



# Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

## *A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, February 26, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 09

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### ***This-N-That***

It seems we're not done with all the scandals in the VA Healthcare System!

Federal authorities are stepping up investigations at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers due to a sharp increase in opioid theft, missing prescriptions or unauthorized drug use by VA employees since 2009.

Aggravating the problem is that some VA hospitals have been lax in tracking drug supplies. Congressional auditors said spot checks found four VA hospitals skipped monthly inspections of drug stocks or missed other requirements.

Just something else that if the VA would procure a fully automated and computerized claims and medical records system, then things like this would not be happening.

Yes they do have a computerized claims system but, it still fully relies on human intervention to approve or deny claims, medical records can still be tampered with, and there is no link or communication with the DoD's system to confirm service without anyone actually having eyes on.

Interesting is that civilian hospitals have been using this type of system since 1980's and over the years has improved dramatically, set in more securities, more warning systems to administrators, and reporting authorities like the FDA. Why is it that the VA is immune to those processes?

Personally I lay most of the blame on Congress. They didn't pressure Obama to sign legislation that would have made it a lot easier to terminate VA employees, they protected the bonuses system for administration staff. They continually ignore or make excuses as to why they don't pay attention to calls, letters and faxes asking their support on various bills presented.

Then, and I'm sure this will upset many, but the truth of the matter is that Veterans allow this by always remaining silent.

If we only had just 4-5 million out of what 100m Veterans picking up the phone and calling their Reps in DC and demanding support, pretty much bringing their offices to a stand still not being able to communicate outbound and not being able to communicate inbound on other matters, they would indeed listen, they would indeed take action just to stop the calls, E-Mails, and faxes from coming in so they could conduct other business like lining their pockets.

I mean face it, and I'm sure we all know this, but how does one go into politics maybe a millionaire already, but leave office in 30 or 40 years a multi-millionaire or even a billionaire on the salaries they received? They don't, it's back room dealings, "donations to their charity", lobbyists, etc. who help make them multi-millionaires/billionaires and really what did they accomplish for their constituents?

We are the only country in the world who puts people in offices of high power and walks away. We cast our votes electing, or in many cases re-electing these people and once we cast our vote we walk away expecting them to do the job we're hired them for. And what employer in the world hires staff and walks away expecting that person or persons to do the job and do it right? NONE!

So again, I'm asking you, to please pick up those phones, and call the toll free number or even the toll numbers (most have unlimited long distance now) and demand that they support the legislation that is presented, and even ask they fix problems in the VA and fix them now!

Over the past year there has been more than enough evidence presented by the IG's office and the AG's office to convince a high school graduate there are problems and many of them and most are not being duly addressed.

You don't even need to leave home or for that matter get out of your PJ's to make the calls, or log on to their websites and send an E-Mail message. And trust me every little bit helps! Same with the action items in this and all other newsletters we produce. Click on the appropriate item and send out those pre-written E-Mails, which, you also can edit in any added comment(s).

All you need to keep in mind is be respectful, even if they haven't so as not to be cut off permanently.

None of us (organization wise) can do it alone, we need YOU too!

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

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

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



**Help Blue Water Vietnam Vets Exposed to  
Agent Orange**

The “Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act” has been introduced in both the House and Senate (H.R. 299 & S. 422 respectively). These proposals would clarify that service members serving off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam conflict have a presumption for filing disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for ailments associated with exposure to the Agent Orange herbicide. FRA believes Congress should recognize that so-called “Blue water” veterans were exposed to Agent Orange herbicide and authorize presumptive status for VA disability claims associated with this exposure.

Please use the [Action Center](#) to ask your legislators to support this important legislation.

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## **Commissaries Try New Brands and Prices**

The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) has chosen the names "Freedom's Choice" and "HomeBase" for its new private label product assortment. Private labels are known as store brands. Freedom's Choice will be the commissary brand name for food items, and HomeBase for nonfood items such as paper products and other household items. With the initial rollout targeted for May, patrons in commissaries worldwide can expect to see a number of DeCA's Freedom's Choice and HomeBase products. The number of these store brand products will continue to grow much larger over the next four to five years. Read the whole story about commissary price changes and new brands on [Military.com](#).

