

Employment

Healthcare

Education

VA Benefits

# SCVets



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS, ACTIVE MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES | VOLUME 2



A Community Resource Provided by:



Homeless to Housing

Women's Services

Personal Services

Active Military





# U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

*To care for those “who shall have borne the battle,”  
and for their families and their survivors.*

## Your potential VA benefits include:

- \*Disability Compensation
- \*Disability Pension
- \*Life Insurance
- \*Health Care

- \*Education (GI Bill)
- \*Vocational Rehabilitation
- \*VA Home Loan Guaranty
- \*Burial and Memorial assistance

- **MyVA311 is VA’s national toll free number to assist Veterans and families with VA health care, benefits, and services**  
1-844-MyVA311 (844-698-2311)
- **Veterans Benefits and Services (other than health care)**  
National Call Center (also reachable through MyVA311)  
1-800-827-1000  
Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 9:00 pm ET
- **VA’s Inquiry Routing and Information System**  
We are here to answer your questions by email:  
<https://iris.custhelp.com/>
- **www.eBenefits.va.gov - At this website, It is easy to file for many VA benefits online.**  
eBenefits questions or technical issues:  
1-800-983-0937  
Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 8:00 pm ET
- **Veterans Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**
- **Explore.VA.gov**  
Explore VA Benefits for Veterans and their families

# Thank you, SC Veterans

## You are important to us.

Military members, Veterans and their families are important to us at SC Thrive. Your service is appreciated and we want to ensure that you have access to all the quality of life resources you deserve. With a track record of collaborative partnerships with grassroots organizations, federal agencies and state agencies, we will continue to connect you to resources by building relationships and developing trust at all levels. We have worked to break down barriers to access needed resources and work supports while you have worked hard to protect our country. Please take this resource guide and share it with the other military members and Veterans in your life so they, too, can thrive in South Carolina.



**Tricia Richardson**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
SC Thrive

## On behalf of the County Veterans Affairs Officers in South Carolina...

I want to thank each man and woman who served in the United States Armed Forces. We want to make sure that our Veterans have all the tools they need to succeed in the world today. We will continue to work hard each day to make sure the Veterans and their families are taken care of with help from many federal, state and nonprofit organizations. I would also like to thank our partners and staff who work hard to make South Carolina the most Veteran-friendly state in the Nation.

*Todd Humphries*

*President, South Carolina Association of County Veterans Affairs Officers*



### **SCACVAO**

The South Carolina Association of County Veterans Affairs Officers is made up of officers from 46 South Carolina counties.

Officers are available to assist Veterans and their dependents with questions about benefits, medical services, programs, facilities and support.

[www.sccounties.org/  
veterans-affairs-officers-scvao](http://www.sccounties.org/veterans-affairs-officers-scvao)



# SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS



318,377 WARTIME VETERANS

7,006 WWII VETERANS

21,794 KOREAN CONFLICT VETERANS

136,932 VIETNAM ERA VETERANS

167,721 GULF WAR ERA VETERANS

82,365 PEACETIME VETERANS

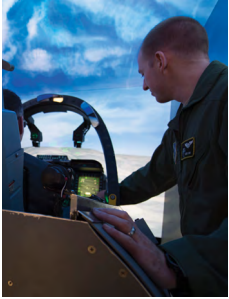
OVER  
**400,000**  
SOUTH CAROLINIANS ARE VETERANS

**44,055**  
WOMEN VETERANS

**356,687**  
MALE VETERANS



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## ABOUT SCVETS RESOURCE GUIDE

The SCVets Resource Guide is produced by SC Thrive in cooperation with the South Carolina Association of Veterans Affairs Officers and numerous community resource agencies serving Veterans, active duty and their families across South Carolina.

## GENERAL DISCLAIMER

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## ABOUT SC THRIVE

SC Thrive is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization serving South Carolinians in need of resources but facing a multitude of barriers. We meet people where they are in life, addressing their needs holistically to move them toward stability, then self-sustainability. We focus on improving the physical, mental, and financial health of communities across the state, so individuals can move from crisis to sustainability.

**sc Thrive**  
800.726.8774 | [scthrive.org](http://scthrive.org)

# South Carolina Veterans' Affairs County Offices



**ABBEVILLE**  
901 W Greenwood St.  
Suite 1600  
Abbeville, SC 29620  
Phone: 864.366.6690 Ext. 2208  
Fax: 864.366.2625



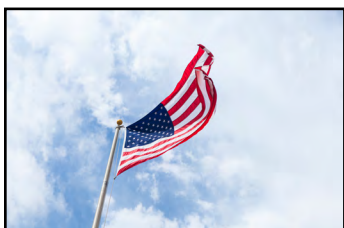
**AIKEN**  
1930 University Pkwy.  
Suite 2305  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: 803.642.1545  
Fax: 803.642.1592



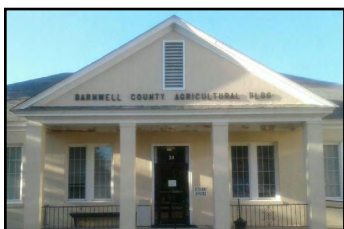
**ALLENDALE**  
184 Barnwell Hwy.  
P.O. Box 521  
Allendale, SC 29810  
Phone: 803.584.4226  
Fax: 855.829.4700



**ANDERSON**  
2404 N Main St.  
Ralph P. Townsend Gov. Bldg.  
Anderson, SC 29621  
Phone: 864.260.4036  
Fax: 864.260.4093



**BAMBERG**  
847 Calhoun St., Suite 8  
Bamberg, SC 29003  
Phone: 803.245.3266  
Fax: 803.245.2494



**BARNWELL**  
Barnwell County Courthouse  
Room 110  
Barnwell, SC 29812  
Phone: 803.541.1057  
Fax: 803.541.3685



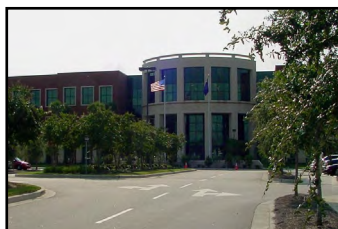
**BEAUFORT**  
Beaufort City Hall  
1911 Boundary St., 1st Floor  
P.O. Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, SC 29901-1228  
Phone: 843.255.6880  
Fax: 843.255.9445



**BERKELEY**  
303 N Goose Creek Blvd.  
Goose Creek, SC 29445  
Phone: 843.377.8506  
Fax: 843.377.8509



**CALHOUN**  
P.O. Box 405  
St. Matthews, SC 29135  
Phone: 803.874.3816  
Fax: 803.874.1278



**CHARLESTON**  
4045 Bridgeview Dr.  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: 843.974.6360  
Fax: 843.745.2354



**CHEROKEE**  
110 Railroad Ave.  
Gaffney, SC 29340  
Phone: 864.487.2579  
Fax: 864.487.6209



**CHESTER**  
154 Main St.  
Memorial Building  
P.O. Drawer 580  
Chester, SC 29706  
Phone: 803.385.6157  
Fax: 855.946.0426



