



Montezuma County Veterans Services Newsletter, August 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.”

My office is still here for veterans and veteran spouses who need help with veteran health care, disability claims, and more. Simply call 970-565-7155 and let me know how I can help. I (Frank) am the only VSO in Montezuma County and had to make some changes to keep my office running proficiently. I want to ensure everyone that my office remains fully operational to provide the services that Montezuma County veterans and their families need.

Visit my website at Veteran Services - Montezuma County or check out my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/people/Montezuma-County-Veteran-Services

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

A FRIENDLY REMINDER...

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Fridays Closed—Admin, processing of claims.

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



**Office Closed for
August Holidays**
None

Accredited Representatives

BEWARE UNACCREDITED INDIVIDUALS WHO PREPARE, PRESENT, OR ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE VA BENEFIT CLAIMS, OR HOLD THEMSELVES OUT AS BEING AN AUTHORIZED VSO, ARE IN VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW.

Please pause! So, after reading this post, if you or somebody you know is supporting veterans in any manner with their VA claim paperwork (excluding yourself) and are not accredited through the VA, and you the veteran require assistance please call my office or stop by during office hours for help. I am a certified Veterans Service Officer for Montezuma County, and I can assist you with any paperwork that has to be sent to the VA. Thank you for your understanding, and I look forward to meeting with you.

What is an accredited representative?

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accredits three types of representatives—Veterans Service Organization (VSO) representatives, attorneys, and agents—to help ensure that claimants have access to responsible and qualified representation on their VA benefits claims. VA-accredited representatives must have good moral character and be capable of providing competent representation, and VA's Office of General Counsel is responsible for making those determinations through its accreditation process. The accreditation process differs depending of which type of accreditation is being sought. An accredited VSO representative is someone who has been recommended for accreditation by a VSO that is recognized by VA to assist on VA benefit claims.

The VSO has certified to VA that the representative possesses good character and is fit to represent Veterans and their families as an employee or member of their organization. An attorney is someone who is a member in good standing of at least one State bar. When an attorney applies for VA accreditation, VA typically presumes that the attorney possesses the good character and fitness necessary to represent Veterans and their family members based on the attorney's state license to practice law. An accredited claims agent is someone who is not an attorney but who has undergone a character review by OGC and has passed a written examination about VA law and procedures.

The VA Office of General Counsel maintains a list of VA-recognized organizations and VA-accredited individuals that are authorized to assist in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of VA benefit claims at <https://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp>.

For more information on VA accreditation, please visit <https://www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp>.

What is the role of an accredited representative?

A VA-accredited representative can help you understand and apply for any VA benefits you may be entitled to including: [compensation](#), [education](#), [Veteran readiness and employment](#), [home loans](#), [life insurance](#), [pension](#), [health care](#), and [burial benefits](#). A VA-accredited representative may also help you request further review of, or appeal, an adverse VA decision regarding benefits.

VA-recognized VSOs and their VA-accredited representatives

Most of the representation that is provided to claimants on initial benefit claims is performed by VA-recognized VSOs and their accredited representatives. Among other things, a VSO representative can help you gather any evidence needed and submit a [Fully Developed Claim](#) on your behalf. A VSO representative can also correspond with VA about your claim on your behalf. VSOs always provide their representation on VA claims free-of-charge.

In addition to assisting Veterans and their families with VA claims, many VSOs also sponsor a range of Veteran-centric programs such as providing transportation to and from VA medical center appointments, funds and volunteers for disaster relief, and grants. VSOs also lobby Congress on behalf of issues facing Veterans and help support requests for resources needed by VA to better serve Veterans, their families, and survivors.

VA-accredited attorneys and claims agents

Typically, VA-accredited attorneys and claims agents perform most of their representation after VA has issued an initial decision on a claimant's claim—this is when attorneys and claims agents are permitted to charge fees for their representation. At this stage of the adjudication process, an attorney or claims agent may be helpful to you in further developing the evidence in support of your claim and crafting persuasive and legal arguments on your behalf to submit to VA. In addition, an attorney or claims agent can assist you in navigating the VA appeals process.

