veteran Crisis Resources</b>	
<a href="#">Veterans Crisis Line</a>	1-800-273-8255 and Press 1
<a href="#">Military Crisis Line</a>	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
<a href="#">National Call Center for Homeless Veterans</a>	1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)
<a href="#">VA Caregiver Support Line</a>	1-855-260-3274

### **Navy Teen Summer Camp Scholarships**

Navy Child and Youth Programs (CYP) is currently accepting applications through April 8 for the 2016 Navy Teen Summer Camp Scholarship Program (SCSP). SCSP offers all-expenses-paid summer camps that promote healthy, lifelong hobbies. The camps being offered this summer include: Hike Hawaii, Tour d'Italy, Sail Annapolis, Explore Japan, Scuba Dive Florida, and OAC Euro Camp. Applications are due by April 8 at 11:59 p.m. CST. The applications must be word processed, provide proof of eligibility, and they must include GPA transcripts, and a character reference. For more information, follow SCSP on [Facebook](#) or find SCSP on [Twitter](#), or e-mail [navyteenscsp@navy.mil](mailto:navyteenscsp@navy.mil).

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### ***Retirees - Save on Costs Left Behind by TRICARE***

Doctor and hospital bills are expensive even when you're covered by TRICARE. Help minimize or even eliminate out-of-pocket expenses with the [TRICARE Insurance Supplement Plan](#).

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### ***Veterans Bonus in Ohio***

The Ohio Veterans Bonus Program has paid more than \$73.5 million to Ohioans through more than 90,000 claims. There is \$5.3 million left for veterans to claim. Veterans may collect up to \$1,500 in individual bonuses. Ohio veterans who have served on active-duty since Oct. 7, 2001 may be eligible. For more information, dial 877-644-6838, and select option 2; or visit the [Ohio Department of Veterans Services website](#) or visit a Veterans Services Office in your county for help filling out applications for the claim. Find your Veterans Services Office in Ohio [on the web](#).

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### ***VA Announces Additional Changes to Improve Veterans Crisis Line***

*Changes Support Crisis Line Staff and Creates Structure for Them to Succeed*

Canandaigua, NY – Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson today announced improvements to enhance and accelerate progress at the Veterans Crisis Line, which serves as a life-saving resource for Veterans who find themselves at risk of suicide.

Today, during his third trip to the Crisis Line in a year, Mr. Gibson announced that the Crisis Line would form a stronger bond with VA's Suicide Prevention Office and Mental Health Services. This partnership includes VA's National Mental Health Director for Suicide Prevention as well as several hubs of expertise, including one Center of Excellence focusing on suicide prevention research and education located at the same medical campus as the Crisis Line responders in Canandaigua, NY.

Mr. Gibson also announced that the Veterans Crisis Line would now be under the direction of VA's Member Services, which has many efforts underway across the nation to restructure portions of VA that have direct contact with Veterans. This brings an expertise in ensuring that staff in these vital roles have more streamlined processes, adequate training and resources at their fingertips, to better serve Veterans.

These structural changes build on key hires made in the last year to lead the Crisis Line, including a director with extensive clinical social work background.

"I witnessed again today that the employees at the Veterans Crisis Line have a tremendously difficult job and they complete it with care, compassion and professionalism," said Mr. Gibson. I want to make sure that the trained professionals at the Crisis Line -- folks I consider the best in the business -- are able to focus on their core mission of focusing on the Veterans most in need of their help. They are life savers and we have to create the structure around them to succeed.

"Over the past year, we have put together a strong team to lead the employees at the Crisis Line. Today's announcement of a structural change within the Veterans Health Administration and additional support from our experts in suicide prevention is another step to make sure the employees and the Veterans they speak with have what they need give Veterans a safe place to call when they need us most."

As a part of the MyVA initiative, the largest restructuring in the Department's history, VA has made improvements at the Veterans Crisis Line a key priority. By the end of this year, every Veteran in crisis will have their call promptly answered



by an experienced VA responder. That will mean non-core calls will be directed appropriately to other VA entities that can best address their questions or concerns.