**CHESTERFIELD**  
105 N Page St.  
Chesterfield, SC 29709  
Phone: 843.623.2482  
Fax: 843.623.7349



**CLARENDON**  
411 Sunset Dr.  
P.O. Drawer 548  
Manning, SC 29102  
Phone: 803.435.2527  
Fax: 803.433.0413





**COLLETON**  
 219 S Lemacks St.  
 P.O. Box 637  
 Walterboro, SC 29488  
 Phone: 843.549.1412  
 Fax: 843.549.0132



**GREENVILLE**  
 301 University Ridge  
 Suite 5900  
 Greenville, SC 29601  
 Phone: 864.467.7230  
 Fax: 864.467.7677



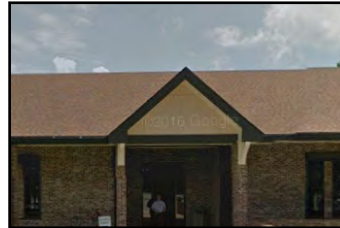
**DARLINGTON**  
 1 Public Square, Room 310  
 Darlington Courthouse  
 Darlington, SC 29532  
 Phone: 843.398.4130  
 Fax: 843.395.8570



**GREENWOOD**  
 106 Main St. N  
 Greenwood, SC 29646  
 P.O. Box 1024  
 Greenwood, SC 29648  
 Phone: 864.942.8531  
 Fax: 864.943.2642



**DILLON**  
 City-County Complex, Room 302  
 401 W Main St.  
 P.O. Box 493  
 Dillon, SC 29536  
 Phone: 843.774.1427  
 Fax: 843.774.1428



**HAMPTON**  
 B.T. DeLoach Building  
 201 Jackson Ave. W  
 Hampton, SC 29924  
 Phone: 803.914.2085 Ext. 2087  
 Fax: 803.914.2089



**DORCHESTER**  
 500 N Main St., Suite 11  
 Summerville, SC 29483  
 Also: 201 Johnston Ave.  
 St. George, SC 29477  
 Phone: 843.832.0050  
 Fax: 843.832.0000



**HORRY**  
 1949 Industrial Park Rd., Suite 101  
 Conway, SC 29526  
 P.O. Box 1236  
 Conway, SC 29527  
 Phone: 843.915.5480  
 Fax: 843.915.6480



**EDGEFIELD**  
 304 Gray St.  
 Edgefield, SC 29824  
 Phone: 803.637.4012  
 Fax: 803.637.4013



**JASPER**  
 651 Grays Hwy.  
 P.O. Box 1536  
 Ridgeland, SC 29936  
 Phone: 843.726.7727  
 Fax: 843.726.7617



**FAIRFIELD**  
 96 U.S. Hwy. 321 S  
 P.O. Box 456  
 Winnsboro, SC 29180  
 Phone: 803.635.4131  
 Fax: 803.815.0585



**KERSHAW**  
 Kershaw Government Center  
 515 Walnut St., Room 150  
 Camden, SC 29020  
 Phone: 803.425.1521 or  
 803.425.1500 Ext. 5318  
 Fax: 803.424.4020



**FLORENCE**  
 600 Senior Way  
 Florence, SC 29505  
 Phone: 843.665.3045  
 Fax: 843.676.8682



**LANCASTER**  
 1033 W Meeting St.  
 P.O. Box 1809  
 Lancaster, SC 29721  
 Phone: 803.283.2469  
 Fax: 803.416.9497



**GEORGETOWN**  
 537 Lafayette Cir.  
 Georgetown, SC 29440  
 Phone: 843.545.3330  
 Fax: 843.545.3312



**LAURENS**  
 200 Public Square  
 P.O. Box 193  
 Laurens, SC 29360  
 Phone: 864.984.4041  
 Fax: 864.984.7589





**LEE**  
 129 W Cedar Ln.  
 P.O. Box 461  
 Bishopville, SC 29010  
 Phone: 803.484.5129  
 Fax: 803.483.0577



**PICKENS**  
 222 McDaniel Ave., B13  
 Pickens, SC 29671  
 Phone: 864.898.5926  
 Fax: 864.898.5927



**LEXINGTON**  
 605 W Main St.  
 Suite B  
 Lexington, SC 29072  
 Phone: 803.785.8400  
 Fax: 803.785.0115



**RICHLAND**  
 1701 Main St., Suite 409  
 P.O. Box 192  
 Columbia, SC 29202  
 Phone: 803.576.1908  
 Fax: 803.576.1923



**MARION**  
 2523 E Hwy. 76  
 P.O. Box 519  
 Marion, SC 29571  
 Phone: 843.423.8255  
 Fax: 843.431.5419



**SALUDA**  
 108 S Rudolph St.  
 Saluda, SC 29138  
 Phone: 864.445.4500 Ext. 2268  
 Fax: 864.445.2808



**MARLBORO**  
 D. D. McColl House  
 300 W Main St.  
 P.O. Box 401  
 Bennettsville, SC 29512  
 Phone: 843.479.5622  
 Fax: 843.479.5634



**SPARTANBURG**  
 Beaumont Plaza  
 610 Chesnee Hwy.  
 Spartanburg, SC 29303  
 Phone: 864.596.2553  
 Fax: 864.596.2971



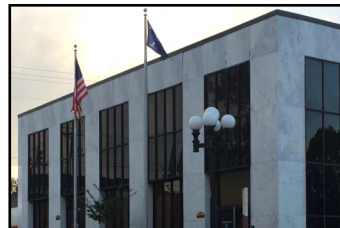
**MCCORMICK**  
 610 S Mine St.  
 P.O. Box 276  
 McCormick, SC 29835  
 Phone: 864.852.2212  
 Fax: 864.852.2210



**SUMTER**  
 14 Law Range  
 Sumter, SC 29150  
 Phone: 803.436.2302/2303  
 Fax: 803.436.2408



**NEWBERRY**  
 1856 Wilson Rd.  
 P.O. Box 217  
 Newberry, SC 29108  
 Phone: 803.321.2161  
 Fax: 803.321.2162



**UNION**  
 320 E Main St.  
 Union, SC 29379  
 Phone: 864.429.1605  
 Fax: 864.429.1604



**OCONEE**  
 223 Kenneth St.  
 Walhalla, SC 29691  
 Phone: 864.638.4231  
 Fax: 864.718.1028



**WILLIAMSBURG**  
 147 W Main St.  
 P.O. Box 565  
 Kingstree, SC 29556  
 Phone: 843.355.9321 Ext. 6301 or 6302  
 Fax: 843.355.1583



**ORANGEBURG**  
 1437 Amelia St., Room 203  
 P.O. Drawer 9000  
 Orangeburg, SC 29116-9000  
 Phone: 803.533.6156  
 Fax: 803.533.6190



**YORK**  
 529 S Cherry Rd.  
 Rock Hill, SC 29732-3412  
 Phone: 803.909.7525  
 Fax: 803.909.7533  
 Also: 6 S Congress St.  
 P.O. Box 41, York, SC 29745  
 Phone: 803.684.8529  
 Fax: 803.684.8551



