



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, April 19, 2020

Volume 11, Issue 16



This-N-That

Good evening everyone,

I'd like to apologize again for my tardiness in getting this edition of the VFC Newsletter out!

Cancer doesn't need to be a death sentence, and for many it's not, provided it's caught in time and treatments begging.

For me, yes it's miserable, unbearable, but I still fight everyday. With radiation treatments five days a week that has become sort of a joke to me just to get through

it, so I go in get "deep fried from the inside, then tossed aside" that is till the next one, a total of 40 treatments.

Than compound that with Chemo treatments which last 4 hours each, every three weeks.

Radiation I have been able t handle reasonable well, but the Chemo usually with an hour seems to strike it's ugly head with nausea, loss of strength, and everything under the sun tasting like garbage, even my favorite foods. And this can last between 3 to 9 days so far.

And it's imperative you stay hydrated, lots of fluids, especially water, waters with nutrients, electrolytes, juices, anything you can tolerate well.

Al I can do as always is participate in the **TAKE ACTION** section! I now some maybe all items listed don't pertain to you, but your continued help is always very much and greatly appreciated. And helping your fellow Veteran is just as important. Then when legislation comes up that meets your needs those whom you've helped we sincerely hope they will return to help you as well.

I don't know how many have noticed, but some changes have been made to the VFC Website!

Kristijan has been working is tail off in re-writing code,

making adjustments, modifications and there are more to come.

The Contact Us Page is working now, but for the non-subscriber the contact information hasn't yet been adjusted to allow completion of the optional fields, but it is working. And for the subscribers, log in and you have complete access. And it has a feature where you click a box and it will send you a copy of the same message you sent.

The libraries now have a much cleaner looking download list with cleaner looking information document by document. In addition a "Search" feature has been added, or I should say been re-written so it will provide better results. Each file might have a FLAG "Hot", "NEW", etc to help easily identify new document that are of most importance.

FAQ's also has a "Search" feature that too had been recently added since there are so many it does help narrow your search down to what you're looking for, and soon we will be adding approximately 500 more FAQ's

If you have any ideas or thoughts, please do share them with us and we will certainly look at them and see if we can merge some or all of it into the new look.

But as a constant reminder, please stay home as much as possible, use hand sanitizer, clean all working surfaces constantly, especially food prep areas and when you need to go out make sure you have some form of face covering.

We all need to be mindful of our own health as well as those around us!

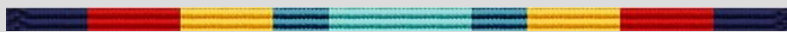
On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org



Rep. Andy Barr Introduces Veterans Benefits Fairness and Transparency Act

Lexington, Ky – This week Representative Andy Barr (KY-06) introduced H.R. 6493, Veterans Benefits Fairness and Transparency Act. This legislation protects veterans applying for VA disability benefits by requiring the VA to continue to make available on its website disability benefits questionnaires (DBQs) that medical providers and others assisting veterans use to submit evidence supporting disability claims. In

addition, the bill cuts down on bureaucratic inefficiencies by requiring the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to accept a veteran's DBQ for one year after it is completed and filed with the VBA, regardless if the VBA updates or changes the form. Veterans in Kentucky have reported receiving denial of disability claims to which they are legally entitled solely because the VBA changed its forms without their knowledge.

Recently, the VBA announced its intention to stop making DBQs available on its website. This decision will undermine veterans' ability to submit evidence in support of disability compensation because the VBA has closed its offices to in person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic and veterans, their representatives and their medical providers will not have access to the DBQ forms online. According to the VBA, the "purpose of a DBQ is to ensure the clinician performing the exam captures and records all the information needed by VBA claims processors to make a decision on a Veteran's claim." The idea for this legislation was brought to Congressman Barr by a member of the Sixth District Veterans Coalition, who regularly assists fellow veterans with the VA disability claims process.

