



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

*A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, October 13, 2019

Volume 10, Issue 41



## **This-N-That**

What on earth is going on in the VA Healthcare System?

Multiple deaths, multiple rapes, thousands of Vets being turned away, homeless being ignored, and the list of horrible things going on only getting worse!

I'd really love to know what Robert Wilkie has done or been doing as I personally don't see

anyone being held accountable, very little improvement across the board with the exception of maybe a few programs which don't benefit all Veterans!

VA Medical Directors merely getting a slap on the hand, sent to their room without dinner. So what does this do to help Veterans and their families? How is this any improvement or change for the better?

To me it's no change, no improvement, and it's still the "good ole boys club!" And it also makes me wonder how many pockets are being lined at the expense of Veterans!

Not many years ago we had VA Medical Directors "re-directing" allotted funds from their Emergency Rooms to cover costs of isolation clinics for communicable diseases which have not existed in this country for decades or ever at all. Re-directing funds to renovate and/or add new buildings to accommodate special clinics much needed or housing needed for homeless Veterans.

Instead VA Medical Directors spend millions of dollars on fences and security to keep Veterans out, rent out vacant buildings to private entities and rental income vanishes. How is this accountability? Why are they not forced to account for every single penny, and held to their specified budgets?

The one suggestion I keep getting over and over again is why don't all these "grass roots" organizations band together? The only answer I have is I don't know!

I know we've tried on many occasions, and we have worked with some groups such as Blue Water whom we continue to work with and will continue.

But as the saying goes, too many chiefs not enough Indians!

I know personally I've spent the past thirteen years trying to get Veterans involved, provide the tools, direction and information, and sad to say most have excuses or just don't say a word.

Some organization merely love to tout membership numbers, and to congress, numbers mean absolutely nothing. Actions speak far louder than mere words.

And several years ago several organizations used an electronic system where they could install pre-written E-Mails, but many of those groups and agencies have faded into the sunset as costs were so high they ended going belly up.

But there are still a few left and that's how I'm able to present to you legislation that is on the table, and provide to you one of the tools that costs you absolutely not a single penny, just a little time to help in the fight.

It's true some of this legislation that is on the table might not directly affect you, but what about your fellow Veteran and his/her family that it might help?

Most of our readers don't have a clue what it takes to produce this newsletter, keep adding to the website, how many sources we need to go to so that we can get as much information to provide

to you!

Mind you I'm not whining or crying over the time spent, or bearing the costs involved. I do it out of love, honor and respect.

And I'm fighting every single day to the best of my ability, making calls, sending off fax blasts, just doing what is necessary and needed, but what happens if the day comes we vanish too? Would you take the time needed to research all the information out there, the legislation on the table, activities within the VA Healthcare System?

We continue to seek out a new hosting service and web master, and I do thank the few who have provided contact information. Sadly most want to write code for an entirely new system, or push us into a platform where the whole system would need to be converted all of which is extremely costly and not the direction we need and want to go.

I still have about ten weeks left to find a service and web master, so if you know of anyone, please do let me know, we've not thrown in the towel yet.

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



## **Military Veterans Advocacy Steps in to Ensure Veterans' Privacy**

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently announced a change to its privacy policy, automatically sharing healthcare records of veterans when they seek medical care outside the VA. Officials claim is authorized by the MISSION Act.

Previously, the VA was required to obtain written consent from the veterans prior to releasing information. Now, instead of opting into the program, a veteran is required to file a written opt-out.

Louisiana-based non-profit Military-Veterans

Advocacy filed suit, arguing that the revised policy is a violation of the Privacy Act and of the veteran's constitutional rights. The suit asked the court to direct the VA not to share records without the individual veteran's consent. Commander John Wells (USN, Ret.), acting litigation director for Military Veterans Advocacy, said many veterans are concerned about private information, such as health diagnoses including post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injuries, becoming public.

"They're definitely afraid of that information being shared," Wells said. "That's private information and we have no way of knowing how it will be secured."

There's also concern about potential "red flag" legislation, that would identify veterans potentially at risk of violence to themselves and others, kicking off a judicial process that could end in a veteran losing access to his or her firearms.

