



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, July 05, 2020

Volume 11, Issue 24



This-N-That

Good afternoon Jim,

Tomorrow is the 4th of July, a day of celebration with picnics, BBQ's and fireworks. For those who live near Veterans, please keep in mind that the loud noises and smells can be a trigger for these Veterans.

The last five or six weeks now we've still not heard anything positive toward our homeless Veterans, nor those who are suicide prone. Pretty sad case when both can and should be easily solved. And the silence from Congress and the VA is deafening and shows me

at least that neither is an important issue.

And there have been some reports from various states that now that the coronavirus is on the decline, that suicide rates are on the increase.

I don't know how they correlate, but this is what is being reported.

Funding to deal with both homelessness and suicide is built into each VA Medical Centers budget, but what's been happening is those funds are being diverted elsewhere, not in all Medical Centers but a good majority of them. How and why is not clear, and who is or isn't monitoring this situation is not clear, so who is to be held accountable?

As I've said, there are many different styles of mini homes being built and all relatively cheap and fully self contained.

Many VA Hospitals have approximately 75-100 acres of land available that could handle up to 400 mini homes.

Also placing Veterans in a position to be near medical and mental health treatment and have a visiting nurse available.



Makes me wonder, what's the cost of the life of a Veteran today?

We've added 116 new web links to the system. And will be adding more documents soon.

We're still looking for more ideas of what we need added to the website, so 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.

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



Retiring from the National Guard or Reserve?

Are you a National Guard or Reserve member who has retired or is about to retire? When you retire from the National Guard or Reserve, your TRICARE coverage changes. Learn how TRICARE options may change for you and your family and what you must do.

Download the new [TRICARE Retiring from the National Guard or Reserve brochure](#).

The brochure covers what your TRICARE options are when you are:

- Under age 60
- Ages 60 through 64
- Age 65 and older

You'll also learn about pharmacy coverage and voluntary dental and vision coverage.





HASC Approves NDAA

The House Armed Services Committee approved their version of the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-H.R.6395) and sent it to the House for further consideration. Rep. John Garamendi (Calif.) offered an amendment that includes the provisions of the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act (H.R.463), which would authorize the retention of the full final month's retired pay by the surviving spouse (or other designated survivor) for the month in which the member was alive for at least 24 hours. Rep. Elaine Luria (Va.) offered an amendment to waive TRICARE pharmacy co-pays during the pandemic and another amendment that allows young adults to stay on their parents' TRICARE plan until age 26. All three amendments were withdrawn. The bill will now go the House floor for further consideration.

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved their version of the NDAA on June 10, which is now on the Senate floor awaiting further consideration, including some floor amendments. After both chambers approve their version of the NDAA, a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the differences between the two bills. Once that occurs, both chambers will vote on the final bill. If approved, it will go to the president to be signed into law or vetoed.

Both the House and Senate will be considering floor amendments to their versions of the NDAA, and the FRA is expecting floor amendments to include:

- Waiving co-pay for prescriptions filled during the pandemic;
- Expanding concurrent receipt eligibility for certain medically retired veterans;
- The Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act (H.R.463) that would authorize the retention of the full final month's retired pay by the surviving spouse for the month in which the member was alive for at least 24 hours; and
- Authorize the National Academy of Medicine to perform an independent study to determine if Agent Orange was or was not used in Guam.

Everyone is strongly urged to use the [FRA Action](#)

Center to weigh in on these issues.



Links to Other Stories

1. [How to Make Your Dog a Service Dog](#)
2. [VA doesn't have the personal protective equipment it needs to handle second pandemic wave](#)
3. [California must protect the Barstow Veterans Home](#)
4. [VA GAF Score and WHODAS | Mental Health Ratings](#)
5. [Veteran suicide risk could increase as COVID-19 pandemic diminishes, experts warn](#)
6. [Federal Indictment For Pensacola Man Accused Of Possessing Firearms at Veterans Affairs Facility](#)
7. [VA supports Whole Health for Women Veterans](#)
8. [The Link between Sleep Apnea and Hypertension](#)
9. [VA sees rise in active coronavirus cases among patients in recent days](#)
10. [Suspects Arraigned on Charges for Stealing \\$470,000 in Public Benefits by Defrauding VA, Michigan Treasury](#)
11. [New trauma training program prepares surgical team for deployment](#)
12. [Study Shows the Success of Whole Health](#)
13. [Four Florida Men Charged for Their Roles in a \\$54 Million Compound Pharmacy Kickback Scheme](#)