## PROGRAMS. TOOLS. RESOURCES.

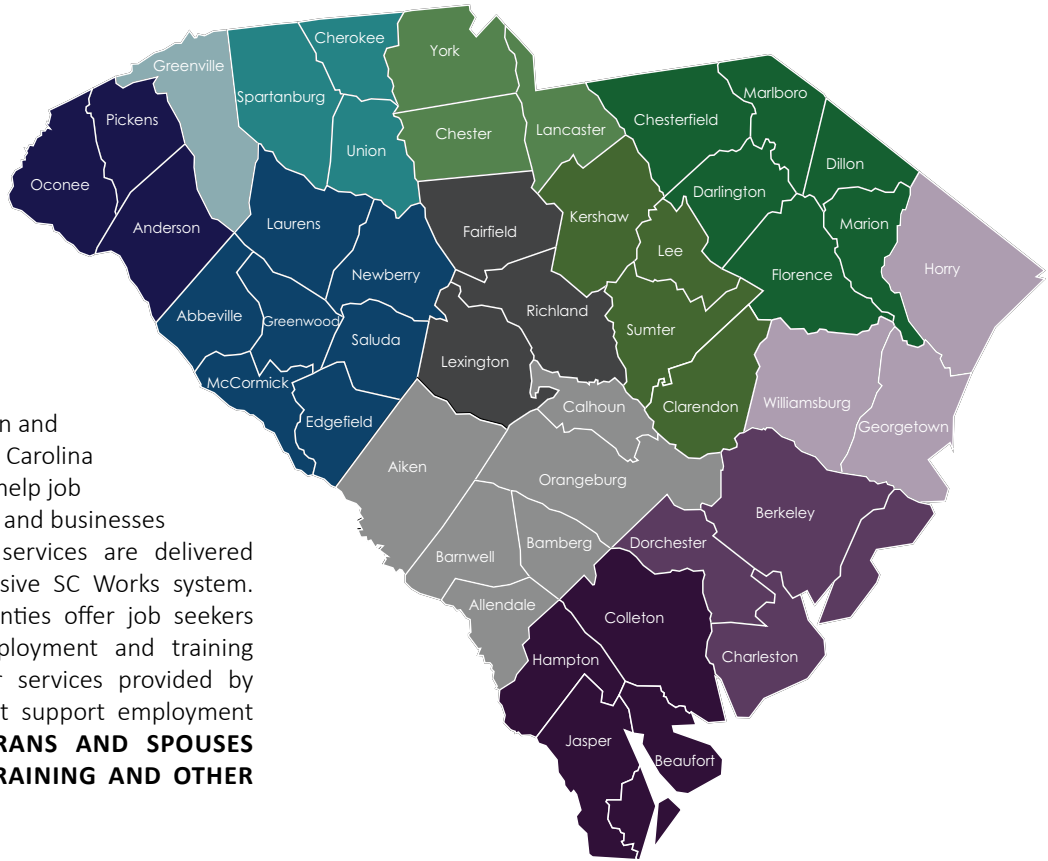
Some Veterans face challenges, making it difficult for them to find employment they enjoy, especially when transitioning to civilian life. This employment section features supportive opportunities for Veterans locating careers or career advancement opportunities.

# EMPLOYMENT



# SC WORK CENTERS

The Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in South Carolina supports training programs that help job seekers prepare for employment and businesses access skilled workers. WIOA services are delivered through the state's comprehensive SC Works system. SC Works Centers in most counties offer job seekers and businesses access to employment and training opportunities as well as other services provided by SC Works partner agencies that support employment and training. **ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND SPOUSES ARE GIVEN PRIORITY FOR TRAINING AND OTHER SERVICES.**



**\*SERVING ANDERSON, OCONEE & PICKENS COUNTIES**  
[www.worklinkweb.com](http://www.worklinkweb.com)

Anderson Center  
 512 Michelin Blvd., Anderson, SC 29625  
 Telephone: 864.260.6780

Clemson Center  
 1376 Tiger Blvd., Clemson, SC 29631  
 Telephone: 864.643.0071

Easley Center  
 1774 Powdersville Rd., Easley, SC 29642  
 Telephone: 864.220.8990

Seneca Center  
 100 Vocational Dr., Seneca, SC 29672  
 Telephone: 864.646.1741

**\*SERVING SPARTANBURG, CHEROKEE & UNION COUNTIES**  
[www.scworksupstate.com](http://www.scworksupstate.com)

Cherokee Center  
 133 Wilmac Rd., Gaffney, SC 29341  
 Telephone: 864.902.1150

Spartanburg Center - E Kennedy  
 Evans Building  
 220 E Kennedy St., Spartanburg, SC 29302  
 Telephone: 864.764.1966

Union Center  
 103 W Main St., Union, SC 29379  
 Telephone: 864.427.4119

**\*SERVING GREENVILLE COUNTY**  
[www.greenvillewib.com](http://www.greenvillewib.com)

McAlister Square Center  
 225 S Pleasantburg Dr., Suite E-1  
 Greenville, SC 29607  
 Telephone: 864.467.8080

**\*SERVING ABBEVILLE, LAURENS, GREENWOOD, MCCORMICK, EDGEFIELD, SALUDA & NEWBERRY COUNTIES**  
[www.upperscworks.com](http://www.upperscworks.com)

Abbeville Center  
 143 Hwy. 72 W, Abbeville, SC 29620  
 Telephone: 864.446.8324

Edgefield Center  
 400 Church St., Edgefield, SC 29824  
 Telephone: 803.637.4029

Greenwood Center  
 927 E Cambridge St., Greenwood, SC 29646  
 Telephone: 864.229.8872

Laurens Center  
 1017 W Main St., Laurens, SC 29325  
 Telephone: 864.681.1605, Ext. 3

McCormick Center  
 109 W Augusta St., McCormick, SC 29835  
 Telephone: 864.852.3649

Newberry Center  
 833 Main St., Newberry, SC 29108  
 Telephone: 803.276.2110

Saluda Center  
 407 W Butler Ave., Saluda, SC 29138  
 Telephone: 864.445.2047

**\*SERVING YORK, CHESTER & LANCASTER COUNTIES**  
[www.scworkscatawba.com](http://www.scworkscatawba.com)

Chester Center  
 764 Wilson St. Ext., Chester, SC 29706  
 Telephone: 803.377.8147

Lancaster Center  
 705 N White St., Lancaster, SC 29720  
 Telephone: 803.285.6966

Rock Hill Center  
 454 S Anderson Rd., BTC 505, Suite 22  
 Rock Hill, SC 29730  
 Telephone: 803.328.3881

**\*SERVING RICHLAND, LEXINGTON & FAIRFIELD COUNTIES**  
[www.scworksmidlands.org](http://www.scworksmidlands.org)

Columbia Center  
 700 Taylor St., Columbia, SC 29201  
 Telephone: 803.737.JOBS (5627)

Lexington Center  
 671 Main St., West Columbia, SC 29170  
 Telephone: 803.359.6131

Winnsboro Center  
 96 Hwy. 321 Byp. S  
 Winnsboro, SC 29180  
 Telephone: 803.635.2812 711(TTY)



