



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, June 12, 2022

Volume 13, Issue 24



This-N-That

Good afternoon Jim,

Spending about 2-3 hours daily on the newsletter, going through all the information received to determine what to include it never occurred to me that VFC had another anniversary and I failed to even mention.

On May 27th we turned sixteen years of providing service in the best way we can. And although I truly look to a day we're no longer needed, I just don't see that happening anytime soon, at least not in my lifetime.

The VA is beginning a new program for self-check-ins and appointments via your Cell Phone. Since I don't have all the details or facts on this, anyone who uses it, please do let me know the good and bad points in using this new system.

For civilian counterparts the only use of this method I know of is checking in for lab work, and LabCorp is the leader so far and it works terrific, and getting in and out of the lab quickly has improved dramatically.

The VA is now hiring Oncologists for its Teleoncology Service.

Personally, I think this is a great move on the part of the VA to have more staff in each department for this type of service and something maybe we might see in civilian life soon.

I don't know how it works or is scheduled to work, but I would hope it would be a 24/7 service. To me this would be great, especially if you're like me and often wake up in the middle of the night with questions and a place to turn to for answers.

I would like to hear from those who would be interested in seeing monthly budget reports and financial statements for each VAMC.

I've been pushing for it for a long time now as in the past years I'd read and brought to your attention the fact that many VAMC's were redirecting budgeted funds to other departments, and to departments that were for absolutely nothing, like a pandemic of an illness we've never seen in our country, etc.

To me it would be a relatively simple process to implement and could be easily uploaded to the VA Website hospital by hospital, this way we can see where problems or potential problems are or might be and can call attention to them.

I want to thank everyone who took the time to send out many if not all the pre-written E-Mails on legislation requesting their support and passage, this is one of the most important parts of our newsletter. Grabbing their attention and getting much needed Veteran legislation passed and signed into law.

But we can't let up on them, so please weekly do as much as you can! **TAKE ACTION!**

If you've not visited our website, www.veterans-for-change.org or not visited in a while, please be sure to check often for updates on documents, web links, etc., we are a bit slow, but are moving as fast as we can, yet not over-loading to put more work on our Webmaster when we get to the transition into the new look.

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

Kindest regards,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

***PS:** If you like what we're doing, have found the newsletter and website useful, please help us keep the site, newsletter and phone/fax lines operational so we can continue to provide in my humble opinion the best there is to offer Veterans. Click here to contribute what you can, please keep in mind this cannot be used as a tax deduction, it's merely a contribution in support.*

[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hostedbuttonid=Y7XXR5X5C7M3N)

[hostedbuttonid=Y7XXR5X5C7M3N](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hostedbuttonid=Y7XXR5X5C7M3N)



House Starts Mark Up of Annual Defense Authorization Bill

The House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee marked up and approved its portion of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-H.R. 7900). Key provisions in the subcommittee markup include:

- No new TRICARE fee increases;
- Prohibiting reductions in military medical staff until there is an impact assessment provided to Congress;
- Providing for an annual active duty pay increase (4.6 percent) that keeps pace with civilian pay increases;
- Requiring the Secretary of Defense to complete a pay study and adjust the pay of child development center employees; and
- Numerous provisions to improve access to mental health care.

The FRA submitted a statement for the record in conjunction with the Subcommittee markup. The statement expresses opposition to increasing TRICARE fees, COLA cuts, and cuts to military medical billets. The Association urged the Subcommittee to include concurrent receipt and military divorce law (USFSPA) reform in the markup. FRA expressed concern about Navy morale issues such as the rash of suicides on the USS George Washington, the need for an annual pay increase that keeps pace with inflation, more oversight of military privatized housing, and increased funding for childcare at military installations. The Association also asked the Subcommittee to allow survivors to retain the full month's retired pay for the month in which the retiree dies, and to repeal the requirement for retirees to wait 180 days before becoming a civilian Defense Department employee.

The bill (H.R.7900) is scheduled to be marked up in the full committee (HASC) on June 22. The Senate Armed Services (SASC) Personnel Subcommittee is scheduled to markup its portion of the FY2023 NDAA on June 14 and the SASC markup will occur on June 15-16. Once approved by the full committees the bills will go to the floor of their respective chamber to consider floor amendments and be approved. After both chambers approve their version of the NDAA a conference committee will be appointed to resolve the differences between the two bills. Once the differences are resolved the final bill will be submitted to the

House and Senate for approval. If approved by both chambers the bill will be sent to the President to be signed into law or be vetoed.



Let a VA career pay you back for school with loan forgiveness

Through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program, your career at VA could offer you an alternative to paying back some students loans.

[Read More](#)



Military Veterans Advocacy

Military Veterans Advocacy is offering some free memberships for those who are struggling to get their claims through, are having financial difficulties. Annual dues are \$25.00 per year. Our organization includes special sections, Blue Water Navy, Veterans of Southeast Asia, Central Pacific Islands, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone, and Okinawa. We have gift members available which can be paid by your fellow brother or sister Veterans. Gift members are kept confidential.



We are offering free lifetime memberships to widows/widowers of Veterans who died of service connected diseases? Please contact Robin Barr for more information.

Click [HERE](#) and help a Veteran.

