



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, April 08, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 14



This-N-That

We're always looking for new information, news, updates, and any means to help protect all our Veterans and their families.

We added recalls and alerts from Food and Drug Administration a few weeks ago, and we had added reports from the GAO several months ago.

So in addition to news briefs, announcements,

FDA and GAO reports, in this issue we have added a few pieces in regard to scams, cyber security. We're hoping some of these new pieces will help keep you and your family safe.

Well it seems politicians have nothing better to do with their time than to pass rumor, dish innuendo's and basically stir the pot of discontent as best they can to avoid actually accomplishing what WE THE PEOPLE put them in office to do!

Personally I think the removal of David Shulkin was more than called for as from the outside appearances he was doing nothing, producing no change, and not adhering to what had already been changed, and who suffers? Veterans suffer!

I never have bothered to keep track of how many times I've heard that we need Veterans to fill many of the high ranking positions in government, well President Trumps choice is a Rear Admiral. I don't think we could really ask for better, could we?

And I'd love to see law changed so that anyone running for any office in government have served a minimum of six years in order to qualify for election! But that's my personal opinion, and many others have expressed the same opinion to me.

I'd like nothing more than for Congress to stop bickering and doing everything in their power to take President Trump down because he doesn't side with them on every issue, and that he has accomplished more in his first year than the past three presidents have in their combined terms.

There are hundreds if not thousands of issue surrounding Veterans, claims, appeals, hearings, delays, denials that still go unresolved. And they're always asking where the money is going to come from when there are many solutions, like bringing a halt to the immigration and illegal aliens (not undocumented workers) and refugees all being provided social services, funds, etc that could be very easily re-directed to Veterans.

There are a few action items in this newsletter, and I'd like to ask each and everyone of our readers to please help, and take the actions. You don't have to be a Veteran to help. The more help we can get from all sources, the better the chances are to help all our Veterans, and truly show them you care, you support them and want them to get the much needed benefits as well as medical care!

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



DAV-Supported COLA Increase Bill

On March 7, 2018, Representative Mike Bost (IL), Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and Ranking Member Elizabeth Esty (CT), introduced H.R. 4958-the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2018.

This bill, if enacted, would provide a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) by the same percentage as Social Security. DAV strongly supports H.R. 4958, in accordance with DAV Resolution 028.

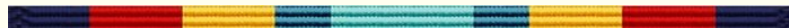
Please use the prepared letter below or draft your own to urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor this important bill.

As always, we appreciate your support for DAV and your participation in DAV CAN. Your advocacy helps make DAV a highly influential and effective organization in Washington.

Thank you for all you do for America's service-

disabled veterans their families and survivors.

Take Action



VA Burn Pit Registry Update

Many veterans who deployed after 1990 can join the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Burn Pit Registry, which is a way to document their concerns about exposures to burn pits and other airborne hazards. The registry is linked to more current and complete DoD deployment records. This reduces or eliminates possible delays in joining the registry resulting from the performance of manual checks of deployment histories for pre-9/11 veterans by VA to confirm a veteran's [eligibility to join the registry](#). The Burn Pit Registry is also a way for Veterans to be evaluated for any concerns that they might have related to exposures. For more information, read the VA [VAntage Point Blog](#).



Be wary of imposter results!

While search engines can be a helpful tool, be sure to carefully scrutinize the results that are displayed before you click any links. Ads and other illegitimate links can appear to be associated with authentic websites, but instead lead to copycat or other malicious sites.



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 2,100 hits per day, and downloads average 1,200 per day with a total **3,991,908** 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 **16,387** documents on-line (Updated: 02/20/18)
- 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 (Counselor Needed)
 - 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: 01/11/18)
- News (Articles On-Line: **7,252**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **3,625**, Added 6 New Links (Updated: 02/19/18)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org



Commissary to Roll Out Sales Price Search

Commissaries will be updating its website sale section with a refreshed search tool that will let users view sale prices at commissaries. For more details, see this [Paycheck Chronicles post](#).



OUR DEBT TO THE
HEROIC MEN AND VALIANT
WOMEN IN THE SERVICE
OF OUR COUNTRY CAN
NEVER BE REPAID. THEY
HAVE EARNED OUR
UNDYING GRATITUDE.
AMERICA WILL NEVER
FORGET THEIR SACRIFICES.