"Veterans should not have their disability claim delayed

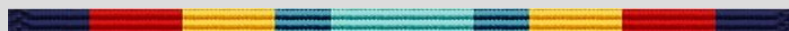
or denied because the VA changed their DBQ form during the application process,” Congressman Barr said. “Additionally, veterans’ disability claims should not be stalled during the COVID-19 pandemic and veterans, their representatives and medical providers should retain uninterrupted access to DBQ forms online throughout the duration of the public health crisis. That is why I introduced the Veterans Benefits Fairness and Transparency Act, which will protect veterans by ensuring that the time it takes to file and receive a fair decision on a disability claim is not delayed.”

Hunt VanderToll

Legislative Director

Congressman Andy Barr (KY-06)

Phone: (202) 225-4706



Editors Note to Veterans Benefits Fairness and Transparency Act

The VA has recently announced is rescinding the use of DBQ's (VA Form 21-4142-a) which are an absolute necessity for Doctors to complete in order for any claim and / or appeal to be processed properly.

The longer Wilkie remains in office transparency will be being tossed right out the window making is more and

more difficult for claims to be processed and adjudicated as prescribed by law.

I've had many VSO' and DRO' contact me for copies, thankfully I've found them and maintain them on my secure server, but the audacity of the VA to knowingly hide them is uncontainable at best!

In one piece of legislations they completely stripped the "duty to assist", again another step in preventing more claims from being properly adjudicated with a positive outcome.

I would like you to please call your reps, don't ask, but politely demand re-instatement of both duty to assist and FORM 21-4142-a. For those who need the form, please contact me direct at Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org and I will provide it to you at absolutely no cost, you're entitled to it.

I would love to find a way to legally siphon off all the adjudications, spend the time to reorganize and label them properly and upload to the VFC Site. Mainly so people like myself don't have to waste countless hours to find a single award that meets all the criteria I'm looking for which could or would help another Vet with their claim.

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder



Links to Other Stories

1. Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
2. How VA and Tricare Users Can Get Tested for Coronavirus
3. Dr. Richard Stone, VA Executive in Charge: VA is here for Veterans during COVID-19
4. Coronavirus: What Veterans Need to Know
5. GI Bill Fix Will Keep Funds Flowing During Pandemic
6. A full night's sleep could be the best defense against COVID-19
7. Promising Results in Trial of Universal Flu Vaccine Candidate
8. Veterans' tips on keeping calm during coronavirus, staying safe
9. Allstate to return \$600 million in auto premiums as pandemic cuts driving
10. Mysterious Heart Damage, Not Just Lung Troubles, Befalling COVID-19 Patients
11. Borne the Battle #180: Benefits Breakdown: Appeals Modernization Part II
12. Free audio books for Veterans with disabilities
13. #VeteranOfTheDay Air Force Veteran Chuck Norris

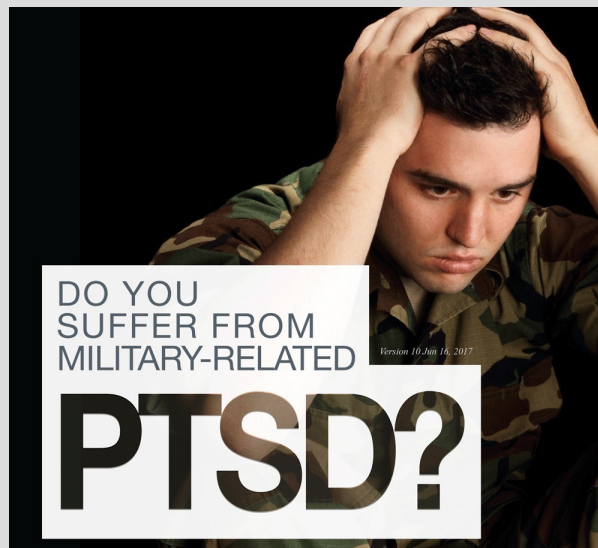
Check us out today: www.Veterans-for-change.org



FDA Withdrawal of Zantac Affects Military Health Beneficiaries

The Food and Drug Administration advised a withdrawal of all over-the-counter and prescription ranitidine April 1, 2020. The drug, often referred to by its brand name, Zantac, is most commonly used to treat heartburn, stomach ulcers, gastroesophageal reflux disease, and other conditions related to stomach acid levels.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



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



Supplemental Security Income Recipients Will Receive Automatic COVID-19 Economic Impact Payments

The Social Security Administration announced today that Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will receive automatic Economic Impact Payments directly from the Treasury Department. Treasury anticipates these automatic payments no later than early May.