You may contact Robin Barr at robin.barr@madvocacy.org



Convenience and self-service appointment check-in at your fingertips

Beginning this summer, some VA facilities will let you use your smartphone for check-in for your scheduled in-person appointment.

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Inclusion of gender identity in medical record a welcome change

VA is including gender identifiers and preferred names in medical records. It's a welcome change for transgender and gender diverse Veterans.

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VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE



Chairman's Remarks

May brought a return to Washington and the Halls of Congress. We had 26 appointments in four days with very successful meetings, including five Members of Congress. Discussions included MVA's™ legislative agenda for this and the next Congress.

We returned to Slidell just in time for our second annual Breakfast with the Best. A good time was had by all. MVA™ members and local community leaders joined Chief of Staff Mike Kvintus, Colonel Rob Maness, yours truly, and our staff to celebrate Armed Forces Day. Rifle-Raffle (Rif-Raf) winners were drawn and winners were notified. We set a record this year, selling 382 Rif-Raf tickets compared to 310 in 2021. We are preparing for next years raffle as we speak.

Speaking of raffles, I was able to purchase 2 season tickets for the New Orleans Saints. These terrace level seats in the end zone have been donated to MVA™. We will be raffling off each game for \$25.00 for the two seats. We will only authorize 100 raffle

tickets per game to increase the chances of winning. So, if you live on the Gulf Coast or you are coming to New Orleans, watch for the announcements on our website and FB pages. Great time to visit us, especially if your favorite team is visiting the Saints.

Of course our Fall Foliage trip raffle is almost ready to launch. The 6 prizes will allow the winners and a guest to join the tour for a late October (Oct 23-27) tour of Southern New England. This will include two nights in Newport RI, the site of many America's Cup races, the Naval War College museum, beautiful Ocean Drive, and shopping on the Newport waterfront. Dinner at the LA Forge Restaurant adjacent to the Tennis Hall of Fame is included. Traveling north, the tour will pass the site of the Revolutionary War Battle of Rhode Island, Battleship Cove in Fall River Mass, and a two night stay in Boston. The tour will include Boston's Freedom Trail and the battlefields at Lexington and Concord. Airfare not included. MVA™'s own Princess Susie Belanger, her Prince Ernie and yours truly will accompany the tour to handle any problems and entertain the winners with sea stories. Tickets are \$100.00 each, but a chance at this tour is worth the chance. Come join us!

Membership is increasing but slowly. We still have a number of non-renewals. But our life memberships are growing. Remember if cost is an issue we can provide a donated gift membership. You do not have to choose between MVA™ and your gas tank. Contact [Robin Barr](#). Also, if you are a widow or widower of someone who died from a service-connected illness or disability, you are eligible for a free life membership.

I will be returning to Washington DC the week of 19 June for more time on the Hill. Due to the cost of hotel rooms in Washington, this visit will be limited to myself and Vice-Chair Sgt. Major Jim Kuiken. We just cannot afford to take a full delegation right now.

The Panama Canal Society will be holding their convention in

Orlando July 6-9. Donna Tornoe, Mike Kvintus, and I will be manning an exhibit to educate attendees on our legislative agenda for veterans who served in Panama.

Every few days I read a Facebook post from a Blue Water Navy veteran who has recently received his or her benefits. Soon we will be seeing these types of posts from Guam, American Samoa, Johnston Island, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Sometimes we are thanked. Occasionally we receive a donation. Folks, please remember who worked on the Hill and in court to get you these benefits. Please consider making a donation by clicking [HERE](#)

No word yet on the promised appointment with the VA Secretary. Still waiting.



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**

The advertisement features a photograph of two men, one in a light blue shirt and glasses, and the other in a dark sweater, with the latter's arm around the former's shoulder. The text is positioned to the right of the photo.

**Veterans join panel during National Research
Week**

On research panel, Marine Veteran shared his struggles after serving near Open Burn Pits. "They have taken the time to try to understand."

[Read More](#)



Start your VA career at these upcoming summer events

Our VA recruiters will be attending multiple events this summer, offering you the perfect opportunity to meet our team and start your VA journey.

[Read More](#)



Now hiring: Oncologists for VA's National TeleOncology Service

VA National Oncology Program (NOP) is actively hiring oncologists for their National TeleOncology service (NTO).

[Read More](#)





PTSD Bytes #11: PTSD resources for family members

In this episode Pearl McGee-Vincent discusses PTSD resources for family and loved ones with Dr. Steven Sayers, director of Coaching into Care.

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VA experts collaborate for Veteran health care innovation

VA health care experts came together in a virtual event to scale new ideas and innovations for VA sites across the country.

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Vietnam Veteran's dream fulfilled with Honor Flight

Navy and Vietnam Veteran David Bartlett reached out to the Dream Foundation to join the Kansas Honor Flight to visit memorials in Washington.