[Accredited Representatives Home \(va.gov\)](#)



Montezuma County Department of Veterans' Services

Documents Checklist

Items to bring 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
- Private Medical Records to support claim
- 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

Holiday/Observance/Event Federal Holidays

August

August 2023 Military Holidays

National Aviation Week - August 15-21 (Always during the week of Orville Wright's Birthday on August 19)

US Coast Guard Birthday (USCG) - [August 4](#)

Hiroshima Day - [August 6](#)

Purple Heart Day - [August 7](#) (More Info: Purple Heart Foundation: <http://www.purpleheartfoundation.org/>)

National Spirit of '45 Day - [August 13](#), 2023 (Second Sunday in August)

Military Marriage Day - [August 14](#)

V-J Day - [August 14](#) (Japan Surrenders)

V-J Day - [August 15](#) (Japan's Surrender Announced to the World)

Bennington Battle Day (State of Vermont) - [August 16](#)

National Airborne Day - [August 16](#)

National Aviation Day - [August 19](#)

Marine Corps Reserve Birthday - [August 29](#)



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



Submit Your Intent to File a Claim

The Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act) is the biggest expansion of Veteran health care and benefits in generations. VA encourages all eligible Veterans and survivors to file a claim — or submit their intent to file a claim — for PACT Act-related benefits now. If you notify VA of your intent to file before Aug. 10, 2023, you may be able to get retroactive payments to Aug. 10, 2022, when the PACT Act became law. Learn how to let VA know of your intent to file.

Are you 55 or older?

Did you know the VA can *always* make changes to your VA disability benefits through a reevaluation?

However, you're protected from a VA rating reduction in most situations if you are 55 years or older.

Why?

Because the VA 55-year rule means that veterans are “protected” from VA rating reductions if they are over the age of 55.

There are a few exceptions to this rule in the instances of:

- Fraud
- P&T (Permanent and Total)
- Not Expected to improve

Check out my NEW Youtube video below—I'll explain more about the 55-year rule and how it can benefit you!

[What is the VA Disability 55 Year Old Rule? \[2023 UPDATE!\] - YouTube](#)

SUMMER VETFEST

PACT Act benefits: claims received by August 9 will be eligible for 12 months of backdated Compensation

July 1, 2023
By Veterans Affairs



Thanks to the [PACT Act](#), millions of Veterans who were exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances are now eligible for VA health care and benefits.

While there is no deadline to apply for PACT Act-related benefits, there is urgency. Most Veterans and survivors who [apply](#) for benefits or submit an “[Intent to File](#)” by August 9, if granted, will have their benefits backdated to August 10th of 2022 – the day that President Biden signed the PACT Act into law.

To encourage Veterans to apply today, [VA facilities](#) is hosting a nationwide Summer VetFest in July. The VetFest will include more than 50 events across the country to inform Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors about the PACT Act. These events will be casual summer gatherings, featuring Veterans, their families, Veteran advocates, and the VA health care and benefits professionals who serve them.

Many of these events will also feature food and music, as well as VA staff who are ready to personally help Veterans apply or submit an intent to file, get screened for toxic exposures, or even apply to come work at VA.

For Veterans that cannot attend a local event, [VA.gov/PACT](#) is a one-stop shop to learn about and apply for PACT Act-related care and benefits. They can also apply by calling 1-800-MYVA411.

<https://news.va.gov/>

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

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

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.

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>.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



VA PACT ACT

PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

JULY 21, 2023

ISSUE ELEVEN
Published bi-weekly on Fridays



In this VA PACT Act Performance Dashboard, we are demonstrating our commitment to transparency by sharing with all stakeholders—internal to VA and externally—key performance metrics and data we are using to assess our success in implementing the PACT Act.

If you, a Veteran, family member, or survivor would like more information about the PACT Act and your VA benefits, please start here:



VA.GOV
ask.va.gov/



CALL
1-800-MyVA411
24/7/365



WALK-IN
va.gov/find/locations



VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION
va.gov/ability/get-help-filing-claims



NEW HEALTH CARE & BENEFITS MAP
[Download Map Here](#)

Help spread the word—download PACT Act Outreach Materials!



Highlight

As of 07/17/2023, 4 million Veterans have received VA's **Toxic Exposure Screening (TES)**. The screening is a series of questions that takes around 10 minutes and helps identify and plan for any possible health issues related to military-related toxic exposure. Over 1.7 million Veterans have endorsed at least 1 potential exposure. The TES allows VA health care teams to provide ongoing care with a focus on early diagnosis and treatment of any health concerns that might be connected to exposures.



Making a Difference Through the PACT Act

A Veteran who served in both the Vietnam and Gulf War eras passed away in November 1995 from lung cancer. Since service in the Gulf War was not considered a presumptive for cancers before the PACT Act, the claim for survivor benefits submitted by the Veteran's surviving spouse was denied. However, now that the PACT Act has expanded presumption of service connection for several cancers to Gulf War and Post 9/11 era service, the spouse's claim was reopened. In January 2023, the spouse's claim was granted. She received a retroactive benefits payment of \$362,157, and she will now receive \$1,562 as a monthly benefit.

VA IS EXPANDING CARE AND BENEFITS FOR VETERANS AND SURVIVORS



The PACT Act is perhaps the largest health care and benefits expansion in VA history. In this section, we are measuring the overall impact of the PACT Act in terms of its expansion of health care and benefits.