14. Oklahoma Contractors to Pay \$2.8 Million to Settle False Claims Act Allegations Concerning Fraudulently Obtained Small Business Contracts
15. Medical Technology Company President Charged in Scheme to Defraud Investors and Health Care Benefit Programs in Connection with COVID-19 Testing
16. Which is good cholesterol? LDL or HDL?
17. VA Employee Sentenced For Orchestrating \$19 Million Corruption Scheme
18. Buffalo Man Pleads Guilty To Assaulting A VA Police Officer
19. Injured military Veteran denied service at credit union for not wearing mask
20. STUDY: Suicide, substance abuse risk for Veterans on the rise during pandemic



TRICARE Select Enrollment Fees Beginning 2021

Those TRICARE Select beneficiaries under age 65 and joining the military before Jan. 1, 2018 (Group A) are scheduled to pay a monthly fee beginning Jan. 1, 2021. The monthly fee for an individual is \$12.50 and \$25 for a family. These and other fee increases were opposed by the FRA and were authorized by the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-S.2943-P.L. 114-328).

The Defense Health Agency announced that these beneficiaries will be receiving a communication from their regional contractors with instructions on how to set up payments. The DHA notes that failure to pay will mean loss of coverage until the following open enrollment period. For more information about the fees please [go online](#).



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! (Updated 06/21/20)

1. [Support Veterans Economic Recovery Act!](#)
2. [Support NDAA Provision to Authorize A Study of Agent Orange Exposure of Service members on Guam](#)
3. [Temporarily Waive TRICARE Mail Order Co-pays](#)



Packing Up and Moving with TRICARE

Does your family have permanent change of station, or PCS, orders to move to a new location this summer? According to the Department of Defense (DoD) website Move.mil, the DoD moves more families than any other organization in the U.S. Whether you're moving on government orders or on your own, you may have a lot of questions, including what will happen to your health care.

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



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

ANC Reduces Restrictions for Funerals

Arlington National Cemetery will now allow more people to attend funerals. The ANC will now allow up to 50 people at gravesites during military funerals, an increase from the 10-person limit that went into effect in March. The cemetery will also begin offering more honors at funerals such as gun salutes, body bearers, buglers and drummers. These elements of the burial ceremony had been curtailed for three months because of the coronavirus pandemic. "Arlington National Cemetery will continue to balance activities to protect our workforce, funeral attendees and family pass holders while we work to accomplish our most sacred mission in this [COVID-19] environment," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, executive director of the cemetery.

The restrictions have been reduced because coronavirus cases in the Washington area are trending down, the cemetery said in a statement. In Washington, Maryland and Virginia, hospitalizations were trending down. The ANC is in phase two of its four-phase plan. Phase three is expected to include opening the cemetery to the public, with some restrictions in place.

As of now, the cemetery will remain closed to anyone except family pass holders and funeral attendees. Anyone who enters is required to wear a face mask

and maintain social distancing. Family pass holders and funeral attendees are allowed only to visit their loved one's grave, and then exit the cemetery when they are done. While the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority reopened 15 Metro train stations Monday, the Arlington National Cemetery stop remains closed.



Office of Inspector General

1. Homeless Veterans: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen Interagency Collaboration and Performance Measurement Procedures
2. Air Travel and Communicable Diseases: Status of Research Efforts and Action Still Needed to Develop Federal Preparedness Plan
3. Air Travel and Communicable Diseases: Status of Research Efforts and Action Still Needed to Develop Federal Preparedness Plan Statement of Heather M Krause, Director, Physical Infrastructure



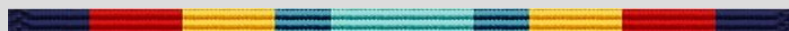


CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !



Virtual July Fourth Celebrations

Celebrate the Fourth of July with the 40th annual broadcast of [A Capitol Fourth](#) which will air on PBS on Saturday, July 4, 2020, from 8:00 - 9:30 p.m. ET. This year's concert performance was pre-taped without live audiences, as the concert will not be held on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. You can also celebrate with the National Archives' first-ever [virtual Fourth of July celebration](#). This year's festivities will include a reading of the Declaration of Independence, as well as other family-friendly programming.



House Holds Hearing on VA Reproductive Health

On Wednesday, members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee and Women Veterans Task Force conducted a hearing on veterans' access to reproductive health care. Chief Officer of Women's Health Services Dr. Patricia Hayes and Deputy Director of Reproductive Health Dr. Alicia Christy responded to questions regarding VA's policies and procedures on in vitro fertilization, maternity care, contraceptive care, termination of pregnancy under extreme circumstances, and research on the reproductive health of both men and women. In a statement submitted for the record, the VFW cited results from a VFW survey of women veterans on gender-specific services, expanding teleradiology to include mammography, extending newborn care coverage, and ensuring VA prioritizes veterans' reproductive health. [Watch the hearing.](#) [Read the VFW's testimony.](#)



