

**Robert E. Wheelock Memorial**  
**Po Box 9, Stanhope, NJ, 07874-0009**  
**Phone: 973.663-3008**

**Email: [fishman23@optonline.net](mailto:fishman23@optonline.net)**

**Editor: Frank Arminio**



**Volume 8, Issue 6**

**BROTHERS IN ARMS**

**JUNE**

**2021**

**Women Veterans hotline—1-855-VA-WOMEN (829-6636)**  
**VETERANS CRISIS HOT LINE 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1**  
**HOTLINE LINK: THEVETERANSSUPPORT.ORG-SUPPORT 1**  
**Vet Center Combat Call Center 877-WAR-VETS**  
**NJ VET 2 VET 1-866-838-7654-www.njveteranshelpline.org**



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**Vice President 2: JOHN PENDER**  
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**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA FOUNDING PRINCIPLE IS "NEVER AGAIN WILL  
ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER".**

**The Next VVA Chapter 327 Board Meeting is at 9:00**  
**on Saturday June 26, 2021**

**The Next VVA 327 Chapter Meeting is**  
**on Saturday July 26, 2021**



**41 U.S. 46**

**Budd Lake, NJ 07828**

**973-691-2222**

**PTSD WARD VISIT**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> Monday of EVERY Month**

**Welcome to the Vietnam Veterans of America New Jersey**  
**State Council Web Page**

**<http://vvanjsc.org/>**

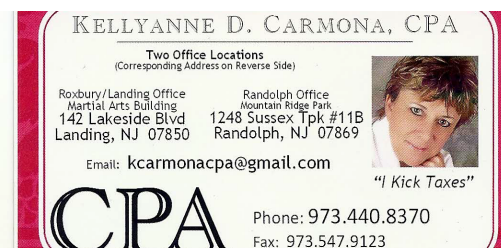
**Popular on Vets.gov**

**<https://www.vets.gov/>**

**NJ VET2 VET 1-866-383-7654 [www.njveteranshelpline.org](http://www.njveteranshelpline.org)**



VETS 2 VETS.pdf





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## Welcome to Sandwiches Unlimited!

Looking for the Best Sandwiches in New Jersey?

Tired of the same fast food menu? Looking for delicious food served your way?

Well look no further, Sandwiches Unlimited Lunch Box is here. We offer fresh food the way you want it. Our dining room offers table service or take out is always available.

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**PLEASE PATRONIZE SANDWICH UNLIMITED, THEY HAVE BEEN**

**SUPPORTING VVA CHAPTER 327 TRIPS TO THE PTSD WARD AT**

**THE LYONS, VA HOSPITAL SINCE 1991. SO STOP BY SANDWICH UNLIMITED AND GET THE BEST SANDWICH MONEY CAN BUY.**

**EVERY TIME YOU STOP BY SANDWICH UNLIMITED YOU WILL BE  
HELPING VETERAN'S!**



**YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT WITH THE VA AND ARE GETTING NOWHERE**  
**CLICK BELOW**



Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General  
<https://www.va.gov/oig/>

## **PTSD WARD SCHEDULE VISITS FOR 2019**



2019 PTSD WARD  
SCHEDULE.pdf



<https://www.benefits.gov/categories>



## **VA New Jersey Health Care System on Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/VANJHCS/>

## **VA New Jersey Health Care System**

<https://www.newjersey.va.gov/>

## **Surgeon General Social Distancing (:60)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKX1POTz5\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKX1POTz5_M)

## **Veteran-Directed Care**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wucNcAjRI3c>

Here is the website for this program: [https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/Veteran-Directed\\_Care.asp](https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/Veteran-Directed_Care.asp)

Here is a link to an FAQ: [https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/docs/Veteran-Directed\\_Care.pdf](https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/docs/Veteran-Directed_Care.pdf)

## **Have you downloaded VA's COVID Coach App?**

<https://mobile.va.gov/app/covid-coach>



In 1868, the Grand Army of the Republic—an organization formed to recognize the brotherhood of American Civil War Veterans—designated the 30th day of May for “decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country” asking their members to “in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect.”

Their hope was that memorial services would continue every year as long as any “survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades.” The Grand Army of the Republic was dissolved in 1956, but their legacy continues in our annual recognition each Memorial Day.

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Today, organizations like Vietnam Veterans of America serve an important role in maintaining the sacred tradition of commemorating, honoring, and remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice while defending our country.

This Memorial Day, VVA Leadership will be present at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial for a ceremony of honor and remembrance, and thousands of communities across the country will host services and ceremonies. [We invite you to learn more about other Memorial Day events hosted by VVA Members, Chapters, and State Councils across the nation.](#)

This Memorial Day we join together in honoring the memories of those we have lost.

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[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

**Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.**



**"The United States and the freedom for which it stands, the freedom for which they died, must endure and prosper. Their lives remind us that freedom is not bought cheaply. It has a cost; it imposes a burden. And just as they whom we commemorate were willing to sacrifice, so too must we—in a less final, less heroic way -- be willing to give of ourselves." –**

**Former President Ronald Reagan**

**"The brave die never, though they sleep in dust: Their courage nerves a thousand living men."**





Our flag does not fly because  
the wind moves it. It flies with  
the last breath of each soldier  
who died protecting it.

**VIETNAM VETERAN**

**A BROTHERS WHO FOUGHT WITHOUT AMERICA'S  
SUPPORT**

**A BROTHERS WHO RETURNED WITHOUT  
AMERICA'S WELCOME**

**A BROTHERS WHO WILL ALWAYS BE THE BEST  
AMERICA HAD**

**THEY TRAIN THEM TO GO TO WAR.. BUT NO ONE  
TRAINS THEM TO COME HOME**



**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND VETERAN NOT THE  
PREACHER WHO HAS GIVEN US FREEDOM OF  
RELIGION**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND THE VETERAN NOT THE  
REPORTER WHO GIVEN US FREEDOM OF THE PRESS**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND THE VETERAN NOT THE  
POET WHO HAS GIVEN US FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND VETERAN NOT THE CAMPUS  
ORGANIZER WHO HAS GIVEN US FREEDOM TO  
ASSEMBLE**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND THE VETERAN NOT THE  
LAWYER WHO HAS GIVEN US THE RIGHT TO A FAIR  
TRIAL**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND THE VETERAN NOT THE  
POLITICIAN WHO HAS GIVEN US THE RIGHT TO  
VOTE**

**IT IS THE SOLDIER AND VETERAN WHO SALUTES  
THE FLAG IT IS THE SOLDIER AND VETERAN WHO  
SERVES UNDER THE FLAG**

**GOD BLESS THEM ALL**

May 27, 2021

Dear Frank:

Thank you for taking the time to write to me about your support for our brave veterans and their families. I rely on the input of engaged New Jerseyans like you when making decisions, and I appreciate you sharing your thoughts.

My parents taught me that I drink deeply from wells of freedom and liberty that I did not dig. Our nation's excellence was built by those who served and by those who fought for freedom and equality. Without the selfless service of our troops and sacrifices of their families, we would not be able to enjoy the freedoms that make the United States of America so extraordinary. While we can never repay the immeasurable debt we owe to our service members and veterans, we must always endeavor to honor their sacrifice.

Each of our veterans, service members, and their families are a testament to extraordinary depths of patriotism. As your United States Senator, I am proud to be a voice in the Senate for the almost 400,000 veterans that call New Jersey home, and I am dedicated to ensuring our veterans receive the recognition and benefits they deserve from an eternally grateful nation. I have long admired our state's great heroes. Their passionate advocacy continues to inspire my own service, and it has been one of my greatest privileges to work with these incredible leaders to guarantee that our nation does not fall short on its promise to our veterans.

Last Congress, I was proud to lead the Senate in passing a resolution designating June 12th as "Women Veterans Appreciation Day" (S.Res.616) to recognize the service and sacrifice of our female veterans. I also led legislation to provide support for veterans and service members, including bills that would remedy critical gaps in GI Bill benefits for student veterans, extend funding for the Gold Star Families National Monument, establish a pilot program to furnish doula services to pregnant veterans enrolled in the VA health care system, provide service dogs to eligible veterans, and expand eligibility for military spouses for vocational and educational benefits. Additionally, I cosponsored critically necessary legislation that would extend the presumption of service-connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to burn pits and Agent Orange for those who have served in Thailand and the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Furthermore, I cosponsored bills that would increase gender-specific services at the

VA, improve and expand current mental health services, reform the Uniform Code of Military Justice, increase access to contraception and family planning information, and recognize the service and sacrifice of the 74 sailors killed in action on the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans.

Additionally, caring for our nation's veterans is one of our most sacred responsibilities, and while we have made progress, there is still much to do. When our brave servicemen and women signed up to serve our country, we agreed to support them upon their return. Please know I am a proud partner in the fight to honor those who have given so much for our nation, and I will keep your thoughts in mind as the Senate debates issues pertaining to veterans.

Again, thank you for writing to me. I am honored to represent you in the United States Senate, and I value what I hear from New Jerseyans about the issues our state and nation face. Please continue to keep in touch with your thoughts and concerns. For more information on my work in New Jersey and in Washington, please visit my website at [www.booker.senate.gov](http://www.booker.senate.gov).

Sincerely,

Cory A. Booker

United States Senator

## **Lawmakers Want Action on VA Records Backlog**

<https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/lawmakers-want-action-on-va-records-backlog/>

## **Vaccine Eligibility for TRICARE Beneficiaries Expanded; Anyone Over 12**

<https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/vaccine-eligibility-for-tricare-beneficiaries-expanded-anyone-over-12/>

## **Korea Vet Awarded Medal of Honor**

<https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/korea-vet-awarded-medal-of-honor/>

## **S. 189: Veterans' Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s189?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s189?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

# **VIETNAM WAR VETERANS**

## ***Honoring Those Who Served - Memorial Day 2021***

<https://www.data.va.gov/stories/s/q3fu-7ckx>

## **VA plans expansion of benefits for disability claims for conditions related to certain toxic exposures**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5675>

## **Copayment refund notification letters mailed to Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89277/copayment-refund-notification-letters-mailed-veterans/>

## **Insurance fraud schemes impact everyone, including Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89096/insurance-fraud-schemes-impact-everyone-including-veterans/>

## **Military Discounts for Major League Baseball Games**

<https://www.military.com/discounts/military-discounts-for-major-league-baseball-games.html?ESRC=at-ease.nl&spMailingID=6948630&spUserID=MTI5MTUxNjE2MDUwS0&spJobID=1260853877&spReportId=MTI2MDg1Mzg3NwS2>

## **Read "The Rural Connection" Summer 2021 Issue**

[https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/news/ORH\\_Newsletter\\_Summer2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/docs/news/ORH_Newsletter_Summer2021_FINAL.pdf)

## **June is PTSD Awareness Month, Spread the Word**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVHA/bulletins/2e19451>

## **VA to start processing Vietnam vets' claims for conditions newly linked to Agent Orange poisoning**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/va-to-start-processing-vietnam-vets-claims-for-conditions-newly-linked-to-agent-orange-poisoning/>

## **Amid pressure, VA eyes speeding benefits for burn pit exposure illnesses**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/amid-pressure-va-eyes-speeding-benefits-for-burn-pit-exposure-illnesses/>



**The Vets Chat and Chew Program** is for veterans, active military and their families. Learn how to feel better with healthy eating! Participants create and share healthy, simple and inexpensive meals under the guidance of a professional chef and nutrition consultant. Check out more pictures and videos on the website and facebook.

Contact us: 201-592-1130

[info@vetschatandchew.com](mailto:info@vetschatandchew.com)

Website: [www.vetschatandchew.com](http://www.vetschatandchew.com)

"Like" us on facebook: [facebook.com/vetschatandchew](https://facebook.com/vetschatandchew)

[VIEW NEWSLETTER HERE](#)

[TAKE A LOOK AT OUR NEW WEBSITE! : click here](#)

**Section 1: NJ Civil Service Opportunities, Trenton, NJ:**

Investigator Trainee FT: [click here](#)

Investigator 2 FT: [click here](#)

Investigator 2 PT: [click here](#)

**Section 2: Want to go fishing with other veterans?: [click here](#)**

**Section 3: Valley Bank Hiring Statewide, Virtual Info Session, May 25: [click here](#)**

**Section 4: Film Maker looking for archival material, family, friends, and veterans that served with the Edison 64 students killed in Vietnam: [click here](#)**

**Section 5: Amazon in-person hiring event, May 21, Budd Lake NJ: [click here](#)**

**Section 6: Home Depot virtual event for military spouses, May 25: [click here](#)**

**Section 7: Randstad telework positions available, virtual event, May 25: [click here](#)**

**Section 8: STAND DOWN, Atlantic City, May 28: [click here](#)**

**Section 9: IT Specialists needed, Picatinny Arsenal, NJ: [click here](#)**

**Section 10: Remote Data Strategist needed at American Red Cross: [click here](#)**

**Section 11: PT School bus drivers wanted, virtual event, May 27: [click here](#)**

**Section 12: Seeking Veterans for electrician position, Cape May: [click here](#)**



**The Vets Chat and Chew Program** is for veterans, active military and their families. Learn how to feel better with healthy eating! Participants create and share healthy, simple and inexpensive meals under the guidance of a professional chef and nutrition consultant. Check out more pictures and videos on the website and facebook.

**Contact us: 201-592-1130**

**[info@vetschatandchew.com](mailto:info@vetschatandchew.com)**

Website: [www.vetschatandchew.com](http://www.vetschatandchew.com)

"Like" us on facebook: [facebook.com/vetschatandchew](https://facebook.com/vetschatandchew)

[VIEW NEWSLETTER HERE](#)

**NEW VETS CHAT & CHEW PROGRAM : APRIL 14 TO MAY 19, 2021 : [CLICK HERE](#)**

**TAKE A LOOK AT OUR NEW WEBSITE! : [click here](#)**

**Section 1: Veteran Entrepreneur Training, Rider University--starts May 2021: [click here](#)**

**Section 2: VETERANS: want to do some fishing with other veterans?: [click here](#)**

**Section 3: NJ Transit Veterans Only Virtual Job Fair, May 13: [click here](#)**

**Section 4: Cognosant wants to hire a Veteran Outreach Specialist: [click here](#)**

**Section 5: Employment Horizons looking for:**

Chief Operating Officer: [click here](#)

Media & Donor Management Specialist: [click here](#)

Employment Support Specialist: [click here](#)

Career Development Professional: [click here](#)

**Section 6: State of NJ--hiring 26 security guards in Newark & Trenton: [click here](#)**

**Section 7: On Site Job Fair--May 12, Secaucus NJ: [click here](#)**

**Section 8: 4 Document Control Specialists Needed, Newark, NJ: [click here](#)**

**Section 9: Computer & cell phone repair technician wanted, Hackettstown, NJ: [click here](#)**

**Section 10: Immediate Warehouse Hirings, Secaucus, NJ: [click here](#)**



May 19, 2021

Dear Frank:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. I appreciate hearing from you and rely on the input of engaged New Jerseyans when making decisions.

I am inspired by the dedication and activism of constituents across the state of New Jersey who take the time to contact me on issues of concern or to share stories about how legislation in Washington, DC affects their daily lives. Thank you for being one of those voices. I want to let you know that my office has received your message.

