



# Montezuma County Veterans Services Newsletter, March 2023

February 1, 2023

***“To enrich the quality of life for Montezuma County veterans and their families by assisting them in accessing all Department of Veterans Affairs and Colorado State benefits they richly deserve.”***

There has been some changes to our office. I (Frank) have been appointed as the Director of Veteran Service Office. Sarah will no longer be with us after March 24, 2023. I want to ensure everyone that our office is still fully functional to provide Montezuma County veterans with the service they are needing.

Come and visit us at our website [Veteran Services - Montezuma County](http://Veteran Services - Montezuma County) or 107 N. Chestnut, (Senior Annex). Check out our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/people/Montezuma-County-Veteran-Services](http://www.facebook.com/people/Montezuma-County-Veteran-Services)

Montezuma County Veteran Services stands ready to assist our veterans and their family members with accessing a wide variety of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Colorado State veteran benefits including:

### Benefits Overview

- Disability Compensation
- Survivor Pension
- VA Education Benefits
- Government Headstones and Markers
- Colorado State Veterans Nursing Homes
- Civil Service Preference Letters
- One time re-issue of Medals
- VA Health Care System
- Certificates of Eligibility for VA Home Loan Guaranty
- Burial Benefits
- VA Life Insurance
- Disabled Veterans License Plates
- Locating Military Records

Key items to bring with you when we meet (if available):

- Military discharge Document (DD214)
- Service Treatment Records
- Personnel Records
- Private medical Records related to claimed injury

The Veteran Affairs office provides services for active, retired military personnel, and their families in Montezuma County

**Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Fridays 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### February 2023 Office Activities

Appointments February 2022(Comparison)	145
Appointments February 2023	126
Increase or Decrease of	-19
Telephone calls	365
Outreach / Community Events	0
Total number of clients assisted	491
New Clients / Visitors	5
New Client / Visitors (year to date)	8
Home / Nursing Home Visits	0
Claims Filed	7
Decisions	15
Favorable	14
Unfavorable	1
Confirmed / Continued	1

**Office Closed for  
March Holidays  
None**



[Veteran Services - Montezuma County](http://Veteran Services - Montezuma County)



# Montezuma County Department of Veterans' Services

## Documents Checklist

Items to provide to a Veteran Services Officer to assist in filing a VA claim.

**\*\* Please Note** - The following documents are not required to file a formal claim but will increase the likelihood of a VA award and will also expedite the process.

First Appointments:

- DD-214, WD AGO 53-55 (WWII), or Other Military Discharge
- Marriage Certificate, if applicable
- Dates of all Previous marriages/divorces for you and your Spouse
- Birth Certificates, if applicable for all Dependent Children
- Previous VA letters, if available
- Bank Name, Routing #, Account #, and type of account (checking or saving) for Direct Deposit

If applying for compensation:

- Service Treatment Records, if available. All National Guard/Reserve treatment records, if available.
- Current VHA Problem List showing a diagnosis for the condition(s) claiming, if treatment is received at VHA
- Current Non-VA Providers Diagnosis records showing claimed condition(s)
- Any additional medical records showing continuity of treatment since military service

If applying for a non-service connected pension:

- Medical records showing total and permanent disability (s), if under age 65
- Proof of income — i.e. Social Security Award Letter, retirement letter (If applicable)
- Proof of net worth — i.e. bank accounts, IRAs, trusts, property other than home
- Proof of medical expenses — i.e. Medicare, private insurance, prescription receipts, personal care expenses

If applying for accrued benefits/dependency and indemnity compensation/widow's pension:

- Copy of veteran's death certificate
- Proof of income — i.e. Social Security Award Letter, retirement letter (If applicable)
- Proof of net worth — i.e. bank accounts, IRAs, trusts, property other than home
- Proof of medical expenses — i.e. Medicare, private insurance, prescription receipts, personal care expenses

If applying for burial benefits:

- Copy of veteran's death certificate
- Funeral/transportation bill
- Itemized contract/receipt showing paid in full from the funeral home and/or cemetery with claimant's name on receipt

# Military Calendar – Holiday/Observance/Event Federal Holidays

Military holidays celebrate the brave men and women who serve worldwide.

## March

March 1- Asiatic Fleet Memorial Day

March 1- Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Day (Bikini Day)

March 1- World Civil Defense Day

March 3 - Navy Reserve Birthday

March 3 - Navy Reserves Birthday

March 4 - Hug a GI Day

March 6 - Alamo Day

March 6 - Casimir Pulaski Day (First Monday in March)

March 19 - Operation Iraqi Freedom Day

March 13 -K-9 Veterans Day – The date is the official birthday of the United States K9 Corps and a day to honor their service.

March 25 - Medal of Honor Day – A holiday to honor the heroism and sacrifice of Medal of Honor recipients for the United States.

March 29 - Vietnam Veterans Day – A national holiday to recognize and honor Veterans who served in the military during the Vietnam War.



R.E.D. Friday - Wear **RED** every Friday to Remember Everyone Deployed!



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Veterans and Military Connected Community—White House Office of Public Engagement - February 10, 2023  
FACT SHEET: President Biden's State of the Union Outline Vision to Advance Progress on Unity Agenda in Year Ahead

To view the complete Fact Sheet, [click here](#).

### Supporting America's Veterans and Their Families, Caregivers, and Survivors

The President believes there is no more sacred obligation than taking care of our nation's military service members, veterans, and their families, caregivers, and survivors. On health care, education, and housing, the Administration and Congress have worked together to make progress to connect veterans and their families to needed resources. Over the past year, the Administration expanded benefits for veterans as well as their caregivers and survivors, and delivered more benefits and health care more quickly to more veterans than ever before. In 2022, VA processed an all-time record 1.7 million veteran claims, and delivered \$128 billion in earned benefits to 6.1 million veterans and survivors. In the State of the Union, the President will announce his Administration plans to continue that work by:

**Reducing veteran suicide.** Suicide among veterans is a public health and national security crisis. Since 2010, more than 71,000 veterans have died by suicide – more than the total number of deaths from combat during the Vietnam War and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. Since releasing a comprehensive strategy for reducing military and veteran suicide, both DOD and VA reported declines in suicide deaths, but much more remains to be done. This will include actions to:

**Support states and territories.** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working with the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Defense (DOD) to partner with 49 states and 5 territories through the Governor's Challenge. To help facilitate this work, VA will launch a new \$10 million program to provide federal resources to states, territories, Tribes and Tribal organizations to develop and implement proposals under the program.

**Increase lethal means safety:** In the coming year, VA will deploy new resources to improve suicide risk identification and increase lethal means safety counseling and safe storage. VA will offer additional training for the 1.3 million community providers and expand "KeepItSecure", the landmark lethal means safety campaign, with new resources and materials for providers, caregivers, family members of veterans, and gun shop owners to encourage safe storage of firearms and lethal medications.