At a court hearing on Oct. 3, the VA declared that it would not share information until Jan. 1, 2010, allowing the court time to completely review the

program. Prior to the court hearing, some veterans were told they had to file any opt-out notice prior to Sept. 30. In many cases, these notices were not received until Sept. 26 or later.

Regarding the VA's decision to allow more time for veterans to opt out of the new MISSION Act, Col. Rob Maness (USAF, Ret.), executive director of Military-Veterans Advocacy, said, "Military Veterans-Advocacy is pleased with this decision. Unfortunately, we have once again been required to step in to ensure the VA follows the law, as passed by Congress."

A hearing on the request to enjoin any disclosures will be held in the next few weeks. MVA is being assisted in this litigation by Benjamin Krause of [disabledveterans.org](http://disabledveterans.org) and Brian Lewis from the Francis White Law firm.



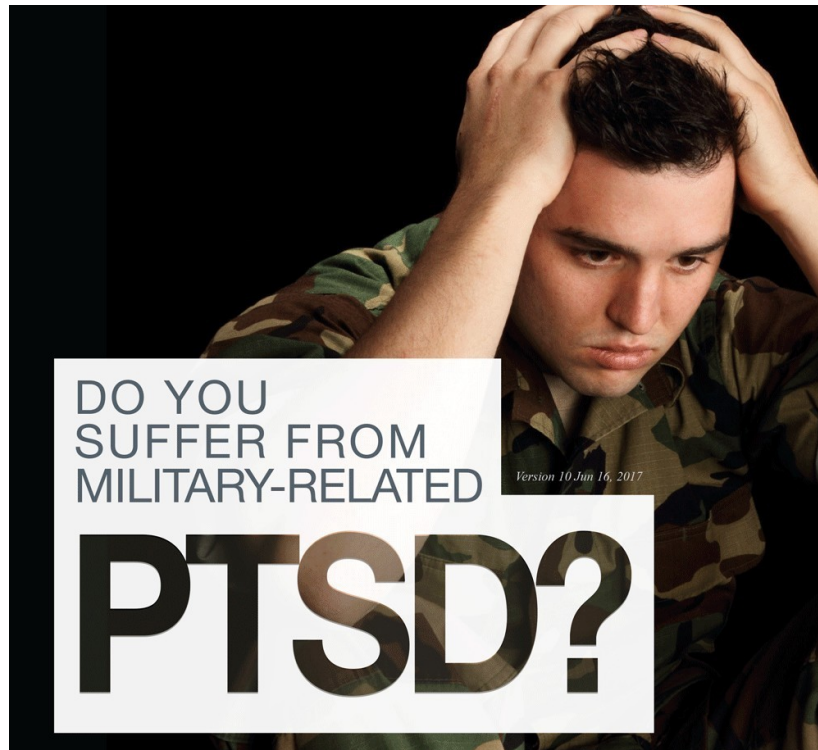




## **VA, Partners Offer Flu Shot**

Veterans enrolled in VA and in need of a flu shot can receive it for free at their nearest VA health care facility or at their local [Walgreens](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, VA, and doctors suggest all individuals get their flu shot during the fall. This is particularly true for individuals over the age of 65, pregnant women, caregivers of infants or family members with health problems, health care employees, and people with heart problems and other chronic illnesses or conditions. [Learn more](#) about the flu shot or [locate your nearest Walgreens](#).





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



**DOD Annual Suicide Report**

On Monday, the Department of Defense (DOD) released its first-ever Annual Suicide Report. The report provides data on service members and their families, provides an overview of the department's suicide prevention strategy and governance, and describes current and future initiatives underway to combat suicide. The military is showing similar trends to the suicide rates in civilian populations, which have increased over time. In calendar year 2018, there were 541 service members across the military's active and reserve components who died by suicide – 325 active duty, 81 reservists, and 135 National Guardsmen. The most common factors that are linked to suicides in the military are relationship and/or financial stressors, and administrative or legal difficulties. [View full report.](#)



## **Veterans-For-Change Web Site**

The Veterans-For-Change website has been around since 2009. 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 for Mental Health and are currently seeking a new Licensed Mental Health Worker, where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **3,611** hits per day, and downloads average **4,317** per day with a total **5,451,296** 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](http://www.Veterans-for-change.org)