I am honored to represent you in the United States Senate, and I hope you will continue to contact me and my staff about the issues that are important to you. There are many challenges before us, but I know that if we work together we will be able to make our state and our nation stronger.

For more information on my work in New Jersey and Washington, DC, please visit my website at [booker.senate.gov](http://booker.senate.gov). If you would like to speak with my staff about a policy issue, please call (202)-224-3224.

Sincerely,

Cory A. Booker

United States Senator

**Biden awards 'long overdue' Medal of Honor to retired Col. Ralph Puckett Jr.**

<http://veteransview.com/news/biden-awards-long-overdue-medal-of-honor-to-retired-col-ralph-puckett-jr>

**DAV volunteers clean, highlight American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial**

**Event was group's first effort since 2019 due to COVID-19 pandemic**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89224/dav-volunteers-clean-american-veterans-disabled-life-memorial/>

# BOB MENENDEZ

## UNITED STATES SENATOR

### FOR NEW JERSEY

Dear Mr. Arminio,

Thank you for writing to me to express your support for S. 976, the Caring for Survivors Act. Your opinion is very important to me, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to you on this legislation.

As you may know, the Caring for Survivors Act increases the payment amount for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Additionally it provides eligibility for DIC payments to veterans who were rated as totally disabled for five years prior to their death. This legislation has been referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Although I am not a member of this committee, rest assured I will keep your views in mind should this bill receive a vote in the United States Senate.

Our servicemen and women have fought for our freedom and security in the most difficult of situations and continue to do so. They have risked their lives to protect ours. I believe now more than ever it is our responsibility to provide our brave men and women and their families all the care and resources they deserve both during their service and throughout their lives.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance. I invite you to visit my website (<http://menendez.senate.gov>) to learn more about how I am standing up for New Jersey families in the United States Senate.

Sincerely,



BOB MENENDEZ  
United States Senator



January 6 Commission, Mental Health Resources Panel, Recent Legislation



Dear Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I am writing today to share a few updates on what I have been working on in Washington.

Last week, the House passed H.R. 3233, which would establish an independent, bipartisan commission to investigate what happened on and what led up to the attack on our nation's Capitol on January 6. I have been advocating for this commission since this horrific attack took place. The effort to help our nation confront and heal from that attack has been an issue close to my heart. I spoke about the need for this commission and what it'll help us do as a nation on MSNBC's Morning Joe and on the House floor this past week; you can watch the videos below.

In honor of May's designation of Mental Health Awareness Month, yesterday I hosted a panel discussion on mental health resources for school-aged children during COVID. That video is also linked below.

I've also included updates on other important pieces of legislation we passed recently in the House, including the GI Bill NEED Act, legislation I introduced to help ensure that our veterans can take full advantage of benefits they earned during their service.

Finally, I wanted to remind everyone to get your vaccine if you haven't already. It is safe, effective, and the key to getting our communities back to normal. Appointments are abundant and we've never been closer to finally defeating this virus than we are now. Find an appointment today at <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/finder>.

Stay safe and take care,



Mikie Sherrill

P.S. We're almost halfway through 2021 and I'd love to hear what issues matter most to you now. Please fill out my survey by [clicking here](#).

### **Vote on the January 6 Commission**

The attacks on the Capitol on January 6 was the worst in our nation's history. An angry mob was incited by the former president, his allies, and conspiracies online with the intent of undermining our democratic process.

Events like January 6 do not happen in a vacuum. An investigation must go further than analyzing this event as a security failure. We must confront the whole problem, recognize the January 6 attack for what it was, and find accountability for those who played a role. Only then can we move forward and heal as a nation.

In the wake of 9/11, Congress created a commission that investigated that day and what led to it. For many in New Jersey who were so directly impacted by those attacks, the commission brought a bit of closure and healing. In the same vein, we need a similar commission at this moment to review the January 6 attack to help come to grips with what led to that day as a country in our effort to build a more resilient democracy.

To read more about H.R. 3233, legislation to create a commission to investigate what led up to and the events of January 6, [click here](#).



[Click to Watch](#)

Last week, I rose on the House floor before the vote to speak about why it's so crucial we establish an independent, bipartisan commission. Click above to watch.



[Click to Watch](#)

We passed H.R. 3233 with bipartisan support, but still too many of my Republican colleagues are attempting to rewrite the history of what happened that day and voted against establishing the commission. I spoke about their opposition and why the commission is important with the anchors of Morning Joe. Click above to watch.

## **Mental Health Resources for School-Age Children During COVID**



[Click to Watch](#)

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Yesterday, I was joined by local experts to highlight the impact the pandemic has had on young people across the district and provide resources for those who may need them. Click above to watch the panel discussion.

## **PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act**



Recently, the House passed H.R. 1448, the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers (PAWS) for Veterans Therapy Act. As a lead sponsor of this legislation, I was so proud to see this crucial legislation pass the House and will continue to fight for it as it works its way through the Senate. The experts all agree that service dogs are one of the best mental health treatments for veterans who may be struggling from post-traumatic stress and establishing this program would be one of the common-sense solutions our veterans deserve.



I first became an advocate for this legislation after a number of conversations about the cost barriers many veterans face in trying to obtain a service dog. For the lives of some servicemembers, the program created by this legislation and the dogs they connect with could be life changing. This treatment has proven results and should be made more readily available to our veterans.

To read more about the bill, [click here](#).

### **GI Bill NEED Act**

Last week, the House passed the GI Bill NEED Act, bipartisan legislation that I introduced earlier this year. This critical bill would protect access to veterans' GI Bill and Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) educational and vocational programs from expiring due to national emergencies, like COVID-19. H.R. 2167 also ensures family members of those who die from service-connected disabilities automatically qualify for in-state tuition rates with their educational assistance and will give future recipients an unlimited time period to leverage that assistance.

I'm honored to have led a bipartisan effort to ensure our veterans don't lose their educational benefits as a result of the lost year of the COVID pandemic. I'm particularly proud that I was able to support the educational needs of the families of those who gave their lives for this country.

To read more about my bill, [click here](#).

### **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act**

Like many people across the country, I worked during my four pregnancies. It often has its challenges but for many employed soon-to-be parents, it's crucial for them to continue working. Yet in too many workplaces, pregnant employees are put on unpaid

leave simply because they've asked for reasonable accommodations due to their pregnancy or after their childbirth.

H.R. 1065, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, protects workers impacted by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions from workplace discrimination and allows them to continue working during their pregnancy. I am a proud co-sponsor and am glad to see it pass in the House.

To read more about this bill, [click here](#).

### **COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act**

Throughout the pandemic, we saw a disturbing rise in racist rhetoric and hate crimes against Asian Americans. This violence cannot go unchecked. That is why I voted for the bicameral COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act. This legislation directs the DOJ to conduct a thorough review and investigation of hate crimes committed against Asian Americans in the wake of the pandemic, to bring justice to those harmed. President Biden signed this bill into law last week.

To read more about this bill, [click here](#).

### **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) Memorial Day message**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89367/tragedy-assistance-survivors-memorial-day/>

### **Hearings to examine S.89**

<https://www.congress.gov/event/117th-congress/senate-event/329223>

### **Korean and Vietnam War Veteran awarded belated honors**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89203/korean-vietnam-war-veteran-awarded-belated-honors/>

***I'm incredibly honored to serve the 11th District and will continue to work hard on the issues that will move New Jersey, and this country, forward.***



Congressman Kim and other members of Congress attend a ribbon laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, 5/19/21.

May 28, 2021

As we head into Memorial Day Weekend, I wanted to thank you for your service and share some information with you that might be useful from the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is always important for us to recognize those who served, but it is especially important to remember those who served our country bravely as we approach Memorial Day.

Yesterday two major decisions were made related to presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange and particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia. Please share this email and information with other veterans you might know, if you think they would find this helpful, or they may have been impacted by any of these conditions due to their service activity.

First, the VA will begin implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act, adding three conditions to the list of those presumptively associated with exposure to herbicide agents, more commonly known as Agent Orange. Those conditions are bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism. In addition to this, due to a recent court order, all Veterans who served during the Vietnam War that had claims denied for these conditions will automatically have their cases reviewed without needing to refile. The VA will also send letters to impacted Veterans and survivors.

Second, the VA recently completed a process resulting in the recommendation to consider creation of new presumptions of service connection for respiratory based conditions. The VA's review will begin processes to address the role that particulate matter pollution plays in generating chronic respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis, for Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and/or after September 19, 2001, or in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf War.

For more information on these changes, you can visit the VA's website by [clicking here](#).

I hope those veterans who have served our country are able to get the assistance they need. If you are in need of further assistance to access your veterans benefits, please don't hesitate to reach out to any of my offices.

Sincerely,



Andy Kim  
Member of Congress

### **Please Contact Us If We Can Be Of Service To You**

<b>Toms River Office</b>	<b>Washington, D.C. Office</b>	<b>Willingboro Office</b>
33 Washington Street Toms River, NJ 08753 District Director Ben Giovine <a href="mailto:Ben.Giovine@mail.house.gov">Ben.Giovine@mail.house.gov</a> (202) 760-1692	2444 Rayburn Building Washington, D.C. 20515 Defense Fellow, Miranda Summers Lowe <a href="mailto:Miranda.Summers.Lowe@mail.house.gov">Miranda.Summers.Lowe@mail.house.gov</a> (202) 557-8217	429 John F. Kennedy Way Willingboro, NJ 08046 Outreach Director, Antoinette Miles <a href="mailto:Antoinette.Miles@mail.house.gov">Antoinette.Miles@mail.house.gov</a> (202) 744-1940

## **VA's HUD-VASH program partners with pet organizations to help Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89370/vas-hud-vash-program-partners-pet-organizations-help-veterans-experiencing-risk-homelessness/>

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
New Jersey Health Care System

# **Virtual Caregiver Support Fair**

*Inclusive Care: Empowering & Engaging Caregivers as Partners in Care*

## **Friday, June 11th, 2021**

## **12:45pm to 3:15pm**

**Join us for Presentations from:**

**AARP:** *Six Pillars of Brain Health: Keeping your Brain Healthy*

**VANJHCS Caregiver Support Program:** *News & Updates*

**VA Whole Health Program:** *Circle of Health: Connections Between Your Life, Health & Overall Well-Being as You Care for a Veteran*

**Chair Yoga!** *Learn to Reduce Stress with this Time Honored Exercise*



**Via WebEx**

## **Click Here to Join**

**Phone Only:**

**Call: 404-397-1596**



**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration

New Jersey Health Care System

# **Virtual Caregiver Support Summit**

*Inclusive Care: Empowering & Engaging Caregivers as Partners in Care*

**Friday, June 11th, 2021**

**9:00am to 12:00pm**

**With Presentations from:**

**Veterans Benefit Administration**

*Service connection, Aid & attendance & financial benefits*

**Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program**

*Strength At Home, Warrior to Soulmate*

**Volunteer Lawyers for Justice**

*Evictions, Veteran Legal Resources, Child IEP issues*

**Alzheimer's Association of NJ**

*Understanding & Responding to Dementia Related Behavior*

*Target Audience for the Summit: Providers, care managers, discharge planners,  
social workers, community partners and VA staff*

**To attend the Summit:**

Via  WebEx

**Click Here to Join**

**Phone Only:**

**Call: 404-397-1596**

**Enter Meeting #: 199 747 7685**





## VA You can count on us.

We have resources to address the unique stressors and experiences that Veterans and those who support them may face — and we're just a click, call, text, or chat away. You can reach us through one of the resources listed below.

Resources	Phone Number
<a href="#">National Call Center for Homeless Veterans</a> Promotes recovery-oriented care for Veterans who are homeless or at risk for homelessness	<a href="tel:1-877-424-3838">1-877-424-3838</a> (Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET)
<a href="#">Quit Vet</a> Offers tobacco cessation counseling in English and Spanish	<a href="tel:1-855-784-8838">1-855-784-8838</a> (Mon - Fri, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET)
<a href="#">Veterans Crisis Line</a> Provides a free, confidential way for anyone in crisis to connect with caring, qualified responder	<a href="tel:1-800-273-8255">1-800-273-8255</a> and press 1 or Text 38255 or Chat online at <a href="https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat">VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat</a> . (24/7)
<a href="#">War Vet Call Center</a> Provides a place for combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life	<a href="tel:1-877-927-8387">1-877-927-8387</a> (24/7)
<a href="#">Women Veterans Call Center</a> Provides women Veterans, their families, and caregivers information about VA services and resources	<a href="tel:1-855-829-6636">1-855-829-6636</a> (Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. ET) (Sat, 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. ET)
<a href="#">Real Warriors</a> Promotes a culture of support for psychological health by encouraging the military community to reach out for help whether coping with the daily stresses of military life, or concerns like depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder.	<a href="tel:1-866-966-1020">1-866-966-1020</a> (24/7)
<a href="#">Caregiver Support</a> Offers training, educational resources, and multiple tools to help caregivers in	<a href="tel:1-855-260-3274">1-855-260-3274</a> (Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET)

their role of promoting the health of Veterans.	
<a href="#">Coaching Into Care</a> Provides education, support, and empowerment to family members and friends who are seeking care or services for a Veteran.	<a href="tel:1-888-823-7458">1-888-823-7458</a> (Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET)

Learn how you can connect with us in other ways by visiting our website.

[REACH US](#)

### Get help from the Veterans Crisis Line.

Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves.

[GET HELP](#)

### Want to help others get support?

Being there is one of the best ways you can support the mental health of others. For more tools, tips and resources, explore our toolkit.

[MORE TOOLS](#)

## Veterans could be targets of pension poaching scams

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89079/veterans-targets-pension-poaching-scams/>

## DAV volunteers clean, highlight American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiaaSzHPIdA>

## Zero COVID deaths among Veterans Affairs patients for the first time in 14 months

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/25/zero-covid-deaths-among-veterans-affairs-patients-for-the-first-time-in-14-months/>

## Ten Ideas to Get Started from Veterans like you

<https://www.maketheconnection.net/mhm>

# CLINICIAN'S TRAUMA UPDATE

CTU-ONLINE | [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)

Editor  
Paula P. Schnurr, PhD

Senior Associate Editor  
Lauren M. Sippel, PhD

Associate Editors  
Paul E. Holtzheimer, MD  
Jennifer S. Wachen, PhD  
Rachel Zelkowitz, PhD

National Center for PTSD  
US Department of Veterans Affairs

## CLINICIAN'S TRAUMA UPDATE Online

Issue 15(2), April 2021

For COMPLETE summaries, see this month's [CTU-Online](#).

### Treatment

#### Smoked cannabis appears ineffective in treating PTSD

Cannabis is frequently used by Veterans with PTSD, but the safety and effectiveness of cannabis for PTSD has not been established. A recent study funded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies tested three formulations of smoked cannabis in a two-stage, randomized, placebo-controlled trial. [Read this CTU-Online](#).

#### Safety and effectiveness of CPT among Veterans at risk for suicide

EBPs for PTSD reduce suicidal ideation (see the [June 2013 CTU-Online](#)), but research with Veterans at more acute risk for suicide, such as those who previously attempted suicide, has remained sparse. A team led by investigators at the VAMC in Salt Lake City used medical record data to evaluate CPT outcomes among Veterans at increased suicide risk. [Read this CTU-Online](#).