**Expand outreach to justice involved veterans.** Veterans who become involved in the criminal justice system may be at high risk of suicide. Through Veteran Treatment Courts and other justice outreach engagements, VA is able to provide veterans access to benefits and services that can be life-changing, and VA will accelerate hiring of veteran justice outreach professionals to expand these programs.

**Expand Access to Legal Support Services.** VA will build upon and expand its current 28 Medical-Legal Partnerships. Family caregivers participating in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance will also be able to receive Financial and Legal Assistance later this year. VA will also award up to 75 grants under its new Legal Services for Homeless Veterans and Veterans at Risk for Homeless (LSV-H) program to provide legal services to veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

**Expanding access to peer support, including mental health services.** Military service increases the risk of mental health problems and other adjustment challenges for veterans. Veteran Peer Specialists are a critical asset within VA's workforce, working across various programs to connect their fellow veterans to services, participate as members of health care teams, and provide individual and group-based peer support. Last year, VA pledged to hire an additional 280 peer specialists and is on track to meet this goal by the end of 2023. VA will increase the number of peer specialists working across VA medical centers by 350 over the next 7 years.





THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Continued

Ensuring access to affordable, stable housing for low-income veterans. Every veteran should have a roof over their head. The President's upcoming budget will triple the number of extremely low-income veterans who can access the assistance they need to afford rent over the years ahead, paving the path to an entitlement for those who have served our country. The number of veterans experiencing homelessness declined by 11% between 2020 and 2022 and the United States permanently housed more than 40,000 veterans in 2022 alone.

Delivering high-quality job training for veterans and their spouses. Roughly 200,000 service members transition from the military to civilian life each year. In the coming year, DOL's Veteran Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) will implement its Employment Navigator Partnership Pilot, which has already provided one-on-one career assistance to 6,500 transitioning service members and military spouses. And, the Department of Defense will use the Military Spouse Career Accelerator Pilot program, a 12-week paid fellowship program, to expand employment opportunities for eligible military spouses.

In last year's State of the Union, the President called for Congress to pass comprehensive legislation to address military toxic exposures. In August 2022, President Biden signed the bipartisan PACT Act into law, the most significant expansion of benefits and services for toxic exposed veterans in more than 30 years. Over the last year, the Administration also took critical action to help reduce veteran suicide, including transitioning the Veterans Crisis Line to "988, press 1." The Administration also expanded access to reproductive health services for women veterans, supported more than 2.3 million children living with wounded, ill, or injured service members through the First Lady's Joining Forces Initiative, and implemented key measures to protect veterans from predatory for-profit colleges.

Additionally, there is expanded access to telehealth. HHS will triple resources dedicated to promoting interstate license reciprocity for delivery of mental health services across state lines. VA will launch a new nationwide network of behavioral health clinicians to ensure timely access to evidence-based mental health services to veterans enrolled in VA health care. And, DoD will continue to expand the BRAVE program, a virtual behavioral health center providing services 24/7 to service members and their families located on federal installations across the globe.

FACT SHEET: The Biden Economic Plan Is Working  
To view the complete Fact Sheet, click [here](#).

President Biden has long believed that we must build the economy from the bottom up and middle out, not the top down. As the President says, when the middle class does well, the poor have a ladder up and the wealthy still do very well. He believes the best way to grow the economy, create good-paying jobs, and lower costs for families is by promoting workers, investing in America and its people, making the economy more competitive, and reforming the tax code to reward work and not wealth. Our progress over the last two years shows that his economic strategy is working.

**Help Us Amplify**

Secretary Denis McDonough  
@SecVetAffairs

Veteran homelessness has decreased by 11% since 2020 – and we housed more than 40,000 Veterans in 2022 alone.

But we can't stop there. Under @POTUS, we won't rest until every Veteran has a good, safe home in this country they fought to defend. #SOTU2023

10:16 PM · Feb 7, 2023 · 3,680 Views

#### Department of Veterans Affairs Update

VA offers \$30M in grant funding to assist formerly homeless veterans. As a part of ongoing efforts to prevent and end Veteran homelessness, the Department of Veterans Affairs is announcing \$30 million in grant funding for organizations to help formerly homeless Veterans maintain their independence and housing stability.

#### Department of Labor-VETS Update

In January 2023, the veteran unemployment rate was down from 3.2% the previous month to 2.5% this month. Also in January 2023, the comparable non-veteran unemployment rate was 3.4%, which is unchanged from the previous month and down from 3.9% the prior year. These unemployment rates are seasonally adjusted and for individuals aged 18 years and over in the civilian non-institutional population.

# Veteran Suicide Prevention

[VA](#) » [Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs](#) » [News Releases](#)

Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs

Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for free emergency health care

Jan. 13, 2023, 09:02:00 AM

Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for free emergency health care

**WASHINGTON** – Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in acute suicidal crisis will be able to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost – including inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days. Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

This expansion of care will help prevent Veteran suicide by guaranteeing no cost, world-class care to Veterans in times of crisis. It will also increase access to acute suicide care for up to 9 million Veterans who are not currently enrolled in VA. Preventing Veteran suicide is VA’s top clinical priority and a top priority of the Biden-Harris Administration. This effort is a key part of VA’s 10-year [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#) and the Biden-Harris administration’s plan for [Reducing Military and Veteran Suicide](#). In September, VA released the [2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report](#), which showed that Veteran suicides decreased in 2020 for the second year in a row, and that fewer Veterans died by suicide in 2020 than in any year since 2006.

“Veterans in suicidal crisis can now receive the free, world-class emergency health care they deserve – no matter where they need it, when they need it, or whether they’re enrolled in VA care,” said **VA Secretary for Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough**. “This expansion of care will save Veterans’ lives, and there’s nothing more important than that.”

VA has submitted an [interim final rule](#) to the federal register to establish this authority

[under section 201 of the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment \(COMPACT\) Act of 2020](#). The final policy, which takes effect on Jan. 17, will allow VA to:

- Provide, pay for, or reimburse for treatment of eligible individuals’ emergency suicide care, transportation costs, and follow-up care at a VA or non-VA facility for up to 30 days of inpatient care and 90 days of outpatient care.
- Make appropriate referrals for care following the period of emergency suicide care.
- Determine eligibility for other VA services and benefits.
- Refer eligible individuals for appropriate VA programs and benefits following the period of emergency suicide care.