Legislation Introduced to Recognize Early Vietnam Veterans

Sens. John Boozman (R-AR) and Jon Tester (D-MT) introduced VFW-supported [S. 4086](#), the Forgotten Vietnam Veterans Act. This important legislation is the Senate companion bill to [H.R. 6082](#), and would allow veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam from Nov. 1, 1955, to Feb. 27, 1961, to receive wartime benefits. “More than 3,000 veterans served in Vietnam from Nov. 1, 1955, to Feb. 27, 1961, 10 of whom were killed in action,” said VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Matthew Doyle. The VFW thanks Sens. Boozman and Tester for their efforts to expand benefits for veterans. [Read more.](#)



VA Launches COVID-19 Screening Tool

On Monday, VA announced the launch of a digital [COVID-19 screening tool](#) to streamline veteran access to medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Veterans, their caregivers, and VA health care employees can use this tool on their mobile phones before entering facilities. It takes less than a minute to complete and ideally will help to reduce wait times. “This screening tool emphasizes the ongoing importance of VA’s investment in digital modernization, as it went from initial concept to national availability in less than two weeks,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “In addition to providing a broad range of innovations and improvements that significantly benefit the veterans we serve; our culture of innovation allows us to respond quickly to urgent and evolving needs.”



VA Simplifies Travel Reimbursement System

VA is implementing a new system for veterans and eligible beneficiaries to submit and track transportation reimbursement claims using VA's secure web-based portal, [Access VA](#). The Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS), which is accessible 24/7, 365 days a year, will simplify how [eligible veterans and beneficiaries](#) claim mileage reimbursement for travel and travel-related expenses. The roll out of this system is scheduled from July through November 2020. While BTSSS will replace the use of kiosks, in-person claims and hard-copy submissions will still be an option. [Read more.](#)



Tax & Credit Information



1. [IRS provides guidance for estates and trusts for itemizing deductions](#)
2. [COVID-19 paid leave tax credits for small and midsize businesses](#)
3. [IRS: Three new credits are available to many businesses hit by COVID-19](#)
4. [Taxpayers have until July 15 to file and pay their taxes](#)
5. [Low-income people are eligible to get an Economic](#)

Impact Payment

6. VA and SSI recipients act now to add eligible children to Economic Impact Payment
7. SSI and VA recipients with a child who don't file taxes should visit IRS.gov now
8. IRS retools Settlement Days program in response to COVID-19 pandemic; allows unrepresented taxpayers to settle their cases virtually and reach finality Act by Wednesday for chance to get quicker Economic Impact Payment; timeline for payments continues to accelerate
9. Treasury, IRS release latest state-by-state Economic Impact Payment figures
10. IRS People First Initiative provides relief to taxpayers
11. IRS People First Initiative provides relief to taxpayers facing COVID-19 issues
12. IRS provides tax relief through increased flexibility for taxpayers in section 125 cafeteria plans
13. IRS provides guidance on the deductibility and reporting of certain amounts paid to, or at the direction of, governments
14. What people really want to know about Economic Impact Payments
15. Taxpayers act now to receive Economic Impact Payments by direct deposit
16. Why the Economic Impact Payment amount could be different than anticipated

17. Relief for taxpayers affected by COVID-19 who take distributions or loans from retirement plans
Returning an Economic Impact Payment
18. IRS outlines changes to health care spending available under CARES Act
19. Taxpayers should be aware of myths about tax refunds
20. IRS alert: Economic Impact Payments belong to recipient, not nursing homes or care facilities
21. An extension to file is not an extension to pay taxes
22. An Economic Impact Payment can come on a prepaid debit card
23. IRS provides guidance on employer leave-based donation programs that aid victims of the COVID-19 pandemic
24. IRS reminder: File now, choose direct deposit or schedule tax payments electronically before the July 15 deadline
25. Taxpayers will soon be able to file amended tax returns electronically
26. IRS offers settlement for syndicated conservation easements; letters being mailed to certain taxpayers with pending litigation
27. Don't forget, Social Security benefits may be taxable
28. Electronic Tax Administration Advisory Committee releases annual report to Congress
29. Gig economy tips taxpayers should remember

30. IRS finalizes guidance for the Section 199A deduction for shareholders of Regulated Investment Companies
31. IRS announces rollover relief for required minimum distributions from retirement accounts that were waived under the CARES Act
32. IRS extends July 15, other upcoming deadlines for tornado victims in parts of the South; Provides other relief
33. Keep Economic Impact Payment notice with other tax records
34. IRS issues guidance on the elimination of the deduction of qualified transportation fringe benefit expenses
35. IRS offers additional retail partners that accept cash payments for federal taxes
36. IRS provides tax relief for the low-income housing credit and bonds for qualified residential rental projects
37. Taxpayers can get last minute filing tips on IRS.gov
38. Taxpayers should file by July 15 tax deadline; automatic extension to Oct. 15 available
39. IRS releases new Data Book with redesigned, expanded format to provide more detailed view of service, compliance activities in FY 2019
40. National Taxpayer Advocate Erin Collins delivers her first report to Congress; Identifies COVID-19 challenges, CARES Act, and Taxpayer First Act implementation as priority issues for taxpayers

41. IRS Responses to National Taxpayer Advocate Administrative Recommendations



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.