Expanding Benefits



379,423
Total Veterans/Survivors with Completed PACT Act Related Claims (08/10/2022–07/15/2023)



323,111
Total PACT Act Claims Approved (08/10/2022–07/15/2023)



103,731
New Enrollees from the PACT Act Planning Population (10/01/2022–07/17/2023)



371,716
Total Veterans with Completed PACT Act Related Claims
7,715
Total Survivors with Completed PACT Act Related Claims



78.9%
Approval Rate for PACT Act Related Claims (07/15/2023)



153.6
Average Days for PACT Act Related Claim Completion (07/15/2023)



47.9%
PACT Act Related Claims Completed <= 125 days (07/15/2023)



90.8%
VA Health Care 90-Day Trust Score (04/16/2022–07/15/2023)

Expanding Care



Total New VHA Enrollees: (through 07/17/2023)



UPCOMING OUTREACH CALENDAR

July 22

PACT Act Summer VetFest

Quincy, MA

[VIEW EVENT](#)

July 26

PACT Act Claims Clinic

Vancouver, WA

[VIEW EVENT](#)

July 27

PACT Act Summer VetFest

Garland, TX

[VIEW EVENT](#)

July 28

PACT Act Claims Clinic

Great Falls, MT

[VIEW EVENT](#)

July 29

PACT Act Las Vegas VetFest

Las Vegas, NV

[VIEW EVENT](#)

August 03

PACT Act VetFest Orlando

Orlando, FL

[VIEW EVENT](#)

For more information on these and other events, please visit <https://www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/>



VA is committed to providing world class and timely health care, benefits and services to Veterans and Survivors. In this section, we measure VA's success in delivering outstanding and timely support and in earning the Veteran's and Survivor's trust.

Care Experience



4,012,565

Total Toxic Exposure Screenings
(09/06/2022–07/17/2023)



1,700,566 (42.38%)

Toxic Exposure Screenings where Veterans Endorsed **at least 1** Potential Exposure



332,436 (8.28%)

Toxic Exposure Screenings where Veterans Endorsed **more than 1** Potential Exposure



1,368,130 (34.10%)

Toxic Exposure Screenings where Veterans Endorsed **exactly 1** Potential Exposure



103,731

New Enrollees in the PACT Act Planning Population
(10/01/2022–07/17/2023)



64%

New Enrollees in Priority Groups 1, 2, or 3 (percentage based on the Planning Population)



3,886,059

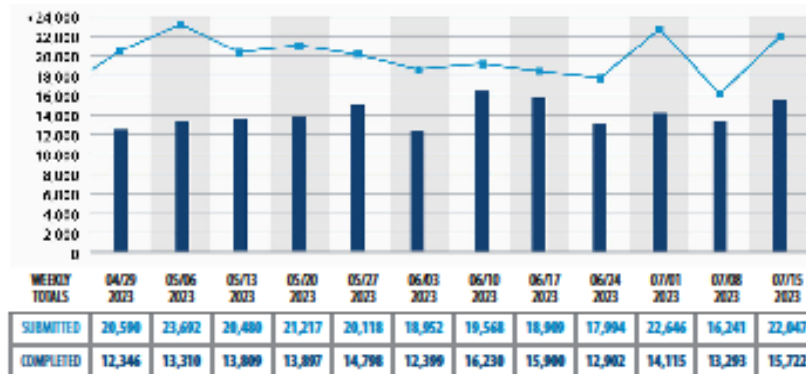
Current Enrollees in the PACT Act Planning Population
(as of 07/17/2023)

Benefits Experience

The charts below show the past 12 weeks (a rolling 12-week view).

Claims Submitted and Completed—PACT Act Related

■ PACT Act Related-Submitted ■ PACT Act Related-Completed



744,701

Cumulative Total PACT Act Related Claims Submitted
(08/10/2022–07/15/2023)

728,810

Total Veteran PACT Act Related Claims Submitted
15,891
Total Survivor PACT Act Related Claims Submitted



409,755

Cumulative Total PACT Act Related Claims Completed
(08/10/2022–07/15/2023)

401,829

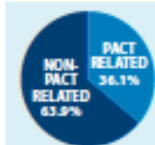
Total Veteran PACT Act Related Claims Completed
7,926
Total Survivor PACT Act Related Claims Completed

153.6

Average Days For PACT Act Related Claim Completion
(07/15/2023)

47.9%

PACT Act Related Rating Claims Completed <=125 Days
(07/15/2023)



Percentage of Claims Submitted PACT Act Related vs. Non-PACT Act Related
(08/10/2022–07/15/2023)

Claims Submitted and Completed—Non-PACT Act Related

■ Non-PACT Act Related-Submitted ■ Non-PACT Act Related-Completed



1,320,316

Cumulative Total Non-PACT Act Related Claims Submitted
(08/10/2022–07/15/2023)