Eligible individuals, regardless of VA enrollment status, are:

- Veterans who were discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months of active service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces, including reserve service members, who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

Over the past year, VA has announced or continued several additional efforts to end Veteran suicide, including [establishing 988 \(then press 1\) as a way for Veterans to quickly connect with caring, qualified crisis support 24/7](#); proposing a new rule that would [reduce or eliminate copayments](#) for Veterans at risk of suicide; conducting an ongoing public outreach effort on [firearm suicide prevention and lethal means safety](#); and leveraging a [national Veteran suicide prevention awareness campaign, “Don’t Wait, Reach Out.”](#)

# Veteran Suicide Prevention continued

If you're a Veteran in a mental health crisis and you're thinking about hurting yourself—or you know a Veteran who's considering this—get help right away. You're not alone.

## How do I talk to someone right now?

Find out how to get support anytime, day or night.

If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, connect with our caring, qualified Veterans Crisis Line responders for confidential help. Many of them are Veterans themselves. This service is private, free, and available 24/7.

## To connect with a Veterans Crisis Line responder anytime day or night:

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

Call [988](#), then select 1.

Text [838255](#).

[Start a confidential chat](#).

If you have hearing loss, call TTY: [800-799-4889](#).

## You can also:

Call [911](#).

- ◆ Go to the nearest emergency room.

Go directly to your nearest VA medical center. It doesn't matter what your discharge status is or if you're enrolled in VA health care.

[Find your nearest VA medical center](#)

How can I get ongoing support?

You can get ongoing support through your local VA health care facility or regional office:

Our specially trained suicide prevention coordinators—available in each VA medical center across the country—can help you get the counseling and services you need.

Our Vet Centers can help you—and your family—readjust to life at home after you've returned from serving in a combat zone.

Our Veterans Benefits Administration offices can help you access benefits for disability compensation (monthly payments), job training, home loans, and more.

[Find these and other resources near you](#)

You can also find information and support on our websites:

Get information about suicide prevention and the support we offer.

[Visit our suicide prevention website](#)

Go to our Make the Connection website to get resources and watch stories of Veterans who've overcome depression and other mental health challenges.

[Visit Make the Connection](#)

## Information for family, friends, and caregivers

### What are the signs that someone may be considering suicide?

Many Veterans don't show any signs of an urge to harm themselves before doing so. But some may show signs of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, or hopelessness, like:

# Veteran Suicide Prevention continued

- ◆ Seeming sad, depressed, anxious, or agitated most of the time
- ◆ Sleeping either all the time or not much at all
- ◆ Not caring about what they look like or what happens to them
- ◆ Pulling away from friends, family, and society
- ◆ Losing interest in hobbies, work, school, or other things they used to care about

Expressing feelings of excessive guilt or shame, failure, lack of purpose in life, or being trapped

They may also change the way they act, and start to:

- ◆ Perform poorly at work or school
- ◆ Act violently or take risks (like driving fast or running red lights)

Do things to prepare for a suicide (like giving away special personal items, making a will, or seeking access to guns or pills)

[Get the full list of signs that someone may be considering suicide](#)

Learn about common suicide myths and realities, Veteran-specific suicide risks, and warning signs.

[Recognize when to ask for help](#)

[Take our Veterans self-check quiz](#)

## **I want to help a Veteran adjust to life at home, but I don't know how. Can I get support?**

Yes. If you're a family member or friend of a Veteran who's having trouble adjusting to life at home, we can help. Through our national Coaching Into Care program, our licensed psychologists and social workers will talk with you by phone, free of charge, to help you find your way around the VA system and figure out the best way to help the Veteran you care about. All calls are confidential (private).

To speak with a VA coach, call [888-823-7458](tel:888-823-7458), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.

To get tips and resources for spouses, parents, and Veterans, visit the Coaching Into Care website.

[Visit Coaching into Care](#)

## **How do I talk to my child about a suicide attempt in the family?**

Get tips for talking to children of different ages about suicide:

- ◆ [Preschoolers](#)
- ◆ [School-age children](#)
- ◆ [Teenagers](#)
- ◆ [All ages](#)

Related health problems you may want to learn about:

- ◆ [Military sexual trauma \(MST\)](#)
- ◆ Learn about VA health services to help support Veterans dealing with issues related to military sexual trauma. [Substance use problems](#)
- ◆ Learn more about VA health services to help support Veterans with substance use problems. [Posttraumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#)
- ◆ Learn more about VA health services to help support Veterans with PTSD. [Depression](#)
- ◆ Learn more about VA health services to help support Veterans with depression.





# Emergency Suicide Care and Treatment

Starting January 17, Veterans in suicidal crises can go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care – including transportation costs, inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days, including social work.

During a medical or mental health emergency, you should immediately seek care at the nearest emergency department and let staff know you are a Veteran. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away. If possible, you should also take steps to safely store personally-owned weapons or ask a trusted individual to assist with securing them, when you believe you are in a mental health crisis.

You are covered if you were discharged from the military under a condition that is other than dishonorable and served more than 24 months of active service or more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location. Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces are also eligible.

Emergencies are never planned, so ensure you and your family member know where to go before you need help. Find your nearest community emergency room, urgent care facility or pharmacy by visiting [https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=emergency\\_care](https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=emergency_care).

## What should a Veteran do if they are billed for emergency suicide-related care?

VA has developed an expedited review process specific to emergency suicide care to eliminate any additional stress during Veterans' time of need. If a Veteran receives a bill for emergency suicide care related care at a VA medical facility, they should contact their local VA patient advocate and ask for a clinical review with an appropriate provider. Veterans can also contact the number on their bill to initiate this process.

Veterans who received COMPACT-related care at a community emergency department should submit a signed, written request for reimbursement to their local VA medical facility community care office along with an after-visit summary/medical documentation and a billing statement from the rendering provider showing diagnosis code information and an itemized list of charges.

Veterans can use the [VA Facility Locator](#) to find their closest VA medical facility.

# Environmental Health Registry Evaluations for Veterans



Are you concerned about environmental exposures during your military service and your health? Environmental health registry evaluations are free, voluntary medical assessments. They can help you learn about exposures to specific environmental hazards during military service and possible related health problems. Registry data also helps VA to better understand and respond to health problems related to environmental exposures for all Veterans.

Environmental health registries offer medical assessments that are:

- Free to eligible Veterans. No co-payment.
- Available regardless of enrollment in VA's health care system.
- Based on recollection of service, not on military records.
- Available for additional evaluations if new problems develop.
- Not a disability compensation exam or required for other VA benefits.
- Not available for family members of Veterans.

Learn about the six health registries offered by VA, including their focus, who can join, and where to learn more:

## Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

This registry includes an online questionnaire and an optional health exam. It focuses on exposure to airborne hazards such as burn pit smoke, sand, and dust.

