

1ST DISTRICT SERVICE OFFICER VA & R REPORT FOR MARCH 24



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VA NEWS & INFORMATION:

Did you know PFAS, an abbreviation for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are compounds that don't degrade in the environment? They're linked to a host of health issues, including low birthweight and kidney cancer. The chemicals are found in a wide range of products, including nonstick cookware, food packaging and firefighting foam that airports use to combat fires resulting from plane crashes. Pentagon documents show at least 385 military bases nationwide are contaminated with PFAS, mostly from firefighting foam used during training.

Did you know Veterans Service Offices are available in almost every county across the United States? These offices are staffed with knowledgeable individuals who are eager to assist veterans in securing the benefits they deserve from the VA. Whether you need help with disability claims, education and training benefits, or home loan guarantees, the staff at these offices are there to help you navigate the process.

Did you know new legislation has recently passed aimed at helping veterans who are unable to locate their service medical records? This can be a major obstacle for veterans seeking benefits or assistance, as these records are often required as proof of service and/or a service-connected injury or disease. The new legislation provides additional resources and support for veterans in their search for these records.

Did you know many veterans suffer from hemorrhoids as a result of their military service, but do not claim it as a service-connected disability. Hemorrhoids can be a debilitating condition, causing pain, discomfort, and in some cases severe bleeding. It is essential that veterans who are suffering from hemorrhoids as a result of their military service come forward and claim the benefits they are entitled to. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides disability benefits to veterans who have service-connected disabilities, including hemorrhoids.

Did you know many veterans think that it is not necessary to hire an accredited VA lawyer because it's free to apply for VA disability benefits? But you should remember that VA is a government agency, so the process can move slowly...very slowly. According to hundreds of VA accredited attorneys, "The agents working at the VA don't work for veterans directly, meaning they are not your representatives or lawyers because they are simply doing their assigned job."

A veterans' disability attorney has your best interest in their hearts. Their goal is to work quickly and get all the disability benefits that you deserve. With that goal in their minds, your attorney can develop a strategy that improves your chance of success.

A new rule change at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will allow veterans to apply for burial in national cemeteries before their death, rather than requiring family members to apply on their behalf after their death.

Did you know that besides the standard VA benefits, including health care and service-connected disability compensation, the VA provides many lesser-known benefits to women veterans, such as women's mental health services; breast feeding supplies and lactation support; post mastectomy prosthetic and support; yoga, tai chi and acupuncture; and pelvic floor therapy for pain, urinary issues and constipation?

Did you know veterans are entitled to be buried or have their ashes interred in any National Cemetery that has available space at no charge? Currently, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) operates 125 national cemeteries, of which 65 are open for new casketed interments, and 21 are open to accept cremated remains only. Burial options are limited to those available at a specific cemetery but may include an in-ground casket or interment of cremated remains in a columbarium, the ground, or a scatter garden.

Did you know a Green Alert is a notification system that helps locate missing veterans who have a service-connected health condition, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI). The Green Alert was first implemented in Wisconsin in 2018, and has since been adopted by several other states. The Green Alert is similar to the Silver Alert, which is used for missing seniors who may have dementia or Alzheimer's disease. The Green Alert aims to raise awareness and mobilize resources to find and assist veterans who are at risk of harming themselves or others.

Did you know the U.S. Air Force released documents about the potential toxic dangers that nuclear missile officers have faced for decades in the workplace after hundreds of "missileers" have come forward with cancer diagnoses?

Did you know the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test is one of the most commonly used screening tools for prostate cancer? It is also used for tracking the disease following diagnosis and during treatment. To perform the test, your doctor will take a blood sample just like any other routine blood test.

Did you know many veterans who seek assistance from a VA-accredited representative, such as a veterans service organization (VSO), an attorney, or an agent may have a better chance of getting service-connected for a disability? These representatives can help veterans file their claims, gather evidence, prepare appeals, and advocate for their rights. They can also provide guidance on the best way to prove service connection, such as using direct service connection, continuity of symptomatology, presumptive service connection, secondary service connection, or aggravation of a pre-existing condition.

Did you know the Veterans Crisis Line is a lifeline for veterans in crisis? This support service aims to provide immediate help during a suicide crisis for veterans. It operates round the clock, ensuring that support is available whenever it is needed. This service helps veterans who are struggling with mental health issues such as depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or any other crisis. Accessing the Veterans Crisis Line is straightforward. Veterans in need can reach out by dialing 988 and pressing 1. As an alternative, a chat service is also available at <https://t.co/7iQX5OQ3yU>. Furthermore, a texting service is accessible for those who prefer this method, by sending a message to 838255. This ensures that help is always within reach, no matter the preferred form of communication.

Did you know a referral letter from her therapist recommending a service dog, a DD Form 214, and a service-connected disability rating may be a requirement for some private organizations who supply service dog to veterans? The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) require a 50% or greater VA disability rating with a PTSD, MST or TBI diagnosis, to get a service dog.

Did you know the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced a major expansion in fast-tracking disability benefits for veterans suffering from illnesses dating back to the Vietnam War era? This move is aimed at providing much-needed relief to veterans who have been struggling with these illnesses for years. The VA has recognized the urgent need to streamline the process and make it easier for veterans to receive the benefits they deserve. This is a significant step towards supporting our veterans and ensuring they receive the care and assistance they need.

Did you know the VA now offers bariatric endoscopy procedures to help veterans lose weight, reduce comorbidities and enhance recovery time? This minimally invasive procedure is an effective alternative to traditional bariatric surgery and has been shown to have a faster recovery time. Interested veterans should seek a referral through their primary care manager.

Did you know the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, and for no charge, a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death? For eligible veterans who died on or after November 1, 1990, and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone, VA may also furnish a headstone or marker to supplement, or a medallion to be affixed to, a privately purchased headstone.



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