



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, October 15, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 42



This-N-That

Always the issues are Agent Orange, delays and denials in claims, Homeless Veterans, Veteran Suicides, VA's refusal to grant benefits to Blue Water Navy Veterans, delays in getting appointments with VA Doctors, Choice Program running out of funds, and the list can go on forever.

In no way am I attempting to put anyone down, but even with all the organizations fighting to make things better for Veterans and their families, it's no way an easy battle to fight, and why I am constantly asking for your help.

Remaining silent when it comes to voicing concerns, expectations and demands from those who hold the purse strings in no way makes this battle any easier.

With over 40 million Veterans today, imagine what we could accomplish if only half were to get on the phones, and make those concerns, expectations and demands known to Congress, and yes even with those

who don't really give a damn, or just don't listen.

TWENTY Million Veterans against 535 members of CONGRESS, think about that, let it sink in.

And not just phone calls, but faxes and E-Mails too!

Members of Congress are only good at one thing, lining their pockets! Now again imagine if TWENTY million Veterans were to flood their offices with calls, faxes and E-Mails every week, you would be preventing them from their favorite past time, lining their pockets!

Then, they would be literally forced to take immediate action to resolve the problems, just so they could get back to their favorite past time! Lining their pockets!

There are now well over ONE MILLION claims pending! Are you one of those claims?

Wouldn't you like to have you claim approved favorably and quickly?

Then please, help all the organizations fighting this battle to help you by making the calls, sending the faxes, sending the E-Mails! It doesn't take much time! You don't have to leave the comfort of your home, and it won't cost you one red cent!

I apologize for the usual weekly items that are missing in this issue. We will be posting all the latest news articles on Saturday and sending out a special release Saturday afternoon.

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

Emergency Referral Procedures Extended in parts of California

Due to wildfires, emergency referral procedures are extended in California for Butte, Lake, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Solano, Sonoma, and Yuma counties. For more information, visit: www.tricare.mil/Disaster

VA Authorizes Health Insurance for Service Dogs

The VA Mental Health Mobility Service Dog Initiative authorizes the veterinary health insurance benefit for service dogs of veterans with chronic mobility limitations associated with a mental health disorder. (VA does not provide service dogs; it refers veterans to accredited service dog organizations.) VA provides the veterinary health insurance benefit to eligible veterans with service dogs obtained from these organizations, when it is determined that a service dog is the optimal means for the Veteran to manage the chronic mobility impairment and live independently. For more information, contact your VA mental health provider and visit the VA Guide and Service Dog [webpage](#).

TRICARE Reform Includes New Appointment Fees

Near-final regulations released last week by the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to implement sweeping TRICARE reforms on Jan. 1 include a surprise restructuring of appointment fees for active duty families, and retirees under 65 and their families, who get their health care outside of military treatment facilities. Read the full article on the Military Advantage [blog](#).



VGLI Alternatives for Less: Get \$500k Coverage from \$35 a Month

Is SGLI enough? SGLI too much? Get coverage customized to your family's needs for less than you think. Because tomorrow is never guaranteed, start protecting your family today. **Get up to \$1 million coverage from just \$41 a month.**

VA Forms Family, Caregiver Committee

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the formation of the Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor Federal Advisory Committee, which will be chaired by former U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole. The Committee will advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, through the Chief Veterans Experience Officer, on matters related to veterans' families, caregivers, and survivors. A key element of the committee's work will be to engage veteran family members, research experts, and family service providers as a way to better understand their needs and identify ways VA can continue to support them in the best possible way.



Take Command with TRICARE Changes

Enrollments Shifting from Fiscal to Calendar Year Starting in January 2018

Starting Jan. 1, 2018, cost changes for TRICARE benefits transition from a fiscal year period to a calendar year period. Changing from fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30) to calendar year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31) makes the TRICARE benefit consistent with civilian health plans. The change will largely affect those plans which have an enrollment fee and are currently billed by the fiscal year.

Read the full [article](#).

VA Provides Post-Hurricane Support

The Department of Veterans Affairs continues to provide health care and other support to displaced veterans in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI). The following resources are available for veterans and employees impacted by the hurricanes: (1) VA Employee Accountability hotline for staff is 866-233-0152; (2) VISN 8 TelCare 24/7 hotline to assist veterans with health-care advice and information is 877-741-3400; (3) current operating status of VA Caribbean Healthcare System is [here](#); (4) get more information about the VA Caribbean Healthcare System at its [website](#), or on its [Facebook](#) page; and (5) VA's blog [article](#) on VA facilities and services impacted by hurricanes Irma and Maria. For more information, read the VA [VAntage Point Blog](#).