**For:** Veterans and service members who deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of operations at any time on or after August 2, 1990, or Afghanistan or Djibouti on or after September 11, 2001.

**Visit:** <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/registry.asp>

## Agent Orange Registry

This registry reviews health problems related to Agent Orange exposure and includes a health exam.

**For:** Veterans who served in Vietnam between 1962-1975, including Veterans who served aboard patrol boats that operated on the inland waterways of Vietnam (Brown Water Veterans), Veterans who served on a vessel operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia (Blue Water Navy Veterans), and certain Veterans who served in Korea or Thailand.

**Visit:** <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/benefits/registry-exam.asp>

## Gulf War Registry

This registry offers a medical exam focusing on health problems related to service for Veterans who deployed from 1990 to the present.

**For:** Veterans who served in the Gulf during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn.

**Visit:** <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/benefits/registry-exam.asp>

## Ionizing Radiation Registry

This registry covers health problems related to ionizing radiation exposure during military service and includes a health exam.

**For:** Veterans involved in tests on the atmospheric detonation of a nuclear device or in radiation-risk activities; prisoners of war in Japan during World War II; and Veterans who participated in the occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki from August 6, 1945, through July 1, 1946.

**Visit:** <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/radiation/benefits/registry-exam.asp>

## Depleted Uranium Follow-Up Program

This program provides screening and monitoring for health problems associated with exposure to depleted uranium, a byproduct of uranium used since the Gulf War for tank armor and some bullets.

**For:** Veterans of the Gulf War, Bosnia, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn who may have been exposed to depleted uranium.

**Visit:** [https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/depleted\\_uranium/followup-program.asp](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/depleted_uranium/followup-program.asp)

## Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center

The Baltimore VA Medical Center offers medical surveillance for Veterans who have retained metallic fragments.

**For:** Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn who have retained toxic embedded fragments in their body after a blast injury.

**Visit:** [https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/toxic\\_fragments/index.asp](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/toxic_fragments/index.asp)

It's important to remember that a health registry evaluation is not related to claims for VA benefits. Information obtained during a registry exam may not confirm exposure to environmental hazards during military service. Veterans who want to be considered for disability compensation for exposure-related health problems must file a claim. These are considered on a case-by-case basis. More information is available at [www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/types-disability.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/types-disability.asp).

To schedule a registry evaluation, contact an Environmental Health Coordinator at a VA medical facility near you. A list of Coordinators is available online at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp>.



# PACT Weekly Report

All data through close of business February 4, 2023

Since the PACT Act was signed, Veterans and their survivors have filed more than 1,008,484 total claims—an increase of more than 23.8% over the same period last year. And to date, VA has already received more than 294,920 PACT Act-related claims since August 10. This increase in receipts has resulted in a net increase of over 139,877 rating claims in VBA's total inventory during that same time period.

- 294,920 PACT related claims received since August 10, 2022

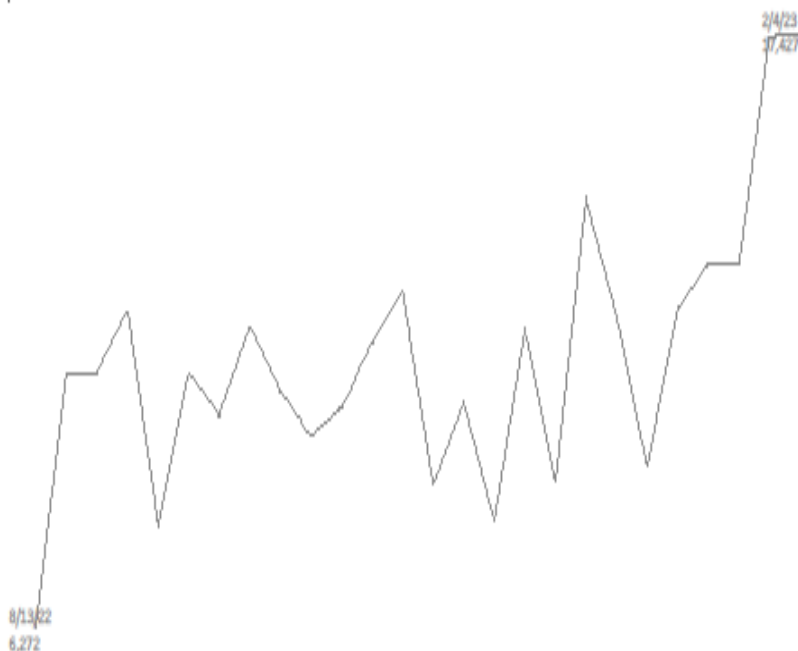
- 249,726 PACT related claims pending

- 110,815 PACT related claims completed since August 10, 2022, to include claims completed before January 1, 2023, under existing regulatory guidance (example: asthma/sinusitis/rhinitis presumptives, direct grants)

- o On December 12, 2022, VBA began granting benefits for terminally ill Veterans in cases where service connection for a PACT Act presumptive condition can be established. Since August 10, 2022, VA has completed 1,985 claims for terminally ill Veterans, 1,259 of which were granted.

- o Since January 1, 2023, VA has completed 53,096 claims for all Veterans/Survivors, to include terminally ill Veterans, 45,137 of which were granted

Weekly PACT claims filed since August 10, 2022



Product of Performance Analysis & Integrity

## Receipts by State since August 10, 2022

State Level Data is Provided for Internal Use Only

Alabama	7,200
Alaska	905
Arizona	7,213
Arkansas	3,216
California	20,980
Colorado	4,444
Connecticut	1,710
Delaware	981
District of Columbia	314
Florida	25,228
Georgia	13,044
Hawaii	1,815
Idaho	1,898
Illinois	7,376
Indiana	5,785
Iowa	2,813
Kansas	3,017
Kentucky	4,580
Louisiana	5,617
Maine	1,252
Maryland	4,571
Massachusetts	2,943
Michigan	7,017
Minnesota	4,409
Mississippi	4,030
Missouri	5,707
Montana	1,441
Nebraska	2,223
Nevada	3,786
New Hampshire	1,081
New Jersey	3,333
New Mexico	1,972
New York	7,389
North Carolina	13,185
North Dakota	880
Ohio	10,305
Oklahoma	4,131
Oregon	3,567
Pennsylvania	8,310
Puerto Rico	2,086
Rhode Island	664
South Carolina	7,654
South Dakota	1,135
Tennessee	7,980
Texas	31,420
U.S. Islands	671
Unknown	1,661
Utah	1,990
Vermont	366
Virginia	11,805
Washington	6,589
West Virginia	2,043
Wisconsin	5,362
Wyoming	785





WRIISC

War Related Illness and Injury Study Center  
Post-Deployment Health Services, Patient Care Services  
Department of Veterans Affairs

# GULF WAR ILLNESS: INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

A RESOURCE FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

## WHAT IS GULF WAR ILLNESS?

Gulf War Illness (GWI) is a term that refers to a group of unexplained or ill-defined chronic symptoms found in Veterans deployed to the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm/Operation Desert Shield (1990-1991).