**\*SERVING AIKEN, ALLENDALE, BAMBERG, BARNWELL, CALHOUN & ORANGEBURG COUNTIES**

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

Aiken Center  
1571 Richland Ave. E, Aiken, SC 29802  
Telephone: 803.641.1065

Allendale Center  
398 Barnwell Hwy., Allendale, SC 29810  
Telephone: 803.584.3263

Bamberg Center  
19 Maple Ave., Denmark, SC 29042  
Telephone: 803.956.6030

Barnwell Center  
248 Wall St., Barnwell, SC 29812  
Telephone: 803.450.1000

Calhoun Center  
101 Courthouse Dr., St. Matthews, SC 29135  
Telephone: 803.874.2443

Orangeburg Center  
1804 Joe S. Jeffords Hwy.  
Orangeburg, SC 29116  
Telephone: 803.534.3336

**\*SERVING KERSHAW, SUMTER, CLARENDON & LEE COUNTIES**

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

Bishopville Center  
200 N Main St., Bishopville, SC 29010  
Telephone: 803.484.5921

Camden Center  
1111 Broad St., Camden, SC 29020  
Telephone: 803.432.5153

Manning Center  
Harvin-Clarendon County Library  
215 N Brooks St., Manning, SC 29102  
Telephone: 803.435.8633

Sumter Center  
31 E Calhoun St., Sumter SC 29150  
Telephone: 803.774.1300

**\*SERVING CHESTERFIELD, DARLINGTON, FLORENCE, MARLBORO, DILLON & MARION COUNTIES**

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

Bennettsville Center  
460 Hwy. 9 W, Bennettsville, SC 29512  
Telephone: 843.479.4081  
Chesterfield Library  
(Limited Services Available)  
119 W Main St., Chesterfield, SC 29709  
Telephone: 843.287.0768

Dillon Center (Limited Services Available)  
2204 Hwy. 301 S, Dillon, SC 29536  
Telephone: 843.774.1420

Florence Center  
1558 W Evans St., Florence, SC 29501  
Telephone: 843.669.4271

Hartsville Center  
437 W Carolina Ave., Hartsville, SC 29550  
Telephone: 843.309.9817

Marion Center  
2413 E Hwy. 76, Marion, SC 29571  
Telephone: 843.765.3123

**\*SERVING HORRY, GEORGETOWN & WILLIAMSBURG COUNTIES**

[www.wrcog.org/workforce-investment](http://www.wrcog.org/workforce-investment)

Coastal Center  
200C Victory Ln., Conway, SC 29526  
Telephone: 843.234.9675

Georgetown Center  
2704 Highmarket St., Georgetown, SC 29440  
Telephone: 843.546.8581

Kingstree Center  
530 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.  
Kingstree, SC 29556  
Telephone: 843.354.7436

**\*SERVING BERKELEY, CHARLESTON & DORCHESTER COUNTIES**

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

Berkeley Center  
100 S Hwy. 52  
Moncks Corner, SC 29461  
Telephone: 843.761.4400

Charleston Center  
1930 Hanahan Rd., Suite 200  
North Charleston, SC 29406  
Telephone: 843.574.1800

Dorchester Center  
1325-A Boone Hill Rd., Summerville, SC 29483  
Telephone: 843.832.7851

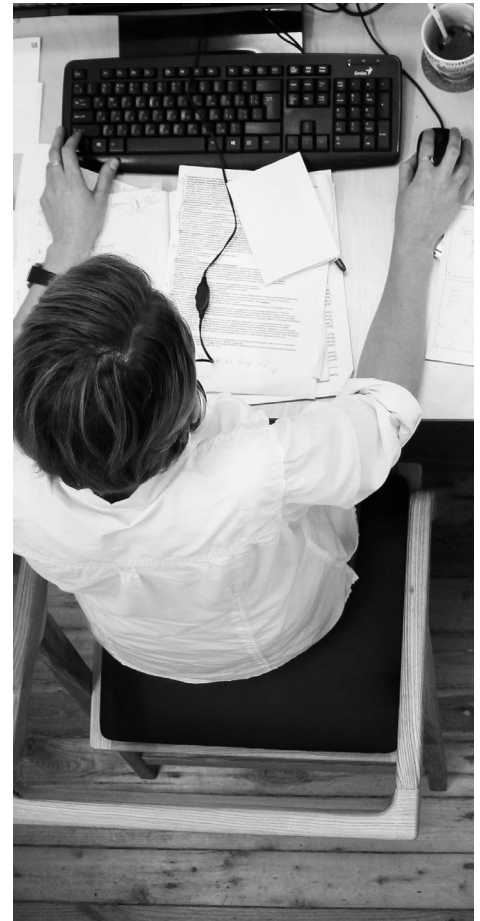
**\*SERVING BEAUFORT, COLLETON, HAMPTON & JASPER COUNTIES**

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

Beaufort Center  
164 Castle Rock Rd., Beaufort, SC 29901  
Telephone: 843.524.3351

Colleton Center  
1085 Thunderbolt Dr., Walterboro, SC 29488  
Telephone: 843.694.7274

Hampton Center  
54 Tech Cir., Varnville, SC 29944  
Telephone: 843.694.7024



# Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) for Veterans & Service Members

You may receive Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resumé development and job-seeking skills coaching. Other services may be provided to assist Veterans in starting their own businesses or independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment.

## Education and Career Counseling

VA's Education and Career Counseling program is a great opportunity for Service members, Veterans and dependents to get personalized counseling and support to help guide their career paths, ensure the most effective use of their VA benefits and achieve their goals.

Eligibility:

- Transitioning Service members within six months prior to discharge from active duty
- Veterans within one year following discharge from active duty
- Any Service member or Veteran currently eligible for a VA education benefit
- All current VA education beneficiaries

**Services include assisting the Service member/Veteran with:**

- Career Choice - understand the best career options for you based on your interests and capabilities
- Benefits Coaching - guidance on the effective use of your VA benefits and/or other resources to achieve your education and career goals
- Personalized Support - academic or adjustment counseling and

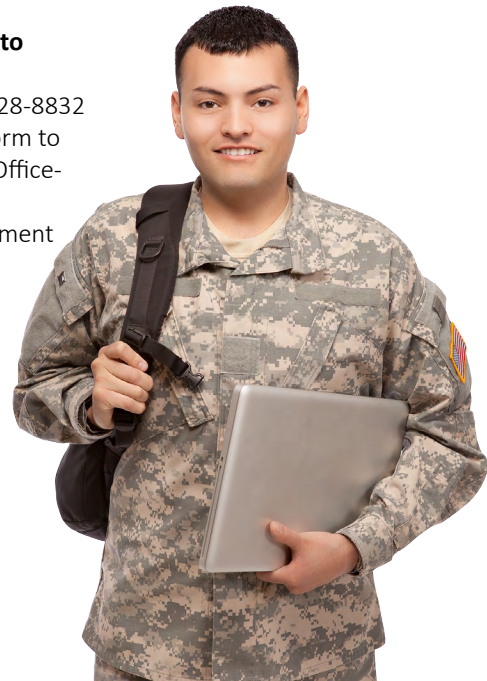
personalized support to help you remove any barriers to your success