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## **Fifty Ways to Cut Spending**

At one point or another, you'll probably find yourself in a place where you need to cut spending. Sometimes, it's a temporary thing to get through a rough patch. Other times, you're spending more than you're making each month. For a list of fifty suggestions on how to cut your spending and manage your finances, see this Paycheck Chronicles [post](#).

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## **Help for Veteran Entrepreneurs**

Bunker Labs DC, a 501(c) 3 organization committed to veteran entrepreneurship, hosted the "Muster DC," to showcase and empower local veteran entrepreneurs. The experience, part of the Muster Across America Tour sponsored by JPMorgan Chase & Co., is designed to connect veterans in business, and foster growth, knowledge and success for veteran entrepreneurs.

The event, attended by FRA staff ADVP Brian Condon, featured expert talks and panel discussions, a pitch stage where veteran entrepreneurs can compete for the title of "top startup," and a post-event networking reception. Bunker Labs DC Executive Director Emily McMahan remarked, "We know this experience will be a great opportunity to gather our local veteran entrepreneur community for one day to connect and share their ideas, experiences, and to also showcase Bunker Labs DC as a great resource."

In partnership with JPMorgan Chase, the "Muster Builds America Tour" will travel to 14 cities across the country to showcase veteran entrepreneurs, empower local entrepreneurial ecosystems with large-scale events, and serve as the launching point for local Bunker Labs chapters. The tour began with the "DC Muster" event in Washington DC and concludes with the 14th and final event, October 26, 2017. For more information about dates and locations of future events please go to the Bunkers Lab [website](#).

Source: FRA

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## **Franchise Opportunities for Veterans**



your  
**FRANCHISE**  
source

Have you thought about having your own business? Owning a franchise is a great opportunity, especially for Veterans.

Franchisors are actively seeking Veterans for Franchisees. In fact, multiple Franchisors provide substantial discounts on their Franchise Fee. Why? Veterans are disciplined and know how to follow a process. That is exactly what they are looking for – plus, they are grateful for your service to our country.

If you have interest, how do you know where do you start?

1. Start thinking about what kind of business you'd like to run. Where are your interests? What do you enjoy doing?
2. Financing – do you have money that you can put down on your business? If not, we can help you with multiple resources for grants and loans.
3. Learn about the process to buy a Franchise.

If you would like to learn more about looking at your own franchise, please give us a call. We do not charge for our services and are here to help you find the best franchise for you!

Janice Charles  
Your Franchise Source  
[yfransource@gmail.com](mailto:yfransource@gmail.com)  
303-319-5186  
[www.yourfranchisesource.com](http://www.yourfranchisesource.com)

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**More Reservists Now Eligible For Post-9/11  
GI Bill**

A recent decision by the Department of the Army Human Resources Command has made a more reservists eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. On February 10 MILPER message 17-059 was issued, stating that reservists who had certain types of active duty after September 10, 2001 may now use that time to qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill under 10 USC 12301(d). For more details, see this Military.com [article](#).

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**CONTACT YOUR  
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

**To Call your Representative:**

**202-225-2305**

**To Call your Senators:**

**202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553**

**To call Different Members of Congress:**

**202-224-3121**

**TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622**

**PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!**

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

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**New VA Secretary Urged to Push Hiring  
Freeze Exemptions**

Dr. David Shulkin was sworn in Tuesday as secretary of the Veterans Affairs Department and immediately was urged to begin approving thousands of exemptions to President Donald Trump's federal hiring freeze. Shulkin, who was [approved by the Senate](#) in a 100-0 vote Monday night, said, "I think we have a system that's doing terrific things with very dedicated people, but we all know we have a lot of work to do. We all agree that our veterans deserve the very, very best that we can do."

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## **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)**

The Department of Defense (DoD) released a report this past March, that was required by the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This report stated the DoD has 22 percent excess infrastructure. The Defense FY 2017 budget requested \$4 million to begin the planning for another round of BRAC in 2019, which Congress denied. Closing bases always meets resistance on Capitol Hill because lawmakers want to protect jobs in their districts. Some members of Congress have also expressed concerns that a new round of base closures would face similar problems as the one in 2005, which saw costs to close facilities increase so much that any actual savings may have been eliminated.

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## **Concurrent Receipt (Veterans Disability Payments) and the Myth Going Around the Internet**

We have been receiving many inquiries from members regarding Concurrent Receipt – the fancy term for VA disability payments for military retirees.