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF GULF WAR ILLNESS?

Symptoms of GWI vary and cannot be grouped into one consistent group of symptoms. This may make it challenging for healthcare providers to recognize and treat it. Here are the most common symptoms of GWI:

- Fatigue
- Muscle and joint pain
- Cognitive difficulty
- Skin rashes
- Abdominal (belly) discomfort/ bowel changes
- Headaches
- Shortness of breath
- Sleep disturbances

It is important that prior to making a diagnosis of GWI, a Veteran have a thorough work-up for their symptoms as some medically explainable conditions unrelated to GWI may also cause the above symptoms.

## HOW MANY VETERANS ARE IMPACTED BY GULF WAR ILLNESS?

Several studies showed that about one-third of Gulf War Veterans have GWI. It's important to note that deployed Gulf War Era Veterans do not have higher rates of death compared to Gulf War Era Veterans who did not deploy.

## WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CAUSES OF GULF WAR ILLNESS?

Despite much research, the cause of GWI is unclear. A number of possible causes include:

- Immune dysfunction
- Nerve dysfunction
- Mitochondrial (part of your cells involved in energy) dysfunction
- A genetic and environmental exposure interaction
- Deployment related exposures
- A combination of these factors

Many Gulf War Veterans have concerns that exposure to chemicals such as pyridostigmine bromide (taken in pill form to prevent effects from exposure to nerve agents) and smoke from oil well fires caused GWI. There have been no clear or consistent links found.

Veterans can work with a healthcare provider or see an environmental health clinician

or expert in occupational and environmental exposures if they have specific exposure concerns.

## WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR GULF WAR ILLNESS?

GWI falls under a broad term for a group of chronic, unexplained symptoms called Chronic Multi-Symptom Illness (CMI). In 2014, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) released guidelines for healthcare providers caring for Veterans with CMI. These guidelines can also help healthcare providers identify, manage, and treat GWI. Veterans with concerns about GWI can learn more about the guidelines for treatment of CMI by visiting:

- Patient Summary <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MR/cmi/>
- FAQ <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MR/cmi/CMIFAQSheetFinal.pdf>

There are no specific treatments for GWI. The focus of treatment is improving your quality of life and functioning. Treatment without medicine is usually tried first. It can include:

- Graded exercise programs
- Yoga
- Acupuncture
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy

There are some medications which may

For more information, contact 800-248-8005 | [www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov](http://www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Patient Care Services





## EXPOSURE TO ASBESTOS

### A RESOURCE FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

#### WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is a fibrous mineral that occurs naturally in the environment. Asbestos has good heat resistant and strength properties. Given these characteristics, asbestos has been used in a wide range of manufactured goods, including building materials (roofing shingles, ceiling and floor tiles, paper products, and asbestos cement products), friction products (automobile clutch, brake, and transmission parts), heat-resistant fabrics, packaging, gaskets, and coatings. In July 1989 the Environmental Protection Agency issued a final ruling banning most asbestos use, asbestos because of the health risks associated with asbestos exposure.

#### WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF ASBESTOS EXPOSURE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS?

In the past, the military used many asbestos containing materials (ACM) because of their excellent heat resistance, insulation, and fireproofing capabilities. Some of the ACM that the military used included brakes, gaskets, valves, cements, adhesives, and floor and pipe coverings called lagging. The Navy also used ACM in its shipyards and ships that were built before the mid-70s. The ships often contained multiple ACMs in the engine and boiler rooms and other areas below deck for fire safety purposes.

#### HOW ARE SERVICE MEMBERS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS?

Because asbestos has been so widely used in our society, most people have been exposed to some asbestos at some point in time. Asbestos is most

hazardous when it is friable. This means asbestos material that is easily crumbled by hand, thus releasing fibers into the air. People are exposed to asbestos when ACMs are disturbed or damaged, and small asbestos fibers are dispersed in the air. These fibers may get into the lungs through the air that we breathe. Individuals who only have contact with intact ACM (that is not fraying, peeling, or falling apart) are not expected to be at risk for asbestos exposure.

#### Service members at risk for asbestos exposure may include:

- Those involved in demolition of asbestos-containing structures and/or removal of asbestos materials either before or after 1970.
- Navy Veterans who served on ships whose keels were laid before 1983.
- Navy Veterans who worked in shipyards from the 1930s through the 1990s when ACM was widely used in ship building and in construction materials
- Navy personnel who regularly worked below deck before the early 1990s since asbestos was often used below deck and the ventilation was often poor.
- Navy Veterans who were frequently tasked with removing damaged asbestos lagging in engine rooms and those using asbestos paste to re-wrap the pipes,
- Veterans who handled damaged ACM.
- Pipe fitters, welders, boiler operators, building renovation and demolition specialists who worked in these occupations may have had exposure.
- Service members who served in Iraq and other countries who may have been exposed to asbestos when older buildings were damaged, and the asbestos released into the air.

#### HOW CAN ASBESTOS AFFECT MY HEALTH?

Whether a Veteran develops health effects because of their asbestos exposure depends on several factors.

- The **amount and duration** of exposure. People who breathe in high levels of ACM and/or lower levels over long periods of time are at greatest risk.
- **Whether or not you smoke.** If you smoke and have been exposed to asbestos, you are far more likely to develop asbestos related problems than someone who does not smoke and who has not been exposed to asbestos.
- **History of a pre-existing lung condition.** If you have an underlying lung condition and are exposed to asbestos, you may be at greater risk.
- **Age.** Studies have shown that the younger people are when they inhale asbestos, the more likely they are to develop asbestos related problems.





# ANTHRAX VACCINE

## A RESOURCE FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

Veterans are often concerned about the potential health effects of having received the anthrax vaccine for protection from anthrax.

### WHAT IS ANTHRAX?

Anthrax is a serious disease that can affect both animals and humans. It is caused by bacteria called *Bacillus (B.) anthracis*. People can get anthrax from contact with infected animals, wool, meat, or hides. The anthrax disease occurs in three forms:

- 1. Cutaneous Anthrax.** Cutaneous anthrax is a skin disease that causes skin ulcers and usually, fever and fatigue. Up to 20% of these cases are fatal if untreated. Cutaneous anthrax is the most common form of anthrax disease.
- 2. Gastrointestinal Anthrax.** This form of anthrax can result from eating raw or undercooked infected meat. Symptoms can include fever, nausea, vomiting, sore throat, abdominal pain and swelling, and swollen lymph glands. Gastrointestinal anthrax can lead to blood infection, shock, and death.
- 3. Inhalation Anthrax.** This form of anthrax occurs when *B. anthracis* is inhaled and is very serious. The first symptoms can include a sore throat, mild fever, and muscle aches. Within several days these symptoms are followed by severe breathing problems, shock, and often meningitis (inflammation of the brain and spinal cord covering). This form of anthrax requires hospitalization and aggressive treatment with antibiotics. It is often fatal.