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[Links to Other Stories](#)

- 1) [3 VA Mental Health Counselors Kept Their Jobs After Starting Relationships with Patients, Watchdog Finds](#)
- 2) [Army Veteran volunteers with bomb tech crews in Ukraine](#)
- 3) [Culture Shift Needed to Combat Patient Safety Failures at VA, Watchdog Says](#)
- 4) [Federal Veteran Unemployment Stats 'Inaccurate,' New Report Says](#)
- 5) [How the US is failing female Veterans suffering illness from toxic burn pits](#)
- 6) [Rotary Club of Lubbock to dedicate bench at Veterans War Memorial](#)
- 7) [Texas doctor's new research links onset of Gulf War illness in some Veterans to sarin gas exposure](#)
- 8) [Wisconsin father-son duo thank America's military heroes from the 'bottom of our heart'](#)



Veterans Toxic Exposure

As NewsBytes goes to press, the Senate is expected to approve the veteran's toxic exposure bill (H.R.3967) after the Senate voted to limit debate on the legislation (86-12). As noted in last week's NewsBytes The bill will be amended in the Senate to authorize the setup 31 major medical clinics across America and hire thousands more claims processors and health care staff.

The bill would establish a presumption of service connection for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers related to the smoke from burn pits, used extensively in Afghanistan and Iraq to dispose of various types of waste, many of them toxic. Further, the bill also provides for new benefits for veterans who faced radiation exposure during deployments throughout the Cold War, adds hypertension and monoclonal gammopathy to the list of illnesses

linked to Agent Orange exposure in the Vietnam War, expands the timeline for Gulf War medical claims and requires new medical exams for all veterans with toxic exposure claims. Veterans who served in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Guam during the Vietnam War era would be covered for the first time under the same Agent Orange presumptive policies as those who served in Vietnam itself.

VA staff would be granted "the authority to determine that a veteran participated in a toxic exposure risk activity when an exposure tracking record system does not contain the appropriate data," a stark distinction from the science-only system in use at VA currently. Veteran advocates have complained that in many cases, veterans with serious illnesses obviously connected to their service have been turned away by the VA because irrefutable data showing chemical exposure during their service does not exist. The measure that passed the House is estimated to cost more than \$200 billion over 10 years and would potentially affect as many as one in five veterans living today.

Since the bill was amended in the Senate so it must go back to the House to approve the Senate amendment before being sent to the President to be signed into law.



**VALife insurance program coming January 2023
for Veterans with service connection**

In January 2023, VA will launch a new life insurance program called Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife), which provides guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance coverage to Veterans age 80 and under, with any level of service-connected disability. Some Veterans age 81 and older may also be eligible.

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Innovation Revolutionary: Melissa Tran is innovating Veteran centric perinatal care

Melissa Tran has changed Veteran perinatal care to be more interdisciplinary and easier to access in one location.

[Read More](#)



Coast Guard Change of Command Ceremony

VFW Director of Operations Bob Jackson and VFW National Legislative Deputy Director Tammy Barlet attended the Coast Guard change of command held at the US Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Admiral Linda Fagan, the first female officer in charge of a U.S armed forces branch, took command as commandant of the Coast Guard from Admiral Karl Schultz. In her comments, Admiral Fagan shared she was wearing the shoulder boards of the late Admiral Owen Siler who allowed women to attend the Coast Guard Academy. The event was attended by many distinguished guests, including President Biden.

[Read More](#)



Opening the Door: Talking about your trauma story

Knowing if, when, and how to share your trauma story takes some thought. Disclosing trauma with someone you trust can help you recover.

[Read More](#)



FCC program offers affordable, low-cost internet access to eligible households

The Federal Communications Commission program offers affordable, low-cost internet access to eligible households. If you or a #Veteran you know is struggling to afford internet service, an FCC program may put fast and reliable internet service within financial reach. Learn more and see if you qualify.

[Read More](#)



PACT ACT UPDATE

It looks like the Senate will quickly pass the PACT Act upon their return from recess. The bill must then return to the House to reconcile some changes made by the Senate but should quickly pass the House again and be sent to President Biden for his signature.

The PACT Act will provide for herbicide (Agent Orange) benefits for veterans serving on Guam, American Samoa, Johnston Island, and in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. The bill will add hypertension to the list of herbicide presumptives. It will also provide coverage for radiation cleanup veterans at Eniwetok and Palomares. Finally, it will provide coverage for veterans deployed to the K-2 base in Uzbekistan and burn pit victims throughout Southwest Asia.

This bill is not all encompassing but it is a good start. It should provide toxic exposure benefits to about 3.4 million veterans.

If you have not filed a claim, file it now or at least submit an intent to file. The claim submission will mark the effective date of your benefits. Unlike the case with the Blue Water Navy, benefits will not be retroactive to previous submissions. There was a consent agreement that allowed us to make Blue Water retroactive. That is not the case with the other areas. Reserve your place in line now - file that claim.



Suicide Prevention Resources for Military and Veterans

Military & Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255, Press 1
Text 838255, 24/7

Vets 4 Warriors 855-838-8255

InTransition 1-800-424-7877

Office of Warrior Care Policy

warriorcare.dodlive.mil/

Military One Source 1-800-342-9647

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors [TAPS] 1-800-959-8277



VA launches Pathfinder website to streamline opportunities to sell to or innovate with VA

VA launches Pathfinder, a one-stop-shop, transforming customer experience for vendors and innovators selling or innovating with VA.

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Melissa Washington Small Business Award

The annual Melissa Washington Small Business Award (MWSBA) will be up to \$5,000 and will be up to the discretion of the awards committee and Board of Directors. The MWSBA is awarded to a woman veteran to start or expand her business. Finalists must attend the Business Beyond the Battlefield Conference (Conference Costs Covered) held on October 6, 2022, in Arlington, Texas.