PRESIDENT HARRY S TRUMAN

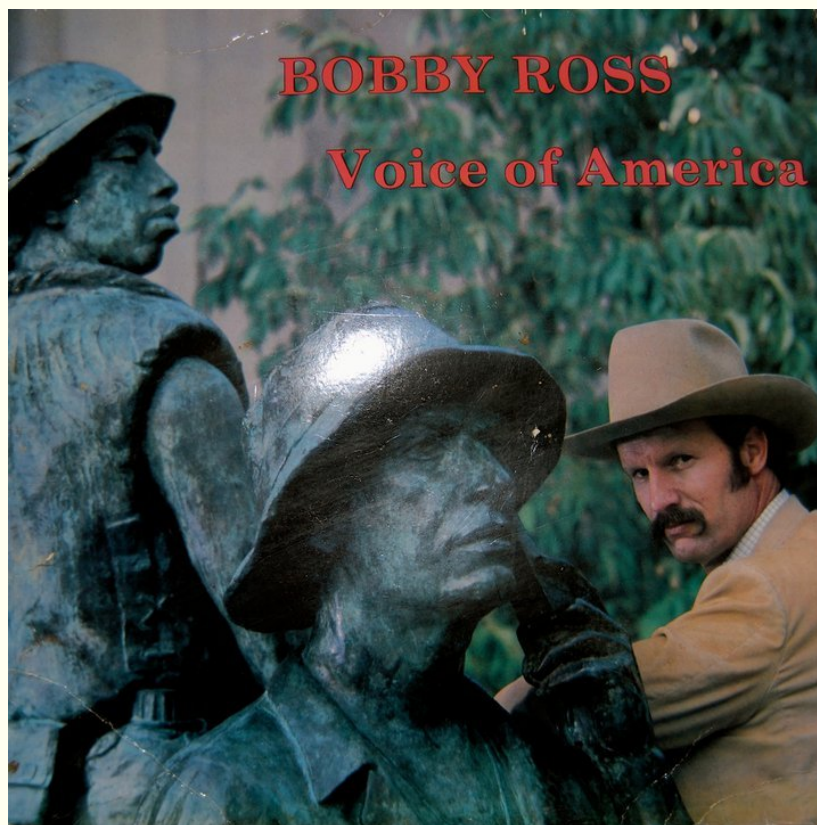


Government Seeks Comments On Future Desert Storm Memorial

Are you a Desert Storm/Desert Shield veteran? Do you know one? Are you just interested in having a say on the future National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial? If so, the [National Park Service](#) wants to hear from you.



LT Bobby Ross



March's Featured Song

Back To Blue Jeans

LT Bobby Ross

PATRIOTIC MUSIC

Remember this site is an Internet Adventure. All you need do is click on the pictures and any highlighted word, and you are launched to another world in Cyberspace. Try it! So much fun!



Veterans Fair Debt Notice Act of 2017

On January 25, 2018, Senator Jon Tester (MT), introduced S. 2341-the Veterans Fair Debt Notice Act.

This legislation would require the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to improve the processing of veterans benefits, limit the authority of the Secretary to recover overpayments and improve the due process accorded veterans with respect to such

recovery.

The bill would address the root causes of VA overpayments and institute common-sense protections for veterans by:

- Only allowing the VA to collect debts that occur as a result of an error or fraud on the part of a veteran or their beneficiary.
- Prohibiting VA from deducting more than 25 percent from a veteran's monthly payment in order to recoup overpayment or debt. This deduction may be further limited if it puts that veteran at risk of financial hardship, for example if the veteran is living on a fixed income.
- Preventing the VA from collecting debts incurred more than five years prior. Currently there is no time limit on how long after a payment a veteran can be billed.
- Requiring the VA to provide veterans with a way to update their dependency information on their own, eliminating a key processing delay for veterans, which frequently contributes to the VA making overpayments.

Consistent with the intent of DAV Resolution No. 213, which calls for alleviating undue financial hardship in processing overpayments and notifying veterans of debt, we support this bill. Please use the prepared letter or draft your own to urge your Senators to support and cosponsor S. 2341.

Stand with us and support this change to provide debt protections for all veterans and their families. Thank you for your continued support of the DAV Commander's Action Network.

[Take Action](#)





Swap the Fries for a Salad at No Cost

You can choose a side salad instead of fries for free with any combo meal at more than 160 Burger King Restaurants at Army & Air Force Exchange Service locations worldwide. Throughout its main stores, Express convenience stores and restaurants, the Exchange is making it a priority to help Soldiers and Airmen maintain a BE FIT lifestyle. The Exchange operates more than 1,700 quick-serve restaurants across the world.