1,386,296

Cumulative Total Non-PACT Act Related Claims Completed
(08/10/2022–07/15/2023)

125.9

Average Days For Non-PACT Act Related Claim Completion
(07/15/2023)

67.5%

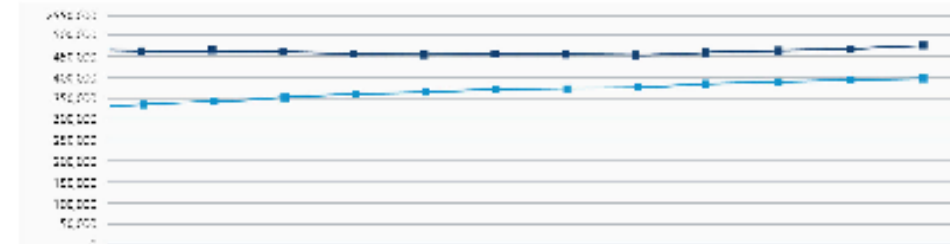
Non-PACT Act Related Rating Claims Completed <=125 Days
(07/15/2023)

PACT Act Claims Submission Methods

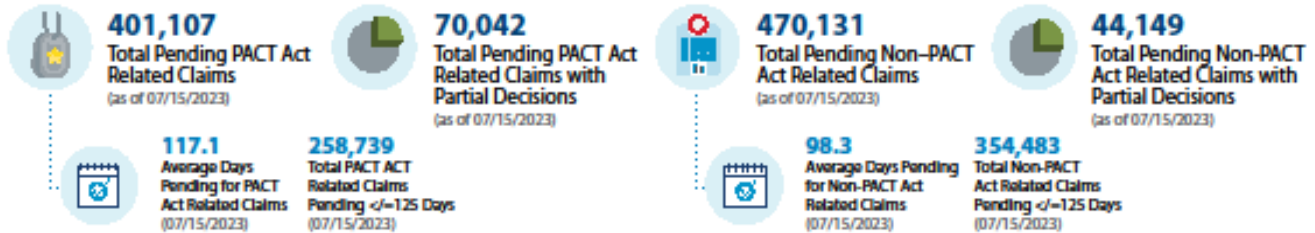


Pending Claims—PACT Related and Non-PACT Related

Inventory Pending-PACT Related Inventory Pending-Non-PACT Related



WEEKLY TOTALS	04/29/2023	05/06/2023	05/13/2023	05/20/2023	05/27/2023	06/03/2023	06/10/2023	06/17/2023	06/24/2023	07/01/2023	07/08/2023	07/15/2023
PACT RELATED	335,618	346,000	352,671	359,901	365,311	371,864	375,202	378,211	383,303	391,834	394,782	401,107
NON-PACT RELATED	467,004	467,762	462,239	457,932	454,722	457,262	454,059	452,666	454,768	461,042	466,940	470,131



Top 5 Most Frequent Conditions on PACT Act Related Claims (As of 07/15/2023)

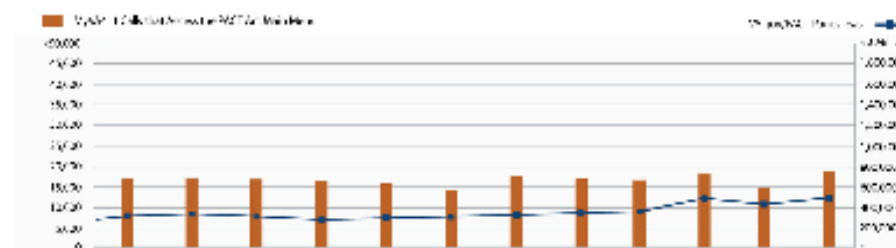
Condition	Number of Claims	Number of Issues	Percent Granted	Percent Denied
Hypertensive Vascular Disease	126,003	127,665	79%	21%
Allergic Rhinitis	76,159	77,343	82%	18%
Maxillary Sinusitis	36,199	36,506	54%	46%
Bronchial Asthma	33,785	34,369	51%	49%
Malignant Growth of Genitourinary System	18,353	18,809	67%	33%

Most Frequent Denial Reasons (As of 07/15/2023)

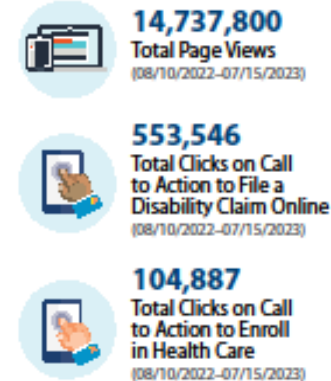
- 1 No Diagnosis
- 2 Not Incurred or Not Caused by Service
- 3 Not Established by Presumption

Web and Phone Experience

VA.gov/PACT Pageviews & 1-800-MyVA411 Calls that Access the PACT Act Main Menu (Press 8)