- Documents Library with over **17,905** documents in 149+ Libraries, added 37 documents on-line (Updated: 09/19/19)
- FAQ's on-line with **1,790** FAQ's on 101 topics! (Updated 08/29/19 - 128 NEW)
- 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: 10/30/18) (37 Added)
  - News (Articles On-Line: **9,064**)
  - Polls
  - Web Links, more than **5,300**, Added **98** New Links (Updated: 10/08/19)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages,  
E-Mail: [Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org)





Below are links to all currently active E-Mails to many pieces of legislation. We ask that you go to each one, and send the ore-written E-Mails, and to also call your Reps or Senators and ask for their support on a weekly basis!

You don't need to be Active Duty or a Veteran, in fact we ask all Veteran friends to also help!

1. [Allow Active Duty to Sue Military for Medical Malpractice \(H.R. 2422\)](#)
2. [H.R. 1527, the Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act](#)
3. [Action Alert: Tell Congress to End the Widow's Tax Now!](#)
4. [H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act](#)
5. [H.R. 2359, the Whole Veteran Act](#)
6. [S. 514, the Deborah Sampson Act to Improve VA Services for Women Veterans](#)
7. [H.R 445, Help Hire Our Heroes Act](#)

8. S. 2022, Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019
9. H.R. 96, to Provide Dental Care for All Veterans Enrolled in Veterans Health Care
10. S. 555 and H.R. 1377, Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act
11. H.R. 840, the Veterans' Access to Child Care Act
12. S. 179/H.R. 712, Legislation Calling for Clinical Trials to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Medical Cannabis for Chronic Pain and PTSD
13. S. 980, the Homeless Veterans Prevention Act of 2019
14. H.R. 2201, Include Military Installations in Thailand as exposed to Agent Orange
15. H.R. 444, Reduce Unemployment for Veterans of All Ages Act of 2019
16. S. 2216, Transparency and Effective Accountability Measures for Veteran Caregivers Act
17. H.R. 2200, the Keeping Our Promises Act
18. H.R. 553, Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act
19. Senate Bill Introduced to Protect Active Duty from Medical Malpractice
20. H.R. 1182, Veterans' Access to Acupuncture



## Services

21. Support SBP/DIC Offset Repeal (S. 622/H.R. 553)!
22. S. 374/H.R. 1092, the Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2019
23. H.R. 2568, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act
24. Urge Congress to Pass the Retired Pay Restoration Act
25. Protect Bankrupt Disabled Veterans from Losing Benefits
26. S. 318, the VA Newborn Emergency Treatment Act
27. S. 785, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act
28. Blue Water Navy Veterans Need Your Help
29. H.R. 713, Provide Beneficiary Travel Funds to Veterans Seeking Specialized Treatment for Military Sexual Trauma
30. Urgent Action Needed to End "Widow's Tax"
31. S. 154, VA CLEAR Act of 2019
32. H.R. 663/S. 191, Burn Pits Accountability Act
33. S. 1392, the Support for Suicide Prevention Coordinators Act
34. S. 1881 and H.R. 3356, Veterans Expedited TSA Screening Safe Travel Act

35. [H.R. 1963, Expanding Care for Veterans Act](#)
36. [NDAA and Spending Bills](#)
37. [H.R. 4137, Healthcare for Open Air Burn Pit Exposure Act](#)
38. [H.R. 2982, Women Veterans Health Care Accountability Act](#)



## **Legislation Introduced for Rural Veterans Transportation Grants**

This week Representative T.J. Cox (D-Calif.) introduced VFW-supported H.R. 4589. Rep. Cox introduced this bipartisan bill with Representatives Amua Amata (R-American Samoa), Susie Lee (D-Nev.), and Greg Steube (R-Fla.). This important legislation would indefinitely extend the VA grant program to organizations that assist veterans in rural areas travel to and from VA medical facilities, instead of having to be renewed every two years. The VFW thanks all original cosponsors for their efforts to improve access to medical treatment for rural veterans. [Learn more.](#)





## **VFW Visits Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors**

On Wednesday, VFW Washington Office Executive Director Vincent “B.J.” Lawrence met with Bonnie Carroll, founder and president of Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS). They discussed how VFW and TAPS can work together to support those who have lost a loved one who has served our country. It’s important to note that TAPS [supports survivors](#) of all eras and all relationships to the loved one, even if one’s loss was decades ago. One of the VFW’s purposes as defined in our congressional charter is “to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their surviving spouses and orphans” which aligns perfectly with the mission of TAPS. [Learn more about TAPS.](#)





## **~Follow us on MEWE ~**

Follow us on [MEWE](#)! The support staff at [MEWE](#) is responsive, open to suggestions and works very hard to protect your personal information.