Already, VA has committed to increase staff at the Veterans Crisis Line. It now has more than 300 employees, and is in the process of hiring 88 more staff. At the same time, they have expanded the work area for responders and are making necessary technology improvements to phone systems and equipment to better handle the increased demand at the crisis line.

“Last year, counselors at the Crisis Line dispatched emergency responders to intervene and save the lives of Veterans in crisis more than 11,000 times,” said Gibson. “That means, on average, we’re stepping in to save 30 lives per day. Nothing could be more important.”

**Key Facts:**

- Since its launch in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line has answered nearly 2 million calls — and nearly a quarter of those calls were answered last fiscal year — 490,000.
- The same is true for referrals to local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators: One quarter of the 320,000 referrals made so far by crisis-line counselors were made in FY 2015.
- Crisis Line counselors dispatched emergency responders to callers in crisis over 11,000 times last year (averaging 30 per day) — and over 53,000 times since 2007.
- Since adding chat and text services, they have engaged nearly 300,000 Veterans or concerned family members through chat or text.

Veterans in crisis may contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1. They can also text or chat with our trained professionals online at VeteransCrisisLine.net.

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**Links to other Stories**

- 1) [Chillicothe VA Medical Center Announces New Director](#)
- 2) [Department of Veterans Affairs takes action against Barbara Temeck, Jack Hetrick at Cincinnati VA](#)
- 3) [Exclusive: Feds outsource Vet benefit processing to Philippines](#)
- 4) [Homeless Veterans find permanent housing in 2015](#)
- 5) [Military's Paid Maternity Leave Now 12 Weeks; Feds Still At Zero](#)
- 6) [OPM director nominee can't serve as acting agency head, inspector general says](#)
- 7) [Reward for screwing up a major VA hospital? Plush job, free house in the Philippines](#)
- 8) [Second Marine beaten, left for dead in D.C. the night of McDonald's attack](#)
- 9) [Unhinged nurse chugs multiple beers before operating on Veteran](#)
- 10) [VA hides failed hospital chief on the other side of the world](#)
- 11) [VA Inspector General sitting on wait-time reports](#)
- 12) [VA's carrot-and-stick plan: Raise salaries, limit appeal rights for its executives](#)
- 13) [Veterans Choice program used to reduce crucial services at VA hospital](#)
- 14) [Veterans Choice Program: A breakdown of the basics](#)
- 15) [Wait-time probes at Montrose, Castle Point VA centers not released](#)
- 16) [Who Loses VA Musical Chairs? Vets Do.](#)
- 17) [Why Do Skeletons Follow Cincinnati VA's Dr. Barbara Temeck?](#)

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](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)

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<b>To Contact your Members of Congress</b>	
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 <b>FREE</b> Number:	866-272-6622
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## ***VA Improves Timeliness of Provider Payments***

*Modification Enhances Veterans Access to Receive Timely, High-Quality Care*

WASHINGTON – To enhance Veterans’ access to care and eliminate delays in Choice provider payment, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is eliminating administrative burdens placed on VA community providers. Previously, payments to Choice providers were not allowed until a copy of the Veteran’s medical record was submitted. Now, community providers, under the Choice program, will no longer be required to submit medical records prior to payment being made. To facilitate the change, VA has modified the [Choice Program](#) contract, making it easier for Health Net and TriWest to promptly pay providers.

VA continues to require pertinent medical information be returned to ensure continuity of care; however, it is no longer tied to payment. VA is taking these steps to more closely align with industry standards.

“This administrative step just makes sense,” said VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. David J. Shulkin. “It ensures Veteran access, timely payments and strengthens our partnerships with our Choice providers. We know that providing Veterans access to high-quality, timely healthcare would be impossible without collaboration with our community providers.”