**It's simple to apply. Just follow these steps:**

- Log in to your eBenefits account at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) and select "Apply"
- Select "Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits"
- Apply for "Educational and Career Counseling"
- If it is determined that you are eligible, you will be invited to attend an orientation session at the nearest VA Regional Office

**If you do not have access to eBenefits you may:**

- Open and print VA Form 28-8832
- Complete and mail the form to your nearest VA Regional Office- Attention: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- If it is determined that you are eligible, you will be invited to attend an orientation session at the nearest VA Regional Office



## DID YOU KNOW?

### VETERANS' REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

The Federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), enacted in October 1994, provides reemployment protection and other benefits for Veterans and employees who perform military service. It clarifies the rights and responsibilities of National Guard and Reserve members as well as their civilian employers. USERRA was significantly updated in 1996 and 1998 and applies almost universally to all employers, regardless of the size of their business. **Contact the U.S. Department of Labor at 1.866.487.2365, or the U.S. Department of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) at 1.800.336.4590 or visit them on the web at [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil).**

### CREDIT OF STATE RETIREMENT FOR MILITARY SERVICE



An active member of one of the retirement systems administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority may also establish up to six years of service credit for any period of military service for which he or she does not already have service credit in one of the correlated defined benefit plans.

**Go to [www.retirement.sc.gov](http://www.retirement.sc.gov) and log into Member Access to request a cost estimate.**



# SOUTH CAROLINA Vocational Rehabilitation



The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department prepares and assists eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to achieve and maintain competitive employment. Why seek VR services? If you have a disability, they can help you understand the options available in setting and reaching a vocational goal.

Individualized services are provided at offices all over the state and may include:

- Assessment for eligibility, career exploration and planning for employment
- Disability management through therapies, treatments, procedures or assistive devices
- Training to enhance skills through instruction and work experiences in our offices, on worksites or through educational partnerships
- Job search to help you find competitive employment and support once you are on the job

## Why partner with VR?

VR clients have the skills, drive, loyalty and dependability you want, and can help you tap into this talent pool through:

- Job matching that connects you with qualified, pre-screened candidates
- Outsource/training partnerships to meet your needs for quality products or services, and help clients learn fundamental work skills
- Internships, apprenticeships and on the job training which fill any specific knowledge or skills gap at initial employment
- Post-employment and job retention services to keep valuable employees with disabilities
- Tax credits and other financial incentives for training, orientation and accommodation

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.SCVRD.NET](http://WWW.SCVRD.NET)  
OR CALL 800.832.7526



# DO YOU NEED RESOURCES FOR YOUR FAMILY?



1

Call SC Thrive at 800.726.8774 and choose option 1 to find an SC Thrive Site near you!



2

Visit your SC Thrive Site to apply for resources, answer a few questions and then submit your applications!



3

Want to apply over the phone? Ask the agent for help applying for SNAP and Medicaid.

Searching for all the resources available to your family can be overwhelming, but we are here to help. At **SC Thrive Partner Sites across the state, you can apply for several benefits in one place at one time!**

## AT AN SC THRIVE SITE YOU CAN APPLY FOR:



SNAP and TANF



State and federal taxes



Medicaid, Welvista and other healthcare



Military and Veteran benefits

**sc Thrive**  
800.726.8774 | [scthrive.org](http://scthrive.org)

# Resources for Veteran Employment

## ASSOCIATION OF THE U.S. ARMY (AUSA)

236 N. Ainsdale Dr., North Charleston, SC 29414

843.573.9657

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

AUSA is a not-for-profit, professional, education organization devoted to helping troops, Veterans, their families and all our armed services communities in the Lowcountry. AUSA's Charleston Chapter helps troops and Vets write resumés and cover letters, learn to network and interview effectively, follow up after interviews and helps find suitable employment. The AUSA Charleston Chapter also adopts Army (Regular, Reserve and National Guard) units to help identify short-term housing, ships supplies and comfort items to troops overseas, helps industries find reliable employees, hosts social events for troops and their families, distributes helpful publications for parents and spouses and adopts the widows and widowers of troops killed in the war on terror.

## COMPENSATED WORK THERAPY (CWT)

Inside Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center

109 Bee St., Charleston, SC 29401

843.789.7830

[www.benefits.va.gov/columbia/vre\\_ncharleston.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/columbia/vre_ncharleston.asp)

To assist Veterans in preparing for, obtaining and maintaining employment. To qualify for services, Veterans must have a mental or physical disability or be homeless and unemployed. Referrals are made by VA providers. Please call for additional information.

## GOODWILL INDUSTRIES

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

Goodwill works to enhance the dignity and quality of life of individuals and families by strengthening communities, eliminating barriers to opportunity and helping people in need reach their full potential through learning and the power of work. Goodwill meets the needs of all job seekers, including programs for youth, seniors, Veterans and people with disabilities, criminal backgrounds and other specialized needs.

## OPERATION PALMETTO EMPLOYMENT (OPE)

[www.operationpalmettoemployment.sc.gov](http://www.operationpalmettoemployment.sc.gov)

803.299.1713 or 803.737.9936

Operation Palmetto Employment (OPE) is an initiative designed to help the state's military Service members, their family members and Veterans find meaningful civilian careers. OPE matches job seekers and employers through several efforts, including a website, hiring events and job fairs. This initiative is implemented through the South Carolina National Guard and the Department of Employment and Workforce.

## SOUTH CAROLINA BUSINESS ONE STOP

E-Mail: [scboshelp@scbos.sc.gov](mailto:scboshelp@scbos.sc.gov)

803.898.5690

South Carolina Business One Stop (SCBOS) is a business web portal that provides easy access of business resources for multiple South Carolina government agencies, including DEW. Using SCBOS, businesses can find: business start-up information, licensing and registration information, business address change information and state, county and municipal resources and federal and national business resources.



## SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

1201 Main St., Suite 1600, Columbia, SC 29201-3200

803.737.0400 or 800.868.7232

[www.sccommerce.com](http://www.sccommerce.com)

The South Carolina Department of Commerce promotes economic opportunity for individuals and businesses, including workforce development. As part of that role, the department administers the South Carolina Coordinating Council for Economic Development. Charged with coordinating economic development efforts by state agencies involved in the recruitment of new business and the expansion of current enterprises throughout the state, the council is comprised of the heads or board chairs of 11 state agencies whose missions include economic development.

## SOUTH CAROLINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1301 Gervais St., Suite 1100, Columbia, SC 29201

803.799.4601

[www.schamber.net](http://www.schamber.net)

The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce is the unified voice of business in the Palmetto State. The Chamber provides leadership to increase prosperity for the state by creating a shared, collaborative vision for South Carolina and increasing productivity through an educated, highly-skilled and capable workforce.

## SOUTH CAROLINA WORK READY COMMUNITIES (WRC)

800.WorkKeys [800.967.5539]

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

The ACT Work Ready Communities (WRC) initiative links education to workforce development. With the use of Work Keys testing, employers can match job seekers with jobs based on their skill sets and individuals can identify careers that align with their results. 46 counties are certified as a WRC with more than 3,000 South Carolina businesses registered as WRC supporters and more than 1,200 profiled to help employers understand the assessment scores and how they translate to job skills.