We hope you will join us on this new site.

**VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE**

**HOMELESS HEROES PROGRAM OF  
VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE**

**AMVETS GROUP**

**VETERANS SOCIAL GROUP**

**{USAVET} SUPPORTING GOD & ALL WHO  
SERVED OUR GREAT NATION**

**AMERICANS FOR SOVEREIGNTY**





## Links to Other Stories

1. [Why fewer people are using the GI Bill](#)
2. [Why younger Veterans more likely to struggle after leaving the military](#)
3. [VA investigating sexual assaults at West Virginia hospital](#)
4. [Veterans with PTSD, anxiety turn to beekeeping for relief](#)
5. [World War II gunner, 95, who took out five German tanks gets Bronze Star he forfeited for 1945 bubblegum offense](#)
6. [Strangers pack funeral for Veteran with no known family, friends: 'He will not be alone'](#)

7. Mental health care is the key to keeping spec ops forces ready for the next fight
8. Millions More Vets and Caregivers Are About to Get Commissary, Exchange Access
9. VA is ready for the 2019-2020 flu season
10. VA rejects claim of Tampa Veteran who says he was sprayed by Agent Orange
11. Three Veterans died in three days at a VA hospital under the same suspicious circumstances. What happened?
12. Program to Prevent Suicide by Veterans Earns Bipartisan Support
13. 'A blessing': Santa Rosa tiny home village provides housing for homeless Veterans
14. 'Wars are fought by humans': Veterans lead new campaign against endless war in Afghanistan
15. VA North Texas employees train to save lives of Veterans in crisis
16. Puerto Rican Veteran still struggling 2 years after Hurricane Maria
17. VA-distributed video tablets deliver telehealth to Veterans
18. VA achieves historic goal delivering more than 90,000 appeals decisions to Veterans in FY 2019
19. Managing Suicide Risk and Access to Firearms: Guidelines for Providers

20. Woodstock Man Who Posed as Deceased Sister to Steal VA Benefits Sentenced to 6 Months in Prison

21. VA Takes Action to Restore Trust at Atlanta VAMC's Eagles' Nest Community Living Center

Check us out today: [www.Veterans-for-change.org](http://www.Veterans-for-change.org)



**New Podcast - Listen to TRICARE  
Beneficiary Bulletin #522**



Listen to the latest podcast to hear about:

- Women's Health Month
- 2020 FEDVIP Dental and Vision Plans
- Breastfeeding Supplies and Services

Visit the Multimedia Center for this podcast and previous podcasts [here](#).



## **VA, Partners Offer Flu Shot**

Veterans enrolled in VA and in need of a flu shot can receive it for free at their nearest VA health care facility or at their local [Walgreens](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, VA, and doctors suggest all individuals get their flu shot during the fall. This is particularly true for individuals over the age of 65, pregnant women, caregivers of infants or family members with health problems, health care employees, and people with heart problems and other chronic illnesses or conditions. [Learn more](#) about the flu shot or [locate your nearest Walgreens](#).





**2019 TRICARE Open Season,  
Federal Benefits Open Season Starts  
Next Month**

Did you know that the TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season happen only once a year? Unless you experience a Qualifying Life Event, open season is your only chance to enroll in or make a change to your enrollment for the participating programs. TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for a TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select health plan.

Read the [full article](#).



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



## **COLA Increase for 2020 Passed into Law**

On September 26, 2019, President Trump signed Public Law 116-58, which provides a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase of 1.6 percent, effective December 1, 2019, for veterans disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for survivors and certain other benefits.

VA compensation and DIC benefits are paid on the first of each month, for the previous month. This means that the 1.6 percent COLA increase effective December 1, 2019, will be included in the January 1, 2020 payment. This increase matches the COLA provided to Social Security recipients.