Phone Safety Tips

Now more than ever, criminals utilize phone calls in their ever-evolving strategies to take advantage of unsuspecting individuals. It's important to arm yourself with the information needed to identify and protect yourself from phone scams.

To help keep you safe, no matter who asks for or requests sensitive personal information like passwords, credit card numbers, or bank account information, **NEVER** give it out! No one you do business with or those attempting to do business with you should not ever call or email you with requests to access your computer, or offering virus protection plans or 10-year calling plans.



**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



Why Get a VA Loan?

A home purchase is among the most important purchases you can make in your life — and if you've served in the military, you may qualify for a veteran home loan (or VA loan) that can help make the process of buying a home much easier. For a breakdown of what the VA loan can do for you, read this [article](#).

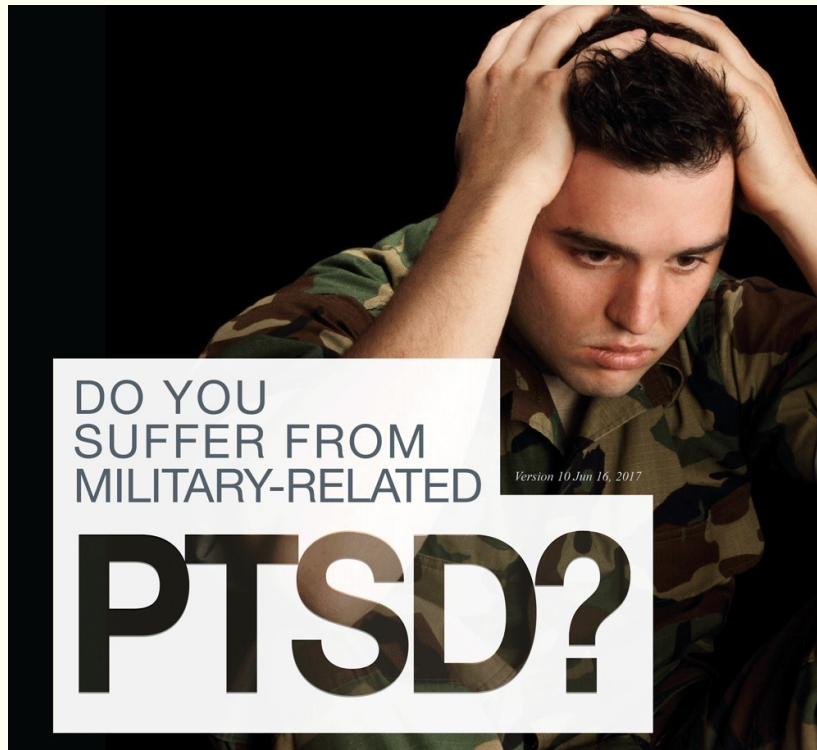


Family or Friend Emergency Scams

Scammers may call you pretending to be a family member or friend who is in a bad situation. They may present an urgent, distressing story involving things like an accident, travel issues, or even jail. They may request that you send money right away via a fast, untraceable method (like gift cards or wire transfer) - their goal is to get your money before you realize you have been scammed.

In these situations, it's important to think calmly and with a level head. Ask the caller questions that only the person they report to be would know, and attempt to call them back on a known-good phone number. If you aren't able to verify their identity, do not hesitate to reach out to others to validate their story.





**Veterans Crisis Line:
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets
1-877-424-3838**



**It's Time to Celebrate Your Military
Child**

Military children are a vital part of the military family and they deserve to be recognized. During the month of April, the Department of Defense celebrates these children and recognizes their contribution to their military parents' mission and success. The health of military children is a top priority for the Defense Health Agency. TRICARE coverage helps ensure these beneficiaries get the care they deserve, too.

Read the full article [here](#).



What Impact Will Shulkin's Ouster Have on the VA?

Former VA Secretary Shulkin resisted the pressure to privatize the VA Health Care system. Some are concerned that the next to fill that seat may not be as willing to push back on efforts to shift funding for modernizing and staffing VA hospitals and clinics to subsidizing private sector care. Read more about the impact of Shulkin's departure in this [Update](#).