SSI recipients who have qualifying children under age 17, however, should not wait for their automatic \$1,200 individual payment. They should now go to the IRS's webpage at www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here and visit the Non-Filers: Enter Your Payment Info section to provide their information.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/>.



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 our new webmaster has been making repairs to things that haven't worked properly in

over a year.

There are still repairs being made, but the polls are now working 100% and there are five polls open to all to take.

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 15,577 hits per day, and downloads average **7,818** per day with a total **6,131,936** 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 **18,699** documents in 171+ Libraries, added **49** documents on-line (Updated: 04/11/20)
- 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: 02/26/18) (**115** Added)
 - News (Articles On-Line: **9,660**)
 - Polls
 - Web Links, more than **7,461**, Added **55** New Links (Updated: 04/02/20)

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



VFW Urges Congress to Include Medically Retired Veterans in the Stimulus Bill

The VFW is urging Congress to pass the [Major Richard Star Act](#) during this challenging COVID-19 pandemic to help put money back in the pockets of veterans who were forced to retire early from military service because of battlefield injury or illness.

“Retirement pay and VA disability compensation are fundamentally different benefits, granted for different reasons,” said VFW National Commander William “Doc” Schmitz. “To deny earned retirement pay from veterans who were unfortunately medically retired early because of wounds or illnesses sustained on the battlefield is an absolute injustice that must end now.”

The Major Richard Star Act would eliminate the unjust offset for 42,000 Chapter 61 retirees who suffered injuries in combat. This is a modest segment of the approximately 450,000 military retirees who are unjustly denied their retirement pay. [Learn more.](#)



Below are links to all currently active pre-written E-Mails to many pieces of legislation. We ask that you go

to each one, and send the pre-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. [Urge Congress to Pass the Retired Pay Restoration Act](#)
3. [Protect Bankrupt Disabled Veterans from Losing Benefits](#)
4. [S. 2966, the Rural Veterans Travel Enhancement Act of 2019](#)
5. [S. 1003, VET OPP Act to Reform VA Employment Programs](#)
6. [H.R. 4574 - Pass the Veterans' Right to Breathe Act Now!](#)
7. [S. 2810, the Veterans Hearing Benefits Act of 2019](#)
8. [Support H.R.4985, the Veterans Residential Care Choice Act](#)
9. [New Concurrent Receipt Bills Introduced!](#)
10. [STOP Downsizing of Military Treatment facilities](#)
11. [Support H.R. 5610 and S. 3444 to add Agent Orange Presumptives](#)
12. [Temporarily Waive TRICARE Mail Order Campaign](#)

13. Need Your Help on Recovery Rebate Checks
14. Put In Stimulus Bill a Waiver of Mail Order Copays During Pandemic
15. Ensure Service Members and Their Families Have Safe Quality Housing

Please help us to help your fellow Veteran or Veteran friend, and be sure to call your rep to follow up and re-enforce the need for this legislation to be passed!



TRICARE Limits Refills of Some Inhalers

If you have asthma or another respiratory condition, you may be familiar with albuterol and levalbuterol inhalers. Because of COVID-19, the demand for these two inhaler drugs is now much higher than normal. In response to the high demand, TRICARE is implementing quantity limits on these two drugs. Beginning April 10, you'll receive only one inhaler per 30 days.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



~~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

These groups are similar to "Face Book" without the BS, Nazi Gestapo Monitoring Police and far few headaches. Joins us, share your story, lets see is someone or if we can help!