#### New study compares Adaptive Disclosure to CPT

Adaptive Disclosure, an emotion-focused therapy for combat-related PTSD, was previously found to improve PTSD in an uncontrolled study but had not yet been tested in a randomized controlled trial. Investigators from the VA Boston Healthcare System led a non-inferiority study comparing Adaptive Disclosure to CPT. [Read this CTU-Online](#).

#### Efficacy of CPT among Veterans who experienced moral injury

A team led by investigators from Rush University Medical Center examined whether exposure to a morally injurious event or targeting a morally injurious index event during CPT was associated with higher symptom severity or impacted treatment response. Some authors have suggested that existing EBPs for PTSD may not be as effective among Veterans who have experienced moral injury, yet prior studies had not directly tested this idea. [Read this CTU-Online.](#)

## Vortioxetine not effective in the treatment of PTSD

Antidepressants targeting the serotonin neurotransmitter system comprise the few medications demonstrating efficacy in treating PTSD. Vortioxetine is an antidepressant medication that affects the serotonin system in several novel ways. A research team led by investigators at Emory University and the University of Miami tested the efficacy of vortioxetine in patients with PTSD. [Read this CTU-Online.](#)

## Dropout in trials comparing treatments for PTSD

Predicting dropout from effective PTSD treatment continues to be a critical challenge for the field (see Take Note in this issue of *CTU-Online*). In two new studies, teams led by an investigator at Case Western Reserve University examined dropout from several treatments for PTSD: PE and sertraline in one study and COPE and Seeking Safety in the other. [Read this CTU-Online.](#)

## Further evidence that PE does not worsen PTSD symptoms PE

Patients and providers often cite concerns that exposure-based therapies will worsen PTSD symptoms, despite little evidence for this claim (see the [February 2014 CTU-Online](#)). A new study by investigators at the University of Washington provides more evidence of a lack of symptom exacerbation in PE. [Read this CTU-Online.](#)

## Assessment

### PC-PTSD screen for DSM-5 validated for use in primary care

Screening for PTSD in primary care is mandatory in VHA, so it is crucial to have PTSD screening instruments adapted for this setting. Investigators at the National Center for PTSD have now validated the Primary Care Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Screen updated for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5) against the CAPS-5, the gold-standard assessment for PTSD. [Read this CTU-Online.](#)

## Take Note

### Dropout from PTSD treatment

Two new papers report on dropout from PTSD treatment. A team led by investigators at the Psychological Health Center of Excellence in Washington conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of dropout from RCTs of psychotherapies for PTSD among military and Veteran samples. Investigators at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center carried out a systematic review of factors associated with PTSD treatment dropout among OIF/OEF Veterans.

[Read the first article.](#) | [Read the second article.](#)

## Network meta-analysis of expressive writing for PTSD

A team led by investigators at the University of Basel in Switzerland conducted a systematic review and network meta-analysis of RCTs examining outcomes for expressive writing interventions for PTSD. [Read the article.](#)

## Meta-analysis of third wave CBT for PTSD

Investigators at Auburn University carried out a meta-analysis of studies of third wave cognitive-behavioral interventions for PTSD, such as ACT, DBT, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, and Behavioral Activation. [Read the article.](#)

## Systematic reviews of cannabinoids for PTSD

Two new systematic reviews address cannabinoids for PTSD. The first, conducted by investigators at McMaster University, review physical and mental health outcomes associated with cannabis use in Veterans; the second, by investigators at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, is a review of RCTs testing the effects of cannabinoids on PTSD, mood disorders, and anxiety.

[Read the first article.](#) | [Read the second article.](#)

## Mental health care for Service members living away from military bases

In a new report, RAND investigators examined access to mental health care and the quality of care for Service members with PTSD, depression, or substance use who live off base from military facilities. [Read the report.](#)

Tell a friend so they can [subscribe to CTU-Online](#).

[Sign up for the PTSD Monthly Update](#) or other publications from the National Center for PTSD.

---

**ARE YOU TREATING U.S. VETERANS WITH PTSD?**

**WE CAN HELP**



Our [PTSD Consultation Program](#) can answer questions about assessment, treatment, medications, and more: [PTSDconsult@va.gov](mailto:PTSDconsult@va.gov) or 866-948-7881

The Clinician's Trauma Update, *CTU-Online*, is an electronic newsletter produced by the National Center for PTSD, Department of Veterans Affairs. *CTU-Online* provides summaries of clinically relevant publications in the trauma field with links to published abstracts or full text articles when available. Please send any feedback to [Lauren.Sippel@va.gov](mailto:Lauren.Sippel@va.gov).

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Patient Centered Care and  
Cultural Transformation



## Veterans Please Join Us For: **Whole Health Welcome & Taking Charge of my Health and Life Series**

### What is it?

A virtual session where we will describe areas of self-care each week. You will have the opportunity to be paired up with a Whole Health Coach to help you along your journey towards Whole Health. This is an opportunity to network with other Veterans, and create attainable goals while receiving support from your Whole Health Care team.



### Dates and Times: 6 week session

Starting Tuesday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2:00pm-4:00pm (Class Welcome)

June 8<sup>th</sup>- July 6<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm-3:30pm

---



# **VA accepting walk-ins for COVID-19 vaccinations nationwide**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88597/va-accepting-walk-covid-19-vaccinations-nationwide/>

## **Don't let distance deter you**

**Veterans Health Administration sent this bulletin**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVHA/bulletins/2d85338>

## **Veteran, 74, has message for people reluctant to get vaccine**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88112/veteran-74-message-people-reluctant-get-vaccine/>

## **Homeless Veterans largely satisfied with community health care options**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/87974/homeless-veterans-largely-satisfied-community-health-care-options/>

## **This Mental Health Month, explore advice from Veterans to Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88148/mental-health-month-explore-advice-veterans-veterans/>

## **Veterans can get tools, resources at Military OneSource**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/87185/veterans-can-get-tools-resources-military-onesource/>

## **VetsGoGlobal and the free Export Education Program**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88141/vetsgoglobal-free-export-education-program/>

## **Law expands Veteran housing benefits**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5662>

## **As space dwindles, final rules on burial eligibility for Arlington Cemetery expected this fall**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/05/as-space-dwindles-final-rules-on-burial-eligibility-for-arlington-cemetery-expected-this-fall/?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/05/as-space-dwindles-final-rules-on-burial-eligibility-for-arlington-cemetery-expected-this-fall/?utm_medium=EMAIL)



**Report a Homeless Veteran  
to the Rapid Response Team  
(609) 619-0861**



**Being Homeless Hurts, OPERATION CHILLOUT Helps.**

## 2021 Summer Homeless Outreach Campaign



Hello Frank,

When you spend time outside in hot weather, you probably start to feel thirsty in a fairly short time. Finding clean, safe drinking water can be a challenge for our homeless population and dehydration can lead to severe illness or death. OPERATION CHILLOUT's Annual Summer Homeless Outreach began in 2004, following the death of a homeless veteran who resorted to drinking polluted river water near his encampment.

Please help us continue the tradition of providing lifesaving water to the homeless by donating \$10 to purchase 3

cases of bottled water. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the OCO Summer Water Drive is entirely online. Our target this year is 750 cases by July 4th. Safe water saves lives!

We are also requesting donations for the OCO Rapid Response Team and the Emergency Supplies Fund due to shortages related to cancelled fundraisers during the pandemic. Please visit our website at [www.OperationChillout.org](http://www.OperationChillout.org) to donate. Thank you for your support!

---

## Join Us To Celebrate Tony and Noi DeStefano!

OPERATION CHILLOUT would like to recognize our very own National Homeless Veterans Outreach Coordinator, Major Tony DeStefano and his wife, Noi. Tony served in the U.S. Army as a major in the Signal Corps and on the Coalition staff in the Iraqi war. He joined OCO in 2007 and has been involved in every aspect of our mission. Tony volunteers at Lyons VA Medical Center and helps to identify Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in homeless veterans so they can get treatment. Noi has organized many successful fundraisers for our outreach programs through the years. We wish them well as they relocate to Florida this summer.



All are invited to thank Tony and Noi for their faithful service to OCO and their deep friendship with us all. We have organized a fun, safe, outdoor event on **May 8 at VASA Park in Hackettstown, NJ starting at 3PM**. Bring your own food! There will be live music, a cash bar, and two grills fired up. Please bring face masks and observe safe distancing while at the park. We look forward to seeing you there!

---

**NJ Women's Clubs  
Donate Gift Cards to  
Operation Chillout**

**Vets Summerfest  
2021**

Save the date! ***Vets Summerfest will be held on August 14, 2021.*** There will be a live concert, great food and a motorcycle ride included



New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, the largest volunteer women's service organization in the state, has partnered with OPERATION CHILLOUT for their special State Project 2020-22.

NJSFWC Member clubs recently donated hundreds of gift cards that will be used by OCO outreach programs and our partner organizations. We are very grateful for their commitment to our mission and tireless efforts to help the homeless in NJ.

in the event. Although there will be a limited number of tickets to attend the event at VASA park, we are planning to live stream the concert for remote viewing. Stay tuned for more details!



Special thanks to the Hackettstown Elks Lodge #2331 for donating \$1500 to the OCO Rapid Response Team! *Pictured: Leslie Chimileski, Helene Walsh (Elks), Maj. Tony DeStefano, Liz Thurrott (Elks), Al Compoly, Deacon Ray Chimileski and John Hennessy.*

## OPERATION CHILLOUT

is a 501-c-3 not-for-profit organization.  
All donations are tax deductible to the  
amount allowed by law.  
Federal ID #: EIN 27-0181975

[Contact Us](#)



Share



Tweet

OPERATION CHILLOUT | PO Box 353, Long Valley, NJ 07853

## **Army Fort Jackson Trainee Arrested After Allegedly Hijacking a School Bus Full of Children**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/06/army-fort-jackson-trainee-arrested-after-allegedly-hijacking-school-bus-full-of-children.html>



# A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE VIETNAM WALL



**There are 58,267 names on the wall.**

**39,996 were just 22 or younger.**

**8,283 were 19. 33,103 were 18.**

**12 were 17 years old.**

**5 soldiers were 16.**

**There are 3 sets of fathers and sons on the wall.**

**31 sets of parents lost 2 of their sons.**

**997 were killed their first day.**

**1,448 were killed on their last day.**

**8 women were on the wall, nurses.**

**244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor  
during the war and 153 of them are on the wall.**



## **Enrollment applications now available for accelerated program to prepare Veterans for high-demand careers**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5664>

## **Austin Says POW/MIA Agency's Mission Gives Confidence to Service Members in War**

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2592416/austin-says-powmia-agencys-mission-gives-confidence-to-service-members-in-war/source/GovDelivery/>

## **VA opens new rapid retraining program for thousands of vets who lost jobs due to pandemic**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2021/05/04/va-opens-new-rapid-retraining-program-for-thousands-of-vets-who-lost-jobs-due-to-pandemic/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Vets%20%26%20Retirement%2005-04-21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Retirement](https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2021/05/04/va-opens-new-rapid-retraining-program-for-thousands-of-vets-who-lost-jobs-due-to-pandemic/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Vets%20%26%20Retirement%2005-04-21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Retirement)



<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d7b85a>

## **I'm Vaccinated. What's Next?**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210222-after-being-vaccinated>

## **Food and Hypertension**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210414-food-and-hypertension>

## **What to Ask Your Cardiologist**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210504-what-to-ask-your-cardiologist>

## **Depression vs. Blues: Know the Difference**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20181219-depression-vs-blues>

## **Are You Protected Against Skin Cancer?**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20170509-are-you-protecting-against-malignant-melanoma>



## **Arthritis: What You Need to Know**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20170307-arthritis>

## **Take a Deep Breath: Asthma Basics**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20180521-asthma-basics>

## **House prepares veterans' legislative package ahead of Memorial Day**

<https://www.stripes.com/news/us/house-prepares-veterans-legislative-package-ahead-of-memorial-day-1.672285>

## **VA opens new rapid retraining program for thousands of vets who lost jobs due to pandemic**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2021/05/04/va-opens-new-rapid-retraining-program-for-thousands-of-vets-who-lost-jobs-due-to-pandemic/>

## **Guard chief wants free health care for all troops, activated or not**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/mil-money/2021/05/04/guard-chief-wants-free-health-care-for-all-troops-activated-or-not/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.05.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/mil-money/2021/05/04/guard-chief-wants-free-health-care-for-all-troops-activated-or-not/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.05.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Veteran eligibility and access to VA home loans expanded**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88313/veteran-eligibility-access-va-home-loans-expanded/>

## **Celebrate National Nurses Month with VA and explore a new nursing career**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88250/celebrate-national-nurses-month-va-explore-new-nursing-career/>

## **Pentagon's approach to countering sexual assault: 'All options are on the table'**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88356/pentagons-approach-countering-sexual-assault-options-table/>

# TELL US ABOUT YOUR



VA provides quality healthcare to our nations Veterans and we are committed to Owning the Moment to make every encounter a positive patient experience! Your feedback is essential in making your VA serve you better. You may receive an email or mail survey from us asking about your experience from one of our two VHA National Surveys:

## **Survey of Healthcare Experience (SHEP) Veteran Signals (VSIGNALS)**

### **Benefits of surveys:**

- Improve quality by communicating to leadership areas of strength and weakness.
- We are able to make things right if we did not meet your expectations.
- Patients who are satisfied with their care have better health outcomes
- Survey responses help to recognize VHA best practices.
- Patient feedback on employees improves morale and recognition opportunities.
- We are able to improve patient-healthcare team communication.

### **You may receive surveys for your experience in the following areas:**

Primary Care	Emergency Medical Care	Specialty Care
Telehealth Care	Community Care	COVID-19
Inpatient	Same Day Service	

Have concerns about an experience? Our VA Providence Healthcare System Patient Advocate Office can help!  
Walk-in Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., My HealtheVet or call 401-457-3093.