## PROSPERITY CENTERS

**Berkeley Center:** 325 E. Main St., Moncks Corner, SC 29491

843.761.6033

**Dorchester Center:** 222 Old Trolley Rd., Summerville, SC 29485

843.282.6294

[www.tuw.org/prosperity-centers](http://www.tuw.org/prosperity-centers)

The Prosperity Centers are a collective effort of Trident United Way, Origin SC and Palmetto Goodwill. The Prosperity Centers bring together more than ten nonprofit service providers that help individuals and families in Berkeley and Dorchester counties increase their financial stability.





## ACCREDITED VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

The quickest way to navigate the claims process is to work with an Accredited Veteran Service Officer. Services are always FREE. Paying for services will not expedite the process.

# VA BENEFITS



# SOUTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



THE MISSION OF THE DIVISION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS IS TO BE THE ADVOCATE FOR THE STATE'S VETERANS IN ALL MATTERS THAT PERTAIN TO VETERANS.

## VA REGIONAL OFFICE

803.647.2434 | [va.sc.gov](http://va.sc.gov)

*Note that there are South Carolina Division of Veterans' Affairs Officers in each VA Medical Center.*

## DORN VA MEDICAL CENTER

6439 Garners Ferry Rd.  
Building 100, Room 1B109  
Columbia, SC 29209  
803.776.4000, Ext. 7539

## RALPH H. JOHNSON VA MEDICAL CENTER

109 Bee St., Room B260  
Charleston, SC 29401  
843.789.7506

## CHARLIE NORWOOD VA MEDICAL CENTER

1 Freedom Way  
Downtown Division, Room 1D264  
Augusta, GA 30904  
706.823.2356

## SOUTH CAROLINA MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF FUND

The South Carolina Military Family Relief Fund (SCMFRF) provides monetary grants to families of South Carolina National Guard members and South Carolina residents serving in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserve components who were called to active duty as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. For an application, please visit [www.va.sc.gov](http://www.va.sc.gov) or call for assistance: 803.734.4014.

## HOME LOANS

VA helps Service members, Veterans and eligible surviving spouses become homeowners. As part of our mission to serve you, we provide a home loan guarantee benefit and other housing-related programs to help you buy, build, repair, retain or adapt a home for your own personal occupancy. VA Home Loans are provided by private lenders, such as banks and mortgage companies. VA guarantees a portion of the loan, enabling the lender to provide you with more favorable terms.

## FIVE-YEAR POST DEPLOYMENT BENEFIT

Veterans, including members of the National Guard and activated Reserve members, are eligible for the enhanced "Combat Veteran" benefits if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, and have been discharged under honorable conditions.

## LIFE & SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS INSURANCE

As part of their mission to serve Service members, Veterans and their families, VA provides valuable life insurance benefits to give you the peace of mind that comes with knowing your family is protected. VA's life insurance programs were developed to provide financial security for your family given the extraordinary risks involved in military service. **Visit [www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/overviewinsurance.html](http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/overviewinsurance.html) for an easy way to find out if you are eligible for all insurance programs**, including Service Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI), Veterans Group Life Insurance and Family SGLI, TSGLI and Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance. You will find infographics (timelines and charts) for each program.



## DO YOU QUALIFY FOR VA INSURANCE?

Visit this website:

[www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/overviewinsurance.html](http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/overviewinsurance.html)

for an easy way to find out if you are eligible for all insurance programs.





## Disabled Veterans may be eligible for Social Security Disability Benefits

IN ADDITION TO RECEIVING VA COMPENSATION OR PENSION, A SENIOR OR DISABLED VETERAN MIGHT BE ELIGIBLE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA) BENEFITS.

### THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SSA BENEFITS:

The main difference between Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is the fact that SSDI is available to workers who have accumulated a sufficient number of work credits, while SSI disability benefits are available to low-income individuals who have either never worked or who have not earned enough work credits to qualify for SSDI.

While many people do not distinguish between SSI and SSDI, they are two separate governmental programs. While both programs are overseen and managed by the Social Security Administration and medical eligibility is determined in the same manner for both programs, there are distinct differences between the two programs.

RSDI (Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance) is an insurance benefit. The disability portion of RSDI is known as SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance). The amount of the SSDI payment is based on what the eligible person paid into the system while working. SSDI is like VA compensation in that eligibility is based on work performed in the past and not on current income and assets. A person who receives a lower SSDI payment due to having paid less into the insurance system may also be eligible for SSI. However, the SSDI payment will affect the amount of the

SSI payment because SSDI payments count as income against SSI eligibility.

### TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SSI OR SSDI, YOU MUST MEET THE SOCIAL SECURITY DEFINITION OF DISABILITY:

1. You are not able to engage in any substantial gainful activity (SGA) because of a medically-determinable physical or mental impairment(s). In 2019, SGA is income above \$1,220 per month.
2. Your condition has lasted or is expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months or end in death.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE OR GO ONLINE AT**

**[www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/](http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/)**

## FEDERAL BENEFITS INFORMATION:

# Types of Compensation

VA disability compensation provides monthly benefits to Veterans in recognition of the effects of disabilities, diseases or injuries incurred or aggravated during active military service. The program also provides monthly payments to surviving spouses, dependent children and dependent parents in recognition of the economic loss caused by a Veteran's death during military service or, after discharge from military service, as a result of a service-connected disability. A summary of VA's disability compensation programs is below.

### DISABILITY COMPENSATION

Disability Compensation provides a tax-free monetary benefit to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. The benefit amount is graduated according to the degree of the Veteran's disability on a scale from 10 percent to 100 percent (in increments of 10 percent). Compensation may also be paid for disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service. Generally, the degrees of disability specified are also designed to compensate for considerable loss of working time from exacerbations or illnesses. Learn more about Disability Compensation at [www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-disability.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-disability.asp).

### DEPENDENCY & INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC)

DIC is a tax-free monetary benefit generally payable to a surviving spouse, child or parent of Service members who died while on active duty, active duty for training or inactive-duty training or to survivors of Veterans who died from their service-connected disabilities. Parents DIC is an income-based benefit for parents who were financially dependent on a Service member or Veteran who died from a service-related cause. Learn more about DIC at [www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-dependency\\_and\\_indemnity.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-dependency_and_indemnity.asp).

### SPECIAL MONTHLY COMPENSATION (SMC)

SMC is an additional tax-free benefit that can be paid to Veterans, their spouses, surviving spouses and parents. For Veterans, Special Monthly Compensation is a higher rate of compensation paid due to special circumstances such as the need of aid and attendance by another person or by specific disability, such as loss of use of one hand or leg. For spouses and surviving spouses, this benefit is commonly referred to as Aid & Attendance and is paid based on the need of aid and attendance by another person. Learn more about Special Monthly Compensation at [www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/resources-rates-read-compAndSMC.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/resources-rates-read-compAndSMC.asp).