VA Launches New Claims Appeals Tool

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the [U.S Digital Service](#) have announced their launch of an improved [Appeals Status tool](#) to increase transparency and enable veterans to track the progress of their benefits claims appeals. The tool, which went live March 21 on VA's [Vets.gov website](#), will allow Veterans to access detailed information about the status of their benefits appeals and will include alerts about needed actions, as well as estimates of how long each step of the process takes. Some Veterans who have previewed the new tool said it had given them hope and helped them understand that the process might take longer than expected.



A Veterans Request

I would like to ask everyone reading this to be and other Veterans a BIG favor. We need you to contact the Whitehouse at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/> OR Phone 855-948-2311 in support of Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans.

Here is some history. In 1993, a bill passed in Congress call the Agent Orange Act of 1993 giving VA Benefits to Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans that were suffering from certain diseases , this list has been updated since then. In 2002 the General Consul of the VA ruled that Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans didn't qualify for these benefits Since that time Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans have been fighting to get these benefits back.

You may ask why this is important. Veterans like myself who served on Ships while serving in Vietnam were actually exposed to a high level of the Dioxin that is in Agent Orange than their fellow Veterans who served "Boots on the Ground". This is due to the fact that the distillations system used on the ships actually enhanced the Dioxins instead of removing them. This has lead to many of these Veterans suffering from diseases related to Agent Orange exposure like myself who now suffers from Prostate Cancer, Thyroid Cancer, Heart Problems, COPD, Emphysema, and Skin Cancer.

Right now there is a Bill in Congress called the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (H.R.299 & S.422) that would covers use. We have 75% of Congress Supporting the Bill, yet we can't get the Bill brought to the floor for a VOTE because they do not have a way to Fund the Bill. The cost of the Bill is around \$1 Billion over 10 years. Now to add insult to injury, our own Government has spent over \$1.1 Billion Cleaning up Vietnam of Agent Orange.

I am asking everyone reading this to PLEASE, First contact the White House and ask them to find the Funds to Fund Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (H.R.299 & S.422) and please share this letter.

We are also looking into taking our Case to the Supreme Court, we will be making the final decision after May 5, 2018. Due to this we are looking for donations to help with our cost. If you are willing to donate (tax deductible) please go to <https://www.bwnvva.org/membership.html> and donate (tax deductible) online or you can send

a check to:

Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans
Association

8651 John J Kingman Rd

Suite #206

FT Belvoir, VA 22060

If you are a Veteran or a family Member of a
Veterans, please feel free to join us on our
Blue Water Navy Association Facebook Page.

Mike Yates

National Commander

commander@bluewaternavy.org

Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans

Association





Some Vets Still Can't Apply for New Veteran ID Card

Some veterans continue to have problems showing proof of service for the VA's new ID card program. But sources disagree on what's causing the issue. For more details, see this [article](#).



Computer-Related Scams

You may receive phone calls claiming to be tech support from reputable companies (such as Microsoft or Apple) stating that you have a

virus, or other computer-related issues. These callers often request information about or remote access to your computer under the guise of diagnosing or repairing the reported issue. Legitimate companies will typically never call you to report issues with your computer. Regardless of how convincing the caller sounds, if you receive this type of call, do not provide any information or access to your computer, and hang up.

Likewise, be wary of any emails or pop-up alerts with similar claims. Do not click on any links displayed, and before placing an outbound call to a phone number found in one of these notifications, perform a search on Google to verify its authenticity. Do not dial the number if the results are suspicious.

Never navigate to or enter information on websites these individuals direct you to visit. Doing so could result in loss of control of your computer, the installation of a virus, or your information being stolen.



**AAFES Salutes Military Children with
Events, Giveaways**

The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is saluting military children throughout April with in-store events and giveaways in honor of the Month of the Military Child. The Exchange is offering the first-ever military brat patch, available for free while supplies last at select Main Stores worldwide April 7. On April 18, participating Exchange restaurants will Purple Up for Military Kids, offering a free side item, fountain drink or dessert for kids wearing purple. The Exchange is also giving away nearly \$50,000 in prizes via sweepstakes throughout April. Authorized shoppers can enter all sweepstakes at ShopMyExchange.com. For more information, contact your local Exchange.



IRS Impersonators

Callers identifying themselves as representatives from the IRS may claim that you need to make an urgent payment. Oftentimes these demands include threats of arrest and jail time, or other severe penalties if you do not comply. These calls may appear to come from legitimate phone numbers, and the caller may appear to know some basic personal information about you (like your name and address).