This COLA benefits injured and ill veterans, their families and survivors by helping to maintain the value of VA benefits against inflation. Without annual COLAs, many disabled veterans, who sacrificed their own health and family life for the good of our nation, may not be able to maintain the quality of life they deserve.

We thank Representative Elaine Luria (VA),

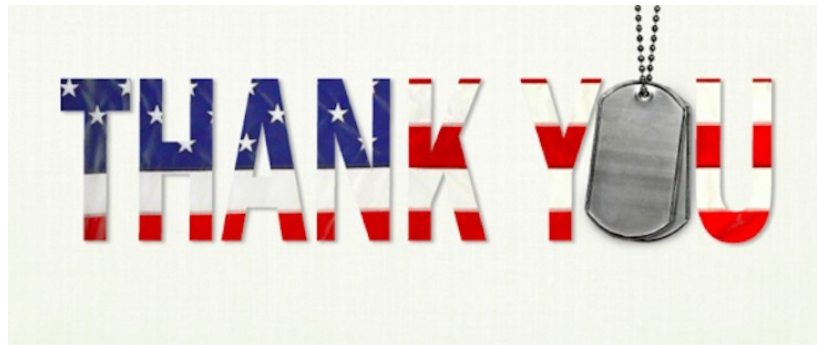
Chairwoman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs for introducing HR 1200, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2019 and Congress for final passage of the bill on September 12, 2019.

Likewise, we appreciate your support for service-disabled veterans and your grassroots efforts in the DAV Commander's Action Network, which helped get this critical legislation enacted. Please share this information on all of your social media sites. Thank you for all you do for America's veterans and their families.



## **Tricare Drug Costs to Increase More Than 40% in 2020**

Prescription drug costs for Tricare users are set to rise Jan. 1, some by as much as 42%. Effective Jan. 1, 2020, the price of all generic drugs, brand-name drugs and non-formulary drugs purchased through the mail-order pharmacy and through in-network retail pharmacies will increase. Costs at out-of-network pharmacies will also increase. Drugs received through on-base pharmacies will continue to be free. Learn more about the new prices [here](#).



**See the New 2020 Rates for Vision  
and Retiree Dental Insurance**

Military dependents and retirees and their families should check out the 2020 Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) plans and rates. The FEDVIP program offers vision insurance to military dependents, retirees and their families, as well as dental insurance for retirees and their families. For 2020, FEDVIP offers 10 dental and four vision carriers to choose from. Information about the 2020 plans is now available online. Read more [here](#).



**Veterans Wanted: Work for Graphic  
Packaging International**

With almost 18,000 employees working in more than 80 locations in North and South America, Europe and the Pacific Rim, we strive to be an environmentally responsible leader in our industry and in the communities where we operate.

[Search jobs now.](#)



**It Was the Biggest Scam in Tricare's History. Now Troops May Be Going to Jail**



For those who saw a loophole, it was easy money. In 2013, a handful of pharmacy companies that make compounded medications -- personalized dosages or formulas normally crafted for patients who can't tolerate certain ingredients -- discovered they could make treatments such as pain and scar creams, wound ointments and erectile dysfunction drugs, and market them to patients enrolled in Tricare. As of May 2019, the Justice Department has indicted and sentenced 74 people, with 50 more convicted and awaiting sentencing in the nationwide scheme perpetrated by at least 100 pharmacies. The criminals include at least five veterans, with more arrests of former service members possibly to come. Read more [here](#).





## **You Can Now Join the VA's Genetic Research Study**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that veterans can now join its genetic research study, the [Million Veteran Program](#) (MVP), online. The program, which began in 2011, is one of the largest programs on genetics and health in the world. It studies how military exposures, lifestyle and genetics affects a person's health. Currently, there are more than 775,000 veterans enrolled. Read more [here](#).



## **VA's Automobile Grant Increases for 2020**

The Department of Veterans Affairs' automobile grant increased to a maximum of \$21,488.29 effective Oct. 1 for fiscal 2020. The fiscal 2019 maximum amount was \$21,058.69. The VA pays the grant directly to the vehicle's seller for the total price, up to \$21,488.29. If it costs more than that, you must make up the difference. You can receive this grant only once. Read more about who qualifies [here](#).