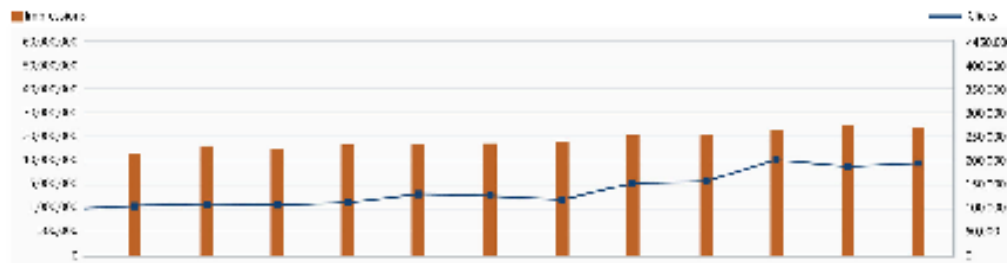


The PACT Act webpage has received to date:



Web and Phone Experience

Digital Advertising (ChooseVA PACT Act Campaign)



WEEKLY TOTALS	04/29/2023	05/06/2023	05/13/2023	05/20/2023	05/27/2023	06/03/2023	06/10/2023	06/17/2023	06/24/2023	07/01/2023	07/08/2023	07/15/2023
Clicks	102,494	113,083	116,335	121,579	131,287	127,798	127,839	156,887	165,703	203,581	189,629	195,648
Impressions	13,862,340	15,333,350	15,848,378	16,340,782	16,658,877	17,385,646	17,715,849	20,238,253	20,866,958	22,819,255	24,637,817	25,188,335
CTR	0.73%	0.73%	0.73%	0.74%	0.84%	0.74%	0.72%	0.78%	0.79%	0.90%	0.90%	0.90%



772,407,728
Total Impressions
5,155,992
Total Clicks
0.67%
Click Through Rate

VA Call Centers



741,679
Total MyVA411 that Access the PACT Act Main Menu (Press 8)
(10/20/2022-07/15/2023)

MAIN MENU



156,412
Calls that Access Option 1 to Learn More about PACT Act and Health Care
(10/20/2022-07/15/2023)

OPTION 1



160,719
Calls that Access Option 2 to Learn More about PACT Act Benefits
(10/20/2022-07/15/2023)

OPTION 2



223,587
Calls that Access Option 3 to Learn More about the PACT Act Overall
(10/20/2022-07/15/2023)

OPTION 3

US States & Territories / Freely Associated States / Philippines	Projected # of Veterans	% of All Veterans Nationally	Total PACT Act Related Claims Received (08/10/2022 - 07/15/2023)	% Total PACT Act Related Claims Received (08/10/2022 - 07/15/2023)
Alabama	351,132	1.89%	18,482	2.48%
Alaska	69,838	0.38%	2,330	0.31%
American Samoa	2,723	0.01%	198	0.03%
Arizona	498,547	2.68%	17,662	2.37%
Arkansas	204,198	1.10%	8,773	1.18%
California	1,534,708	8.25%	53,302	7.16%
Colorado	374,234	2.01%	14,110	1.89%
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	995	0.01%	69	0.01%
Connecticut	158,714	0.85%	4,263	0.57%
Delaware	68,675	0.37%	2,271	0.31%
District of Columbia	28,003	0.15%	845	0.11%
Federated States of Micronesia	-	-	<10	<0.01%
Florida	1,450,596	7.80%	64,690	8.69%
Georgia	678,302	3.65%	34,468	4.63%
Guam	12,800	0.07%	1,064	0.14%
Hawaii	107,210	0.58%	4,760	0.64%
Idaho	126,467	0.68%	4,691	0.63%
Illinois	569,450	3.06%	18,257	2.45%
Indiana	388,083	2.09%	14,081	1.89%
Iowa	182,639	0.98%	6,927	0.93%
Kansas	186,098	1.00%	7,532	1.01%
Kentucky	272,088	1.46%	11,300	1.52%
Louisiana	267,174	1.44%	14,594	1.96%
Maine	107,750	0.58%	3,308	0.44%
Marshall Islands	-	-	<10	<0.01%
Maryland	355,787	1.91%	14,026	1.88%
Massachusetts	285,972	1.54%	7,296	0.98%
Michigan	530,588	2.85%	17,062	2.29%
Minnesota	294,233	1.58%	10,717	1.44%
Mississippi	181,855	0.98%	10,355	1.39%
Missouri	399,154	2.15%	14,572	1.96%
Montana	86,399	0.46%	3,492	0.47%
Nebraska	119,645	0.64%	5,327	0.72%
Nevada	216,626	1.17%	10,196	1.37%
New Hampshire	96,359	0.52%	2,554	0.34%
New Jersey	310,801	1.67%	8,614	1.16%
New Mexico	144,134	0.78%	5,309	0.71%
New York	688,612	3.70%	18,304	2.46%
North Carolina	687,362	3.70%	33,494	4.50%
North Dakota	50,834	0.27%	1,905	0.26%
Ohio	695,452	3.74%	24,328	3.27%
Oklahoma	281,728	1.52%	13,299	1.79%
Oregon	271,871	1.46%	8,174	1.10%
Palau	-	-	<10	<0.01%
Pennsylvania	719,231	3.87%	20,644	2.77%
Philippines	-	-	<10	<0.01%
Puerto Rico	73,146	0.39%	6,534	0.88%
Rhode Island	58,026	0.31%	1,686	0.23%
South Carolina	388,404	2.09%	19,538	2.62%
South Dakota	63,322	0.34%	2,762	0.37%
Tennessee	444,481	2.39%	19,470	2.61%
Texas	1,543,166	8.30%	82,854	11.13%
United States Virgin Islands	3,625	0.02%	260	0.03%
Unknown/Foreign	62,476	0.34%	2,845	0.38%
Utah	128,923	0.69%	4,663	0.63%
Vermont	39,731	0.21%	1,005	0.14%
Virginia	691,324	3.72%	29,699	3.99%
Washington	533,344	2.87%	16,068	2.16%
West Virginia	128,326	0.69%	5,108	0.69%
Wisconsin	331,650	1.78%	12,676	1.70%
Wyoming	45,435	0.24%	1,871	0.25%
Total	18,592,446	100%	744,701	100%