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MVA™ AT THE SUPREME COURT

What happens when a veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress or Traumatic Brain Injury fails to file a claim within one year or misses an appeal date? Can this be excused? The VA says no, but if the mental illness interfered with the veteran's ability to file or pursue his claim, should he or she be denied the earlier effective date? A court case supported by Military-Veterans Advocacy® is now pending at the Supreme Court of the United States to resolve the matter. MVA™ has filed an amicus curiae brief in *Arrellano v. McDonough*, which argues that these deadlines are susceptible to equitable tolling. In other words, an event that was not the veteran's fault, but that prevented him from meeting these deadlines, could stop the deadline.

This case, if decided favorably, may have wide ranging ramifications. Say you wanted to file a claim for herbicide under the Blue Water Navy Act prior to the Procopio decision. A VSO refuses to accept it because of the "boots on the ground" policy. A couple of years later you convince another VSO to file the claim. If we are successful in *Arrellano*, we may be able to argue that the retroactive date is should be the date you first tried to file the claim, not when it was eventually filed.

Oral argument was held in this case in April. We should see a decision this month.





Team Red, White, and Blue hosts nationwide Old Glory relay

Rooted in an epic display of patriotism, the Old Glory Relay epitomizes what Team RWB is all about – showing our nation's Veterans that their best days are ahead through a strong focus on health and wellness. VA Secretary Denis McDonough kicked off Team Red, White and Blue's Old Glory Relay on May 25. [...]

[Read More](#)



Provider webinar: Women Veterans and trauma-informed care

Did you know that women Veterans experience a high prevalence of trauma? Understanding women Veterans' unique health care needs and using trauma-informed care approaches can greatly improve health outcomes for women Veterans.

[Read More](#)



Jim, 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!

Jim you don't need to be Active Duty or a Veteran, in fact we ask all Veteran friends to also help! (Updated 06/12/22)

Please note, we've added no new items to the **TAKE ACTION** list.

- 1) [HR 1014 - Furnish Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy \(HBOT\) to a Veteran who has a Traumatic Brain Injury \(TBI\) or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTS\)](#)
- 2) [HR 109 will establish an advisory committee on the implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record](#)
- 3) [Concurrent Receipt Legislation Introduced](#)
- 4) [Expand Concurrent Receipt](#)
- 5) [H.R. 333, Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act](#)
- 6) [H.R. 344, Support the Women Veterans TRUST Act](#)

- 7) H.R. 914, the Dental Care for Veterans Act
- 8) Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act
- 9) S. 134/H.R. 637, the Veterans Economic Recovery Act of 2021
- 10) S. 437, Take Action for Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits
- 11) S. 89, Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2021
- 12) STOP TRICARE Fee Increases
- 13) Support Bills to Expand Coverage for ChampVA and TRICARE Young Adults
- 14) Veterans Economic Recovery Act Introduced
- 15) H.R. 855, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening (VETS) Safe Travel Act
- 16) HR 1355 and S 454. These companion bills will provide health care and benefits to Veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan.
- 17) Support Repeal of TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee
- 18) HR 1585 & S 565- Provide for the treatment of Vets who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as Radiation Exposed
- 19) Please Support S. 344, the Major Richard Star Act
- 20) Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act
- 21) S. 810 & H.R. 1972, the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
- 22) HR 109 Establish an Advisory Committee on Implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record
- 23) HR 2372 and S 952 will Provide for Presumption of Service Connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins
- 24) Please Ask you Senator to support S.952 the Warfighters Act
- 25) Support Improving VA Homelessness Program
- 26) S. 976, Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 27) H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act
- 28) H.R. 912, American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans Mental

Health Act

- 29) S. 976, the Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 30) HR 2269 and S 657 cover herbicide exposure in Thailand
- 31) Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Help Military Survivors
- 32) Legislation asks for Study of Involuntary Discharges for Women
- 33) H.R. 2436, the Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act
- 34) H.R. 958—the Protecting Moms Who Served Act
- 35) HR 2127 and S 927, the TEAM bills Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances
- 36) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
- 37) Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 The Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
- 38) Ask your member and senator to support HR 2580 and S 1151 to provide for a presumption of service connected disability for certain Veterans who served in Palomares, Spain, and for other purposes
- 39) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
- 40) HR 855, VETS Safe Travel Act
- 41) HR 3368, the Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston Island bill
- 42) H.R. 2521, Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Affairs Act of 2021
- 43) H.R. 1273, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act
- 44) H.R. 2968, the Military and Veteran Student Loan Relief Act
- 45) H.R. 845, the VA Billing Accountability Act
- 46) Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Bill Introduced in House
- 47) HR 303 and S 1147 The Retired Pay Restoration Act
- 48) Ask Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt Reform HR-1282
- 49) HR 1656 TREAT PTSD Act
- 50) S. 1664, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Processing Claims Improvement