## **Unemployment Rate for Post-9/11 Veterans Rises Again**

The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans went up to 4.5% in September, standing out as an exception in a Labor Department report that showed overall joblessness at a 50-year low of 3.5%. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans, who are classified as "Gulf War-era II veterans" by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, contrasted with the 3.1% rate for all veterans, the BLS said in its monthly report. Read more [here](#).



## **VA's Vocational Rehabilitation Rates Increase Oct. 1**

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that the subsistence allowance paid to veterans enrolled in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program would increase on Oct. 1, 2019. The program provides counseling, training, education and job placement assistance to veterans with a VA disability rating and an employment handicap. For fiscal 2020, there will be a 2.04% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the monthly subsistence benefit paid to eligible trainees using the program. See the new rates [here](#).



## **TRICARE Drug Costs Increasing for 2020**

As a result of skyrocketing prescription drug cost in recent years, TRICARE was mandated by Congress as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 to bring their prescription costs compatible with actual costs of prescription drugs in the civilian medical domain. Starting on Jan. 1, 2020, TRICARE prescription drug costs for beneficiaries are set to rise as much as 42 percent. However, prescriptions filled on base will continue to be free. Copayments for Express Scripts mail-order pharmacy prescriptions will increase for generic drugs, brand name drugs, and non-formulary drugs for a 90-day supply. Cost at retail pharmacies for prescriptions will increase as well for generic drug, brand-name drugs, and non-formulary drugs will for a 30-day supply. [Learn more.](#)




*CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !*



## Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2019 Now Law

Last Monday, the president signed the VFW-supported Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2019 into law. The new law provides cost of living increases equal to the same increase granted for Social Security benefits. The increase will be for wartime disability compensation, compensation for dependents, clothing allowance, and dependency and indemnity compensation to surviving spouses and children. These increases will take effect on Dec. 1, 2019. The VFW thanks Representative Elaine Luria (D-Va.) for introducing this legislation, and for her continued efforts to expand benefits for veterans and their families. [Learn more.](#)

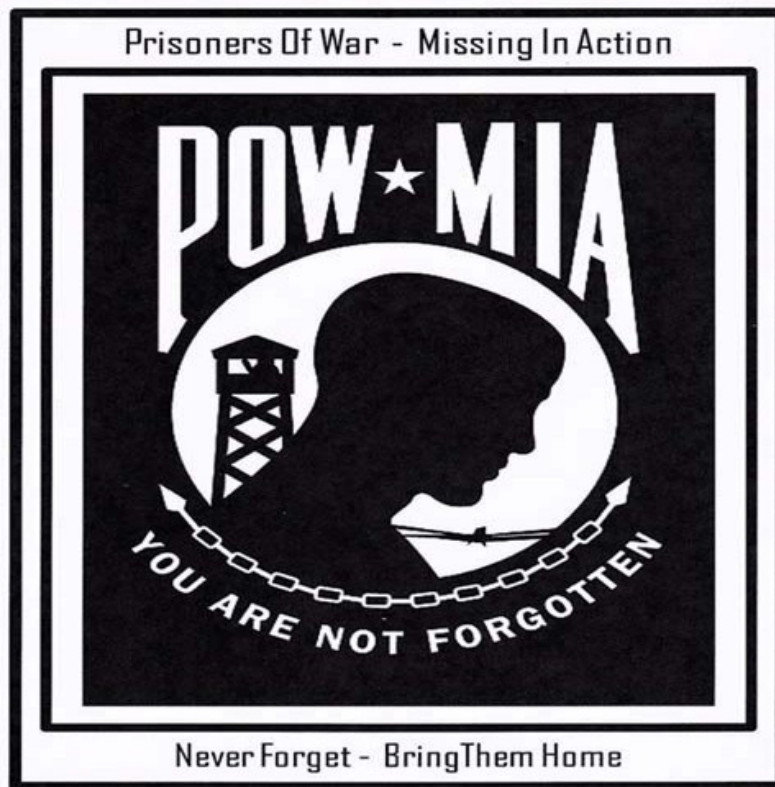




## Your actions could save a life.

Showing you care can make a big difference to someone in crisis.