VA prescription delivery will continue despite possible UPS strike

VA has made alternative arrangements to ensure delivery in the event of a strike

July 25, 2023

By Pharmacy Benefits Management and Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy team

Some Veterans may have concerns regarding the potential UPS strike and its impact on VA prescriptions. Rest assured, your prescriptions will continue as usual and you should not experience disruptions or delays due to the potential UPS strike.

VA's Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP) has already made alternative arrangements to ensure reliable delivery in the event of a strike. Since July 17, the prescriptions that UPS normally ships are being delivered by FedEx to ensure Veterans have uninterrupted access to needed prescriptions.

U.S. Postal Service delivers the majority of prescriptions shipped by CMOP. VA does not anticipate any interruptions with those deliveries at this time.

Q/A

Q: What will happen to my VA medications if UPS strikes?

A: Veterans will continue to get their medications. A potential UPS strike will not impact delivery. Veterans can rest assured they will continue to receive their VA medications and supplies.

VA's CMOP has proactively moved ground shipments to FedEx as of July 17 to ensure Veterans still have access to needed medications in the event of a UPS strike. Veterans will not have a disruption in the delivery of prescriptions or supplies from CMOP.

Q: If UPS goes on strike, which carrier will deliver my packages?

A: Your packages will most likely be delivered by FedEx, but some medications and supplies may be delivered by USPS.

Q: Will my packages still be delivered timely?

A: Yes. VA's CMOP does not anticipate any delays.

Q: What happens if the strike doesn't occur or doesn't last long?

A: CMOP is working with FedEx as a proactive measure to ensure Veterans continue to receive uninterrupted medication delivery. If there is no strike or if they resolve the strike quickly, VA will re-evaluate delivery options and choose shipping partners based on what is in the best interest of the Veterans.

Q: What if the strike goes on for weeks or months?

A: The changes CMOP made in VA's shipping methods are potentially long-term solutions and can continue to serve our Veterans for as long as the strike may last.

Track delivery using My HealtheVet

Refill track, and manage your prescriptions easily using these online resources:

[My HealtheVet](#)
[VA's Rx Refill App](#)



Celebrating 75 years of helping make home modifications for seriously disabled Veterans

July 18, 2023

By Matthew Davis
Chief of Communications, VA Loan Guaranty Service

On June 19, VA commemorated the 75th anniversary of the [Specially Adapted Housing program](#), providing home adaptation grants to nearly 50,000 service members and Veterans with qualifying, serious service-connected disabilities through multiple eras of military service.

SAH grants provide important financial support for home modifications that address the unique needs of these Veterans and service members.

Created in 1948, adaptation assistance was first a one-time grant limited to \$10,000, which covered up to 50 percent of the housing unit, land and remodeling costs to the Veteran.

Since that time, the grant amount has grown over tenfold with annual increases calculated using the Turner building cost index. And instead of being a one-time use program, eligible Veterans can use the grant up to six times up to the grant amount.

Eligibility has continued to expand to include Veterans with other conditions caused or worsened by their military service. SAH eligibility also now includes degenerative conditions where Veterans are diagnosed at higher rates than non-Veterans, such as Parkinson's and ALS. And if you're a Veteran temporarily residing in a home owned by a family member, you have a one-time option to adapt that home through the Temporary Residence Adaptation grant program.