- 51) Please Support H.R. 3452 —Veterans Preventative Health Coverage Fairness Act
- 52) HR 2192, The Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2021
- 53) HR 5026, The Panama Canal Zone Veterans Act of 2021
- 54) HR 3368, HR 5026, HR 2269, S 657 are all Toxic Exposure Bills that need special attention and more pressure to get passed!
- 55) H.R. 4627, Veterans' Culturally Competent Care Act of 2021
- 56) S. 2172, Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness
- 57) H.R. 4571, the SERVICE Act of 2021
- 58) H.R. 4732, Protect Individual Unemployability Benefit for All Disabled
- 59) S. 1937, the Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Act of 2021
- 60) S. 2283 and H.R. 5073—the Crisis Hotline REACH for Veterans Act
- 61) HR 852 and S 221, United States - Israel PTSD Collaborative Research Act
- 62) Ask Congress to Preserve Arlington National Cemetery
- 63) HR 4949 and S 692, the Hello Girls Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2021
- 64) HR 2963, the VOW to Hire Heroes Extension Act of 2021
- 65) S 1970, The Clean Water for Military Families Act
- 66) Support S. 1198/H.R. 2819—the Solid Start Act of 2021
- 67) H.R. 3402/S. 976—Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 68) HR 3537 and S 1813, Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act
- 69) S. 2386/H.R. 4575, the Veteran Peer Specialist Act
- 70) H.R. 5721—the VIPER Act
- 71) H.R. 5607, Justice for ALS Veterans Act
- 72) HR 2601 and S 1188, SFC Heath Robinson Burn Pit Transparency Act
- 73) S. 3017, Veterans Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and

Enhancement Act

- 74) HR 1361 and S 444, AUTO for Veterans Act
- 75) H.R. 4880 and S. 2720, the Veterans' Prostate Cancer Treatment and Research Act
- 76) HR 2800, the WINGMAN Act
- 77) H.R. 5944, Veterans Administration Backlog Accountability Act of 2021
- 78) HR 3400, VA Emergency Transportation Act
- 79) HR 2992, TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act
- 80) HR 6260, the Casualty Assistance Reform Act of 2021
- 81) H.R. 5819, Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act
- 82) HR 3596, the Lawrence J. Hackett, Jr. Vietnam Veterans Agent Orange Fairness Act
- 83) H.R. 2327 – to Remove Delimiting Dates for Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance
- 84) S. 2513/H.R. 4772, Improved VA Clothing Allowance Benefit for Disabled Veterans
- 85) S. 3293, the Post 9-11 Veterans Mental Health Care Act of 2021
- 86) HR 6402 and S 1725, will grant a Federal charter to the National American Indian Veterans, Incorporated
- 87) HR 6659 and S 3541, the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Acts
- 88) Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
- 89) H.R. 6543, Restore Veterans Compensation Act
- 90) H.R. 3967, Honoring Our PACT Act Going to House Floor for a Vote
- 91) H.R. 2916/S. 1467, the VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2021
- 92) S. 3483, Justice for ALS Veterans Act
- 93) H.R. 6273 and S.3397, the VA Zero Suicide Demonstration Project Act of 2021
- 94) HR 7050, Ernest Peltz Accrued Veterans Benefits Act
- 95) S. 3851/H.R. 7089, the Veterans Exposed to Toxic PFAS Act

- 96) S. 3854/H.R. 6823, the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act
- 97) HR 4601 and S 2405, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act
- 98) S. 3304/H.R. 5754, the Patient Advocate Tracker Act
- 99) Please Support H.R. 7369, VENTURE Act
- 100) Please support of HR 7524, the ACES Act
- 101) HR 7589, Remove Copays Act
- 102) Support Concurrent Receipt Bills
- 103) S. 3025 and H.R. 5666, the Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2021 to Improve the Claims Process for MST Survivors
- 104) Support S. 4156, the VA Workforce Improvement, Support, and Expansion (WISE)
- 105) Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans
- 106) They must pass the Honoring our PACT Act NOW
- 107) HR 7048, Protect Lifesaving Anesthesia Care for Veterans Act of 2022



Senators Ask VA to Cut Red Tape for Volunteer Drivers

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.) and Committee members Maggie Hassan (N.H.) and Thom Tillis (N.C.) have dispatched a letter to Secretary Denis McDonough urging the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to cut red tape on its volunteer driver certification process, also known as the Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN), to assist veterans traveling to and from health care appointments.

In January 2021, the Senate passed the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act (Public Law 116-315), which required the VA to establish a national policy regarding medical exams required to certify volunteer drivers for the VTN no later than 90 days following its passage. As of June 1, 2022, the VA has not completed this requirement.

In the letter, the senators highlighted various instances where red tape prevents VTN drivers from helping veterans access the care they need and earned. This includes drivers failing to receive a response from the VA regarding necessary paperwork to participate in the program, and prolonged wait times for physical exams required to become certified as a volunteer driver.



Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) News [May 2022]

Get the Recruitment & Retention, Employment & Integration, Well Being & Treatment, Servicewomen in the News, Women Veterans, and Upcoming Events DACOWITS news from May 2022.

[Read More](#)





After coma and COVID, Veteran returns to festival stage

Jackie Williams remembers waking up from a coma on his way to the morgue. After battling COVID-19 for over six months, he was declared dead in August 2020. Life before his coma was a forgotten memory. "I remembered faces but I couldn't remember any details about people," he said.

[Read More](#)



Live Whole Health #124: Yoga for strength and mobility

Moving the body is important for all of us, and it can prevent or help manage diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity. Some activities increase stamina, while others improve strength, mobility, balance, or flexibility. Listening to our body is important as we engage in movement or exercise.

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Biloxi VA Chief of Police runs to honor fallen officer

The Biloxi VA Chief of Police participated in a run dedicated to fallen VA police officers, noting a fallen officer will never be forgotten.