VeteransCrisisLine.net



## Office of Inspector General

1. VA Health Care: Actions Needed to Improve Family Caregiver Program

2. Veterans Affairs: Additional Actions Needed to Increase Veterans' Burial Access
3. Veterans Affairs: Sustained Leadership Attention Needed to Address Long-Standing Workforce Problems
4. Veterans Health Care: VA Needs to Improve Its Allocation and Monitoring of Funding
5. Social Security Benefits: SSA Needs to Improve Oversight of Organizations that Manage Money for Vulnerable Beneficiaries
6. Medicaid: Efforts to Identify, Predict, or Manage High-Expenditure Beneficiaries
7. VA Health Care: Actions Needed to Improve Family Caregiver Program
8. Veterans Health Care: VA Needs to Improve Its Allocation and Monitoring of Funding
9. VA Disability Exams: Opportunities Remain to Improve Oversight of Contracted Examiners
10. VA Health Care: Actions Needed to Improve Family Caregiver Program
11. Veterans Affairs: Additional Actions Needed to Increase Veterans' Burial Access
12. Veterans Affairs: Sustained Leadership Attention Needed to Address Long-Standing Workforce Problems
13. Veterans Health Care: VA Needs to Improve



## Its Allocation and Monitoring of Funding

14. Veterans Benefits: Actions VA Could Take to Better Protect Veterans from Financial Exploitation

15. Medicaid Demonstrations: Actions Needed to Address Weaknesses in Oversight of Costs to Administer Work Requirements

16. Medicare: Spending on Certain Disposable Wound Care Devices in Home Health



1. The J. M. Smucker Company Issues Voluntary Recall of Specific Lots of Robin Hood® All Purpose Flour Distributed and Sold in the U.S.

Only

2. Ample Hills Manufacturing, LLC Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Peanut in Peppermint Pattie Ice Cream

3. Lung Injury Update: FDA Warns Public to Stop Using Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-Containing Vaping Products and Any Vaping Products Obtained Off the Street

4. Cornerstone Premium Foods Voluntarily Recalls Frozen Blackberries Due to Possible Health Risk of Norovirus
5. Grand Strand Sandwich Company Recalls Lunch Box Chicken Salad Fresh Wedges, Lunch Box Chicken Salad Frozen Wedges, Fresh and Local Chicken Salad Croissants Due to Possible Listeria Monocytogenes Contamination
6. Blue Bell Ice Cream Recalls a Select Lot of Butter Crunch Half Gallons for Possible Foreign Object
7. ICU Medical Issues a Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Certain Lots of Plum and Sapphire Microbore Infusion Sets with Inline Filters
8. Medtronic Recalls 6 French Sherpa NX Active Guide Catheters Due to Separation and Fragmentation Issue
9. Lipari Foods Issues Recall of Ham & Cheese Wedge Sandwiches Due to Potential Contamination of Listeria Monocytogenes
10. UNFI Voluntarily Recalls Arla Apetina Marinated Feta & Olives in Oil, Pitted Because of Possible Health Risk
11. Allergy Alert for Undeclared Milk & Egg In White Parkerhouse Rolls Issued by Four Whole Foods Market Stores in Midwest

12. Jumbo Foods Inc. Recalls Frozen & Fresh Chicken Salad Sandwiches Because of Possible Health Risk
13. Update: Recall of Frozen Cookie Dough Products Due to Allergen Health Risk is Expanded to Include Additional Lot Codes
14. Innoveix Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Issues Voluntary Recall of all Sterile Compounded Drug Products Due to a Lack of Sterility Assurance
15. MedWatch: The FDA Safety Information and Adverse Event Reporting Program
16. Fisherman's Pride Processors Issues Recall of Shrimp Product Due to Misbranding and Undeclared Milk and Soy Allergens



## Tax & Credit Information



1. IRS relief provides drought-stricken farmers, ranchers more time to replace livestock
2. IRS releases draft 2019 Forms 1065, 1120-S, and Schedules K-1
3. Taxpayer Bill of Rights outlines protections for all taxpayers