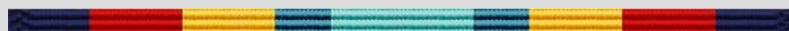
HOME *of the* FREE
BECAUSE *of the* BRAVE

Honoring those who served



VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act Now Law

The president signed the VFW-supported [VA Tele-Hearing Modernization Act](#) into law last Friday. The new law permits appellants in disability compensation cases before the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) to appear remotely by picture and voice transmissions, also known as "tele-hearings," from locations other than VA facilities. "Tele-hearings provide veterans with an opportunity to conveniently attend hearings for their disability compensation cases before the Board of Veterans' Appeals," said VFW Washington Office Executive Director B.J. Lawrence. "The VFW lauds the enactment of this law, which will significantly improve access for veteran appellants in disability compensation cases and would permit a greater number of veterans to participate in the appeals process." The VFW thanks all original cosponsors for their efforts to expand veteran access to tele-hearings. [Learn more.](#)



VA Reports Increase Deaths from COVID-19

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently reported 241 deaths from the Coronavirus. The VA reports only one death of a veteran younger than age 50. VA officials said the first death of a VA patient older than 100 was a veteran at New York City's Brooklyn medical center. New York is now the hardest-hit region nationally by the fast spreading virus. The Brooklyn VA medical center became the second site to reach 30 deaths from coronavirus, behind the VA facility in New Orleans. More than 4,000 patients in VA care have tested positive for COVID-19.

The VA's Veterans Health Administration is the largest integrated health care system in the United States with an annual budget of more than \$68 billion. It provides care at 1,243 health care facilities, including 170 VA Medical Centers and 1,063 outpatient sites of varying complexity. The system serves more than 9 million enrolled veterans each year.





Get Familiar with Your Emergency and Urgent Care Options

During the COVID-19 crisis, you may have more questions than usual about where to seek care or even the level of care you need. Now is the time to learn the difference between emergency and urgent care, and the rules for your TRICARE health plan. That way, you can get the appropriate treatment you need.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



VFW Sends Letter to President Trump to Keep VSO 48-Hour Claims Review

On Wednesday, the VFW sent a joint Veterans Service Organization (VSO) letter to President Trump requesting that he direct VA Secretary Wilkie to maintain the policy of permitting VSOs to review claims decisions within the 48-hours preceding promulgation. During the 48-hour review period, VSOs inspect claims for accuracy to ensure that all claims were properly evaluated and are free from error prior to a veteran receiving notification of a ratings decision. “The 48-hour review period is an essential feature of the VA claims process,” stated VFW National Commander William “Doc” Schmitz and the leaders of seven other VSOs. “Eliminating VSO review prior to finalizing a claim decision would lead to VA wrongfully denying veterans their earned benefits because of correctable errors. Moreover, this abrupt policy change comes amidst the nationwide public health crisis caused by COVID-19. During these uncertain times, VA should not implement broad policy changes to veterans’ claims adjudication, which will only bring about more uncertainty.” [Read the letter.](#)



**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



Emergency Stimulus Checks

All eligible veterans will receive their 2020 stimulus check regardless of whether they filed taxes or not. Veterans who do not file taxes because they rely on VA benefits are still eligible to receive stimulus checks. Such veterans can go to the [IRS Coronavirus Tax Relief and Economic Impact Payments webpage](#) to input their direct deposit and dependent information to help expedite and track when they will receive the stimulus checks. Eligible individuals for whom the IRS does not have direct deposit information and do not submit their data electronically will instead receive paper checks through the mail, which is estimated to take several months.



35 Reps Demand SecDef Help Military Families Impacted by Stop Movement Order

Thirty-five U.S. Representatives have dispatched a letter to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper urging the Department of Defense to provide more direction and support to help service members and military families who are financially impacted by the Pentagon's 60-day stop movement orders.

"While the stop-movement order was noble and necessary, this unprecedented action left thousands of military families in extreme financial distress," the letter states.

Two stop-movement orders were issued in March by the Defense Secretary in response to the spreading coronavirus outbreak and barred all travel including military moves and redeployments. The travel restrictions have impacted thousands of service members and their families around the world. The inability to follow through with their change of station, separation or retirement, is making them pay for two residences, having to repurchase necessities and in some cases, creating job losses for spouses. Some military families are finding themselves in extreme financial distress. The letter urges the DoD to provide the necessary assistance and resources to the

thousands of military families under extreme financial distress as a result of the Stop Movement Order.

In the letter, members wrote, "We strongly urge you to show the same level of swift action you did in issuing the Stop Movement Order to exercise every measure within your authority to provide the Services with the guidance and resources needed to ensure care and support to every military member and family adversely affected by this order."