VA’s [Plan to Consolidate Community Care Programs](#) outlines additional solutions to improving timely provider payment. VA is moving forward on two paths to further improve timely payment. First, VA is working toward a single community care program that is easy to understand, simple to administer and meets the needs of Veterans, community providers and VA staff. Secondly, VA plans to pursue a claims solution that moves to a more automated process for payment. VA envisions a future state where it is able to auto-adjudicate or process a high percentage of claims, enabling the Department to pay community providers promptly and correctly, while adopting a standardized regional fee schedule to promote consistency in reimbursement.

Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program or wanting to know more about it, can call 1-866-606-8198 to confirm their eligibility and to schedule an appointment. For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA’s progress, visit [www.va.gov/opa/choiceact](http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact).

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## ***DAV Testifies at Joint Hearing***

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of representing DAV members and our supporters by testifying before a joint session of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans’ Affairs. My testimony highlighted the needs of America’s wartime veterans, the issues that confront the Department of Veterans Affairs, and, most importantly, the achievements of DAV in carrying out our mission of assisting injured and ill veterans.

I was proud to report our steady advance of achievement in aiding veterans to file hundreds of thousands of claims for benefits; transporting millions of veterans to their VA appointments; locating thousands of DAV volunteers at VA facilities to help their fellow veterans, friends and family members; and, forcefully moving to change VA’s appellate process and reform VA’s health care system.

All of these facts are reported in my formal, written statement, which can be read here. As always, DAV appreciates your continuing support, and your active participation in the DAV Commander’s Action Network.

Moses A. McIntosh, Jr.  
DAV National Commander

Click the link below to log in and send your message:  
<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/Zc315Z03CiGPIrxU5h953g>

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**~ We Proudly Support Our Military Personnel & Families ~**

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## ***VA Takes Accountability Actions against Board of Veteran Appeals Personnel***

*Actions Proposed Against Three Attorneys, Two Judges Referred to Merit Systems Protection Board*

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced it proposed disciplinary action against three Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) attorneys, and has filed a Complaint against two Board Veterans Law Judges. Accountability actions against the Board judges have been referred to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), which has direct jurisdiction over cases concerning administrative law judges.

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Sloan D. Gibson filed a Complaint against two Board Veterans Law Judges with the MSPB and VA proposed actions against three board attorneys for reasons of misconduct based on information received as part of an Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigation that revealed a pattern of inappropriate emails that were racist and sexist in tone. The OIG proactively brought the information to VA early in their investigation and VA acted immediately by assigning the Board employees to non-adjudicative duties pending the disciplinary actions that have now been taken to protect Veterans appellate rights.

"These actions are reprehensible and completely counter to our values," said Gibson. "It undermines the trust the American people place in the VA to serve our Veterans and has no place in this Department. We will not tolerate it. Taking action as quickly as we did was simply the right thing to do."

VA proposed disciplinary actions in mid-January against two attorneys. One attorney retired, and one resigned from Federal service while the actions were pending. VA proposed a lesser administrative penalty against one attorney.

VA is conducting a review of appeals handled by these individuals while also examining comparative statistical data from internal quality review processes and appeals of Board decisions to the federal courts. At this time, we have no indication that any Veterans' appeal was unjustly influenced by their conduct.

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## ***Vet Jobs Symposium in New York***

An overview of the job market for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and the ins-and-outs of hiring veterans will be the focus of a symposium on Thursday, March 3, 7:30-10:30 a.m. at The Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The event will offer panel discussions covering such topics as the advantages of hiring veterans; training and transition services available; and the translation of titles from military to civilian positions. The cost of attendance is \$40 and includes breakfast. Participants must register at the [Symposium website](#). For more information, contact Beth Moeller at Interactive Media Consulting, LLC, who is organizing the symposium, at 518-587-5107 or [info@vetsbridgesymposium.com](mailto:info@vetsbridgesymposium.com).



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



America is a passionate idea or it is nothing. America is a human brotherhood or it is chaos.

~Max Lerner, *Actions and Passions*, 1949~

## ***Veterans-For-Change, Inc.***

Riverside County, CA

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