[Read More](#)



Purple Power: VA nurse goes purple to support Veteran cancer patient

Army Veteran Rachel VanDeMark recently got a colorful and special surprise when she arrived for her appointment at the Humble VA Outpatient Clinic. VanDeMark, who is undergoing cancer treatment at the Houston VA, was coming in for a routine clinic appointment when she was greeted by Adrienne Carraway, her licensed vocational nurse, wearing a purple wig.

[Read More](#)



North Texas VA nurse's innovation helps prevent pneumonia

The efforts of Nurse Borrinaga and team proved that good oral hygiene helped in preventing the onset of non-ventilator associated pneumonia.

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Borne the Battle #280: Benefits Breakdown – Million Veteran Program

This week's Borne the Battle – a benefits breakdown – features the Million Veteran Program (MVP), which is a national, voluntary research program to learn about how genes, lifestyle and military exposures affect health and illness and improve health care for Veterans.

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For Mom's with small Children

We know the situation with being able to purchase baby formula has been a nightmare and doesn't look like it will be getting any better anytime soon.

So, I took time this week to not only call my personal physician, but several pediatricians to find what homemade formula would be the best to use as a replacement during this time of crisis.

Below is the formula I found, and presented to all doctors I spoke with (totaling 11) and each one approved this version over many others.

I do hope this helps all mom's during this time!

Homemade Emergency Baby Formula Recipe

This recipe, based on World Health Organization guidelines and physician studies through the early twentieth century, is an excellent stop-gap option for when your baby is hungry and you have no other feeding options. It is meant for short-term use only.

Equipment

1 quart-sized canning jar with a tight-fitting lid OR a blender

Ingredients

FOR THE FORMULA:

- 1 13-ounce can (354 mL) full-fat evaporated milk
- 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups (19 fluid ounces // 562 mL) clean water, preferably slightly warm
- 2 tablespoons blackstrap molasses

TO GIVE SEPARATELY AS A NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENT:

- 1 dose multi-vitamin for infants, given daily (follow the dosage instructions on the multivitamin bottle)

Instructions

Instructions

Mix the formula. Place all ingredients in a clean, quart-sized jar with a tight-fitting lid or in a blender. Shake or blend until well-mixed. (If you're using granulated sugar, be sure to mix until it has been dissolved.)

Feed the baby. Pour into clean bottles and give to baby immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to three days. Discard any unused formula after three days.

Give a multivitamin supplement, if available. Give one dose of multivitamin to your baby at least once a day.

How many batches of formula do I need?

1 batch will likely last you approximately 1 day, give or take a few hours.

Follow your child's hunger cues – these values are simply average guidelines.

- 0-2 months: 2-3 ounces every 2-3 hours (approximately 24 oz per day)
- 2-3 months: 4-5 ounces every 3-4 hours (approximately 32 oz per day)
- 4-5 months: 4-6 ounces every 3-4 hours (approximately 32-36 oz per day)
- 6+ months: 6-8 ounces every 4-5 times a day (approximately 32-40 oz per day)

If you have multivitamin drops, give them separately from the formula to make sure your child gets the entire dose.

Why is there sugar in this recipe?

Sugar is used to bring the evaporated milk up closer to the level of natural sugars in human breast milk. We're calling for blackstrap molasses as the sugar because it also contains iron, sodium, and potassium.

What can I use instead of molasses?

If you do not have blackstrap molasses, you may substitute an equal amount of brown sugar, granulated sugar, dark corn syrup (preferably GMO-free) OR maple syrup.

DO NOT USE sweetened condensed milk, as it contains FAR too

much sugar.

DO NOT USE HONEY as a sugar substitute if your baby is under 12 months old.



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To call Different Members of Congress:

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President Signs Veterans Legislation Into Law

On Tuesday, June 7, 2022, President Biden signed nine bills into law related to veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

- S. 1760, which designates the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs planned to be built in Oahu, Hawaii, as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic;
- S. 1872, the “United States Army Rangers Veterans of World

War II Congressional Gold Medal Act,” which provides for the award of a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II;

- S. 2102, the “Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas Supporting Expanded Review for Veterans In Combat Environments Act” or the “Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act,” which expand eligibility for VA mammography screening to veterans who served in locations associated with toxic exposures;

- S. 2514, which renames the Provo Veterans Center in Orem, Utah, as the Col. Gail S. Halvorsen “Candy Bomber” Veterans Center;

- S. 2533, the “Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act,” which makes a number of changes to VA’s mammography screening and access to related medical care;

- S. 2687, the “Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act of 2021,” which temporarily authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Office of Inspector General to issue subpoenas in certain circumstances;

- S. 3527, which authorizes VA to transfer to another property the name of a VA property that was named in statute;

- S. 4089, the “Veterans Rapid Retraining Assistance Program Restoration and Recovery Act of 2022,” which restores entitlement to educational assistance under the Veterans Rapid Retraining Program under certain conditions; Thank you to Senator Durbin and Representatives Danny Davis and Underwood for their leadership; and

- S. 4119, the “RECA Extension Act of 2022,” which extends by two years the availability of compensation for radiation exposure related to nuclear weapons development.