### ★ ANTHRAX VACCINE SIDE EFFECTS

Like any medicine, and like all vaccines, the anthrax vaccine can have adverse effects. However, the risk of serious harm from this vaccine is extremely small and similar to many more common vaccines. Of all adverse events reported, less than 10% are considered serious.

#### Mild-Moderate Side Effects

Reactions on the arm where the shot was given include tenderness, redness, itching, development of a lump or bruise, muscle aches, or temporary limitation of arm movement. Additional mild-moderate effects include headache, joint pain, rash, fatigue, and fever. Some service members have reported prolonged fatigue and/or joint pain that impacted their activities, but a direct vaccine cause has yet to be proven.

#### Severe Side Effects

In very rare instances (less than one in 100,000 doses administered), an individual may have a serious allergic reaction. Signs of a serious allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, weakness, hoarseness or wheezing, a fast heart beat, hives, dizziness, paleness, or swelling of the lips and throat. Other rare serious events involving the skin and nervous system have been reported, but a direct vaccine cause has yet to be proven.

### WHY ARE SERVICE MEMBERS GIVEN THE ANTHRAX VACCINE?

Given its deadly nature, inhalational anthrax has the potential to be used as a biological warfare weapon. Given this potential, the Department of Defense (DoD) looks at how troops can be protected, such as wearing protective gear or taking antibiotics. Unfortunately, these means of protection have limitations. For example, service members cannot stay in protective gear for days on end and perform well.

Another important form of protection is the anthrax vaccine. The anthrax vaccine provides a very high level of protection against infection by the anthrax bacteria. The anthrax vaccine used in the United States, was licensed in 1970, does not contain *B. anthracis* cells, and it does not cause anthrax. When full immunization is combined with proper use of protective masks, detection devices, surveillance, and post-exposure antibiotics the threat of anthrax disease is substantially reduced.

### EVIDENCE THAT THE ANTHRAX VACCINE WORKS

Based on human and animal data, the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine (IOM) concluded in April 2002 that the anthrax vaccine is "an effective vaccine for the protection of humans







WRIISC

War Related Illness and Injury Study Center  
Health Outcomes Military Exposures, Patient Care Services  
Department of Veterans Affairs

## AIRBORNE HAZARDS CONCERNS: INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

Many Veterans are concerned about exposure to airborne hazards after deployment to countries in Southwest Asia (SWA), including Iraq and Afghanistan. Airborne hazards include particulate matter and gaseous air pollutants that may originate from the following sources:

- Burning of human and non-human solid wastes
- Smoke from structural fires and explosions
- Smoke from burning oil wells
- Dust and sand particles
- Industrial and ambient air pollution
- Aircraft and automobile engine exhaust

### WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT EXPOSURE TO AIRBORNE HAZARDS?

Levels of particulate matter air pollution for service members deployed to countries in SWA are very high, often exceeding military and occupational guidelines. Service members returned from deployment and began reporting respiratory symptoms, leading to concern in the Veteran community. Veterans' health visits and diagnoses related to respiratory problems increased and although most Veterans reported that their respiratory symptoms resolved over time, learning more about airborne hazards exposure and resulting health effects became a top priority at the VA.

In the past several years there have been numerous studies on the health outcomes of exposure to airborne hazards for deployed military members. Several of these studies supported links between the development of respiratory symptoms and exposure to airborne hazards. An important study included a comparison of service members symptom reporting before, during, and after deployment and found that symptoms increased both during and after deployment versus before deployment. Importantly, additional research showed that longer deployment lengths were linked with greater levels of respiratory symptoms.

In 2020 a detailed report published by National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), entitled "Respiratory Health Effects of Airborne Hazards Exposures in the Southwest Asia Theater of Military Operations", reviewed deployment literature related to respiratory health and deployment. Based on the available literature, the NASEM committee concluded that deployment to SWA is associated with respiratory symptoms. The committee was unable to conclude

that deployment was associated with diagnosed respiratory conditions due to limited available evidence in service members and Veterans.

The NASEM also concluded that due to the limitations of the published literature, there was insufficient evidence to support a connection between exposure and any respiratory conditions. The main limitations of studies included in this review were that there was no objective information on exposure available (studies in progress are addressing this gap) and that many published studies on deployed individuals lack control groups for comparison. The NASEM recommended that future research will be critical in improving our understanding of the respiratory health effects of deployment.



Emerging areas of research will further investigate findings of:

- Abnormalities of the small airways via novel techniques like oscillometry (testing to determine respiratory resistance), multi-breath washout (testing that measures efficiency of gas mixing in the lung) and quantitative CT imaging (radiological images that provide insight into the cause of breathing difficulties).
- Findings of a variety of abnormalities on surgical lung biopsy that include multiple components of the lung in addition to damage to the small airways.

Exposure to airborne hazards may have health effects beyond the respiratory system. Recent research discoveries show a relationship between exposure to airborne hazards and the development of non-respiratory conditions.

For more information, contact 800-248-8005 | [www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov](http://www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov)



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WRIISC

**War Related Illness and Injury Study Center**  
Post-Deployment Health Services  
Department of Veterans Affairs

# CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE AGENTS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

## A RESOURCE FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

To help WRIISC best respond to the concerns of Veterans and health care providers, we've compiled a list of frequently asked questions.

### WHAT ARE CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE AGENTS?

- Use of military chemical warfare agents has been reported since World War I.
- Biological and chemical warfare agents include a wide variety of substances that are typically defined as being toxic or harmful to the human body.
- Examples of chemical warfare agents include nerve agents like sarin and soman; blister agents like sulfur mustard; and toxic industrialized chemicals such as chlorine or ammonia that are released by using a weapon. Examples of biological warfare agents may include anthrax and viruses that cause disease such as smallpox.
- These "warfare" agents are intentionally released into the environment with the goal of causing harm to humans. The toxicity or degree of harm from these substances varies greatly. Health effects can differ and are dependent on many factors like the toxicity and volatility of the warfare agent, the amount and duration of exposure, the route of exposure, and environmental conditions.
- People who experience acute toxic symptoms at the time of exposure that are consistent with a high exposure dose are at greater risk for long term health effects compared to people who do not.