**Choose** 

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Health Administration  
Providence Healthcare System

**The way we treat Veterans today is the reason they will Choose VA tomorrow.**

## **Warning: Post Office sees rise in COVID vaccination scams targeting veterans**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/04/30/warning-post-office-sees-rise-in-covid-vaccination-scams-targeting-veterans/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.03.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/04/30/warning-post-office-sees-rise-in-covid-vaccination-scams-targeting-veterans/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.03.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Tens of thousands of US vets living overseas left to find COVID vaccine doses on their own**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/04/30/tens-of-thousands-of-us-vets-living-overseas-left-to-find-covid-vaccine-doses-on-their-own/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.03.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/04/30/tens-of-thousands-of-us-vets-living-overseas-left-to-find-covid-vaccine-doses-on-their-own/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.03.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **He mentored decades of Army Rangers. At 94, he'll receive the Medal of Honor.**

[https://www.stripes.com/he-mentored-decades-of-army-rangers-at-94-he-ll-receive-the-medal-of-honor-1.671845?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm\\_campaign=Daily+Headlines&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.stripes.com/he-mentored-decades-of-army-rangers-at-94-he-ll-receive-the-medal-of-honor-1.671845?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm_campaign=Daily+Headlines&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Medal of Honor Monday: Army Pfc. Sadao Munemori**

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Features/Story/Article/2586993/medal-of-honor-monday-army-pfc-sadao-munemori/source/GovDelivery/>

## **Tester, Sullivan Push VA to Explore Medicinal Cannabis as an Alternative Treatment for Veterans**

<https://www.veterans.senate.gov/newsroom/majority-news/tester-sullivan-push-va-to-explore-medicinal-cannabis-as-an-alternative-treatment-for-veterans>

## **Deported Veterans, Stranded Far from Home After Years of Military Service, Press Biden to Bring Them Back**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/opinions/2021/03/02/deported-veterans-stranded-far-home-after-years-of-military-service-press-biden-bring-them-back.html>

## **Navy Corpsman Is Aspiring Olympic Wrestler**

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Features/Story/Article/2583739/navy-corpsman-is-aspiring-olympic-wrestler/source/GovDelivery/>

## **Marine Corps inspector general suspended pending third investigation into AAV accident**

[https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2021/05/03/marine-corps-inspector-general-suspended-from-duties-pending-third-aav-investigation/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Breaking%20News%2005-03-21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Breaking%20News](https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2021/05/03/marine-corps-inspector-general-suspended-from-duties-pending-third-aav-investigation/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Breaking%20News%2005-03-21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Breaking%20News)

## **VA's 1 Step Today campaign promotes Veteran mental wellness**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5661>

## **Supreme Court justice castigates Feres Doctrine over cadet's rape lawsuit**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/03/supreme-court-justice-castigates-feres-doctrine-over-cadets-rape-lawsuit/>

## **Temporary Financial Assistance Decreased Health Care Costs For Veterans Experiencing Housing Instability**

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01796>

## **Murphy names first woman to oversee N.J. National Guard, veterans homes after COVID deaths spur big changes**

<https://www.nj.com/coronavirus/2021/05/murphy-names-first-woman-to-oversee-nj-national-guard-veterans-homes-after-covid-deaths-spur-big-changes.html>

## **Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures Raise Risk for Suicide in Veterans**

<https://www.neurologyadvisor.com/topics/epilepsy/psychogenic-nonepileptic-seizures-raise-risk-for-suicide-in-veterans/>

## **Light Therapy Helps Veterans Treated for Traumatic Brain Injury**

<https://neurosciencenews.com/tbi-light-therapy-18331/>

## **Postal Inspectors Warn Veterans of Scams Targeting Them**

<https://www.chronicle-express.com/story/news/2021/05/03/postal-inspectors-warn-veterans-scams-targeting-them/4928601001/>

## **Proposed Law Would Make It Easier for Vets to Get Private-Sector Care on VA's Dime**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/proposed-law-would-make-it-easier-vets-get-private-sector-care-vas-dime.html>

## **Texas could use psychedelic mushrooms to treat PTSD in veterans**

<https://www.military.com/video/texas-could-use-psychedelic-mushrooms-treat-ptsd-veterans>

## **Supreme Court Justice Castigates Feres Doctrine, Court in Military Rape Case**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/supreme-court-justice-castigates-feres-doctrine-court-military-rape-case.html>

## **Trump's VA Secretary Joins Conservative Think Tank The Heritage Foundation**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/trumps-va-secretary-joins-conservative-think-tank-heritage-foundation.html>

## **Pentagon Rejects Permit Request by Veterans Group for Memorial Day Motorcycle Ride**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/pentagon-rejects-permit-request-veterans-group-memorial-day-motorcycle-ride.html>

## **Top General Drops Opposition to Change in Sex Assault Policy**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/top-general-drops-opposition-change-sex-assault-policy.html>

## **New Law Makes Many Active Duty, Vets and Survivors Eligible for Free or Discounted Broadband Internet**

[https://www.military.com/benefits/2021/04/30/veterans-may-be-eligible-free-or-discounted-broadband-internet.html?ESRC=army\\_210504.nl](https://www.military.com/benefits/2021/04/30/veterans-may-be-eligible-free-or-discounted-broadband-internet.html?ESRC=army_210504.nl)

## **Chats with the Chief: VA Secretary: “VA’s common purpose – The Veterans”**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88337/chats-chief-va-secretary-vas-common-purpose-veterans/>

## **Celebrate National Nurses Month with VA and explore a new nursing career**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88250/celebrate-national-nurses-month-va-explore-new-nursing-career/>



Dear Veteran,

The Veteran application for the [Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program \(VRRAP\)](#) is now available on [Va.gov](#).

When we receive a complete [application for VRRAP](#), we will make an eligibility determination, and notify you directly of our decision. If you are found eligible, you may seek training from an [approved VRRAP educational institution](#) that includes IT certifications, welding and health care. Participating educational institutions may have their own admissions criteria, we encourage you to contact them directly to find out more.

To learn more about the program and for updates, visit our [Facebook](#) page. You may also contact the Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday to speak with a representative.

Respectfully,  
Education Service



US Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
1-888-442-4551, TDD: 711

If you know a Veteran who is in crisis, call the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1.

## **How VA patient advocates help Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88186/va-patient-advocates-help-veterans/>



## **Veteran discounts available year round**

[https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/85765/veteran-discounts-available-year-round/#utm\\_source=VRfeature&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=VetResources](https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/85765/veteran-discounts-available-year-round/#utm_source=VRfeature&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources)

## **Veterans Affairs: Use of Additional Funding for COVID-19 Relief**

[https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-379?utm\\_campaign=usgao\\_email&utm\\_content=topic\\_veterans&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-379?utm_campaign=usgao_email&utm_content=topic_veterans&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## **Duckworth, Murray Introduce Bill To Help Wounded Veterans Start A Family**

[https://vetlikeme.org/duckworth-murray-introduce-bill-to-help-wounded-veterans-start-a-family/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=duckworth-murray-introduce-bill-to-help-wounded-veterans-start-a-family](https://vetlikeme.org/duckworth-murray-introduce-bill-to-help-wounded-veterans-start-a-family/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=duckworth-murray-introduce-bill-to-help-wounded-veterans-start-a-family)

## **Advocacy Group Launches New Leadership Development Program for Military Spouses**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/04/advocacy-group-launches-new-leadership-development-program-military-spouses.html>

## **Dear Military Spouse: Here's Why We Appreciate You**

<https://vetlikeme.org/dear-military-spouse-heres-why-we-appreciate-you/>

## **The VA Is Testing an Implant That Could Allow Paralyzed Veterans to Walk Again**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/04/25/va-testing-implant-could-allow-paralyzed-veterans-walk-again.html?ESRC=mr\\_210503.nl](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/04/25/va-testing-implant-could-allow-paralyzed-veterans-walk-again.html?ESRC=mr_210503.nl)

## **He went from NYC to Vietnam to deliver beer during a war — now his story is coming to the big screen**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2021/05/04/he-went-from-nyc-to-vietnam-to-deliver-beer-during-a-war-now-his-story-is-coming-to-the-big-screen/>

## **A Veterans Affairs system to quicken access to health care by sending military veterans to private doctors is showing backlogs and strains in Atlanta.**

[https://www.ajc.com/news/backlog-of-military-veterans-awaiting-medical-care-grows-in-atlanta/SGTGK6I4RVCOLLWYZ75MJW7D4E/?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.ajc.com/news/backlog-of-military-veterans-awaiting-medical-care-grows-in-atlanta/SGTGK6I4RVCOLLWYZ75MJW7D4E/?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **VA Benefits News - Episode 1: Acting Under Secretary for Benefits, Thomas J. Murphy**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4jngk3\\_JE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4jngk3_JE)

## **How the American Rescue Plan aids VA in helping Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/86147/american-rescue-plan-aids-va-helping-veterans/>

## **The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers**

<https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers/>

## **Join ‘Fans in the Stands’ to virtually cheer on Veteran athletes**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5667>

## **VA genetics program aims to increase mental health treatments for Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/87918/87918/>

## **\$113.1 Billion Discretionary VA Bill for '22 Submitted**

<https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/113-1-billion-discretionary-va-bill-for-22-submitted/>

## **Fighting for our Lives**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqlv62ow6n0>

## **Legion’s ongoing race to care for veterans, families and youth**

<https://www.legion.org/commander/252469/legion%E2%80%99s-ongoing-race-care-veterans-families-and-youth>

## **H.R. 2441: Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2441?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2441?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2494: To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2494?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2494?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2545: To amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of doctors of podiatric medicine in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2545?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2545?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2704: Improving VA Accountability To Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2704?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2704?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2788: VA Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor Modernization Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2788?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2788?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2429: VA Police Improvement and Accountability Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2429?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2429?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2167: GI Bill National Emergency Extended Deadline Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2167?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2167?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2093: Veterans and Family Information Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2093?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2093?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 1510: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a report on the use of cameras in medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1510?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1510?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 1448: PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1448?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1448?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 1257: Homeless Veterans CREDIT Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1257?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr1257?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 958: Protecting Moms Who Served Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr958?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr958?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 290: To amend title 38, United States Code, to render an individual, who transfers certain educational assistance, to which the individual is entitled because of an agreement by such individual to serve in the Armed Forces, to a dependent of that individual, and who fails to complete such ...**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr290?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr290?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 293: VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr293?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr293?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 239: Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr239?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr239?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**H.R. 234: Korean American VALOR Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr234?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr234?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **New panel to advise VA leaders on better response to sexual misconduct issues**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/06/new-panel-to-advise-va-leaders-on-better-response-to-sexual-misconduct-issues/>

## **Austin still mum on whether to prosecute sexual assaults outside chain of command**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/06/austin-still-mum-on-whether-to-prosecute-sexual-assaults-outside-chain-of-command/>

## **Skeptics question VA promise to increase diversity in senior management**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/06/skeptics-question-va-promise-to-increase-diversity-in-senior-management/>

## **Thousands of veteran record requests languish in red tape**

[https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/thousands-veterans-record-requests-languish-red-tape?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.07.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/thousands-veterans-record-requests-languish-red-tape?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.07.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Skeptics question VA promise to increase diversity in senior management**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/06/skeptics-question-va-promise-to-increase-diversity-in-senior-management/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.07.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/06/skeptics-question-va-promise-to-increase-diversity-in-senior-management/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.07.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

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## **Military Spouses Enable Mission by Maintaining the Home Front**

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2600076/military-spouses-enable-mission-by-maintaining-the-home-front/source/GovDelivery/>

## **Desert Storm group makes final funding push to begin construction**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/07/desert-storm-group-makes-final-funding-push-to-begin-construction/>

## **Military Transition During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

<https://veterans.house.gov/events/hearings/military-transition-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

## **Combat veteran Kurt Power on ‘Never Stop Fighting’ tour to help veterans suffering from PTSD**

<https://www.boston25news.com/news/local/combat-veteran-kurt-power-never-stop-fighting-tour-help-veterans-suffering-ptsd/7P6CGRSVXBHXXGTGXCUKITFWW4/>

## **Blinded Veterans Association donates braille flag to VA**

<https://www.kplctv.com/2021/05/08/blinded-veterans-association-donates-braille-flag-va/>

## **City and veterans unveil downtown banner project honoring veterans, active-duty military**

<https://www.thedailyjournal.com/story/news/2021/05/07/vineland-veterans-unveil-downtown-banner-project-honor-military/4994885001/>

## **VR&E recognizes the service and commitment of military spouses**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88523/vre-recognizes-service-commitment-military-spouses/>

## **Military Sexual Trauma survivors: You’re Not Alone**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88369/military-sexual-trauma-survivors-youre-not-alone/>

## **VA hospital improvises with new device to prevent in-patient suicides**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88070/va-hospital-improvises-new-device-prevent-patient-suicides/>

## **PTSD Research Quarterly (RQ)**

[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/ptsd\\_rq.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/ptsd_rq.asp)



## **Carry the Load relays to honor fallen veterans head to Texas for Memorial Day**

[https://www.stripes.com/carry-the-load-relays-to-honor-fallen-veterans-head-to-texas-for-memorial-day-1.672887?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm\\_campaign=Daily+Headlines&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.stripes.com/carry-the-load-relays-to-honor-fallen-veterans-head-to-texas-for-memorial-day-1.672887?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm_campaign=Daily+Headlines&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Internal audit highlights shortfalls in mental healthcare access at Phoenix VA**

[https://www.abc15.com/news/local-news/investigations/internal-audit-highlights-shortfalls-in-mental-healthcare-access-at-phoenix-va?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.abc15.com/news/local-news/investigations/internal-audit-highlights-shortfalls-in-mental-healthcare-access-at-phoenix-va?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Desert Storm group makes final funding push to begin construction**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/07/desert-storm-group-makes-final-funding-push-to-begin-construction/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/07/desert-storm-group-makes-final-funding-push-to-begin-construction/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Ernest West, Medal of Honor recipient who saved three in Korea, dies at 89**

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/ernest-west-dead/2021/05/07/5c82c074-adf1-11eb-acd3-24b44a57093a\\_story.html?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/ernest-west-dead/2021/05/07/5c82c074-adf1-11eb-acd3-24b44a57093a_story.html?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **One female Fort Bragg soldier charged in another's killing**

[https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/08/one-female-fort-bragg-soldier-charged-in-anothers-killing/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/08/one-female-fort-bragg-soldier-charged-in-anothers-killing/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Jobs market for veterans remains flat as pandemic restrictions linger**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2021/05/07/jobs-market-for-veterans-remains-flat-as-pandemic-restrictions-linger/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/education-transition/2021/05/07/jobs-market-for-veterans-remains-flat-as-pandemic-restrictions-linger/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Trump's VA Secretary missed chance to save sick veterans, critics say**

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<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0421-Study-sheds-light-on-interplay-among-PTSD-combat-experience-alcohol-use.cfm>

## **VA genetics program aims to increase mental health treatments for Veteran**

<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0421-VA-genetics-program-aims-to-increase-mental-health-treatments-for-Veterans.cfm>

## **VA telehealth clinic focused on cognitive issues helps Veterans in rural areas**

<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0421-VA-telehealth-clinic-focused-on-cognitive-issues-helps-Veterans-in-rural-areas.cfm>

## **Using genetics, researchers identify potential drugs for early treatment of COVID-19**

<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0421-Using-genetics-researchers-identify-potential-drugs-for-early-treatment-of-COVID-19.cfm>

## **New Brain Proteins Suspected of Causing Depression**

<https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0421-New-Brain-Proteins-Suspected-of-Causing-Depression.cfm>

## **H.R. 2911: VA Transparency & Trust Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2911?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2911?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2704: Improving VA Accountability To Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2704/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2704/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **Soldiers who perished in 1962 on secret mission to Vietnam are memorialized**

<https://www.armytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/16/soldiers-who-perished-in-1962-on-secret-mission-to-vietnam-are-memorialized/>

## **Pentagon Needs Better Data on Domestic Abuse in the Military Community, Audit Finds**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/17/pentagon-needs-better-data-domestic-abuse-military-community-audit-finds.html>

## **Not So Fast, Vets: Mask Mandate Still in Place at VA Hospitals**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/17/not-so-fast-vets-mask-mandate-still-place-va-hospitals.html?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.18.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/17/not-so-fast-vets-mask-mandate-still-place-va-hospitals.html?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.18.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **H.R. 2545, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of doctors of podiatric medicine in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57231?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-18 16:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-18 16:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57231?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-18%2016:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-18%2016:30:00)

## **H.R. 2726, VA FOIA Reform Act of 2021**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57225?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-18 11:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-18 11:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57225?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-18%2011:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-18%2011:30:00)