It is important to be aware that even if you do owe money, the IRS will typically send you a bill prior to calling you. They won't demand payment via any specific method (like gift cards or wire transfer), and they won't ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone. They will always give you the opportunity to appeal the amount of money you owe, and they won't threaten to involve law enforcement. You can contact the IRS regarding taxes owed by calling 800-829-1040.





Never forget our fallen!



Reduce Your Out of Pocket & Rx Costs with a TRICARE Supplement

Get a Tricare supplement that pays your cost shares and can pay 100% of covered excess charges. [Get valuable coverage now.](#)

Avoid phony calls!

If you receive an unsolicited, unexpected phone call from a company - even one you recognize or receive services through - requesting personal information such as your credit card number, bank information, log in credentials, or social security number, DO NOT provide the information. Instead, hang up,

retrieve the company's contact information from a reliable source (such as their official website, product packaging, or contract information), and reach out to them via one of their official channels. By contacting the company via a legitimate, verified avenue, you are able to ensure you are communicating with the intended party.

Do not feel pressured to pick up calls from unknown numbers (especially if the area code is not one that you recognize, or if the caller ID is blocked); if the message is important, the caller will likely leave a voicemail.

Be wary of individuals guiding you to websites or having you download files under the guise of providing "technical support," or granting remote access to your computer.



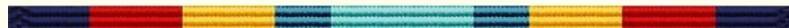
Veteran Crisis Resources

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



No United Airlines Military Pet Exemption Coming Despite Navy Claim

United Airlines does not plan to grant an exemption to military members and families who need to move their pets, despite an announcement from the [Navy's](#) chief of personnel to the contrary, United officials said last week. For more details, see this [article](#).



Emails can be deceiving!

One of the most commonly-used avenues for unscrupulous individuals, emails can be made to look authentic in many ways - using trusted branding, urgent messaging, and coming from genuine-appearing addresses. These types of emails can also appear to come from personal friends, or even family.

When you receive a new, unsolicited email, always proceed with a skeptical eye. Attached files and links can look legitimate, but may lead to unwanted malware. Avoid clicking on links contained in this type of email - instead, manually navigate to the website via your favorite web browser to reach the intended webpage.

If you are uncertain as to whether an email is authentic, reach out to the person or company who sent the email directly using contact information from a reliable source (such as a company's official website, product packaging, or contract information) to verify its contents.



Links to Other Stories

- 1) 5 things to know about VA nominee Ronny Jackson
- 2) Affordable Dentures & Implants® Launches Pro Bono Implant Treatment Initiative For U.S. Veterans, Homeless
- 3) BEYOND THE 'BROKEN VETERAN': A HISTORY OF AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS EX-SOLDIERS
- 4) Ex-CIA chief: Trump's VA nominee will hurt our Veterans
- 5) How Veterans Are Powering the Democrats' 2018 Hopes
- 6) Levelland native nominated as new Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- 7) Major Fallout from Firing of Veterans Secretary
- 8) New March Air Reserve Base village offers a haven for homeless Veterans
- 9) Trump looks to replace David Shulkin with Adm. Ronny Jackson as Veterans Affairs secretary

10) Veteran kills himself in St. Louis VA hospital waiting room, report says

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



The VA Loan Benefit Increased to up to \$453k Financing: Use Your Benefit Now

Spring is here and the VA Loan Benefit is now worth up to \$453k financing. Now is the time to use this great benefit. Qualified borrowers can buy or refi with as little as \$0 down, and have no PMI payments with great rates and financing up to \$453k. Use your [VA loan benefit](#) today.





Click Here to Join



VA Data Breach Reported by California Hospital

If you are [receiving care](#) at the Palo Alto, CA Veterans Affairs Health Care System, you may want to keep an eye on your credit report and personal information. A Military.com staffer recently received a letter from the VA Palo Alto Health Care System director saying his personal information may have been compromised by the VA. For more details, see [this article](#).





Commissary Curbside Expansion On Hold

A commissary curbside grocery pickup service will not expand to new locations any time soon, despite an announcement last summer that it would do so, officials confirmed this week. For more details, see this [article](#).



How to protect against tax-related identity theft

Wendy Zamora

It's everyone American's favorite time of year —tax season. While you might be looking forward to it with a mixture of trepidation and dread, cybercriminals are positively drooling at the prospect of all that personal data out there on the Internet for the taking.