These were classified medical studies that the Department of Defense (DoD) did to evaluate the impact of low-dose chemical warfare agents on military personnel and to test protective clothing and pharmaceuticals.

- The National Academies of Science (NAS) reviewed the potential for long term health effects and did not find any significant long term physical harm except for Veterans exposed to larger doses of mustard agents. These studies were published in "Possible Long-Term Health Effects of Short Term Exposure to Chemical Agents." In a follow-up study, NAS reported that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) could occur as a result of "perceived exposure to biochemical warfare agents."
- Project 112/Project SHAD, or Shipboard Hazard and Defense, was another series of tests conducted by DoD from 1962 to 1973. The purpose of these tests was to determine potential risks to U.S. warships and American forces from chemical and biological warfare agents.
  - In a report by the Health and Medicine Division of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, there was no evidence of specific, long term health problems with participation in Project SHAD, but the report was limited to available scientific and medical data.
- After the 1991 Gulf War cease-fire, rockets filled with sarin and cyclosarin mixes were found at a munitions storage depot in Khamsiyah, Iraq, that was demolished by U.S. Service Members. This demolition may have exposed some U.S. units to low levels of chemical warfare agents.

### WHAT CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE AGENT CONCERNS HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY VETERANS?

- Some Veterans have reported concerns about military studies and testing. From 1955 to 1975, some Veterans participated in medical studies at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland and other military facilities.

This document was developed by the War Related Illness & Injury Study Center (WRIISC)

Post-Deployment Health Services (PDHS)  
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Last Updated: May 2021

For more information, contact 800-248-8005 | [www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov](http://www.WarRelatedIllness.va.gov)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Public Health



# ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION EDUCATION SESSION

**Wednesday, March 14th 2023**


**Understanding Alzheimer's & Dementia:**

11:00am - 12:00pm

**Effective Communication Strategies:**

12:00pm - 1:00pm

**Registration required. Please contact  
Crystal Hollingshead to RSVP.**

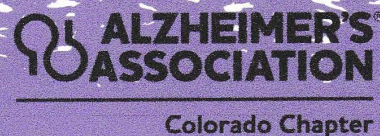
 **970-564-4110**

 **[chollingshead@co.montezuma.co.us](mailto:chollingshead@co.montezuma.co.us)**

EDUCATION SESSION HOSTED AT:

Montezuma County Annex

107 N Chestnut St | Cortez, CO 81321



# VFW

## Post 5231 Montezuma County Post

**Quartermaster:** John Davis III  
**Commander:** Tommy Endres  
**Dues Amount:** \$35.00

Check out our face book page at <https://www.facebook.com/VFWPost5231>

If you would like to join contact any VFW member or come to one of our meetings on the first Thursday of every month at the Senior Annex at 107 N. Chestnut, Cortez, CO 81321 the corner of Montezuma and Chestnut.  
PO Box 561, Cortez, CO 81321, Phone: (970) 560-5242



### Meeting Location & Time

107 North Chestnut, Cortez, CO 81321 7:00 pm 1st Thursday of the month

**Our Mission:** *To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.*

**Our Vision:** *Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.*

**Who We Are:** The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is a nonprofit veterans service organization comprised of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, guard and reserve forces. We trace our roots back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service. Many arrived home wounded or sick. There was no medical care or veterans' pension for them, and they were left to care for themselves.

In their misery, some of these veterans banded together and formed organizations that would eventually band together and become known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. After chapters were formed in Ohio, Colorado and Pennsylvania, the movement quickly gained momentum. Today, membership stands at more than 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary.

Our voice was instrumental in establishing the Veterans Administration, development of the national cemetery system, in the fight for compensation for Vietnam vets exposed to Agent Orange and for veterans diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. In 2008, we won a long-fought victory with the passing of a GI Bill for the 21st Century, giving expanded educational benefits to America's active duty service members, and members of the guard and reserves, fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. We were the driving force behind the Veterans Access and Accountability Act of 2014, and continually fight for improved VA medical centers services for women veterans.

Besides helping fund the creation of the Vietnam, Korean War, World War II and Women in Military Service memorials, in 2005 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to contribute to building the new Disabled Veterans for Life Memorial, which opened in November 2010. And in 2015, we became the first supporter of the National Desert Storm War Memorial which is planned for construction at our nation's capital.

We have many programs and services that work to support veterans, service members and their families, as well as communities worldwide. **No One Does More For Veterans.**

### Our Core Values:

- Always put the interests of our members first
- Treat donors as partners in our cause
- Promote patriotism
- Honor military service
- Ensure the care of veterans and their families
- Serve our communities
- Promote a positive image of the VFW
- Respect the diversity of veteran opinions [www.vfw.org/about-us](http://www.vfw.org/about-us)



# DAV

Ron Terry is the Commander. Hour of operation are Monday—Friday 9:00am to 3pm, closed Saturday and Sunday.

If you would like to join contact any DAV member or contact the office at (970) 565-4310 Check out our face book page at [www.facebook.com/projectoutreachvets/](http://www.facebook.com/projectoutreachvets/) or visit us at 432 North Broadway Street, Cortez, CO, email: [outreach.center@yahoo.com](mailto:outreach.center@yahoo.com)

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is an organization created in 1920 by World War I veterans for disabled military veterans of the United States Armed Forces that helps them and their families through various means. It was issued a federal charter by Congress in 1932. It currently has over 1 million members.

In 2020 and 2021 DAV celebrated its centennial anniversary and marked 100 years of service and support for America's injured and ill veterans and their families.

The Disabled American Veterans of the World War (now DAV—Disabled American Veterans) was founded by former Cincinnati Judge Robert S. Marx in 1920. Marx, a U.S. Army captain who received the Distinguished Service Cross during the First World War, recognized that the nation was ill-equipped to provide the medical care and services the more than 200,000 injured and ill returning war veterans needed—and had earned.

Since the time of our founding, we have stood as an organization of veterans serving veterans as they make the critical transition from military service to civilian life. Today, with a century of service and support under our belts and more than 1 million members in our ranks, DAV continues the fight to make medical care, employment, education and other earned benefits accessible to America's 4 million disabled veterans.

Veterans need our help today, as much as they did 100 years ago. They have earned the right to participate in the American Dream they helped to defend, and we will continue our work to help make that promise possible well into the future. Please join us as we mark this momentous anniversary in DAV's history of service to the men and women who served.

## **Mobile Service Office**

The DAV's Mobile Service Office (MSO) Program is designed to bring assistance for disabled veterans and their families living in geographic rural areas on veterans' benefits, filing claims and services closer to home by eliminating long trips for veterans to the National Service Offices. The DAV's specially equipped Mobile Service Offices "offices on wheels" visits communities according to the MSO locations schedule.