## **How a Green Beret captain sold out his own teammates to Russia**

<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/us-army-special-forces-peter-debbins/>



<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d9ef7d>

## **Refill or Renew? Getting VA Prescriptions**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210518-refill-or-renew-va-prescriptions>

## **Connecting Mobile Health Data Across Systems**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210518-connecting-mobile-health-data>

## **Your COVID-19 Vaccine Records Online**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210112-covid19-vaccine-records-online>

## **Senators urge VA to improve training for PTSD claims**

[https://www.stripes.com/senators-urge-va-to-improve-training-for-ptsd-claims-1.673811?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.stripes.com/senators-urge-va-to-improve-training-for-ptsd-claims-1.673811?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Vietnam War hero who killed sniper and silenced machine gun to save wounded buddies dies at 74**

[https://www.stripes.com/news/veterans/vietnam-war-hero-who-killed-sniper-and-silenced-machine-gun-to-save-wounded-buddies-dies-at-74-1.674000?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.stripes.com/news/veterans/vietnam-war-hero-who-killed-sniper-and-silenced-machine-gun-to-save-wounded-buddies-dies-at-74-1.674000?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **Senator Demands Update on Upgrading 'Bad Paper Discharges' for Vets with PTSD, TBI**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/20/senator-demands-update-upgrading-bad-paper-discharges-vets-ptsd-tbi.html>

## **COVID-19 Pandemic: VA Provides Health Care Assistance to Civilians as Part of the Federal Response**

[https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-395?utm\\_campaign=usgao\\_email&utm\\_content=topic\\_veterans&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-395?utm_campaign=usgao_email&utm_content=topic_veterans&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## **'Hard to put into words': Phillies surprise Vietnam vet with first-pitch opportunity**

[https://www.audacy.com/connectingvets/news/phillies-surprise-vietnam-vet-with-first-pitch-opportunity?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.audacy.com/connectingvets/news/phillies-surprise-vietnam-vet-with-first-pitch-opportunity?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **H.R. 2911: VA Transparency & Trust Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2911/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2911/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 707: Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act**

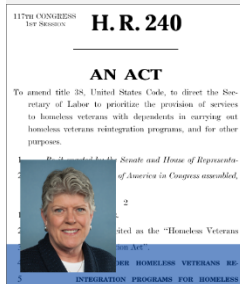
[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr707/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr707/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2494: To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department the Veterans Economic Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2494/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2494/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

## **H.R. 2167: GI Bill National Emergency Extended Deadline Act**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2167/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/hr2167/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

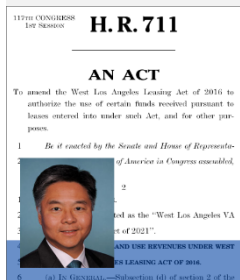


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

**H.R. 240: Homeless Veterans with Children Reintegration Act**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).



May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

**H.R. 711: West Los Angeles VA Campus Improvement Act of 2021**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).

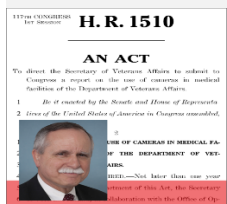


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

**H.R. 707: Ghost Army Congressional Gold Medal Act**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).



May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

**H.R. 1510: To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress cameras in medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).



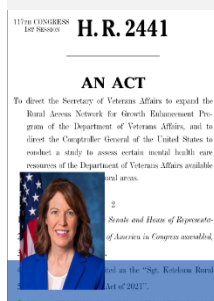


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

### **H.R. 2167: GI Bill National Emergency Extended Deadline Act**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).

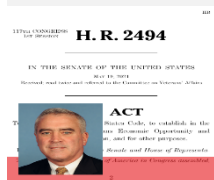


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

### **H.R. 2441: Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).

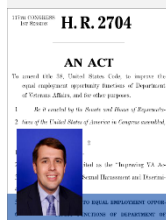


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

### **H.R. 2494: To amend title 38, United States Code, to establish in the Department the Veterans Affairs Opportunity and Transition Administration, and for other purposes.**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).

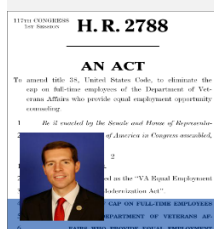


May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

### **H.R. 2704: Improving VA Accountability To Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Act**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).



May 18, 2021 — Bill Text

### **H.R. 2788: VA Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor Modernization Act**

This bill's text for status *Passed the House* (May 18, 2021) is now available.

Trackers: [Armed Forces and National Security](#).

## **VA Education Service**

Dear School Certifying Official,

As of today, May 21, 2021, the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) is pleased to announce that the application period for the new Lump Sum Payment Program (LSPP) is now open to eligible Education and Training Institutions (ETIs) participating in the GI Bill® Work Study Allowance Program. Those wishing to apply may do so until June 18, 2021.

The [Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019](#) (Public Law 116-154) authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to administer the Lump Sum Payment Program (LSPP) for eligible Education and Training Institutions (ETIs) participating in the GI Bill® Work Study Allowance Program.

Through the LSPP, eligible ETIs may apply to become a 154 Adminstrating Facility (154AF), which allows them to receive an annual lump sum payment from VA. The lump sum payment will be used to pay eligible work study students who are receiving GI Bill benefits at the ETI.

### **What do you need to do?**

ETIs that would like to participate in the LSPP must apply during the month of May and must re-apply each new academic year. The first eligible participation year is August 1, 2021, to July 31, 2022.

If your ETI does not plan to apply for consideration to participate, there is nothing for you to do. ETIs wishing to participate in future years must apply during the LSPP open season, typically in May.

### **How to apply**

ETIs seeking consideration to participate, must submit a completed [VA Lump Sum Work Study Participation Agreement - PL 116-154](#) to VA no later than June 18, 2021.

### **Year 1 application process and timeline: 2021-2022 Academic Year (AY 21)**

ETIs seeking to participate in the 2021-2022 academic year must submit a completed application no later than June 18, 2021. The VA Work Study Team (WST) will review the applications and render an approval decision by July 1, 2021. If approved, the ETI will receive the approved amount prior to August 1, 2021.

### **Participating ETI responsibilities and training**

In addition to the required application process, ETIs are encouraged to complete the optional training:

- [LSPP Training Video](#)
- [LSPP Presentation Slides](#)

The training covers a variety of topics, including the responsibilities of participating in the VA Work Study program, the application process, and important dates to remember.

### **Next steps**

If you are a School Certifying Official (SCO) or Work Study Site Supervisor, or you are interested in becoming an approved Work Study work site, you may contact the Work Study team through the GI Bill Ask a Question site:

[https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/utils/login\\_form/redirect/ask](https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/utils/login_form/redirect/ask), or by calling the Site

Supervisor Hotline at 1-855-225-1159, option #2. Please be sure to select Work Study from the category drop down menu when using the Ask a Question site.

If you have any questions regarding enrollment certifications, please contact the Education Call Center at: 1-888-442-4551 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday or contact your [Education Liaison Representative \(ELR\)](#).

Respectfully,

Education Service

**US Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
[1800 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20006](#)

**Contact Us**

Visit us on the web at <https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/>  
Call us at 1-888-442-4551  
TDD: 711

**Follow us on Social Media**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/gibilleducation>  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VAVetBenefits>

**If you know a Veteran who is in crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line at  
1-800-273-8255 and press 1.**

## **Ending gender-based harassment at VA facilities**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88728/ending-gender-based-harassment-va-facilities/>

## **Vets Increasingly Seeking Mental-Health Services**

<https://www.fedweek.com/armed-forces-news/vets-increasingly-seeking-mental-health/>

## **"Family Caregiver Support"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8z1t2a2mCc>

## **VHA: VSO's and VA - Take the shot.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MyyKxBVxjs>

## **Older Veterans Can Go to College for Free or Cheap in All 50 States**

[https://www.military.com/education/money-school/older-veterans-can-go-college-free-or-cheap-all-50-states.html?ESRC=mr\\_210524.nl](https://www.military.com/education/money-school/older-veterans-can-go-college-free-or-cheap-all-50-states.html?ESRC=mr_210524.nl)

## **Veterans Justice Outreach Program offers hope and connectivity to justice-involved Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88991/veterans-justice-outreach-program-offers-hope-connectivity-justice-involved-veterans/>

## **Mental health matters, now more than ever**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88988/mental-health-matters-now-ever/>

## **VA to hold “2021 Minority Summit” June 9**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89070/va-hold-2021-minority-summit-june-9/>

## **“No wonder we are losing so many vets to suicide.**

<https://mailchi.mp/thewarhorse/appeal-7015g000000jecbqao-1546630?e=30bd3f4c62>



<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2df024c>

## **H.R. 293, VA Hospitals Establishing Leadership Performance Act**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57246?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-25\\_17:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-25\\_17:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57246?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-25_17:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-25_17:30:00)

## **H.R. 239, Equal Access to Contraception for Veterans Act**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57249?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-25\\_17:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-25\\_17:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57249?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-25_17:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-25_17:30:00)

## **VA expands COVID-19 vaccinations to adolescents under SAVE LIVES Act**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5674>

## **H.R. 234, Korean American Vietnam Allies Long Overdue for Relief Act**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57248?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-26\\_11:30&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express\\_2021-05-26\\_11:30](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57248?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-26_11:30&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express_2021-05-26_11:30)

## **Advocates Fear a Huge Surge of Homeless Veterans as Pandemic Effects Become Clear**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/25/advocates-fear-huge-surge-of-homeless-veterans-pandemic-effects-become-clear.html?utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/25/advocates-fear-huge-surge-of-homeless-veterans-pandemic-effects-become-clear.html?utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **DAV volunteers clean, highlight American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial**

[https://www.military.com/video/all-female-82nd-airborne-team-jumps-out-of-woman-crewed-air-force-cargo-plane?fbclid=IwAR3l83tsi42tTg7YHxsa4PJICjBG4c6M2k-Ctj6AqcFT4ikdhO3iMTml&utm\\_source=Newsletter+Email&utm\\_campaign=f7ee194fc8-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_01\\_07\\_02\\_36\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_9a9d4becaa-f7ee194fc8-200978638&mc\\_cid=f7ee194fc8&mc\\_eid=30bd3f4c62](https://www.military.com/video/all-female-82nd-airborne-team-jumps-out-of-woman-crewed-air-force-cargo-plane?fbclid=IwAR3l83tsi42tTg7YHxsa4PJICjBG4c6M2k-Ctj6AqcFT4ikdhO3iMTml&utm_source=Newsletter+Email&utm_campaign=f7ee194fc8-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_01_07_02_36_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9a9d4becaa-f7ee194fc8-200978638&mc_cid=f7ee194fc8&mc_eid=30bd3f4c62)

## **iBOT® PMD Donation**

[https://www.newjersey.va.gov/NEWJERSEY/features/iBOT\\_PMD\\_Donation.asp](https://www.newjersey.va.gov/NEWJERSEY/features/iBOT_PMD_Donation.asp)

## **Judge: Vietnam Veteran Charged with Bringing Guns to DC Had Militia Ties**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/26/judge-vietnam-veteran-charged-bringing-guns-dc-had-militia-ties.html>

## **A Flying Car Could Be the Air Force's Next Medevac Transport**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/26/flying-car-could-be-air-forces-next-medevac-transport.html>

## **This Is How the Poppy Became a Symbol for Fallen Troops**

<https://www.military.com/history/2021/05/26/how-poppy-became-symbol-fallen-troops.html>



## **IG Says VA Underestimated Health Records Project Costs by Up to \$2.6B**

<https://www.nextgov.com/cio-briefing/2021/05/ig-says-va-underestimated-health-records-project-costs-26b/174324/>

## **H.R. 234, Korean American Vietnam Allies Long Overdue for Relief Act**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57248?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=855024&utm\\_campaign=Once%20a%20day\\_2021-05-27\\_01:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=855024&utm\\_campaign=Once%20a%20day\\_2021-05-27\\_01:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57248?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=855024&utm_campaign=Once%20a%20day_2021-05-27_01:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=855024&utm_campaign=Once%20a%20day_2021-05-27_01:30:00)

## **H.R. 2419, Affordable Housing for Homeless Veterans Act of 2021**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57247?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=855024&utm\\_campaign=Once%20a%20day\\_2021-05-27\\_01:30:00&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=855024&utm\\_campaign=Once%20a%20day\\_2021-05-27\\_01:30:00](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57247?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=855024&utm_campaign=Once%20a%20day_2021-05-27_01:30:00&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=855024&utm_campaign=Once%20a%20day_2021-05-27_01:30:00)

## **Department of Veterans Affairs Pharmacy Tech Arrested for Stealing Prescription Medication**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HFJy7IpSOQ>

## **5 Legendary US Military Firearms Were Designed by the Same Person**

<https://www.military.com/history/5-legendary-us-military-firearms-were-designed-same-person.html?ESRC=at-ease.nl&spMailingID=6948630&spUserID=MTI5MTUxNjE2MDUwS0&spJobID=1260853877&spReportId=MTI2MDg1Mzg3NwS2>

## **Veteran health care wait-time data lacks reliability and accuracy, feds say**

[https://www.wfla.com/8-on-your-side/veteran-health-care-wait-time-data-lacks-reliability-and-accuracy-feds-say/?utm\\_source=NEWSLETTER&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.wfla.com/8-on-your-side/veteran-health-care-wait-time-data-lacks-reliability-and-accuracy-feds-say/?utm_source=NEWSLETTER&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **House bill would fast track VA benefits to veterans suffering from 23 respiratory illnesses, cancers**

[https://www.stripes.com/Veterans/2021-05-26/HOUSE-TOXIC-1587398.html?utm\\_source=NEWSLETTER&utm\\_medium=EMAIL](https://www.stripes.com/Veterans/2021-05-26/HOUSE-TOXIC-1587398.html?utm_source=NEWSLETTER&utm_medium=EMAIL)

## **S. 894: Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s894?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s894?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**S. 1031: A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on disparities associated with race and ethnicity with respect to certain benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s1031?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s1031?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**S. 89: Ensuring Survivor Benefits During COVID-19 Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s89?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s89?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**S. 894: Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s894?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s894?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**S. 1095: Colonel John M. McHugh Tuition Fairness for Survivors Act of 2021**

[https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s1095?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_email\\_update&utm\\_source=govtrack/email\\_update&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/117/s1095?utm_campaign=govtrack_email_update&utm_source=govtrack/email_update&utm_medium=email)

**This real-life Air Force superhero saved 28 people from an active shooter in Arizona**

<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/air-force-tech-sgt-michael-walker-glendale-shooter/>

**Department of Veterans Affairs oversight body highlights \$2.6B IT overspend**

<https://www.fedscoop.com/va-underestimated-cost-of-ehr-program-by-several-billions/>

**The Fuentes brothers: COVID-19 vaccine**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFiGusZBRuU>

**'At What Point Does VA Become Adequately Funded?' Republicans Question Record Budget Request**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/27/what-point-does-v-a-become-adequately-funded-republicans-question-record-budget-request.html?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/27/what-point-does-v-a-become-adequately-funded-republicans-question-record-budget-request.html?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **‘A national outrage’: Lawmakers seek solutions to food insecurity in military, veteran families**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/2021/05/27/a-national-outrage-lawmakers-seek-solutions-to-food-insecurity-in-military-veteran-families/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/2021/05/27/a-national-outrage-lawmakers-seek-solutions-to-food-insecurity-in-military-veteran-families/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **VA budget plan includes new office focused on preventing harassment, promoting diversity**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/28/va-budget-plan-includes-new-office-focused-on-preventing-harassment-promoting-diversity/>