The letter was signed by; U.S. Reps. Debra Haaland (N.M.) James P. McGovern (Mass.), Brian Fitzpatrick (Pa.), Matt Gaetz (Fla.), Jackie Speier (Calif.), Cheri Bustos (Ill.), Eleanor Holmes Norton (District of Columbia), Denny Heck (Wash.), Donald S. Beyer, Jr. (Va.), Madeleine Dean (Pa.), Tulsi Gabbard (Hawaii), Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.(Calif.), Veronica Escobar (Texas), Jason Crow (Colo.), William Lacy Clay (Mo.), Doug Lamborn (Colo.), Elaine G. Luria (Va.), Terri Sewell (Ala.), Anthony Brindisi (N.Y.), Ruben Gallego (Ariz.), Michael Waltz (Fla.), Joe Wilson (S.C.), Tony Cardenas (Calif.), Anthony G. Brown (Md.), Stephen F. Lynch (Mass.), Vicki Hartzler (Mo.), Lauren Underwood (Ill.), Julia Brownley (Calif.), Seth Moulton (Mass.), Mike Levin (Calif.), Jamie Raskin (Md.), Salud Carbajal (Calif.), William R. Keating (Mass.) and Colin Allred (Texas).



Office of Inspector General

1. Preventing Drug Diversion: Disposal of Controlled Substances in Home Hospice Settings
2. Child Care and Development Fund: Office of Child Care Should Strengthen Its Oversight and Monitoring of Program-Integrity Risks
3. Telecommunications and Call Centers: Observations on Federal Contracting Practices
4. Cybersecurity: DOD Needs to Take Decisive Actions to Improve Cyber Hygiene
5. Presidential Helicopter: Program is Meeting Cost Goals but Some Technical and Schedule Risks Remain



**VA to Reimburse Denied and Rejected
Non-Department Emergency Claims**

Starting this week, many veterans will have their rejected emergency room expenses reimbursed by VA. The action stems from a [VFW-supported court](#) case decided in September 2019, which found VA failed to comply with laws and regulations requiring it to reimburse veterans for emergency room visits. This week, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, again, ruled that VA's new regulations are in violation. The court has required VA to reexamine more than 72,000 rejected claims, and update its rule. VA estimates it will need to reimburse between \$1.8 billion and \$6.5 billion in new and previously denied emergency room claims to comply with the court order. [Read more.](#)



COVID-19 Testing Costs

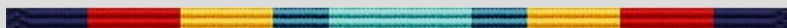
Under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#), TRICARE will waive co-pays for approved COVID-19 testing that is ordered by a doctor. Beneficiaries are not responsible for copays for tests (and related provider services and supplies) furnished on or after the date of enactment. Claims that were filed with a copay will be re-processed to remove the copayment or cost-share. Beneficiaries who already paid a copay for now-covered tests can file for reimbursement. [Learn more.](#)



Facebook, VA, and The American Red Cross Provide a Connection

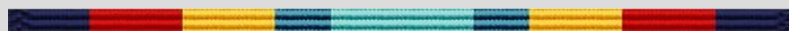
As a part of the PREVENTS initiative, veterans enrolled in VA's caregiver support programs or a geriatric and extended care program now qualify for two free video-calling devices while supplies last. [The program provides two portal devices](#): one for the veterans and the other for a caregiver or family member. VA has seen a 70% increase in mental health appointments in March compared to February. [Read more](#). During this time of social distancing and loneliness, it is more important to check in with both veterans and their caregivers. [#BeThere](#) and keep these resources handy:

- [Veterans Crisis Line](#): Dial 1.800.273.8255 and press 1 to talk to someone or send a text message to 838255 to connect with a VA responder.
- [VA Caregiver Support Line](#): 1.855.260.3274 (toll free 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST).



Reproductive Health and COVID

Last week, VA presented a cyber-seminar on “[COVID-19: Emerging Considerations Regarding the Care for Women Veterans for Clinicians and Researchers.](#)” The cyber-seminar centered around reproductive health, maternity care consults, gynecologic care, access to contraceptives, infertility treatments, labor and delivery, breastfeeding, interpersonal partner violence, domestic violence, mental health, and telehealth during the [COVID pandemic](#). The [seminar](#) is now available on the [HSR&D library](#).