### CLAIMS BASED ON SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Veterans may be eligible for other types of disability compensation once a disability has been determined to be service-connected. Special VA disability compensation programs include: individual unemployability, automobile allowance, clothing allowance, prestabilization, hospitalization, convalescence, dental and birth defects.

## Types of Claims

There are numerous types of claims that apply to disability compensation. They can be based on disabilities that existed when entering military service, but were made worse, disabilities that occurred during service or disabilities that arose after leaving military service. Additionally, there are claims that are filed for special circumstances.

### PRE-DISCHARGE CLAIMS

Service members that are within 180 days of separation or retirement from active duty or full-time National Guard duty may file claims for disability compensation. Learn more about pre-discharge claims at [www.benefits.va.gov/PREDISCHARGE/index.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/PREDISCHARGE/index.asp).

### CLAIMS BASED ON PRE-SERVICE DISABILITIES

Individuals may enter military service with a known disability. Should this disability become worse due to military service, VA may be able to pay compensation. This is known as aggravation; however, compensation can only be paid for the level of aggravation. For example, at entry into military service, an individual has a disabling condition that could be considered ten percent disabling. In order for this condition to be considered aggravated, it would have to have worsened due to military service to at least 20 percent.

### CLAIMS BASED ON IN-SERVICE DISABILITIES

These claims are based on disabilities that are a result of an injury or disease that occurred in active service and in the line of duty. Injuries or diseases as a result of the Veteran's own willful misconduct or abuse of alcohol or drugs are excluded.

### CLAIMS BASED ON POST-SERVICE DISABILITIES

Claims for post-service disabilities would include claims for disabilities that are a result of disabilities considered to be service-related, even though the disability arose after service. There are various classifications of presumptive disabilities which can be based on location or circumstances of service or just by military service itself. Learn more about post-service claims at [www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/claims-postservice-index.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/claims-postservice-index.asp).

### CLAIMS BASED ON SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Claims regarding compensation are not always based on an in-service event. In other words, after a disability has been determined to be service-connected, there may be other types of claims a Veteran or surviving spouse may wish to file. This might include a claim for a temporary 100 percent rating due to surgery for a service-connected disability or additional compensation based on being in need of regular aid and attendance. Learn more about special claims at [www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/claims-special-index.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/claims-special-index.asp).



# Burial & Cemetery Benefits

Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance. You should advise your family of your wishes and where your discharge papers are kept. These papers are very important in establishing your eligibility. At the time of need, your family would contact a funeral home who will assist them with making burial arrangements at the national cemetery. You may wish to make pre-need arrangements with a funeral home. To schedule a burial, you must fax all discharge documentation to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1.866.900.6417 or scan and email the documentation to [NCA.Scheduling@va.gov](mailto:NCA.Scheduling@va.gov) with the name of the decedent in the subject line. Follow-up with a phone call to 1.800.535.1117.

## FILING A CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

To file for reimbursement of burial expenses, an Application of Burial Allowance form must be submitted to the VA. The person filing the claim must also provide a certified copy of the Veteran's death certificate, proof of the Veteran's military service (Form DD-214) and itemized bills of the funeral and burial expenses.

## SERVICE-CONNECTED DEATH

If a Veteran's death is service-connected, the VA will pay burial allowance of up to \$2,000 for deaths on or after September 11, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of moving the Veteran's body to the national cemetery nearest the Veteran's home may also be reimbursed. There is no time limit for applying for a service-connected burial allowance. The person who bore the Veteran's burial expense may claim reimbursement from any VA regional office.

## NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED DEATH

If a Veteran's death is not service-connected, there are two types of payments the VA may make. The VA will pay a burial and plot allowance if the Veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and the Veteran was in receipt of a VA pension or compensation at the time of death. If a Veteran died while in a VA facility or as a patient at an approved state nursing home, the VA may also pay this allowance.

## BURIAL PLOT ALLOWANCE

When a Veteran is buried in a cemetery that is not under the U.S. government jurisdiction, the VA may also pay a plot allowance, provided that the Veteran was discharged under a condition other than dishonorable and met other qualifications similar to that of a non-service-connected death.

## MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

The Department of Defense (DoD) is responsible for providing for military funeral honors. "Honoring Those Who Served" is the title of the DoD program for providing dignified military funeral honors to Veterans who have defended our nation. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration cemetery staff assist with military funeral honors at VA national cemeteries.

Upon the family's request, the law requires that every eligible Veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps. The law defines a military funeral honors detail as consisting of two or more uniformed military persons with at



least one a member of the Veteran's parent service of the Armed Forces. The DoD program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans' family. Veteran(s) organizations may assist in the provision of military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at a national cemetery are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home. To arrange military funeral honors, contact your local funeral home. Also, visit [va.gov](http://va.gov) for more information.

## PRESENTATION OF THE STATE FLAG TO FAMILIES OF DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

Provides that the State Adjutant General's Office shall present to the family of each deceased member of the South Carolina National Guard a flag of the State of South Carolina, appropriate for use as a burial flag, upon application of a member of the family of the deceased. For more information call 803.734.0200.

## GOVERNMENT HEADSTONES & MARKERS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible Veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death. For eligible Veterans that died on or after November 1, 1990 and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone, VA may also furnish a headstone or marker to supplement the grave or a medallion to be affixed to the privately purchased headstone. Eligible Veterans are entitled to either a government-furnished headstone or marker or the new medallion, but not both.

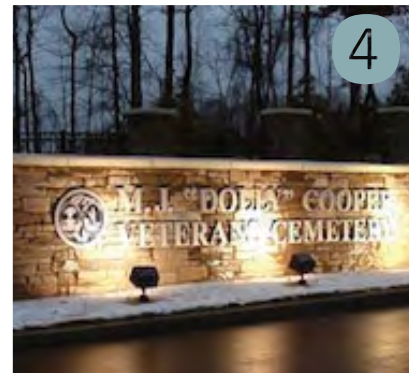
## BRONZE MEDALLIONS FOR HEADSTONES AND MARKERS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) may also provide a medallion, by request, to be affixed to an existing privately purchased headstone or marker to signify the deceased's status as a Veteran. If requested, the medallion is furnished in lieu of a traditional government headstone or marker for Veterans that died on or after November 1, 1990 and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker.

## PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATES

A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current president, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased Veterans. Eligible recipients include the next of kin and loved ones of honorably discharged deceased Veterans. More than one certificate may be provided. Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a PMC in person at any VA regional office or by U.S. mail.

# Honoring Our Veterans National & State Cemeteries



**1 BEAUFORT NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
 1601 Boundary St., Beaufort, SC 29902-3947  
 Phone: 843.524.3925  
**Office Hours** Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
 Closed federal holidays, except Memorial Day & Veterans Day.  
**Visitation Hours** Open daily from 8:00 AM to sunset.

**3 FORT JACKSON NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
 4170 Percival Rd., Columbia, SC 29229  
 Phone: 866.577.5248  
**Office Hours** Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
 Closed federal holidays.  
**Visitation Hours** Open daily from sunrise to sunset.

**2 FLORENCE NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
 803 East National Cemetery Rd., Florence, SC 29501  
 Phone: 843.669.8783  
**Office Hours** Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
 Closed federal holidays.  
**Visitation Hours** Open daily during daylight hours.