## **'Absolutely speechless': 9/11 charity buys home for local veteran injured in Afghanistan**

[https://www.njherald.com/story/news/2021/05/28/memorial-day-2021-hurt-afghanistan-veteran-gets-new-home-hampton/7487516002/?a=a&utm\\_source=njherald-Daily%20Briefing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=daily\\_briefing&utm\\_term=hero&utm\\_content=NEWJERSEY-NEWTON-NLETTER65](https://www.njherald.com/story/news/2021/05/28/memorial-day-2021-hurt-afghanistan-veteran-gets-new-home-hampton/7487516002/?a=a&utm_source=njherald-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=hero&utm_content=NEWJERSEY-NEWTON-NLETTER65)

## **Army General Who Allowed Helicopter to Fly Low Over DC Protesters Failed to Give Clear Orders, IG Finds**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/27/army-general-who-allowed-helicopter-fly-low-over-dc-protesters-failed-give-clear-orders-ig-finds.html>

## **Why a move in 1971 to change Memorial Day still has some veterans upset**

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/local/2021/05/29/nj-veterans-memorial-day-history-historical-dates/7432732002/>

## **WOMAN'S VETERANS CORNER**



*“How important  
it is for us to  
recognize and  
celebrate our  
heroes and  
she-roes!”*

-MAYA ANGELOU

JUSTFAB

### **Army Disciplines 13 Leaders, Confirms Murdered Soldier Vanessa Guillen Was Sexually Harassed**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/04/30/army-disciplines-13-leaders-confirms-murdered-soldier-vanessa-guillen-was-sexually-harassed.html>

## **Spc. Vanessa Guillen's Harasser Was a Known Toxic Leader, Army Report Shows**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/05/spc-vanessa-guillens-harasser-was-known-toxic-leader-army-report-shows.htm>

## **A stunning 21 Army leaders will be disciplined over Vanessa Guillén's disappearance and death**

<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/army-fort-hood-21-leaders-guillen/>

## **New Fort Hood Report May Help Change Sexual Assault Prosecutions**

<https://www.govexec.com/defense/2021/04/new-fort-hood-report-may-help-change-sexual-assault-prosecutions/173756/>

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## **The Army Infantry Doesn't Just Need More Women. It Needs More Qualified Women**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/opinions/2021/03/29/army-infantry-doesnt-just-need-more-women-it-needs-more-qualified-women.html>

## **Military Children Are Caught in a Battle over Government Funding**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/opinions/2021/04/19/military-children-are-caught-battle-over-government-funding.html>

## **A stunning 21 Army leaders will be disciplined over Vanessa Guillén's disappearance and death**

<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/army-fort-hood-21-leaders-guillen/>

## **New Fort Hood Report May Help Change Sexual Assault Prosecutions**

<https://www.govexec.com/defense/2021/04/new-fort-hood-report-may-help-change-sexual-assault-prosecutions/173756/>

## **Supreme Court justice castigates Feres Doctrine over cadet's rape lawsuit**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2021/05/03/supreme-court-justice-castigates-feres-doctrine-over-cadets-rape-lawsuit/>

## **Top General Drops Opposition to Change in Sex Assault Policy**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/03/top-general-drops-opposition-change-sex-assault-policy.html>

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d789ca>

## **COVID-19 and Your Mammogram**

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20210428-covid-19-and-your-mammogram>

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d89db2>

## **Difficulty of Transitioning from the Military and Becoming a Mother at the Same Time**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lvXxcJpitY>

## **Army Brass Noncommittal on Push to Remove COs from Sexual Assault Prosecution Decisions**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/11/army-brass-noncommittal-push-remove-cos-sexual-assault-prosecution-decisions.html?ESRC=eb\\_210512.nl](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/11/army-brass-noncommittal-push-remove-cos-sexual-assault-prosecution-decisions.html?ESRC=eb_210512.nl)

## **Women Veterans' care preferences key to preventing suicide**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88457/women-veterans-care-preferences-key-preventing-suicide/>

## **VA to create specialists to handle military sexual trauma claims**

[https://www.stripes.com/news/us/va-to-create-specialists-to-handle-military-sexual-trauma-claims-1.673244?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.13.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.stripes.com/news/us/va-to-create-specialists-to-handle-military-sexual-trauma-claims-1.673244?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.13.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Army Secretary Nominee Worries the ACFT Will Push Too Many Women Out**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/13/army-secretary-nominee-worries-acft-will-push-too-many-women-out.html>

## **Local female veteran harassed for parking in veterans-only spot**

<https://keyt.com/health/2021/05/14/local-female-veteran-harassed-for-parking-in-veterans-only-spot/>

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d95888>



## **H.R. 2704, Improving VA Accountability to Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Act of 2021**

[https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57213?utm\\_source=feedblitz&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-14 11:30&utm\\_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm\\_content=812526&utm\\_campaign=Express 2021-05-14 11:30](https://www.cbo.gov/publication/57213?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-14%2011:30&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=812526&utm_campaign=Express%2021-05-14%2011:30)

## **Tiny uptick in 2020 military sex assault reports, officials say**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/13/tiny-uptick-in-2020-military-sex-assault-reports-officials-say/>

## **Women recount claims of sexual harassment by veterans charity leader, a former Green Beret**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/15/women-recount-claims-of-sexual-harassment-by-veterans-charity-leader-a-former-green-beret/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.17.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/15/women-recount-claims-of-sexual-harassment-by-veterans-charity-leader-a-former-green-beret/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.17.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2d9b944>

## **More Female Soldiers Are Passing the ACFT, But Their Scores Still Trail Men's**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/17/more-female-soldiers-are-passing-acft-their-scores-still-trail-mens.html>

## **‘Stop the social experiment’ — New survey spotlights bias against women in Army special ops**

<https://taskandpurpose.com/news/army-special-operations-women-survey/>

## **ICYMI: AMVETS and VA Facebook Live on the Million Veteran Program and future of medicine**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88845/icymi-amvets-va-facebook-live-million-veteran-program-future-medicine/>

## **Women in Military Becomes Gender Battleground in South Korea**

<https://www.military.com/video/women-military-becomes-gender-battleground-south-korea>

## **Ending gender-based harassment at VA facilities**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88728/ending-gender-based-harassment-va-facilities/>

## **ICYMI: Facebook Live chat on housing stability and security for women Veterans**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89037/icymi-facebook-live-chat-housing-stability-security-women-veterans/>

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2dd5738>

## **'I am Vanessa Guillén Act' Praised as Calls for Removing COs from Sexual Assault Prosecutions Mount**

[https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/25/i-am-vanessa-guillen-act-praised-calls-removing-cos-sexual-assault-prosecutions-mount.html?ESRC=eb\\_210526.nl](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/25/i-am-vanessa-guillen-act-praised-calls-removing-cos-sexual-assault-prosecutions-mount.html?ESRC=eb_210526.nl)

## **Women Veterans, work and a post-COVID world**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89236/women-veterans-work-post-covid-world/>

## **Kirsten Gillibrand and Joni Ernst Can Pass Their Military Sexual Assault Bill — They Just Need a Senate Vote**

<https://www.govexec.com/defense/2021/05/kirsten-gillibrand-and-joni-ernst-can-pass-their-military-sexual-assault-bill-they-just-need-senate-vote/174347/>

## **VA Center for Women Veterans**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/2e1cb82>

## **This bill proposes giving veterans a year of birth control at once**

[https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/27/this-bill-proposes-giving-veterans-a-year-of-birth-control-at-once/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/05/27/this-bill-proposes-giving-veterans-a-year-of-birth-control-at-once/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.28.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

# **CLAIMS CORNER**

## **VA Wants to Reduce my Disability Rating**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvRo0dVdO\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvRo0dVdO_I)

## **When Should I Fire My Veteran Services Officer?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlyA2LrVe5o>

## **VA Disability for Anxiety | Everything You Need to Know!**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILc\\_aaLWS6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILc_aaLWS6w)

## **How to Get Sleep Apnea VA Disability Benefits**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3Pfgl40mYM>

## **Compensation and Pension Exams: Stop When It Hurts And Tell The Truth**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhb5V82zX64>

## **When Should I Fire My Veteran Services Officer?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlyA2LrVe5o>

## **VA Benefits for Spouses of Disabled Veterans**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYNn56quQBw>

## **VA Deferred My Rating Decision? (H&P Quick Hits)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qK0op3xr2hE>

## **VA Claim Denied, Now What?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpN06CR1iA0>

## **[4/28/21] LIVE - Answering VA Questions**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kL7KeI9aCfc>

## **VA.gov site becomes central login for accessing benefit**

[https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88099/va-gov-site-becomes-central-login-accessing-benefits/#utm\\_source=VRfeature&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=VetResources](https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88099/va-gov-site-becomes-central-login-accessing-benefits/#utm_source=VRfeature&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources)

## **VA grows locations for C&P contract exams for Veterans and service members**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/83107/va-grows-locations-cp-contract-exams-veterans-service-members/>

## **VA Disability Questions Answered By VA-Accredited Attorneys**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQkc-JFJ7Fo>

## **When can the VA take away my disability?**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0ItjX\\_mtCo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0ItjX_mtCo)

## **VA PTSD Claims: What Every Veteran Needs to Know**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU1SxScm4sU>

## **100 P&T VA Disability Rating: When Is It Truly Protected?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w29LLXybuP0>

## **Top 5 Easiest VA Disability Claims to get Approved In 2021**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Phcfwo0tWAM>

## **We Answer VA Disability Questions (VA-Accredited Lawyer)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w5\\_4NDeOt0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w5_4NDeOt0)

# **VA Disability Questions Answered By VA-Accredited Attorneys**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQkc-JFJ7Fo>

## **VA Disability Exams: Actions Needed to Improve Program Management**

[https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-543t?utm\\_campaign=usgao\\_email&utm\\_content=topic\\_veterans&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-543t?utm_campaign=usgao_email&utm_content=topic_veterans&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## **Do VA Raters Even Follow Their Own Laws?**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaCnlzJmJ\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaCnlzJmJ_s)

## **How to access your health records through third party applications**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88436/access-health-records-third-party-applications/>

## **VA to re-adjudicate some Veteran and survivor claims**

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/88709/va-re-adjudicate-veteran-survivor-claims/>

## **VA to readjudicate Veteran and survivor claims for possible herbicide exposure**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5672>

## **Do VA Raters Even Follow Their Own Laws?**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaCnlzJmJ\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaCnlzJmJ_s)

## **How Does The VA Rate Hearing Loss?**

<https://www.lawyers4veterans.com/how-does-the-va-rate-hearing-loss/>

## **What Causes Plantar Fasciitis?**

<https://www.lawyers4veterans.com/what-causes-plantar-fasciitis/>

## **Congress Orders The Department Of Veterans Affairs To Clean Up Its Act**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xGP9hJZHUU>

## **Veterans Are At Risk Of Not Receiving The Benefits They Deserve!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcTM0HXwdGs>

## **The (Toxic) Truth Hurts and It's Only the Beginning Fort McClellan**

<https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-history/>

## **Two Easy Ways To Win A 10% Tinnitus VA Rating**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l72yPVVHvwY>

## **Do Commercial Use of Herbicides Affect Veterans Differently than Tactical Herbicides?**

[https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-diseases/?utm\\_source=pardot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ft-mcclellan](https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-diseases/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ft-mcclellan)

The secrets we found that could help you improve your VA benefits claim are exposed in a new video series!

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## **Putting It All Together: Filing A Successful Fort McClellan Claim**

[https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-filing-claim/?utm\\_source=pardot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ft-mcclellan](https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-filing-claim/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ft-mcclellan)

### **[5/26/21] VA-Accredited Lawyer Answers VA Disability Questions**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlybRx6fjk>

### **TOP 7 Best Ways To Get A 100 VA Disability Rating!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=giLlwHOuVvA>

### **VA plans expansion of benefits for disability claims for conditions related to certain toxic exposures**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5675>

### **VA to start processing Vietnam vets' claims for conditions newly linked to Agent Orange poisoning**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/va-to-start-processing-vietnam-vets-claims-for-conditions-newly-linked-to-agent-orange-poisoning/>

### **Amid pressure, VA eyes speeding benefits for burn pit exposure illnesses**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/amid-pressure-va-eyes-speeding-benefits-for-burn-pit-exposure-illnesses/>

### **"Fully Developed Claims Decided in 90 Days or Less**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVc7-VBe2ac>



**VA Announces Major Changes To  
Presumptive Conditions - Agent Orange and  
Particulate Matter Exposure**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOdymv4wCJk>

**Don't Fall for This VA Trick! | PTSD C&P  
Exam**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvdgxxZEGGE>

**70%, 80% and 90% VA Benefits and  
Advantages!!! Over 25 Must Know  
Benefits!!!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMcxE0sBsxQ>

**How to Get Sleep Apnea VA Disability  
Benefits**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3Pfgl40mYM>

**VA Announces Major Changes To  
Presumptive Conditions - Agent Orange and  
Particulate Matter Exposure**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOdymv4wCJk>

**VA Disability for Anxiety | Everything You Need to  
Know!**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILc\\_aaLWS6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILc_aaLWS6w)

# **MILITARY EXPOSURE**

## **Mammoth Toxic Exposure Push Could Be Biggest Congressional Health Care Effort in Years**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/05/mammoth-toxic-exposure-push-could-be-biggest-congressional-health-care-effort-years.html>

## **VA asks for delay in House committee's call for toxic exposure legislation**

[https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2021/05/05/house-veterans-toxic-takano-burnpit/5781620241369/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.06.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2021/05/05/house-veterans-toxic-takano-burnpit/5781620241369/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.06.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **US Navy Veterans Mesothelioma Advocate Urges a Navy Veteran with Mesothelioma Who Also Had Post Navy Asbestos Exposure to Call Attorney Erik Karst of Karst von Oiste-Compensation Might be in the Millions of Dollars**

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/us-navy-veterans-mesothelioma-advocate-urges-a-navy-veteran-with-mesothelioma-who-also-had-post-navy-asbestos-exposure-to-call-attorney-erik-karst-of-karst-von-oiste-compensation-might-be-in-the-millions-of-dollars-301286456.html>

## **Radiation Exposure and Liver Flukes: Little-Known Veterans' Issues Get Attention in Congress**

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/05/07/radiation-exposure-and-liver-flukes-little-known-veterans-issues-get-attention-congress.html>

## **Are you a Veteran? Questions or concerns about Gulf War Exposures?**

### **Gulf War Exposures & Health**

<https://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/education/local-offerings/support/gulfwarillnessflyer.pdf>

## **VA Disability Exams: Actions Needed to Improve Program Management**

[https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-543t?utm\\_campaign=usgao\\_email&utm\\_content=topic\\_veterans&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-543t?utm_campaign=usgao_email&utm_content=topic_veterans&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## **US Navy Veterans Mesothelioma Advocate Urges a Navy Veteran with Mesothelioma to Please Call Attorney Erik Karst of Karst von Oiste to Discuss Compensation that Might Exceed a Million Dollars If They May Have Spent Time in a Shipyard**

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/us-navy-veterans-mesothelioma-advocate-urges-a-navy-veteran-with-mesothelioma-to-please-call-attorney-erik-karst-of-karst-von-oiste-to-discuss-compensation-that-might-exceed-a-million-dollars-if-they-may-have-spent-time-in-a-shipyard-301291562.html>

## **Benefits for burn pit illnesses, hypertension from Agent Orange would be granted under new plan**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/14/benefits-for-burn-pit-illnesses-hypertension-from-agent-orange-would-be-granted-under-new-plan/>

## **The Government Knew All Along** **Are You One of the Veterans Exposed to Harmful Chemicals at Fort McClellan?**

<https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-series-intro-1/>

## **The (Toxic) Truth Hurts and It's Only the Beginning Fort McClellan**

<https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-history/>

## **Do Commercial Use of Herbicides Affect Veterans Differently than Tactical Herbicides?**

[https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-diseases/?utm\\_source=pardot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ft-mcclellan](https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-diseases/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ft-mcclellan)

The secrets we found that could help you improve your VA benefits claim are exposed in a new video series!