And there's quite a lot of data out there. Thanks to major breaches at [Equifax](#) and large outbreaks of ransomware like [WannaCry](#) in 2017, we're looking at hundreds of millions of records in the (dark web) ether—and that's in the United States alone. No doubt threat actors are already making plans for a few of them.

While the IRS has taken steps to reduce tax-related identity theft, including [new security safeguards](#) that verify identity and the validity of returns, criminals are a cunning folk—they've already devised new tax scams to circumvent extra security protocols.

This February, the [IRS issued a warning](#) about a scam in which criminals steal client data from accountants and file fraudulent tax returns. The

bad actors then have the return sent to the taxpayers' real bank accounts for deposit, only to reclaim the refund later using social engineering tactics. Essentially, they steal your identity, file your return, deposit your return in your bank account, only to steal it away later by posing as the IRS and claiming the return was filed in error.

Let's face it. Filing taxes is enough of a headache on its own. But coupled with tax-related ID theft, it's a serious wrinkle that causes an absolute deluge in paperwork. Besides having your rainy-day money stolen, tax ID theft can also damage your credit and cost you in time. It can take upwards of 600 hours to restore a stolen identity, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center.

But you needn't fear (unless you've been cheating on your taxes, in which case we can't help you). If you take the proper precautions, you can shore up your online safety.

So what are some ways you can protect your

information (and identity) during tax season? Here are some tried and true tips to help ease the stress.

For general tax preparedness

If you haven't already filed, now's the time to get a move on. Not only will you beat the rush, but you can ensure a faster return on your return. Mistakes, including those that can lead to identity theft, are made when you're scrambling to dig up that charitable donation receipt from Goodwill five minutes before filing deadline.

Next, pick a preparer. Do your due diligence and check out any reviews or articles on tax software, if you plan to use it. Research online tax service providers to see how secure their systems are. Sites should have password standards, a lock-out feature that blocks users after too many unsuccessful login attempts, security questions, and email and/or text verification. If using an accountant, look for referrals. Remember that cheapest may not

always be the best.

Finally, once you've filed, make sure to keep your tax returns someplace safe. If filing online, you'll receive a massive PDF that you can download to your desktop. If someone were to access your computer a year from now, all that juicy information would be theirs for the taking. So be sure to either store it in an encrypted cloud service or put it on a removable drive, such as a USB. If filing on paper, keep your taxes in a locked file cabinet or drawer.

For online security

This is important for anyone transmitting sensitive data online, whether that's shopping or filing taxes: be sure to use a connection that's secure. If on a home computer and network, use password-protected Wi-Fi and look for secured browsers (website URLs that start with "https" and display a small lock icon). Be sure your preparer has the same security in place. Never, ever, ever file your taxes using public Wi-Fi.

Ever.

In addition, when filing taxes online (and again, this applies to any online service that requires a password), choose passwords that are long and complex. Avoid plain text passwords, use special characters, and if allowed, use spaces. We also highly recommend a password vault or manager that uses [two-factor authentication](#).

The third pillar of Internet security (especially during tax season) is to be aware of social engineering scams, including phishing emails. A popular phishing technique is to send an email from the “IRS” that says, essentially, “We have your tax return ready and you can get your money faster if you just download this PDF!” Nope. Number one, you should never open an attachment from an email you aren’t expecting to receive. Number two, the IRS will not email you. They’ll physically mail you information, but even then, be wary. Tax scams can happen via postal mail, too.

In addition to phishing attacks, there are

reports of cold callers who say, essentially, “Hey, we’re from the IRS and you owe us \$10,000.” Nope. The IRS won’t call you either. If you receive an email or phone call that’s unsolicited and is looking for personal information, don’t give it. Go back and independently verify who is trying to reach you.

After mastering the basics of online security best practices, it’s a good idea to protect yourself using a little technology. Before you even start typing in your social security number, you should run at least one kind of [cybersecurity scan](#). That way you’re sure there’s no malware on your system, such as a keylogger or spyware that can record your information without you knowing. You should also make sure your operating system, browser, and other software programs are updated—that way, you protect against malware that might exploit vulnerabilities in your computer.

Finally, if you believe there’s a chance you could have been compromised, look into free

credit monitoring or ID theft services. By law, you are entitled to a free copy of your credit report from the major bureaus: Equifax, Experian, and Trans Union. In addition, there's a lesser-known fourth bureau called Innovis that you can also use. Review your reports annually and look for any suspicious activity.