Key Facts

- Created on June 19, 1948, the SAH program administers funding to eligible service members and Veterans with certain severe, service-connected disabilities, such as loss of use of a limb, loss of limb or blindness.
- There are three types of grants administered: SAH, Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) and TRA.

The current amount authorized for eligible SAH, SHA and TRA grant recipients is available [on VA's housing grants website](#). *If your SAH-adapted home is ever damaged in a natural disaster, there may be supplemental grant funds to help you repair it.*

Know a Veteran who may qualify?

Share this blog post! Help us connect with Veterans who may meet the eligibility requirements to receive funding that helps service members and Veterans live independently by adapting their homes to suit their specific needs.

Once an applicant is verified as eligible for an SAH grant, an SAH agent will work with the Veteran to navigate the grant project processes. The Veteran can still choose their own contractor and are the final say on the types of modifications that best suit their specific needs.

Contact us

More information on the SAH program can be found online at [VA's website](#).

*After publishing, this News post was edited on July 19, 2023, reflecting a byline change and modifications to the sections "Key facts" and "Know a Veteran who may qualify?"

The Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife)

By Veterans Benefits Administration, Office of Strategic Engagement

Enrollment is open for VA's newest life insurance program. [VALife](#) offers guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance to Veterans age 80 or under with any level of service-connected disability (0-100%). Veterans 81 or older may qualify if they meet certain criteria and apply within a certain timeframe.

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife) provides low-cost coverage to Veterans with service-connected disabilities. Find out if you're eligible and how to apply.

Eligibility for VALife

If you're age 80 or younger

You're eligible for VALife if you have a VA service-connected disability rating—even if your rating is 0%.

There's no time limit to apply after getting your disability rating.

If you're age 81 or older

You may be eligible for VALife if you meet these requirements.

All of these must be true:

- You applied for VA disability compensation before you turned 81 years old, **and**
 - You got your service-connected disability rating after you turned 81, **and**
- You apply for VALife within **2 years** of getting notification of your disability rating

Key features of VALife include:

- Coverage up to \$40,000, available in \$10,000 increments
 - No health questions or medical exam to enroll
 - No deadline to apply if you are age 80 or under
 - Convenient online application and enrollment, and
- Cash value that builds over the life of the policy, after the first two years of enrollment

VALife opens life insurance coverage to more service-connected Veterans than ever before VA's previous life insurance program for service-connected Veterans—Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (S-DVI)—had a two-year time limit to apply and health requirements for enrollment. As a guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance program, VALife eliminates the time limit to apply and does not ask health questions to enroll. In addition, VALife increases the coverage amount available to service-connected Veterans. VALife offers a maximum of \$40,000 while S-DVI offered up to \$10,000 in basic coverage.

VALife premium rates are the same for men and women, not based on medical conditions, and will not increase over the life of the policy. Premiums are based on a Veteran's age upon enrollment and the coverage amount selected. The full table of monthly VALife premium rates can be found at <https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/valife/>.

In most cases, VALife premium rates are competitive with, or better than, similar private sector guaranteed acceptance programs. Unlike S-DVI, VALife does not offer waiver of premiums.

You can apply, receive an instant decision, and manage aspects of your VALife policy online at <https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/valife/>.

Learn more about the VALife program and its impact for millions of Veterans here: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5844>.

The quickest way to discover more about VA life insurance is to visit one of the websites as mentioned earlier online, where all the information you require is available. These websites allow you to register, and every step is clearly described. Your County Veteran Service Officer thanks you.

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.”](#)

Suicide Prevention cont.

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](tel:988), then select 1.

Text [838255](tel:838255).

[Start a confidential chat.](#)

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

You can also:

Call [911](tel: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:

Suicide Prevention cont.

- ◆ 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.

Post 5231 Montezuma County Post

Commander: Tommy Endres
Quartermaster: John Davis III

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

Montezuma County Stand Down
Saturday, September 16, 2023
9:00am until 3:00pm County Annex Building
107 N. Chestnut, Cortez CO
Corner of W. Montezuma Ave and N. Chestnut
Cortez, Co

MONTEZUMA STAND DOWN FOR VETERANS



107 N. Chestnut, Cortez CO

Corner of W. Montezuma Ave and N. Chestnut Cortez, Co .

Services and access will include

- VA Enrollment/Benefits
- Secure Area for Belongings
- Homelessness Prevention
- Hair Cuts
- Hygiene Supplies
- Employment
- Education
- Medical
- Suicide Prevention Info
- National Park Access Info
- Mental Health Support
- Substance Abuse Support
- Housing Assistance
- Personal Neck Massage
- Hearing Checks
- Veteran Service Officer

And More!