U.S. Government Accountability
Office Reports

- 1) [Biodefense: Federal Efforts to Develop Biological Threat Awareness](#)
 - 2) [Presidential Transition: Information on Ethics, Funding, and Agency Services](#)
 - 3) [VA Real Property: Realignment May Benefit from Adopting Elements of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Process, Provided Process Challenges Are Addressed](#)
 - 4) [Whistleblower Protection: Opportunities Exist for DOD to Improve the Timeliness and Quality of Civilian and Contractor Reprisal Investigations](#)
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Base Guides at Your Fingertips: Find All Things Base Related

Browse [Military.com](#) Base Guides to find important base news, phone numbers and more.

**CONTACT YOUR
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

To Call your Representative:

202-225-2305

To Call your Senators:

202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call Different Members of Congress:

202-224-3121

TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622

PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!

www.veterans-for-change.org

VA 'Benefits at Discharge' Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has redesigned the [Benefits Delivery at Discharge](#) program to enable service members to receive disability benefit decisions the day after their discharge. The redesigned program went into effect October 1. The changes are intended to increase VA's ability to conduct exams, review medical evidence, and process ratings prior to a service member's release from active duty. In most cases, VA benefits decisions will be provided the day after discharge. Service members can submit their claim from 90 to 180 days prior to discharge from active duty. For more information, visit the VA Pre-Discharge [webpage](#), or visit your local military Transition Assistance Program (TAP) office. For more information on disability benefits and compensation, visit the [VA disability compensation page](#).

Holiday Season Mailing Deadlines

Naval Supply Systems Command, in cooperation with the U.S Postal Service, Military Postal Service Agency, and Joint Military Postal Activity, has released mail-by dates for pre-Dec. 25 deliveries of holiday cards, letters, and packages. A list of the mailing deadlines is available on the U.S. Navy [website](#). Customers should check with local civilian or military post offices for information regarding size restrictions and customs declaration form requirements. Mailing restrictions apply, and some items cannot be mailed. Customers should ensure articles are packaged properly for mailing and packages do not display markings related to any type of hazardous material.

Veterans-For-Change Web Site

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “One-Stop-Shop” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you'd like it to be.

We also have a forum with a licensed Mental Health Worker, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **2,200** hits per day, and downloads average **1,200** per day with a total **3,306,004** visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's **FREE** of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be

authorized automatically.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over 16,142 documents on-line (Updated: 8/12/17)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
 - o Afghanistan Veterans
 - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
 - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
 - o Iraq Veterans
 - o Korean Veterans
 - o Men Veterans Forum
 - o Mental Health for Veterans
 - o Political Issues
 - o Suggestion Box
 - o The Mess Hall
 - o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
 - o Veteran Affairs
 - o Vietnam Veterans
 - o Welcome Mat
 - o Women Veterans Forum
 - o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: 10/10/16)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,777)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,608, Added 17 New Links (Updated: 08/12/17)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:

Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org

Tricare Supplement: Save on Your Out-of-Pocket Costs Now

Expenses can mount up quickly when you receive medical care outside the military system. Get a Tricare supplement that pays your cost shares and can pay 100% of covered excess charges. Get valuable coverage [now](#).

VA Awards Adaptive Sports Grants

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the awarding of up to \$8 million in grants for adaptive sports programs that will benefit disabled veterans as well as disabled members of the armed forces. Grant recipients may use the funds for planning, developing, managing and implementing adaptive sports programs. VA will distribute the grants to 96 national, regional and community programs serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Approximately 10,000 Veterans and servicemembers are expected to benefit. Information on the awardees and details of the program are available on the [VA Adaptive Sports Program website](#). For more wounded warrior news, visit the [Military.com Wounded Warrior section](#).

Veterans Sought for Survey

Are you an active duty service member or veteran? If so, The [National Disability Institute](#) (NDI) has been working closely with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to look for respondents for a voluntary, anonymous and confidential survey to identify opportunities to improve the overall financial wellness of veterans, servicemembers and their families. For more information and questions, read the VA [VAntage Point Blog](#) and visit the [National Disability Institute website](#).