Pentagon Deploys Work-at-Home Strategy to Limit Exposure for Employees

The Pentagon workforce has shifted to a Maximum Telework status to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). "We are creating a much more robust, enhanced teleworking capability," Defense Department Chief Information Officer Dana Deasy recently told reporters at the Pentagon. "What we've done is put a multiplier effect into the quantity, types of services, etc. There will be some permanency to what we have here, specifically more on the network side. We will also have created a base of teleworking equipment that we will be able to, in some cases, reuse for other purposes. But yes, there will be an enhanced

teleworking capability that will be sustained at the end of COVID-19."

The Navy's Outlook Web Access service went from 10,000 to 80,000 users within a week and very soon there will be 300,000. The Marines went from a remote work capacity of 70,000 to more than 105,000 in just a couple of weeks.

However, the Government Accountability Office claims the Defense Department has failed to adequately protect its computer and information systems from common and pervasive cybersecurity threats. A recent GAO report indicates that cybersecurity initiatives at the Defense of Department are incomplete - or their status is unknown because no one is in charge or reporting on progress.





How does a benefit become covered in TRICARE?

Are you wondering how a benefit becomes covered in TRICARE? While things are changing rapidly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRICARE has a few steps it must follow to change your benefit. These steps are in place to make sure your benefit is safe, proven, and effective. They must also be in accordance with federal law and regulations. [Learn more.](#)



FDA Withdrawal of Zantac Affects Military Health Beneficiaries

On April 1, 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) advised a withdrawal of all over-the-counter and prescription ranitidine. The drug, often referred to by its brand name, Zantac, is most commonly used to treat heartburn, stomach ulcers, gastroesophageal reflux disease, and other conditions related to stomach acid levels. Consumers taking prescription ranitidine should talk to their doctor before stopping the medication. Anyone taking over-the-counter ranitidine products should immediately stop taking the drug and dispose of all supplies safely, according to FDA guidelines. The FDA is removing ranitidine products from the market because the agency determined that the impurity in some ranitidine products increases over time when stored at higher than room temperatures and may result in consumer exposure to unacceptable levels of this impurity. For an alternative to this medication, please consult your health care provider. [Read more.](#)





**TRICARE is Here to Help: COVID-19
Information, Resources in One Place**

As the nation addresses the COVID-19 public health emergency, TRICARE is adapting. Updated services and policy aims to keep you and providers safe and healthy. Learn where you can find the information you need to stay informed.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



90-Day Pause of DHA Transition for MTFs

To allow the military services and the Defense Health Agency (DHA) to focus efforts on the COVID-19 response, Deputy Secretary of Defense David Norquist approved a 90-day pause in activities to transition military treatment facilities to the DHA. The decision will be assessed again after 45 days. Service medical organizations are required to extend their direct support to DHA for a period beyond Sept. 30, 2020, equal to the total number of pause days. The decision puts on hold the transitions of the next five market offices (Tidewater, San Antonio, Colorado Springs, Puget Sound, and Hawaii). The transition implementation will continue as soon as is practical, and will occur as conditions allow over the next 1-5 years.



Roll of Honor: VA Honors Veterans Online During the COVID-19 Pandemic

With the health and safety concerns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Cemetery Administration has adjusted operations in ways we never expected, such as temporarily discontinuing committal services while continuing to provide interments.

In these challenging times, we are launching a new web page, updated daily, which provides the names of those Veterans interred in our national cemeteries from the previous day.

I invite you to join me in visiting this page and taking a moment to honor these Veterans.

Thank you,
Randy Reeves
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs



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Your actions
could save a life.