Proudly Hosted by VFW Post 5231

Saturday, September 16, 2023

9:00am until 3:00pm County Annex Building

To learn more about this event, sponsoring a vendor table, donating funds or materials or volunteering to staff this event or any general questions please call Corena at 970-570-5755 or Tom at 970-560-5242

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/ or visit us at 432 North Broadway Street, Cortez, CO, email: 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.



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/



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

Exercise your brain

Super Hard 100 Words Word Search

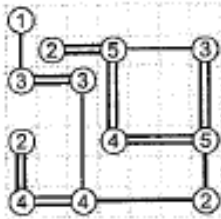
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 M B E Z N T M D T U L V M Q Y U C D K M O Y C R M B U H A N E W O O H R H T O Z A O
 J J L I G I L E N O S E I T I R E V C A I R P I U D C B D E D A X A R O E Q Z C G F
 E A H K A T Y R V M Z P P Y N I A L L I V S P W T F O S I E S J Y J A M D K U E E I
 T U N M B U X S S C G H T S A U C V G Y N I Z E H Y B D N E A P A R D O A A H F T D
 S Q X P R T O E D Y D M S G P P M V Q V R M D N E X O D G R L F J R D A D E N J U V
 Z Y F U J E D C L R M M T K O Z B I E M Y Q L Q Y X Q G L C A C Z L N W S J T L E B
 V Y E Q W D A R H V Y O Y L R L F D C O U V F Y H I F S P V J F C L I Y F V S S S M
 R T G R E D Q E B P S R C H C U M R E W W M I M E D R A I F Z G I Z M S E A Z I Y C
 N U C J Y M B T W R C L A I N L T J Z M D J J N L U R K V Z Q M E U J A F V M X I R
 J F V Y H O Y A T A R X U X D A T Z M V X D O P V J B A O U L H J T Q R Z T K V Y B
 W Q K G B D B R Q C V S Y D W S B W I I N X G N N K I V D R P D P N W J V F S A S Y
 Z Z W W J R S I Z G D M D W J T F D L Q O H M P K F F J D X E A S X Q Z E O M J S F
 K W L D T D U E W S G C K N T F R T K K P O P V P S W J W O J F B I B B I O Y V Z D
 V O U Q M A C S W J D J K E D V W F V F E I A D D O N K A M L Z T U W U Q J V A M D
 B S V Y E Q X X C E V I X D N Q A K M C N K E H M Q I M U N A N Z W C K R N G C X U
 B N J I P Z T J Y M L V O H Q U E O I I W M C L W Y W F F J F V Z N J S E C B S D E
 V D C Q Y P F M R Z L C P O B U L U W H D X O E I M O V F L G E J P E K Z Y B U N T
 E K M A L A E N S U I V U I V Y S E C E T I S G R R U Y Z O N P W E Z N B B V Q G K
 N A H R S C X R V O H J Z M O F F Z W E A N L W L C J O J O Z T E D K E L E N B M J
 B C E C F L W H E Z W H N T O U U S O G U N T J V I V Y S M F O V N H C A A I E T J
 Z I J K B D H U S U L U Z I H S D W Y A S V G T X B C P U Y G O T G Z W G V W U N M

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|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| abominate | booths | crabbing | fishes | inamorata | metacarpi | pacifiers | provider | settled | swastika |
| adumbration | bumptious | credibly | fittingly | inarticulately | minces | paganism | radials | simplified | taro |
| alumni | bundles | daub | forking | inquisitions | muffler | paving | railroad | smelling | termly |
| amuse | canonizations | distinguishable | freeloader | interlocutory | narcissi | peeing | raped | snots | unclothed |
| anorexia | chimpanzee | douches | gastric | jurisdiction | nosegays | pinto | readabilities | so | undersecretaries |
| antagonized | clacked | dully | ghostwrote | juxtaposition | obstacle | pizzicatos | remade | sottish | unloading |
| antidepressants | cliques | duplex | hamstringing | lowered | officer | places | retreading | spellbinds | verities |
| antiquaries | coital | electrode | hellishly | luridness | ongoing | plateaus | ridicule | steamrollering | villainy |
| authentic | contractions | eliminations | hocks | mastodon | orthography | proliferation | runner | steerage | voracity |
| avians | coroners | famishes | hyperactives | mediocre | outshines | propheied | seasickness | substitute | wren |

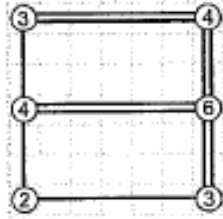
Exercise your brain solution

Solution

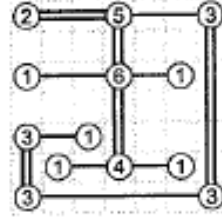
Puzzle #1



Puzzle #2



Puzzle #3



Puzzle #4