4. Taxpayers can explore several tax help options before visiting an IRS office
5. IRS grants relief for U.S. persons who own stock in certain foreign corporations
6. IRS extends Oct. 15 and other upcoming deadlines, provides other tax relief for victims of Tropical Storm Imelda
7. The earned income tax credit can put money in taxpayers' pockets
8. Reminder: Oct. 15 deadline approaching for taxpayers who requested extensions
9. Proposed regulations on reporting requirements; Penalty relief for reliance on Rev. Proc. 2018-38
10. Here's how the credit for other dependents can benefit taxpayers
11. What teachers should know about deducting out-of-pocket classroom expenses
12. New payment option available to taxpayers in private debt collection program
13. Tax reform publication translated into different languages
14. IRS celebrates National Work and Family Month Highlights credit for paid family and medical leave, other topics
15. Virtual currency: IRS issues additional

guidance on tax treatment and reminds taxpayers of reporting obligations

## 16. The child tax credit benefits eligible parents



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.



*CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE VFC NEWSLETTER !*



## MIA Update

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced eleven new identifications, and five burial updates for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from WWII and the Korean War. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

**Marine Corps Pfc. Ray P. Fairchild** was a member of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. He was killed in action on Nov. 27, 1950, near the town of Yudamni, west of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. His remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Fairchild.](#)

**Marine Corps Pfc. Jack B. Van Zandt** was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force. Van Zandt landed on the island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Van Zandt on the third day of the battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Van Zandt.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Norman A. Buan** was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force. Buan landed on the island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Buan on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Buan.](#)

**Marine Corps Pfc. Marley Arthurholtz** was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. On Dec. 7, 1941, Arthurholtz died in the attack along with 429 of his shipmates. Interment services are pending. [Read about Arthurholtz.](#)

**Army Sgt. 1st Class Riley Burchfield** was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. Burchfield was captured by enemy forces near Kunu-ri, North Korea. He reportedly died while in

custody of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces, at Prisoner of War Camp 5, in February 1951. Interment services are pending. [Read about Burchfield.](#)

**Army Pfc. John A. Shelemba** was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. Shelemba was reported missing in action while defending Taejon, South Korea on July 20, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Shelemba.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. John T. Burke**, 18, of Newton, N.C., whose identification was initially announced in May, will be buried on Oct. 26 in Hickory, N.C. Burke was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. In November 1943, his unit landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Burke died on Nov. 20, 1943. [Read about Burke.](#)

**Army Cpl. Jerry M. Garrison**, 21, of Lamar, Ark., whose identification was initially announced in August, will be buried on Oct. 22 in his hometown.



Garrison was a member of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when enemy forces attacked his unit near Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. [Read about Garrison.](#)

**Army Sgt. Gerald B. Raeymacker**, 21, of Dunkirk, N.Y., whose identification was initially announced in August, will be buried on Oct. 19 in his hometown. Raeymacker was a member of Battery B, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division, 31st Regimental Combat Team. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 6, 1950, in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. [Read about Raeymacker.](#)

**Army Pfc. David C. Wilkes**, 20, of Saline, Mo., whose identification was initially announced in July, will be buried Oct. 19 in Lakewood, Wash. Wilkes was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Approximately 2,500 U.S. and 700 South

Korean soldiers assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team, which was deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was attacked by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. Wilkes was initially reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when he could not be accounted for after the withdrawal, but his status was later amended to killed in action. [Read about Wilkes.](#)

**Coast Guard Lt. Thomas J.E. Crotty**, 30, from Buffalo, N.Y., whose identification was initially announced in September, will be buried Nov. 3 in his hometown. Crotty served aboard the USS Quail in the Philippines as part of the 16th Naval District-in-Shore Patrol Headquarters, during the onset of World War II. Crotty was among those reported captured after the surrender of Corregidor and held at the Cabanatuan POW camp, where he died on July 19, 1942. [Read about Crotty.](#)

**Marine Corps Pfc. Louis Wiesehan Jr.**, was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small

island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Wiesehan on the second day of battle, Nov. 21, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Wiesehan.](#)

**Marine Corps Pfc. Robert J. Hatch** was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Hatch on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Hatch.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. John R. Bayens** was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately

1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Bayens on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Bayens.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve 1st Lt. Justin G. Mills** was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Mills on the first day of battle, Nov. 20, 1943. [Read about Mills.](#)



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