Apparently there is information going around the internet that has gotten many veterans upset because we've been asked multiple times about a CBO report that is titled "Eliminate Concurrent Receipt of Retirement Pay and Disability Compensation for Disabled Veterans."

This would only become a problem if a member of Congress decided to take information and have a bill drafted to do what the report says could be done. If this would ever happen TREA will alert you and mount an all-out campaign

to defeat whatever proposal had been made.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) puts out a report each year which lists government programs that could be eliminated or cut back if Congress wants to save money. However, these are only for informational purposes to Congress. They are Not proposals. This is NOT a proposal.

### **A Brief History of Concurrent Receipt**

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 required a joint DOD/VA report on the feasibility of consolidating disability evaluation systems to eliminate duplication by having one medical examination and a single-source disability rating. As a result, DOD and the VA initiated a one-year pilot program, now called the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES), at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda and the Malcolm Grove Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base. The program was expanded to other sites in 2009 and 2010 and since September 2011, all new disability retirement cases at facilities worldwide have been processed through IDES.

As a result of the current disability process, a retiree can have both a DOD and a VA disability rating and these ratings will not necessarily be the same percentage. The percentage determined by DOD is used to determine fitness for duty and may result in the medical separation or disability retirement of the service member. The VA rating, on the other hand, was designed to reflect the average loss of earning power. Studies over the past several years have consistently recommended a single, comprehensive medical examination that would establish a disability rating that could be used by both DOD and the VA.

The DOD and VA disability rating systems have much in common, but there are also significant differences. DOD makes a determination of eligibility for disability retirement only once, at the time the individual is separating from the service. Although DOD uses the VA rating schedule to determine the percentage of disability, DOD measures disability, or lack thereof, against the extent to which the individual can or cannot perform military duties. Military disability retired pay, but not VA disability compensation, is usually taxable, unless related to a combat disability.

As veterans, military retirees can apply to the VA for disability compensation.

A retiree may (1) apply for VA compensation any time after leaving the service and (2) have his or her degree of disability changed by the VA as the result of a later medical reevaluation, as noted above. Many retirees seek benefits from the VA years after retirement for a condition that may have been incurred during military service but that does not manifest itself until many years later. Typical examples include hearing loss, some cardiovascular problems and conditions related to exposure to Agent Orange.

The Ronald W. Reagan NDAA for Fiscal Year 2005 further liberalized the concurrent receipt rules contained in the FY2004 NDAA and authorized immediate concurrent receipt for those rated by the VA totaling 100%. The FY2008 NDAA expanded concurrent receipt eligibility to include those who are 100% disabled due to unemployability and provided CRSC to those who were medically retired or retired prematurely due to force reduction programs prior to completing 20 years of service.

The FY2004 NDAA authorized, for the first time, actual concurrent receipt (now referred to as Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments or CRDP), as well as a greatly expanded CRSC program. The changes included authorization of concurrent receipt for retirees with at least a 50% disability, regardless of the cause of disability. However, the amount of concurrent receipt was phased in over a 10-year period, from 2004-2013. The offset in retired pay was totally eliminated by 2014.

Most of the major changes to these programs have been made through the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003, created a benefit known as "Combat Related Special Compensation," or CRSC. CRSC provided, for certain disabled retirees whose disability is combat-related, a cash benefit financially identical to what concurrent receipt would provide them.

[TREA has never argued that getting paid twice (from the service and from the VA) for the same disabilities should be allowed. However, a portion of your service retired pay is based on your vested years of service, and that makes the pay earned due to time served. You shouldn't have to sacrifice retired pay you earned through years of service. Vested years of service and disability pay have nothing to do with each other.]

Until 2004, the law required that military retired pay be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount of any VA disability compensation received. This

procedure was generally referred to as an “offset.” If, for example, a military retiree who received \$1,500 a month in retired pay and was rated by the VA as 70% disabled (and therefore entitled to approximately \$1,000 per month in disability compensation), the offset would operate to pay \$500 monthly in retired pay and the \$1,000 in disability compensation. The only advantage for the retiree was that the VA disability compensation was not taxable. For many years some military retirees and advocacy groups [including TREA] sought a change in law to permit receipt of all, or some, of both payments. Opponents of concurrent receipt frequently referred to it as “double dipping” because they maintained that it represented two payments for the same condition.