Filing early, being prepared, staying vigilant online, and employing the proper security technology—if you follow these tips then you can not only keep cybercriminals from cashing in on your tax returns but also from taxing your peace of mind.



U.S. Government Accountability
Office Reports

- 1) [Comparative Effectiveness Research: Activities Funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund](#)
- 2) [Defense Health Care: TRICARE Surveys Indicate Nonenrolled Beneficiaries' Access to Care Has Generally Improved](#)
- 3) [Ebola Recovery: USAID Has Initiated or](#)

Completed Most Projects, but a Complete Project Inventory Is Still Needed for Evaluating Its Efforts

4) Food and Drug Administration: Information on Mifeprex Labeling Changes and Ongoing Monitoring Efforts

5) Health Care Funding: Federal Obligations to and Expenditures by Selected Organizations Involved in Health-Related Activities, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

6) New Trauma Care System: DOD Should Fully Incorporate Leading Practices into Its Planning for Effective Implementation

7) Physician Workforce: HHS Needs Better Information to Comprehensively Evaluate Graduate Medical Education Funding

8) VA Disability Benefits: Improved Planning Practices Would Better Ensure Successful Appeals Reform



Month of the Military Child

Bases worldwide use April to celebrate Month of the Military Child. [Military.com](#) salutes the strength and resiliency of military kids.



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



Op-Ed: Many Veterans Still Excluded from Critical VA Services

Delphine Metcalf-Foster, the national commander of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and a disabled U.S. Army veteran of the Gulf War, served as caregiver to her husband, also a disabled Army veteran. In her commentary she debates the [current state of VA and its effectiveness in getting healthcare to veterans](#).




**U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION**

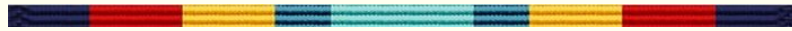
- 1) Dietary Supplements by Nutrizona: Recall - Potential for Salmonella Contamination
- 2) FDA Orders Mandatory Recall for Kratom Products Due to Risk of Salmonella
- 3) Global Commodities Corporation Recalls Buenas Grated Coconut due to Possible Health Risk
- 4) Kratom-containing Products by Triangle Pharmedicals: Mandatory Recall - Risk of Salmonella
- 5) MarcasUSA, LLC Emite Retiro Voluntariamente a Nivel Nacional de Pasta De Lassar Andromaco Protector de la Piel con 25% de óxido de Zinc, en Tubos de 60 Gramos, Debido a Contaminación Microbiana
- 6) MarcasUSA, LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Pasta De Lassar Andromaco Skin Protectant 25% Zinc Oxide 60g Due to Potential Contamination
- 7) Nutrizona Recalls Various Lots of Multiple Dietary Supplements Because of Possible Salmonella Health Risk
- 8) Pasta De Lassar Andromaco Skin Protectant 25 Percent Zinc Oxide by MarcasUSA: Recall - Potential Contamination



VA Initiative Finds Alternative Meds

In October 2015, VA launched a nationwide effort to help veterans ages 75 and older find alternatives to potential risky medications. This effort marked phase two of VA's Psychotropic Drug Safety Initiative (PDSI), and it aimed to reduce the use of these medications, encourage the use of safer therapies and appropriate monitoring, and enhance prescribing practices for older veterans. By June 2017, the initiative had achieved dramatic results: More than 30,000 veterans benefited from improvements in prescribing practices, and the number of veteran outpatients who received prescriptions for benzodiazepines or sedative hypnotics fell by more than 20,000. For more information, read the VA [VAntage Point Blog](#).





Female Veterans Are Fastest Growing Segment of Homeless Veteran Population

The image of a [homeless veteran](#) does not immediately bring to mind that of a female homeless veteran. But, the VA says that women comprise the fastest-growing segment of the homeless veteran population. For more details, see this [Military Advantage post](#).



Reimbursement of Qualifying Adoption Expenses for Certain Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs 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 September 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 under 18 years of age.

More information can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/03/05/2018-04245/reimbursement-of-qualifying-adoption-expenses-for-certain-veterans>.

The VA Form 10152, Reimbursement Request for Qualifying Adoption Expenses can be downloaded and printed:

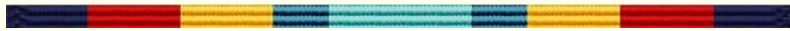
<https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/VA%20Form%2010-10152-fill.pdf>

For more information contact:

Veterans Benefits Administration

1-800-827-1000

www.vba.va.gov



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