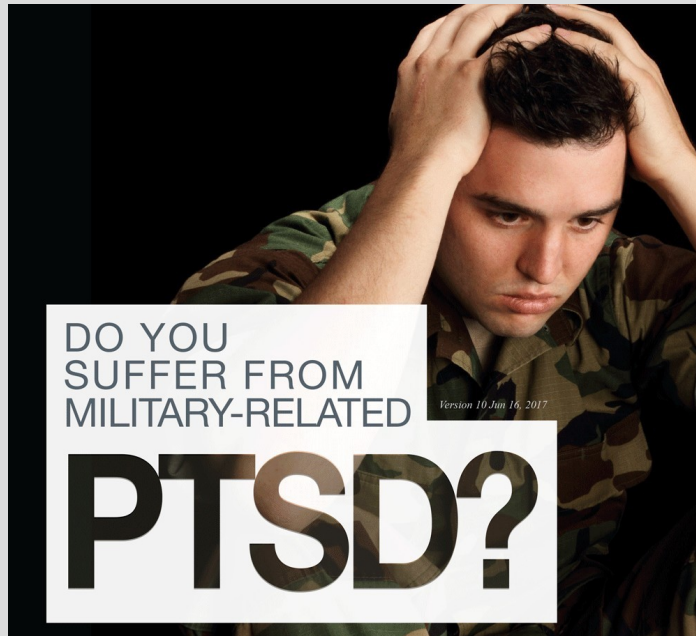


CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE VFC NEWSLETTER!

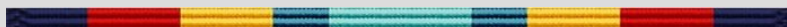


DPAA Returns Remains of South Korean Service Members

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) repatriated the remains of 147 South Korean service members who died during the Korean War. The DPAA and South Korea's Ministry of National Defense Agency for KIA Recovery and Identification worked together in a joint review of the remains. This is the largest repatriation of South Korean service members to date. [Read more.](#)



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



TRICARE FAQs: COVID-19 and Quarantine

As you continue to do your part to slow the spread of the coronavirus, you may have questions about your TRICARE benefit. You can find answers to your frequently asked questions (FAQs) and more on the TRICARE Coronavirus FAQs page. The following are some of the most frequently asked questions about quarantine and COVID-19.

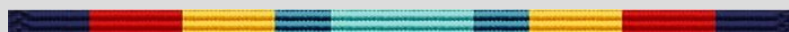
To learn more, [read the article](#).

Here's another article that you may be interested in:

The Role of Data in the War Against COVID-19

In the war on COVID-19, the Department of Defense will rely on future development of vaccines and treatments as weapons in its arsenal. Data sets that inform decisions and improve care serve as a key component toward this effort. The staff at the Joint Trauma System at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, lead that effort.

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



Our Protectors, Our Veterans©

The lives of some known and many not, have touched us. There's little difference than found in any other war,

with caskets holding their bodies, now come home they to rest. They were our protectors, it is their duty they have done, and they did their best, and again, lives of some known and many not, have touched us. How many times has the “story of stories” been repeated, by millions of families throughout the ages since first spoken? “He gave His only Begotten Son”, rings on and on. May that sacrifice never be forgotten. Likewise, millions of other sons and daughters have been given, as our Protectors, in their service; to God, to country, to family, to community. They, too, gave up their begotten children, their loved ones, for us, for all of us, to never be forgotten. As was His sacrifice, is theirs, our protectors, for the ever living hope of futures bright, we join in humble gratitude, to honor and to comfort all who need. May our protectors, our veterans, never be forgotten.

In addition to the horrors and ravages of war itself, during each era of our protectors, our veterans, have had to face such issues as we have seen; issues such as radiation, psychedelics, agent orange, chemicals, biological agents and unproven experimental vaccines. It is my belief that it is our ultimate responsibility to do what we can to minimize these types of issues that were unnecessary to have occurred in the first place. We owe our protectors this, too, for all current and future generations. If we do not protect our protectors,

our veterans, who indeed, will protect them?

The health and well being issues of our protectors, our veterans of all eras and of the reserves, guards, and active duty military of today are real. This should be our focus, this should be our purpose, this should be our commitment, and this is what we owe to our protectors, our veterans.

If we do not protect our protectors, our veterans, who indeed will protect us?

Richard G. Shuster



Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

www.Veterans-For-Change.org

Serving those who served!

**Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and
Family!**



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