According to the Congressional Research Service, “Concurrent receipt” refers to the simultaneous receipt of two types of monetary benefits: military retired pay and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation. With several separate programs, varying eligibility criteria and several eligibility dates, most observers find the subject complex and somewhat confusing. There are, however, two common criteria: first, all recipients are military retirees; second, they are also eligible for VA disability compensation. Beyond the basic eligibility criteria there are two separate and distinct components that are commonly referred to as making up the Concurrent Receipt program: (1) Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP) and (2) Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). As of July 2016, the Department of Defense (DOD) reported that 486,632 retirees were receiving CRDP, with an additional 88,610 receiving CRSC at a total annual cost of \$10.3 billion.

However, because so many have expressed their concern, we are devoting this entire update to the issue.

This report only becomes a problem if a member of Congress decided to take information and have a bill drafted to do what the report says could be done.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) puts out a report each year which lists government programs that could be eliminated or cut back if Congress wants to save money. However, these are only for informational purposes to Congress. They are Not proposals. This is NOT a proposal. In conclusion, we repeat what we said at the beginning.

## Operation Mail Call

Operation Mail Call needs your help! We need cards and letters to send to our troops currently serving on foreign soil.

Our men and women in uniform often go months without hugging their children, walking through the park with a significant other or enjoying Mom's home-cooked Sunday dinners.



Ask them where they'd go if they had a free plane ticket anywhere in the world, and the overwhelming majority would say, "home."

Of course, we can't replace the hugs, the love or the secret family chili recipe – but with your help, we can provide them a connection to their fellow Americans who are grateful for their service.

Now, we're hoping you'll take your support to the next level by sending more cards and letters. Hand made cards by your children, or class mates are a terrific means of putting smiles on their faces even if only for a moment.

Cards and Letters of encouragement to help boost moral and let them know we sincerely appreciate the job they are doing and look forward to they day they are all brought home. Your card or letter will show your appreciation and help thousands more American heroes feel connected to the people they love and the country they serve.

Please help us to make a powerful expression of how much their fellow Americans care about them.

Thank you so much for all you're doing to show our service men and women they are appreciated missed and loved.

If you're a school teacher, please contact me at my E-Mail address at the top, our troops love to hear from kids too!

For more information, visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/5439-operation-mail-call-2>

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## **Happy Birthday Coast Guard Reserve**

This week (February 19) the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve celebrated its 76th birthday. The U.S. Coast Guard Reserve began with the passage of the Coast Guard Reserve and Auxiliary Act on 19 February 1941. Coast Guard reservist normally train two days a month and may perform up to 15 days of Active Duty for Training a year. The Coast Guard Reserve has about 8,000 men and women in service, most of them integrated directly with regular Coast Guard units. The Coast Guard Reserve has been a flexible, responsive and cost-effective workforce that has maintained its primary purpose of providing surge capacity when needed for Coast Guard missions.

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**VA Extends Pilot Dental Program**

Beginning in 2014, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) piloted the VA Dental Insurance Program ([VADIP](#)), which provided an opportunity for certain eligible Veterans and their beneficiaries to purchase dental insurance from private insurance companies at a discounted rate. That program was slated to end Jan. 31, but a law passed in the summer of 2016 allows already enrolled veterans to keep their insurance for twelve more months. The legislation also keeps the program funded through 2021. For more information, visit the [VADIP webpage](#), call 877-222-VETS (8387).

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**Please remember these women who died during February while serving our country in or during war times**