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

VeteransCrisisLine.net

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

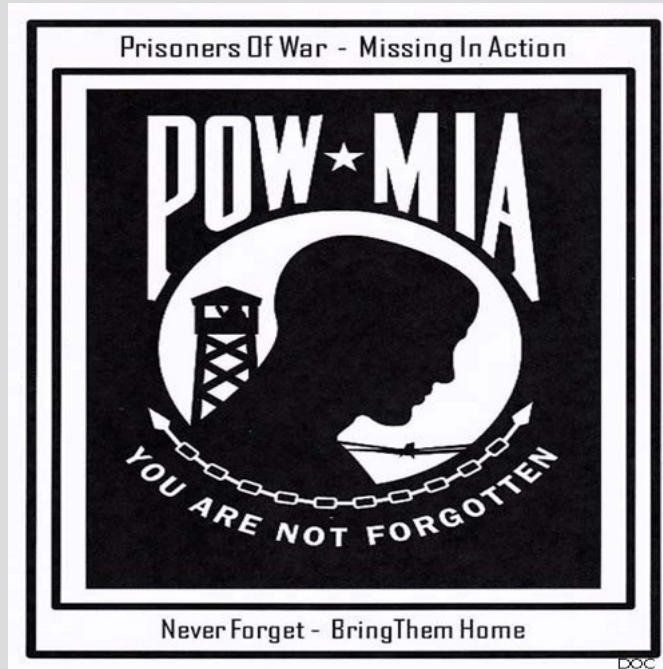


Copayments Waived for COVID-19 Tests On or After March 18

Did you know you can ask to have TRICARE copayments waived for certain COVID-19 testing and office visits related to the testing? This applies to tests and visits on or after March 18.

To learn more, [read the article](#).





Tax & Credit Information



1. Treasury, IRS launch new tool to help non-filers register for Economic Impact Payments
2. IRS extends more tax deadlines, including Form 990-series returns and notices
3. Here's how much individuals will get from the Economic Impact Payments
4. IRS, Security Summit partners warn tax professionals on scams, urge additional security measures to protect taxpayer data
5. REMINDER: Schedule and pay federal taxes electronically due by July 15; only a few hours remaining for taxpayers to reschedule payments set for April 15
6. Security tips for working from home (WFH)
7. Cybercriminals impersonate World Health Organization to distribute fake coronavirus e-book



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!



New Procedures for Witnessing Interments at VA National Cemeteries due to COVID-19

All Department of Veterans Affairs' national cemeteries remain open and continue to provide interment for Veterans and eligible individuals during this health crisis. As you are aware, on March 23rd the National Cemetery Administration temporarily discontinued committal services while continuing to allow families to witness their loved ones' interments (up to 10 individuals).

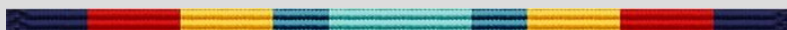
We seek your continued assistance in ensuring that those who are visiting national cemeteries as witnesses are aware of CDC and local guidelines intended to protect healthy and safety. CDC guidance is available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/> Please emphasize with families that the CDC recommends

those individuals who are not feeling well, have been exposed to someone who is COVID positive, or have received a COVID positive diagnosis to not leave their homes except to get medical care and to not visit public areas. NCA is offering all families the option to postpone the interment, or to proceed with the interment and provide a memorial service at a later date. Families choosing to witness should also understand our staff are closely following CDC guidelines on social distancing, to include maintaining safe distances and using personal protective equipment such as face masks and gloves.

Effective, Wednesday, April 15, 2020, to ensure social distancing at the cemetery, witnessing family members will now be asked to view the interment from their cars or the road very near their cars. Families may visit the gravesite in the days following the interment consistent with CDC guidelines and local travel restrictions.

Thank you for your cooperation,
The National Cemetery Administration





The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced four new identifications 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 Pvt. Jack R. Stambaugh, 20, 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, in an attempt to secure the island. Over

several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Stambaugh died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. He was reported to have been buried in Row D of the East Division Cemetery, later renamed Cemetery 33. Interment services are pending. [Read about Stambaugh.](#)

Army Pfc. Anthony F. Mendonca, 28, was a member of Company A, 106th Infantry Regiment, 27th Infantry Division, when American forces participated in the battle for Saipan, part of a larger operation to secure the Mariana Islands. Mendonca was killed during fighting on June 28, 1944. His remains were reportedly not recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Mendonca.](#)

Army Sgt. Billy V. Rodgers, 19, was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Rodgers.](#)

Army Pvt. Wayne M. Evans, 21, was a member of Battery G, 59th Coast Artillery Regiment, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula on April 9, 1942, and of Corregidor Island on May 6, 1942. Interment services are pending. [Read about Evans.](#)



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