Center for Women Veterans Book Corner: Army Veteran Tamara D. Files

This month's Women Veteran Authors Book Corner author is U.S. Army Veteran Tamara D. Files, who served from 1989-to 1993. Tamara D. (Howell) Files, MA BSN RN is a registered nurse in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and the founder and co-owner of a small business that specializes in life coaching and consulting. Files wrote "Sitting on the Moon" and "The Leopard Butterfly" to inspire her young nieces through the process of grief and loss.

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Start online to make the most of your health care visit

With eScreening, fill out some forms before talking to your provider and free up more time to focus on your health concerns.

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VA celebrates Pride Month by serving all who served

VA celebrates Pride Month by serving all who served. The "Pride Counts at VA" campaign continues VA's initiative to inform Veterans that they can disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity within our national health record systems. Veterans can choose from several gender identity options or choose not to reveal them at this time.

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Office of Inspector General

- 1) COVID-19: FDA Took Steps to Help Make Tests Available; Policy for Future Public Health Emergencies Needed
- 2) Defense Health Care: Prevalence of and Efforts to Screen and Treat Mental Health Conditions in Prenatal and Postpartum TRICARE Beneficiaries
- 3) Equal Employment Opportunity: Better Assistance and Data Use Could Improve Oversight of Veterans' Federal Contractor Employment
- 4) International Family Planning Assistance: USAID Has Faced Implementation Challenges Related to U.S. Policy and COVID-19
- 5) Private Health Insurance: Limited Data Hinders Understanding of Short-Term Plans' Role and Value During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 6) VA Health Care Facilities: Leveraging Partnerships to Address Capital Investment Needs
- 7) VA Health Care Facilities: Leveraging Partnerships to Address Capital Investment Needs
- 8) VA Vet Centers: Opportunities Exist to Help Better Ensure Veterans' and Servicemembers' Readjustment Counseling Needs Are Met
- 9) VA Vet Centers: Opportunities Exist to Help Better Ensure Veterans' and Servicemembers' Readjustment Counseling Needs Are Met



Army Veteran with MS finds joy in life

He was diagnosed with MS in 1991 and reflects on his life as, "A man who has lived a good life and is surrounded by people who love him."

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Army Doctor Earns Top Honors at Air Assault School at Fort Campbell

The 10-day course is both physically and academically challenging, teaching soldiers the foundations of heliborne operations to include troop transportation, sling loaded cargo and equipment transportation, medical and casualty evacuation operations, and air assault operations.

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- 1) Baxter Issues Urgent Medical Device Correction to Reinforce Important Safety Information Regarding Possible Risk of Oxygen Desaturation While Using Volara Device in Line with Ventilator in a Home Care Environment
- 2) Buzzagogo, Inc. Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Allergy Bee Gone for Kids Nasal Swab Remedy Due to Potential Microbial Contamination
- 3) FDA Drug Shortages
- 4) FDA Infant Formula Update: June 10, 2022
- 5) FDA Infant Formula Update: June 9, 2022
- 6) FDA Launches Campaign Aimed at Preventing E-Cigarette Use Among American Indian/Alaska Native Youth
- 7) FDA Roundup: June 10, 2022
- 8) FDA Roundup: June 7, 2022
- 9) Green Pharmaceuticals Inc Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of SnoreStop NasoSpray Due to Microbial Contamination
- 10) Infant Formula Supply
- 11) Outbreak Investigation of Hepatitis A Virus: Strawberries (May 2022)
- 12) Philips Respironics Recalls All V60 and V60 Plus Ventilators for Power Issue that May Cause Ventilator to Stop with or without Alarms
- 13) Plastikon Healthcare Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Milk of Magnesia Oral Suspension and Magnesium Hydroxide /Aluminum Hydroxide /Simethicone Oral Suspension Due to Microbial Contamination
- 14) Products Marketed for Removing Moles and Other Skin Lesions Can Cause Injuries, Scarring
- 15) Wilton Brands Issues Allergy Alert on Possible Presence of Undeclared Milk in Two Sprinkle Products



Kimberly Stuart: LGBTQ and Red, White & Blue

Kimberly Stuart used the challenges she faced during her service to help other Veterans, so they can have pride for all aspects of their identity.

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Tips for Military Parents Planning PCS Moves with Children

Here are some things that service members can do to prepare for a permanent change of station move that can make for a smoother transition for children.

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VA homeless programs enable bright future for Army Veteran Ronald Scott

When a fire damaged Army Veteran's home, he received help from HUD-VASH, a collaborative program pairing HUD assistance with VA support.