4 Feb 1997: USN AW3 Wendy L Potter, airplane crash, off coast of Israel

5 Feb 2015: USCG PO2 Lisa Trubnikova, 31, murdered by USCG member, Bourne, MA

7 Feb 1944: USA ANC LT Marjorie Morrow, WW II

7 Feb 1944: USA ANC 1LT Carrie Sheetz, WW II

7 Feb 1944: USA ANC LT Blanche Sigman, WW II

7 Feb 2007: USMC CPT Jennifer Harris, 27, IRAQ

7 Feb 2007: USMC CPL Jennifer Parcell, 20, IRAQ

9 Feb 1944: USA ANC LT LaVerne Farquar, WW II

9 Feb 1944: USA ANC LT Gertrude Spelboug, WW II

9 Feb 2005: ILARNG SGT Jessica M. Housby, 23, IRAQ  
9 Feb 2015: USAF CPT Jamie Brunette, suicide, Tampa, FL  
9 Feb 2015: USA Amanda Weyrick, 25, drug overdose, San Antonio, TX  
10 Feb 2010: USA PFC Adriana Alvarez, 20, gunshot wound, IRAQ  
10 Feb 1945: USN HA1 Marilyn E Weeks, bacterial infection, Navy Hospital, Seattle, WA  
12 Feb 2007: USN MA2 Laquita (Pate) James, 33, natural causes aboard USS Bataan, AFGHANISTAN  
12 Feb 2009: USN IT3 Caitlin Trask, 21, died of gunshot wound by her former boyfriend in Newport News, VA  
12 Feb 2009: USAF T/SGT Jessica Sweet, 30, leukemia, Walter Reed  
14 Feb 2008: USA SGT Julianna Gehant, 32, murdered in Northern Illinois University  
14 Feb 2013: USA SPC Kimberly Walker, 28, murdered by boyfriend, Colorado Springs, CO  
15 Feb 2010: USAF MG Jeanne Holm, died from double pneumonia  
16 Feb 1944: USA ANC Ellen Ainsworth, 24, WW II  
16 Feb 2004: USAR PFC Nichole M. Frye, 19, IRAQ  
16 Feb 2005: USA SPC Katrina Lani (Johnson) Bell, 32, IRAQ  
16 Feb 2014: USMC GySgt Monica Plank, 34, hit & run driver, OH  
17 Feb 2006: USAF SrAirman Alecia S Good, 23, plane crash near Africa  
18 Feb 1944: WASP Marian Toevs, WW II  
18 Feb 1966: USA ANC 2LT Carol Ann Drazba, 22, VIETNAM  
18 Feb 1966: USA ANC 2LT Elizabeth Ann Jones, 22, VIETNAM  
19 Feb 2009: HIARNG PFC Cwislyn K Walter, 19, non-combat vehicle accident  
19 Feb 2010: USA SGT Winter Plummer, 27, murdered by husband at Ft Lewis, WA  
21 Feb 2010: TNARNG CWO2 Billie J Grinder, 25, helicopter accident, IRAQ  
22 Feb 2008: USA SPC Keisha M Morgan, 25, non-combat overdose, IRAQ  
22 Feb 2010: USA PFC Autumn M Shannon, 32, murdered by mother, Ft Bragg, NC  
24 Feb 1944: ANC 2LT Elizabeth J Howren, plane crash near Gela-Vittoria, Sicily  
25 Feb 1944: WASP Trainee Betty Pauline Stine, WW II  
25 Feb 1991: USAR SPC Christine Mayes, 22, barracks building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, DESERT STORM  
25 Feb 1991: USAR SPC Beverly S Clark, 23, barracks building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, DESERT STORM

25 Feb 1991: USAR SPC Adrienne L Mitchell, 20, barracks building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, DESERT STORM

26 Feb 2007: MDARNG PVT May Yuen, 22, Basic Training suicide?

27 Feb 1991: USA SGT Cheryl (LaBeau) O'Brien, 24, DESERT STORM

28 Feb 1991: CTARNG SPC Cindy Marie Beaudoin, 19, Kuwait, DESERT STORM

28 Feb 2003: USAF SSG Shelby Dawn Orelup, 22, murdered at Sheppard AFB, TX

28 Feb 2009: USMC Carri Leigh Goodwin, 20, suicide due to rape

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## **Veteran Crisis Resources**

**Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**

**Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans**

**1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)**

**VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274**

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## **Caregiver Help: Veteran Substance Abuse and Depression**

Depression and substance use disorders can be two of the invisible wounds of war — and understanding them can give caregivers the tools they need to help their veterans. PsychArmor, a non-profit dedicated to bridging the military-civilian divide by providing resources to help community members and others engage veterans, has free video courses on a variety of military-related issues, including depression and substance use. For more details, see this [Military.com article](#).

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# Veterans-For-Change Web Site

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “One-Stop-Shop” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you’d like it to be.