**Our values
match yours.**



www.veterans-for-change.org

Veterans Crisis Line: Help Prevent Suicide

Sometimes we need help to get through challenging times. Here are signs that you may need to see a mental health provider to prevent suicide: (1) anxiety or agitation; (2) anger or rage; (3) hopelessness; (4) difficulty sleeping; (5) thoughts or feelings about death or dying; (6) increased alcohol or drug use; and (7) withdrawing from friends and family. If you or a loved one is thinking or talking about death, suicide or other self-destructive behavior, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. You never need prior authorization to get emergency help. The [Veterans and Military Crisis Line](#) provides confidential help 24/7 by calling 1-800-273-8255, option 1. Also, [#BeThere](#) is a Defense Department campaign that offers peer support at 1-844-357-7337.



Active Duty Families, Tricare Reserve Select Tricare Changes

All Tricare users except those on Tricare for Life will soon see major plan changes. For active duty families and Tricare Reserve Select users, a contractor and region shake-up, a change to what plans are called, a new fees system, a shift from fiscal to calendar year payments and a change to when users can swap plans will all have major impact going forward. For more details, see this Spousebuzz [article](#).

If You're a Retired Pilot, the Air Force Wants You Back

The Air Force has laid out plans to welcome back retired pilots into active-duty staff positions. The service, through the Voluntary Retired Return to Active Duty Program, or VRRAD, is encouraging pilots who held a job in the 11X career field to apply before Dec. 31, 2018, officials said in a release this week. For more details, see this [article](#).



Your VA Loan Benefit = No Down Payment or Mortgage Insurance

There is still time to use your VA Loan benefit in 2017. Qualified borrowers can buy or refi with as little as \$0 down, and have no PMI payments with great rates and financing up to \$424,000. Use your [VA Loan Benefit today](#).



VA Suspends Debt Collection in Hurricane Areas

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [Debt Management Center](#) has suspended collections on debts for individuals located in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's recently declared hurricane disaster areas. VA also partnered with the U.S. Department of the Treasury to have collections suspended on Veteran benefit debts that have been referred to Treasury for collection within the same disaster areas. Veterans can find out if they are in a FEMA-declared disaster area by visiting [FEMA's disasters page](#). The suspension of these collections is slated to remain in effect through March 2018. For more information, read the VA [VAntage Point blog](#).

Veteran Crisis Resources

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1
Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)
VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274

How Tricare's 2018 Changes Impact Retirees

While all users, except those on Tricare for Life, will see changes under a series of sweeping Tricare reforms set to roll-out in January, there are some special factors retirees need to know, including a change to when they can switch plans. For more details, see this [article](#).

VA Photo ID Cards for All Veterans Coming in November

All honorably discharged veterans of every era will be able to get a photo identification card from the Department of Veterans Affairs starting in November due to a law passed in 2015. The law, known as the [Veterans Identification Card Act 2015](#), orders the VA to issue a hard-copy photo ID to any honorably discharged veteran who applies. The card must contain the veteran's name, photo and a non-Social Security identification number, the law states. For more details, see this [article](#).

Links to Other Stories

1) **New news articles will be posted on Saturday 10/13/17, check the website often under NEWS.**

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

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

Happy Birthday to the Navy!

The U.S. Navy celebrates its birthday on October 13. For nearly two and a half centuries, the U.S. Navy has had a storied history, and proven itself in war and peacetime. For features and videos that celebrate the Navy birthday, visit the [Navy Birthday page](#).



Navy Closes Remaining Stateside College Offices

The remaining four Navy College Offices (NCO) in the continental United States closed as scheduled Oct. 1. The Navy College Virtual Education Center (NCVEC) now serves as the Navy College Program's (NCP) central location for tuition assistance processing and education services. The initiative is part of an ongoing effort to increase virtual and self-service options for Sailors. Sailors can use the Assistance Center on the [Navy College website](#) or call 877-838-1659. Also, NCVEC tools can be accessed through the NCP app, available to download for free through the Google Play and iTunes stores.



October Vet Job Fair Schedule

Veterans, servicemembers and military spouses will have several options for career fairs in October. A list of upcoming career fairs around the nation is available at the [Veteran Job Fair page](#).



DoD Consolidates Personal Property Programs

The U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) is now the single manager of the Defense Personal Property Program (DP3), which oversees the Defense Department's household goods and privately-owned vehicle shipment programs. Program improvements will gradually occur, including an update to the www.move.mil website. Customers should plan ahead for a successful relocation by either visiting their local TMO or registering for a [DPS account](#) prior to, or when they receive, their permanent change of station orders. Planning ahead is the best way to ensure your move is a success. For more moving guides and tips, visit the [Military.com PCS section](#).