Email not displaying correctly?  
[View it in your browser.](#)

## **Putting It All Together: Filing A Successful Fort McClellan Claim**

[https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-filing-claim/?utm\\_source=pardot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ft-mcclellan](https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-filing-claim/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ft-mcclellan)

## **The Government Can't 'Detox' the Evidence**

If you're seeing this, you're just in time. On our upcoming episode, we are about to unleash the insidious reality of the Toxic Chemicals used at Fort McClellan. We reveal the nature of the documents we found, the research we conducted, and expert opinions we requested.

You ask any vet stationed at Fort McClellan about their unexplained diseases and they'll tell you about mustard gas, maybe radiation, or toxic exposure from the nearby Monsanto plant, etc. but the truth is a more familiar danger.

[https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-toxins/?utm\\_source=pardot&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=ft-mcclellan](https://va-law.hillandponton.com/ft-mcclellan-video-toxins/?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ft-mcclellan)

## **Nearly All" VA Claims for Gulf War Illness "Improperly Denied"**

[https://thewarhorse.org/nearly-all-gulf-war-illness-veterans-affairs-claims-improperly-denied/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.24.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://thewarhorse.org/nearly-all-gulf-war-illness-veterans-affairs-claims-improperly-denied/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.24.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## **Tester announces new bill aimed at expanding coverage for veterans exposed to toxic hazards**

<https://www.ktvh.com/news/tester-announces-new-bill-aimed-at-expanding-coverage-for-veterans-exposed-to-toxic-hazards>

## **VA plans expansion of benefits for disability claims for conditions related to certain toxic exposures**

<https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5675>

## **VA to start processing Vietnam vets' claims for conditions newly linked to Agent Orange poisoning**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/va-to-start-processing-vietnam-vets-claims-for-conditions-newly-linked-to-agent-orange-poisoning/>

## **Amid pressure, VA eyes speeding benefits for burn pit exposure illnesses**

<https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2021/05/27/amid-pressure-va-eyes-speeding-benefits-for-burn-pit-exposure-illnesses/>



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

## News Release

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 27, 2021

#### **VA plans expansion of benefits for disability claims for conditions related to certain toxic exposures**

*New evaluation process to be applied in identifying future  
presumptive conditions*

**WASHINGTON** — The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today two major decisions related to presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange and particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia.

#### ***Agent Orange***

VA will begin implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283), adding three conditions to the list of those presumptively associated with exposure to herbicide agents, more commonly known as Agent Orange. Those conditions are bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism.

“Many of our Nation’s Veterans have waited a long time for these benefits,” said **Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough**. “VA will not make them wait any longer. This is absolutely the right thing to do for Veterans and their families.”

VA will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, which may result in an earlier date for entitlement to benefits for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Vietnam War era Veterans and their survivors, who previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions, will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim. VA will send letters to impacted Veterans and survivors.

#### ***Particulate Matter Exposures***

The Secretary recently concluded the first iteration of a newly formed internal VA process to review scientific evidence to support rulemaking, resulting in the recommendation to consider creation of new presumptions of service connection for respiratory conditions based on VA’s evaluation of a National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine report and other evidence. VA’s review supports initiation of rulemaking to address the role that particulate matter pollution plays in generating

chronic respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis, for Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and/or after September 19, 2001, or in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf War.

“VA is establishing a holistic approach to determining toxic exposure presumption going forward. We are moving out smartly in initiating action to consider these and other potential new presumptions, grounded in science and in keeping with my authority as Secretary of VA,” **said Secretary McDonough.**

VA is initiating rulemaking to consider adding respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, sinusitis, and rhinitis, to the list of chronic disabilities, based on an association with military service in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the covered periods of conflict.. VA will conduct broad outreach efforts to reach impacted Veterans and encourages them to participate in the rulemaking process.

For more information, visit our website at [Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures - Public Health \(va.gov\)](#).

If you have questions contact [Susan.Carter2@va.gov](mailto:Susan.Carter2@va.gov), [Randal.Noller@va.gov](mailto:Randal.Noller@va.gov) and [Tatjana.Christian@va.gov](mailto:Tatjana.Christian@va.gov).

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## Blue Water Navy - Nehmer

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it will readjudicate claims for Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

This review is part of the Veterans Benefits Administration’s implementation of the November 5, 2020, U.S. District Court of the Northern District of California decision to readjudicate previously denied claims as applied in Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Veterans who were previously denied service connection for an herbicide related presumptive condition due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will automatically have their claims readjudicated.

Readjudication means VA will review the evidence of record and provide replacement decisions in the cases of Veterans who were previously denied service connection for one or more herbicide related conditions on the basis that military service was not performed on the landmass of the Republic of Vietnam or on its inland waterways. This review will also apply to eligible survivors of deceased Vietnam era Veterans. VA is dedicated to ensuring all Veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

VA ensures that we have the proper resources in place to meet the needs of the Veteran community. Eligible survivors of deceased Veterans may also benefit from the policy and may be eligible for benefits based on the Veterans' service.

Veterans who have a condition caused by herbicide exposure during military service can learn more about Agent Orange exposure at this [website](#).

## **Trump's VA Secretary missed chance to save sick veterans, critics say**

[https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/trumps-va-secretary-missed-chance-to-save-sick-veterans-critics-say?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/trumps-va-secretary-missed-chance-to-save-sick-veterans-critics-say?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2005.10.21&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

Former Trump administration Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie grew up at Fort Bragg surrounded by Vietnam veterans affected by the toxic chemical Agent Orange. His father, too, was grievously wounded in Vietnam. Still, when given the chance to change policies at the Department of Veterans Affairs to help post-9/11 service members suffering from diseases related to toxic chemical exposure, critics say he chose not to.

In an exclusive interview with the *Washington Examiner*, Wilkie said he did not know if he had the authority to make such changes, and he “would have to go back and look.”

For two decades following the American invasion of Afghanistan, service members stationed across the Middle East and Asia have developed rare cancers and ailments that veterans groups say are linked to their exposure to burn pits and toxic chemicals.

Wilkie said he worked on the issue, encouraging more scientific studies, helping to create a registry, and treating all sick veterans who came to the VA. “I knew all about Agent Orange, so I didn't want us to have to go through that,” said Wilkie, now a Heritage Foundation visiting fellow. “We didn't turn away a veteran who was ill.”

### **EXCLUSIVE: 'TOXIC WOUNDS ARE WOUNDS,' JON STEWART SAYS OF MILITARY VETERANS AND BURN PITS**

But lawmakers and sick veterans say the VA must grant preventive screenings and tests before the onset of disease in order to save lives, and the burden of proof should not be on the veteran. More than a dozen bills before Congress would force the VA to respond.

Mark Jackson, a veteran who served at a contaminated Afghanistan War staging base in Uzbekistan known as “K2,” said it's not about treating veterans who are already ill. The need is to test veterans exposed to toxins so that preventable cancers can be addressed early.



“Mr. Wilkie is right when he says an acutely sick veteran can go in for care. That's not what I'm fighting for,” said Jackson, who works with the Stronghold Freedom Foundation, which is working to help pass the pending legislation.

“We're fighting for the presumption by the VA that if someone was exposed to radiation at K2 or breathed toxins and jet fuel out of a burn pit, then the default position of the Department of Veterans Affairs is that the illnesses that they are now experiencing are automatically presumed to have occurred due to those exposures,” he said.

### **'Go back and look'**

More than a dozen bills before Congress are related to military toxic exposures, including one introduced in April by New York Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio and promoted by comedian Jon Stewart, who helped pass similar legislation to help 9/11 first responders.

Several of the bills before Congress would grant a presumption of exposure.

Since Wilkie's three years in office ended Jan. 20, Jackson said he knows of veterans exposed to toxins in the line of duty who have died without the long-term care the VA could have provided.

Jackson added that Wilkie had the power to make that change, and he chose not to. Wilkie says he's not sure if he could have helped those veterans or not.

“I would have to go back and look,” said Wilkie. “All I did was make sure that anyone presenting himself had the physical, made sure that anyone coming to us who was ill was taken care of. But most of the legislation, going back to Agent Orange, was a VA mandate.”

Stewart recently told the *Washington Examiner* the so-called VA mandate means the department has the power to help veterans.

“The secretary of VA has a lot of leeway as far as mandates,” Stewart said in a recent phone interview.

“They could deem constrictive bronchiolitis and these cancers and these respiratory illnesses as service-related,” he explained. “What we do in our bill is, we basically list all the countries that the U.S. was active in and ... a list of illnesses based on the science of toxic exposure and the types of illnesses that exposure causes.”

Wilkie said he hasn't read the bill, and he dismissed Stewart's claim, saying the science isn't there yet. “I have not seen it, and nor have I had time to look at it,” said Wilkie. “I'm not a scientist, never have been, and I'm not a doctor, and I've never played one on television, so I would have to look to science to tell me that.”

## **'Free for all'**

Wilkie said he depended on research by the National Institutes of Health and the National Academy of Medicine to prove a connection between exposure to toxic burn pits and certain illnesses.

The DOD claims such studies have not “met the criteria for 'sufficient evidence for an association' (relationship) with burn pit exposure.”

“If you don't have that, you could have the possibility for a free for all,” said Wilkie.

“I think the crux of many of the pieces of legislation on the Hill regarding burn pits had to do with the payment of benefits,” Wilkie said. “You get certain kinds of disability benefits based on your medical condition, and I think that they wanted to expand that and make it a presumption that burn pits did these things.”

To be sure, Jackson admits that making the presumption clause law will be “insanely expensive.”

“That gets to the root of what that bureaucracy has become,” he said of the VA. “It is now designed to essentially be a giant screening process to make sure as few people as possible get coverage because it's expensive.”

In a written statement to the *Washington Examiner*, the VA did not respond to questions regarding Secretary Denis McDonough's ability to make the described policy changes himself without an act of Congress.

“Secretary McDonough is fully committed to this immediate and deliberate forward-leaning approach that tackles the questions of environmental exposure,” a spokesperson said. “VA is seeking every avenue possible to develop a process with the utmost rigor where presumptives can be determined in a more expedient and holistic manner for Veterans. This process includes gathering science from all available sources.”

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee chairman, a Montana Democrat, is working on omnibus legislation that would take the best of the 15 bills currently before Congress.

“I'm done waiting for VA to take action,” he said in a statement Friday. “Providing health care and benefits to veterans suffering from the effects of toxic exposure is a cost of war that has to be paid.”

## **How Two Incredible Women Declared War on the Makers of Agent Orange Sprayed All Over Vietnam and the US**

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-two-incredible-women-declared-war-on-the-makers-of-agent-orange-sprayed-all-over-vietnam-and-the-us>

# **PAUL SUTTON'S CORNER**

## **America, Please Don't Forget the Victims of Agent Orange**

by Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai

*Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai, Ph.D., is a Vietnamese novelist and journalist. Her first novel in English, "The Mountains Sing," is set during the Vietnam War.*

Forty-six years have passed since the Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975. While some Americans may prefer to forget its atrocities, and Vietnam is focused on forgiveness and the future, the wounds of Agent Orange victims still demand attention.

Between 1962 and 1971, the U.S. military employed approximately 19.5 million gallons of herbicides in South Vietnam to clear vegetation that was believed to conceal enemy troops and that provided food for them, as part of [Operation Ranch Hand](#). Agent Orange, the most widely used of those defoliants, destroyed [five million acres](#) of Vietnamese forests and damaged some 500,000 acres of cropland.

The herbicide contains dioxin, [one of the most toxic substances known to science](#), which remained in the contaminated soil and sediment of water bodies for decades. Before dioxin hot spots were contained and [cleanup efforts](#) began, the contamination had spread to [fish and shrimp, and, from there, to more people](#).

On Jan. 26, a French-Vietnamese woman and victim of Agent Orange brought a case against 14 [chemical giants before a French court](#) to seek damages for the harmful effects herbicides have had on her and three generations of her family. She seeks to hold the companies, including Dow Chemical and Monsanto (since acquired by Bayer), accountable for their role in making or selling Agent Orange.

At 79, the woman, Ms. Trần Tố Nga, [is fighting what may be the last battle of her life](#). She has cancer, high iodine levels in her blood, genetic abnormalities, among other illnesses linked to Agent Orange. Her children were born with genetic abnormalities; one died when she was only few months old.

With much of the world preoccupied with the pandemic, Ms. Nga's fight for justice has been largely ignored — the same way the innocent people exposed to herbicides sprayed from American military aircrafts in [Vietnam](#), [Laos](#) and [Cambodia](#) have been overlooked for nearly half a century.

The first time I heard of Agent Orange was in 1980 when I was 7 years old and living in South Vietnam. A neighbor was standing in our kitchen, pointing at a fish we had caught in a stream close to home. The fish was a great catch, but it had two tails and a gigantic, deformed head.

“Don’t eat that fish,” the neighbor told us, “it has been contaminated by chất độc da cam.”

Years later, after I learned English and came across the term Agent Orange, I wondered why Americans used an ambiguous-sounding name for this deadly chemical while Vietnamese farmers, like my parents and our neighbors, chose instead to address it head-on: chất độc da cam, or, “the poison, Agent Orange.”

In the 1980s, unlike many Americans who had the luxury of choosing their food, my parents did not. Over half a decade had passed since the war ended, but we were still living under the trade embargo America had placed on Vietnam. We were starving. My parents kept the fish alive in a deep bucket filled with water for some days, replacing the water regularly as they debated what to do. They reasoned that we couldn’t be certain the fish’s features were caused by chemical contamination.

In their desperation, they argued that even if the fish was contaminated by those American chemicals, the water drawn from the depths of our well would help flush out the toxins.

In the end, my mother went ahead and prepared the fish, much to my joy and that of my two elder brothers. I remember my stick-thin body trembling as I devoured that protein-rich meal, cooked tenderly in lemongrass and ginger harvested from the garden of my mother’s love.

Years later, I would look back and wonder at that moment and at the war that took so many lives and traumatized many more. To survive, my family and most of our neighbors were forced to consume whatever food we could find.

After I became a mother, I would count the fingers and toes of my newborn daughter, and later those of my son. My eyes would tear up each time.