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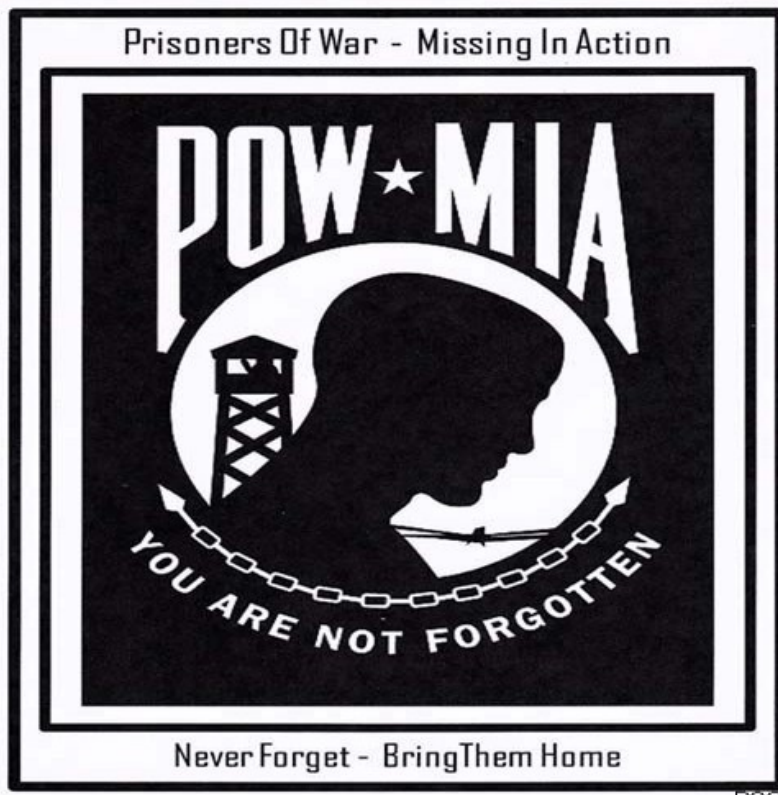
How to Use TRICARE and Other Health Insurance at the Pharmacy

Some other health insurance plans include prescription drug benefits that can be used with TRICARE and could save you time and money.



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America250: Marine Corps Veteran Margaret A. Brewer

This week's America250 salute is Marine Corps Veteran Margaret A. Brewer, the first woman Marine to reach general officer rank.

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How Health Care Providers Can Mitigate Burnout

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the men and women who run the Military Health System have faced an enormous workload, with seemingly no end in sight. That can put health care professionals at significant risk for burnout.

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Dispelling the myths of Women Veterans Recognition Day

Women Veterans Recognition Day is not a separate Veterans Day for women

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How Military Medicine Is Preparing for the Next Conflict

As the Pentagon prepares today's force for a "near-peer" fight against a large military adversary, the Military Health System is challenged to provide life-saving support for large-scale and dispersed operations. That's especially true for the medics supporting troops on the front lines.

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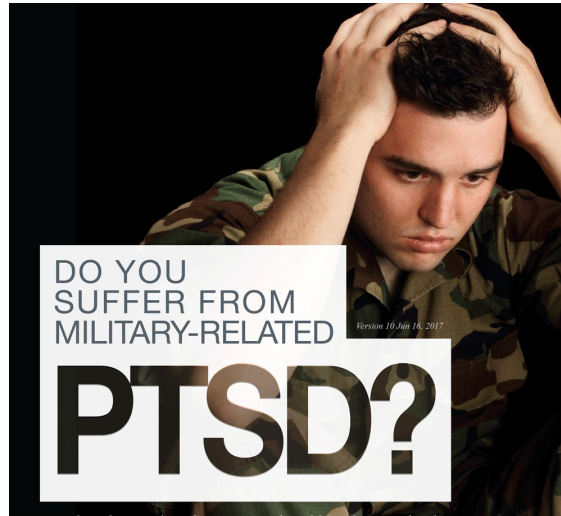


Could a Therapy Dog Help with Your Dental Anxiety?

A first-of-its-kind study at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center is researching whether using facility therapy dogs in dentists' offices could reduce patient anxiety and improve outcomes for military dental treatment programs.

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VA's clinical contact centers: Almost 41 million calls

VA's clinical contact centers answered nearly 41 million calls in FY21...access to telephone care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (24/7).

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Summer Safety Campaign: Grilling Safety

Check out these important tips for a safe summer behind the grill.

[Watch Video](#)



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



Army Veteran Barry Jordan gets a second chance with VA's justice programs

The mission of VA's Veterans Justice Outreach Program is to identify justice-involved Veterans and facilitate access to VA services.

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Facility Dogs Play a Vital Role in Recovery for Patients Across the MHS

The Defense Department's first facility dog program began back in 2005, when then-Army Sgt. Harvey Naranjo saw the positive impact that man's best friend can have on troubled soldiers.

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Tax & Credit Information



- 1) IRS announces transition away from use of third-party verification involving facial recognition
- 2) IRS Free File can help take the stress out of tax season for seniors and retirees
- 3) IRS launches resource page on IRS(dot)gov with latest details and information for taxpayers during filing season
- 4) IRS reminds taxpayers their Social Security benefits may be taxable
- 5) IRS resources and services for visually impaired taxpayers
- 6) IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers open on special Saturdays for face-to-face help
- 7) IRS updates Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit
- 8) IRS warning: Scammers work year-round; stay vigilant
- 9) Low Income Taxpayer Clinics represented nearly 20,000 taxpayers dealing with an IRS tax controversy
- 10) Tax Time Guide: American Rescue Plan changes can boost refunds for many families; people should file even if they haven't for years
- 11) Taxpayers must report tip money as income on their tax return
- 12) Tips to help taxpayers reduce tax-time stress
- 13) Top things all taxpayers need to remember when filing their 2021 tax return



**VA research will bring precision medicine to
mental health**

With precision medicine, disease prevention and treatment are tailored to an individual's clinical, lifestyle and genetic information.

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MHS GENESIS Patient Portal Registration

Here's the essential information you need for registering for the MHS GENESIS Patient Portal.

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