## **Veterans Information Seminars**

This outreach program is designed to educate veterans, their families and survivors who are unaware of veterans government benefits and programs, counseling and claims filing assistance service by DAV's National Service Officers (NSO) at communities throughout the country. Veterans Information Seminars are free of charge to all veterans and do not have to be a member of DAV to attend the Veterans Information Seminars. DAV's Veterans Information Seminars are held at Local DAV Chapters and Community Centers.

## **Homeless Veterans Initiative**

The Disabled American Veterans Homeless Veterans Initiative is supported by the DAV's Charitable Service Trust and the Columbia Trust, This initiative promotes the development of supportive housing and necessary services to assist homeless veterans become productive, self-sufficient members of society. The DAV works with Federal, state, county, and city governments to develop programs to assist homeless veterans. It also coordinates with the VA to get health care, substance abuse treatment, mental health services to put homeless veterans in transition to productive members of their community.



# American Legion

Scott Magness is the Commander. American Legion member meetings are the first Tuesday of every month. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

If you would like to join contact any American Legion member or contact the office at (970) 565-8151. We are located at 320 N Harrison St, Cortez, CO 81321, 970-565-8151.

Check out our face book page at [www.facebook.com/American-Legion-Ute-Mountain-Post-75-Cortez-CO-325568974578945/](http://www.facebook.com/American-Legion-Ute-Mountain-Post-75-Cortez-CO-325568974578945/)



Mission, vision and values

The American Legion is built on a promise from men and women who swore with their lives to defend and protect the United States through military service. The promise begins at enlistment, grows through training and discipline in the U.S. Armed Forces and continues after discharge, as veterans in service to community, state and nation.

In times of crisis, The American Legion steps into the turmoil and fights to provide needed assistance for others.

Young people who seek positive opportunities turn to The American Legion, which has mentored generations into responsible citizens.

Veterans in need of advocates to help them achieve meaningful careers, educations, health-care services, friends and stable homes are supported every day, free of charge, by The American Legion.

Active-duty, National Guard and Reserve personnel have dedicated supporters in The American Legion. A strong and well-resourced national defense is, and has always been, a central purpose of the organization. As former troops, Legionnaires understand the importance of home-front support.

Legionnaires constantly remind communities that freedom and prosperity come with a price, a price often paid in blood. They know the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day. They raise the money, put in the hours and bring into existence monuments and memorials to "preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars."

The American Legion salutes the flag and asks all others to show respect for the unity, freedom and hope it represents.

Among American Legion members, there is no rank or prejudice, only purpose. A veteran is a veteran. And the purpose of veterans in The American Legion is to strengthen the United States of America through programs, services, compassion and actions that have proven vital, timeless and life-changing for over a century.

The American Legion's mission statement, as adopted by the National Executive Committee in October 2020, is:

To enhance the well-being of America's veterans, their families, our military, and our communities by our devotion to mutual helpfulness. The American Legion's vision statement is "The American Legion: Veterans Strengthening America." The American Legion's value principles are as follows:

**A VETERAN IS A VETERAN** - which means The American Legion embraces all current and former members of the military and endeavors to help them transition into their communities.

**SELFLESS SERVICE** - which means The American Legion celebrates all who contribute to something larger than themselves and inspires others to serve and strengthen America.

**AMERICAN VALUES AND PATRIOTISM** - which means The American Legion advocates for upholding and defending the United States Constitution, equal justice and opportunity for everyone and discrimination against no one, youth education, responsible citizenship and honoring military service by observing and participating in memorial events.

**FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** - which means The American Legion meets the unique needs of local communities.

**ADVANCING THE VISION** - which means The American Legion educates, mentors and leads new generations of Americans.

**HONOR THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US** - which means The American Legion pays perpetual respect for all past military sacrifices to ensure they are never forgotten by new generations.

The American Legion's motto is "Veterans Strengthening America." [www.legion.org/mission](http://www.legion.org/mission)



# Exercise your Brain Answers

## SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Solution:

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69	B	I	R	R						70	E	T	N	A				71	H	E	I	R	S				
72	S	C	A	N						73	D	E	A	L				74	A	S	S	E	T				

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You may make unlimited copies of this original large print crossword puzzle for personal, senior center, medical facility, or classroom use. Visit [www.get9.com](http://www.get9.com) for more large print puzzles.

*Jimmy and Evelyn Johnson*

# Exercise your brain

## American History Trivia Questions

The United States of America has packed quite a lot of action into the past 245+ years. Although the first Indigenous tribes arrived in North America thousands of years before, the United States officially started with a bang in 1776 and has gone through decades of turmoil, triumphs, and transitions. Here are American history trivia questions for you to test your knowledge to learn more about the nation under the stars and stripes. Time to test you knowledge on the 1600's and earlier and the 1700's.

### 1600s (and earlier)

1. How long ago do historians estimate the first settlers arrived on what is now American soil?
2. How did Indigenous tribes get here?
3. When did Christopher Columbus land in what would later become the United States?
4. What is the oldest European-founded city in the United States?
5. Who was the first European to land in North America?
6. What five countries formed colonies that would later become part of the United States territory?
7. What tribe was Pocahontas from?
8. Who did Pocahontas marry?
9. What was the name of the first (permanent English) American colony?
10. What year was the Jamestown settlement established?
11. Why did the Pilgrims come to America?
12. What was the name of the Pilgrims' ship?
13. What year were the first enslaved Africans brought to American colonies?
14. How many people were killed in the Salem Witch Trials?
15. What ultimately ended the Salem Witch Trials?

### 1700s

16. How do historians refer to the time period in the 1730s and 1740s when colonists began embracing secular rationalism over religion?
17. With the Proclamation Line of 1763, the British forbid American colonists from settling west of which natural barrier?
18. How many people were killed in the Boston Massacre?
19. What was the date of the Boston Tea Party?
20. What were colonists protesting with the Boston Tea Party?
21. After the Boston Tea Party, Great Britain punished colonists with several laws that took away Massachusetts' right to govern itself. What were these laws called?
22. What city was the first capital of the United States?
23. When was the first American currency created?
24. When was the Declaration of Independence signed?
25. Who do historians believe created the first American flag?
26. What was Hopkinson's fee for creating the flag?
27. When did the Revolutionary War end?
28. What was the name of the treaty that ended the war?
29. How many battles were fought during the American Revolution?
30. What was the first American state?
31. Who was the first president to live in the White House?
32. What founding father was credited with inventing bifocals?
33. How many original British colonies existed in America?
34. What was the first governing document of the newly created United States, later replaced by the U.S. Constitution?
35. Where was the Constitutional Convention held?

Answers to follow in the next issue along with more trivia.