We also have a forum with a licensed Mental Health Worker, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average 1,700 hits per day, and downloads average 1,000 per day with a total 3,183,154 visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it’s FREE of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

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

- Documents Library with over 15,905 documents on-line (Updated: 12/12/16)
- FAQ’s with more than 1,600 FAQ’s and answers
- Multiple Forums
  - o Afghanistan Veterans
  - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
  - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
  - o Iraq Veterans
  - o Korean Veterans
  - o Men Veterans Forum

- o Mental Health for Veterans
- o Political Issues
- o Suggestion Box
- o The Mess Hall
- o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
- o Veteran Affairs
- o Vietnam Veterans
- o Welcome Mat
- o Women Veterans Forum
- o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: 10/10/16)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,352)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,541, Added 46 New Links (Updated: 12/28/16)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:

[Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

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**Links to Other Stories**

- 1) Changes expected at Veterans Cemetery
- 2) Cherokee Nation eligible for accreditation by Veterans Affairs
- 3) Congress debates: Does official time help VA employees serve Veterans or the union?
- 4) Fox Company of Task Force Violent head to Congress to clear their names
- 5) Homeless Shelter for Veterans Nears Completion in Waterloo
- 6) Hundreds of Veterans in need to benefit from \$350,000 in funding from Attorney General Maura Healey
- 7) Judicial Watch to Represent Veteran Prosecuted for 'Posting' American Flag on Veteran's Affairs Center Fence on Memorial Day
- 8) New regulation decreases cost of outpatient medication
- 9) Office of Veterans Affairs gets \$15K grant for treatment courts
- 10) Opioid drugs vanish at some VA hospitals
- 11) Students hold concert to thank local Veterans
- 12) Veterans Court bill inches forward
- 13) Veterans dive with sharks to treat PTSD
- 14) Veterans injured by service wait years for compensation hearings
- 15) Veterans Voice: Bill would increase military pay tax exemption
- 16) Whistleblower warns Veterans Affairs may trash 500,000 healthcare applications

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

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

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**Prepare for Tax Season**

It is time to think about taxes! The first step to filing taxes is the gathering and preparation of documents, such as the W-2 form found on MyPay, Social Security numbers of dependents, and any other tax-related forms received in 2016. Service members can [download](#) free tax-filing software and file themselves, or they can use the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) team on base for help. Pay close attention and reach out for questions on anything which may be a discrepancy. If you are not sure, talk to your chain of command. Also, the official IRS [website](#) can provide more information on requirements, deadlines, and possible extensions. The IRS due date for filing a 2016 income tax return is April 18.



Are you seeking employment? Been looking and not found the right job?

Well Veterans-For-Change is working hard to bring you more information on Job Fairs and Job postings available across the country.

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/167-job-fairs-job-postings>

If you're an employer and have a job to post, send an E-Mail to:  
[Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

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**Military Hiring Fair/Career Event**

On February 24, the American Legion annual Winter Meeting will feature an opportunity to break away from the traditional veteran job fair. The Legion's 'Employment Forum' will include workshops and a networking event for veterans, guard and reserve, transitioning servicemembers and their spouses. Don't miss this unique opportunity; visit the American Legion Winter Conference [Website](#) to learn more.

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**~We Proudly Support our  
Military Personnel & Families~**

If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.

<https://gem.godaddy.com/signups/193302/join>

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**ONE VOICE**  
CAN MAKE  
**ALL THE DIFFERENCE!**



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**Veterans-For-Change, Inc.**

**Riverside County, CA**

**Visit our website today**

**[www.Veterans-For-Change.org](http://www.Veterans-For-Change.org)**

**Serving those who served!**

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

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## Distribution

Express Mail	144,717
Boston	74,676
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	12,389
DoD	29,357
Face Book Pages	3,478
Google	28,227
Los Angeles	134,338
Microsoft	9,436
National Guard	3964
New York	150,965
Other Social Media	41,273
San Francisco	77,338
Twitter	38
US House of Reps & Staff	985
US Senators & Staff	104
University of So. California	5,003
US Air Force	24,890
US Army	64,006
US Marines	27,469
US Navy	36,558
Veterans	19,077,362
Washington DC	139,626
Yahoo	134
	20,089,833

Please do not reply to this E-Mail, this is an unattended E-Mail address, please send all correspondence to: [Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

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