Many mothers are not as lucky as me. Not Ms. Nguyệt, who wept with me in the yard of the [Thanh Xuân Peace Village](#), an orphanage that provides charity care for Agent Orange victims near Hanoi where I volunteered organizing activities for kids. Ms. Nguyệt’s husband had fought in the contaminated areas in the south and died of cancer. As a single mother who was often out working odd jobs to survive, she had no means of caring for their only child — a boy born with deformities — and had to leave him at the orphanage. It is not known how many parents gave up children born with deformities, but many such orphanages exist throughout Vietnam.

Ms. Nguyệt and her son are among the several million Vietnamese estimated by the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange, or the VAVA, to be living with the horrific consequences of the defoliant campaign. The number of Laotian and Cambodian victims is unknown, but researchers have been working on [assessing the impact](#) of the herbicides there.

Scientists in Vietnam have confirmed high levels of dioxin in the [blood and breast milk](#) of people living in hot spots. And in a growing list, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has linked [many types of cancers and health problems to these chemicals](#). American veterans and their offspring who meet certain [requirements](#) are eligible for benefits. Over the years, U.S. veterans have secured [settlements](#) from chemical manufacturers.

Vietnamese and other victims in Southeast Asia are still waiting for the U.S. government to provide a similar level of assistance. It took decades for the United States to commit almost [\\$400 million](#) to clean up hot spots and help victims in the heavily sprayed provinces. The United States still has not taken responsibility for the harmful effects of herbicides in Laos or Cambodia.

[Vietnamese](#), Laotian and Cambodian victims of dioxin have never received compensation from the chemical giants that produced, sold and reaped profits from the sale of herbicides. Ms. Nga's lawsuit could be the first that results in compensation for a Vietnamese victim, according to the Collectif Vietnam Dioxine, the organization supporting her case.

In 2004, VAVA filed a class-action suit in the United States against chemical manufacturers on behalf of millions of Vietnamese. However, the American court ultimately dismissed the case on the grounds that it lacked sufficient basis in U.S. and international law and that the supplying of herbicides [didn't amount to a war crime](#).

For years, I have been asking myself this question: Why has the United States offered at least some form of compensation to Americans, but has not done more for the Vietnamese who were also exposed and [who have spent years seeking justice](#)?

It is long overdue that we highlight the costs of wars beyond injuries and casualties, to include the damage still inflicted on our health, [our families](#) and our environment. It is long overdue that comprehensive actions be taken to help all victims of Agent Orange, regardless of their nationalities.

Even though Jim Doyle has closed down the *"Agent Orange Zone"* due to continuing personal health problems, I will try to continue to keep those of you that remain interested abreast of the exposure news as it comes our way. If you wish to be dis-enrolled from these occasional posts, please let me know and I will remove you from our lists. This link is

courtesy of Richard Hughes in New York. I've just finished reading "*The Mountains Sing*" by Dr. Nguyen, which is an outstanding read and vivid, unique representation of the war from the Vietnamese perspective.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/30/opinion/sunday/agent-orange-vietnam-war-anniversary.html?searchResultPosition=1>

***Released by the VA @ 3:12 p. m.  
today***

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is going to announce it will readjudicate claims for Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

This review is part of the Veterans Benefits Administration's implementation of the November 5, 2020, U.S. District Court of the Northern District of California decision to readjudicate previously denied claims as applied in *Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*.

Veterans who were previously denied service connection for an herbicide related presumptive condition due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will automatically have their claims readjudicated.

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Veterans who have a condition caused by herbicide exposure during military service can file a claim for VA disability compensation at this [website](#).

VA is dedicated to ensuring that all Veterans receive the benefits they have earned and ensures it has the resources in place to meet the needs of the Veteran community. Thank you for your continued support of VA and our joint partnerships.

Thank you,  
Under Secretary for Benefits  
Thomas J. Murphy  
Acting  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
Department of Veterans Affairs

## **Bayer to Re-think Roundup**

*Courtesy of Jim Doyle...*

[Bayer to rethink Roundup](#) in U.S. residential market after judge nixes \$2 bln settlement

## **Three Diseases to be Recognized by VA**

Looks like we may finally have a VA Secretary that "has a pair".



VA plans to expand  
benefits for disability



# **VETERANS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE** **OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

## **Owner of Dog Training School Sentenced for Defrauding VA**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d7678d>

## **Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection of the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Saginaw, Michigan**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d7bcb3>

## **Deficiencies in Leaders' Responses to Lapses in Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing at the Chillicothe VA Medical Center in Ohio**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d7f69f>

## **Deficiencies in Community Living Center Practices and the Death of a Patient Following Elopement from the Chillicothe VA Medical Center in Ohio**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d7f7ae>

## **Care and Oversight Deficiencies Related to Multiple Homicides at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center in Clarksburg, West Virginia**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d8aa88>

## **Former VA Hospital Nursing Assistant Sentenced to Seven Consecutive Life Sentences for Murdering Seven Veterans and Assault with Intent to Commit Murder of an Eighth**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d8add8>

## **Podcast: VA OIG Team Reflects on PRAC Healthcare Subgroup Work**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d9033e>

## **Former VA Employee Sentenced for Conspiring to Accept Bribes**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d99ce4>

## **The Office of Field Operations Did Not Adequately Oversee Quality Assurance Program Findings**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d9bdad>

## **Inadequate Resident Supervision and Documentation of an Ophthalmology Procedure at the Oklahoma City VA Health Care System in Oklahoma**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d9c19a>

## **Statement of Christopher A. Wilber, Counselor to the Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Hearing on "Protecting Whistleblowers and Promoting Accountability: Is VA Making Progress?" May 19, 2021**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d9fc5e>

## **Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection of the Cincinnati VA Medical Center in Ohio**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2da000c>

## **Statement of Michael Bowman, Office of Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs, Director of IT and Security Audits Division, Before the Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Hearing on Cybersecurity and Risk Management at VA: Addressing Ongoing Challenges and Moving Forward May 20, 2021**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2da39b7>

## **Drug Interactions Related to a Patient Death, Marion VA Medical Center in Illinois**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2da314f>

## **Owner of Dog Training School Sentenced for Defrauding VA**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2d7678d>

## **Pharmacy Technician Arrested for Stealing Prescribed Narcotics**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2da86af>

## **Barber College Owner Pleads Guilty to Wire Fraud Scheme**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2dcb9c0>

## **Deficiencies in Reporting Reliable Physical Infrastructure Cost Estimates for the Electronic Health Record Modernization Program**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2ddf00a>

## **VA Employee Sentenced to Prison for Stealing Veterans' Personal Information**

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-edar/pr/va-employee-sentenced-prison-stealing-veterans-personal-information>

## **VA OIG Semiannual Report to Congress, October 1, 2020–March 31, 2021**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2dd56ec>

## **Comprehensive Healthcare Inspection of the Chillicothe VA Medical Center in Ohio**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2e1a023>

## **Compensation and Pension Proceeds Were Generally Handled Accurately but Some Were Delayed**

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVAOIG/bulletins/2e19c70>

# **1 RAO BULLETIN**

**1May 2021**

<http://www.nhc-ul.org/Bulletin%2010501%20-%20PDF%20Edition.pdf>

**RAO BULLETIN**

**15May 2021**

<http://www.nhc-ul.org/Bulletin%2010515%20-%20PDF%20Edition.pdf>

# **Your Education Benefits are Improving and Expanding!**

The spring term is almost over! What are your plans for the summer? Whether you plan on catching some backyard sunshine or just taking some time to catch your breath, the summer break is the perfect time to begin planning for the upcoming fall semester. And just in time, we have a list of ways that VA is improving your VA education experience and expanding your GI Bill® benefits.

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**Are you ready to begin your education journey, but need help getting started? Check out the [GI Bill Comparison tool](#) to learn about programs and even compare benefits by school.**

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## **VA is Offering COVID-19 Vaccines to all Veterans**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is now offering COVID-19 vaccines to all Veterans, regardless of their VA healthcare enrollment status, as well as their spouses and caregivers under the [SAVE LIVES Act](#).

VA Medical Centers (VAMC) are expanding distribution of the vaccine to the wider Veteran community, while continuing to prioritize vaccinations and healthcare delivery for Veterans enrolled in VA care. VA is committed to offering COVID-19 vaccines as quickly and safely as possible.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines at VA or to sign up to receive a COVID-19 vaccine at a VAMC in your area, please [click here](#).

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**May is Military Appreciation Month!** As we celebrate current and former military members, be sure to [read our blog on Vantage Point](#) to find out how **VA is expanding education benefits** to meet the diverse needs of military families.

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**Summer shopping..?** Before you pull out your wallet, **check out this [list of year round discounts](#)** available to Veterans and active duty Service members.

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## **An Improved GI Bill Experience is Coming**



VA has launched a new effort building a modernized [Digital GI Bill](#) that will *allow you to*:

- Explore different program options
- Receive eligibility decisions quickly
- Calculate your educational benefits in a few short steps
- Get guided recommendations on which benefits offer the most value based on your situation
- Engage with the VA electronically for on-the-spot service

We look forward to sharing more updates as we transform the GI Bill experience.

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## VA is Extending Debt Relief for Veterans

The Debt Management Center, or DMC, recently shared a blog post about [ongoing debt relief for students](#).

DMC also has a new website that includes a debt portal for Veterans. Veterans with benefit debt can now log in to see their debt balance and letters. Please note: the portal is for Veterans only (dependents and school officials do not have access). To access the tool, visit [www.va.gov/manage-va-debt](http://www.va.gov/manage-va-debt).



Students with questions about VA benefit debt can call the DMC (800-827-0648) from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. CT Monday through Friday or visit <https://iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/ask/> to submit their requests online.

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## Switch to Direct Deposit for Your VA Payments



Are you signed up for direct deposit with the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)? If you're receiving VA pension payments, disability compensation or education payments by check, here are a few reasons why you should consider switching to direct deposit:

- Direct deposit is *faster*. Funds are deposited directly to your bank account. Therefore, you aren't waiting for a paper check to arrive in the mail.
- Direct deposit is *safer*. Because funds are deposited directly into your account, there is no risk of a lost or stolen check.

- Direct deposit is *convenient*. With direct deposit, you can skip the trip to the bank to cash a paper check.

If you're ready to make the switch from paper to a faster, safer and more convenient way to receive your VA payments, visit [Direct deposit for your VA benefit payments](#).

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## Access Your Benefits through VA.gov

As of April 30, Veterans and their families can access their VA benefits and services on the new and user-friendly [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) website. Users can now access information about VA benefits and services through a single site rather than through multiple locations.



To access their information, users are encouraged to use their current Digital Service (DS) Logon or [create a new account using ID.me](#).

For more information about the switch from eBenefits to VA.gov, read the [VAntage Point blog](#).



To learn more about **what your GI Bill® education benefits can do for you**, visit [VA.gov/education](http://VA.gov/education). Be sure to follow the [Post-9/11 GI Bill Facebook](#) page for timely updates and information about VA education benefits!

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## Your Opinion Matters

We hear the feedback you provide through the Veteran Signals or commonly called VSignals survey. Your feedback has already helped us expand our outreach to better answer what you've said are your most important questions and streamline some of our procedures. We care about your experience with VA. You will receive more surveys in the future when you interact with VA to get and use your benefits, and we encourage you to fill those out to help us keep improving.



Learn more about VSignals and [the success VA has had using it to better respond to your needs and input](#).

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## Avoid Delayed Payments: FAQs for Enrolling in Courses or Training





As students are enrolling in classes for the next semester, here are answers to some frequently asked questions about enrollment, certification, and course changes to help you plan ahead and avoid any confusion or issues that could affect your benefits.

*When should I expect my payments to arrive after I enroll?*

After your school submits your enrollment, VA will pay tuition to the school directly and pay book stipend and housing payments to you. For new claims, VA's current targets are 24 days for processing a new claim and 12 days for processing an existing claim. On-the-job-training and apprenticeship students generally won't need to submit enrollment but will need to submit monthly hours and get payment the next month. Calls to the Education Call Center peak early in the semester and on the first day of every month, causing longer hold times.

*Can I attend school while waiting for VA to make the payment?*

[Yes, find out more here.](#)

*How is my entitlement charged?*

For college students, [according to your training time.](#) For apprenticeship/on-the-job training, [according to the amount of benefits you are receiving.](#) For an accelerated training program, based on the amount of benefits you utilize.

*What happens if I need to change my classes?*

If you decrease your training time after payment, you may need to repay housing or book benefits. Generally, if you receive a [non-punitive grade instead of a punitive grade](#) VA will reduce your benefits unless you have [mitigating circumstances](#), in which case [you could still be paid.](#)



US Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
1-888-442-4551, TDD: 711

**If you know a Veteran who is in crisis, call the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1.**

# Mental Health Topic Email

May 2021

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## May Is Mental Health Month

Every day, Veterans can take a step toward better mental health and well-being. No matter how big or small, **One Step Today** can make a difference. This Mental Health Month, explore the steps you can take to live a healthier life.



[Explore the Steps](#)

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## COVID-19 Vaccine at VA

All Veterans, their spouses and caregivers, and CHAMPVA recipients can now get a COVID-19 vaccine at VA.



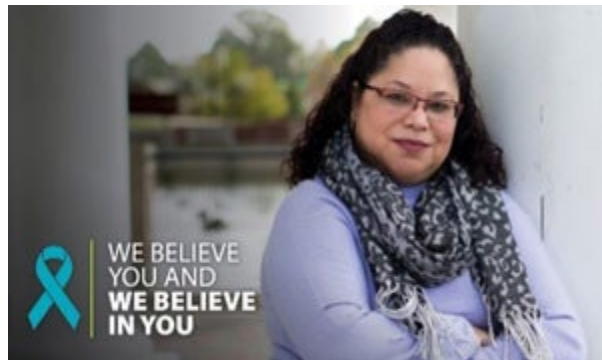
[Learn More](#)

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## We Believe In You

Although Sexual Assault Awareness Month has ended, VA continues to provide services and support year-round for Veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma (MST).

[Find Support](#)



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## Regaining Control Through Mindfulness

Given Gus' family background and years of training and service, he never expected to have difficulty transitioning back into civilian life. But after his time in the Army, he says his mental health issues became evident in three ways.

[Read Gus' Story](#)



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## Be There

For a Veteran facing hard times, your support can provide hope when it's needed most — and you already have what it takes to show you care. Take a few minutes to check in today.

[Learn More](#)



## Poor Sleep Can Cause Mental Health Nightmares

Most people experience trouble sleeping occasionally — it's part of life. They might wake up feeling cranky or sluggish, or as if they're not firing on all cylinders. But for some individuals, the picture of poor sleep is much more challenging.



[Read the Blog](#)

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## Veterans' Friends and Family

As a family member or friend of a Veteran, you can play an important role in providing support. People who are close to Veterans are often the first to notice that they are facing a mental health challenge. Let them know you're there for them.



[Show Support](#)

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## VA Mental Health Apps

Use your smartphone or tablet to access mental health support wherever you are, whenever you need it. VA's mental health apps can help you manage PTSD-related symptoms and stress, learn to practice mindfulness, cope with life's challenges, aid in addressing depression, support wellness, and more.



[Explore VA Apps](#)

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Keep updated & let us know how we're doing.