Unveiling Names Added to California Vietnam Veterans Memorial

WHO: California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Committee

WHAT: The names of 14 Vietnam veterans who died due to their service in Vietnam will be added to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 14, 2017 – 10 a.m.

WHERE: California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park – 15th Street at Capitol Avenue behind the Rose Garden, Sacramento, CA 95814

EVENT: A ceremony to add the names of 14 individuals to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial will include unveiling the names, honoring the families, and laying wreaths at the Memorial.

The Vietnam veterans being added are:

- Cpl. David Joseph Betti, U.S. Marine Corps, of Ventura;
 - Spc. 5 James Brady, U.S. Army, of Stockton;
 - Sgt. James Allen Gray, U.S. Air Force, of Auburn;
 - Lt. j.g. Gregory Keith Hodson, U.S. Navy, of West Sacramento;
 - Spc. 4 Ernest Allen Meekins, U.S. Army, of Helendale;
 - Sgt. George Richard Neal, U.S. Army, of Oakley;
 - Spc. 4 Thomas C. O'Hare, U.S. Army, of Long Beach;
 - Seaman Jerry Ray Oliver, U.S. Navy, of Modesto;
 - Spc. 4 Thomas William Reilly, U.S. Army, of Tacoma, WA (born in Los Angeles);
 - Lt. Harold Stuart Roach, Jr., U.S. Navy, of Los Angeles;
 - Spc. 4 Victor Mario Salas, U.S. Army, of Sonora;
 - TSgt. Richard P. Susoeff, U.S. Air Force, of Marysville;
 - Lance Cpl. Ronald Van Westburg, U.S. Marine Corps, of Sacramento;
- and
- Spc. 4 Dennis Wilburn Williams, U.S. Army, of Sacramento.

EXPECTED TO ATTEND: Family members and friends of the Vietnam veterans whose names are being added to the Memorial, officials from the California Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans and members of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Committee, and elected officials.

BACKGROUND: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor Committee was created when Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed Assembly Bill 287 in 2013. The Committee is tasked with compiling a list of names of California Vietnam Veterans who died as a result of illness or injuries, including documented physical or mental injuries, which can reasonably be assumed to have resulted from military service in the Vietnam War for addition to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

For more information, visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Honor

Committee web page at www.calvet.ca.gov/Vietnam.

**“We Proudly Support our
Military Personnel & Families”**

VA Selects Delta Dental for Dental Plan

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it has selected Delta Dental of California and MetLife to once again offer private dental insurance plans as part of the VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP). The program has been extended until Dec. 31, 2021. Veterans enrolled in the VA health-care system and beneficiaries of the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA (CHAMPVA) can enroll in the program beginning Nov. 15, 2017, for coverage to start Dec. 1, 2017. Enrollment is voluntary and does not affect eligibility for VA outpatient dental services and treatment. For more information, visit the [VA Dental Insurance Program website](#) or call 877-222-VETS (8387).

American Public WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Vietnam War veterans who served in
Harbors and Off-Shore Vietnam
NO LONGER receive Health Care for
cancers and other diseases caused by
exposure to Agent Orange Herbicide.

WE NEED OUR VA BENEFITS!

Please Contact Your Senators and
Representatives
(Call, Write, Email, Fax, or Visit)

**ASK THEM TO PASS
HR-299 AND S-422**



Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association
PO Box 1035 Littleton, CO 80160-1035
Navy@BlueWaterNavy.org



**Navy College Afloat College Program
Upgraded**

The Navy College Program for Afloat College Education (NCPACE) Distance Learning (DL) will transition to individual enrollment Oct. 1. The NCPACE DL courses are self-contained (no Internet connectivity is required to complete the course), and are available at any time for eligible Sailors assigned to type two and type four sea duty. A major change to the program is that all NCPACE DL courses will now be funded using the same rate authorized for Tuition Assistance courses: \$250 per Semester Hour (SH) or equivalent. For more information, visit the [NCP website](#) or call toll free 1-877-838-1659; DSN 492-4684, Monday-Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. EST.

If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.



Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

www.Veterans-For-Change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family!

Please do not reply to this E-Mail, this is an unattended E-Mail address,
please send all correspondence to:

Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org

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