**4 M.J. "DOLLY" COOPER STATE VETERANS CEMETERY**  
 140 Inway Dr., Anderson, SC 29621  
 Phone: 864.332.8022  
**Office Hours** Monday - Friday: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
 Closed federal and state holidays.  
**Visitation Hours** Open daily from 8:00 AM to sunset.



# Understanding Veterans Pension



THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUPPORT AND PENSIONS. DO ANY OF THESE APPLY TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

## SUPPLEMENTAL INCOME FOR WARTIME VETERANS

VA helps Veterans and their families cope with financial challenges by providing supplemental income through the Veterans Pension benefit. Veterans Pension is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to low-income wartime Veterans.

### ELIGIBILITY

Generally, a Veteran must have at least 90 days of active-duty service, with at least one day during a wartime period to qualify for a VA Pension. If you entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally you must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least one day during a wartime period.

In addition to meeting minimum service requirements, the Veteran must be:

- Age 65 or older, OR
- Totally and permanently disabled, OR
- A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, OR
- Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance, OR
- Receiving Supplemental Security Income.

Your yearly family income must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify for the Veterans Pension benefit.

## ADDITIONAL PENSION ALLOWANCES

Veterans or surviving spouses who are eligible for VA pension and are housebound or require the aid and attendance of another person may be eligible for an additional monetary payment.

### SURVIVORS PENSION

The Survivors Pension benefit, which may also be referred to as Death Pension, is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to a low-income, unremarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased Veteran with wartime service. To be eligible, the deceased Veteran must have met the following service requirements:

- For service on or before September 7, 1980, the Veteran must have served at least 90 days of active military service, with at least one day during a wartime period
- If he or she entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally he or she must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty with at least one day during a wartime period
- Was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions

Survivors Pension is also based on your yearly family income, which must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify. While an unremarried spouse is eligible at any age, a child of a deceased wartime Veteran must be:

- Under age 18, OR
- Under age 23 if attending a VA-approved school, OR
- Permanently incapable of self-support due to a disability before age 18

## AID & ATTENDANCE AND HOUSEBOUND

Veterans and survivors who are eligible for a VA pension and require the aid and attendance of another person, or are housebound, may be eligible for additional monetary payment. These benefits are paid in addition to monthly pension, and they are not paid without eligibility to pension.

Since Aid & Attendance and Housebound allowances increase the pension amount, people who are not eligible for a basic pension due to excessive income may be eligible for pension at these increased rates. A Veteran or surviving spouse may not receive Aid & Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits at the same time.

### AID & ATTENDANCE (A&A)

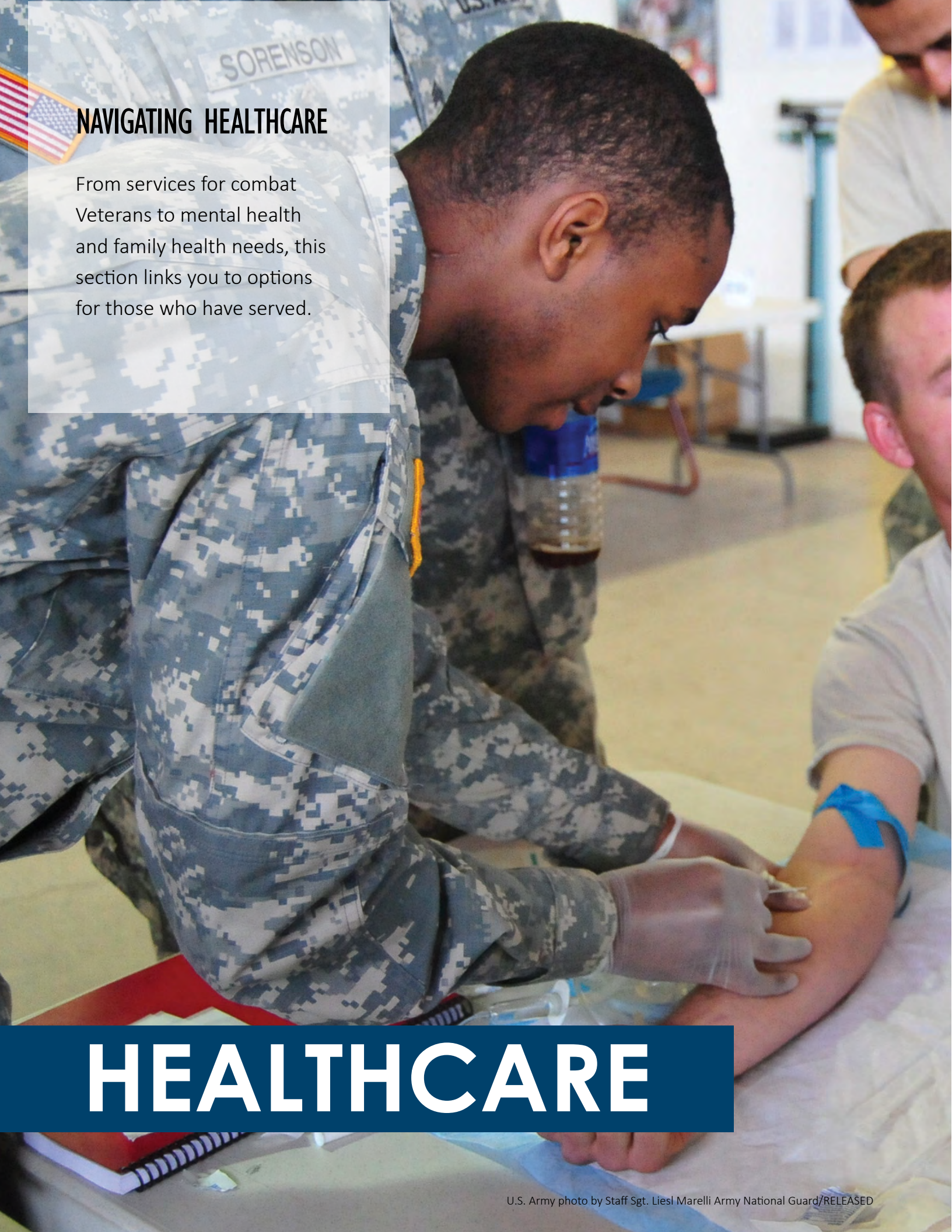
The Aid & Attendance (A&A) increased monthly pension amount may be added to your monthly pension amount if you meet one of the following conditions:

- You require the aid of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices or protecting yourself from the hazards of your daily environment
- You are bedridden, in that your disability or disabilities requires that you remain in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment
- You are a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity
- Your eyesight is limited to a corrected 5/200 visual acuity or less in both eyes; or concentric contraction of the visual field to five degrees or less

### HOUSEBOUND

This increased monthly pension amount may be added to your monthly pension amount when you are substantially confined to your immediate premises because of permanent disability.





SORENSEN

## NAVIGATING HEALTHCARE

From services for combat Veterans to mental health and family health needs, this section links you to options for those who have served.

# HEALTHCARE



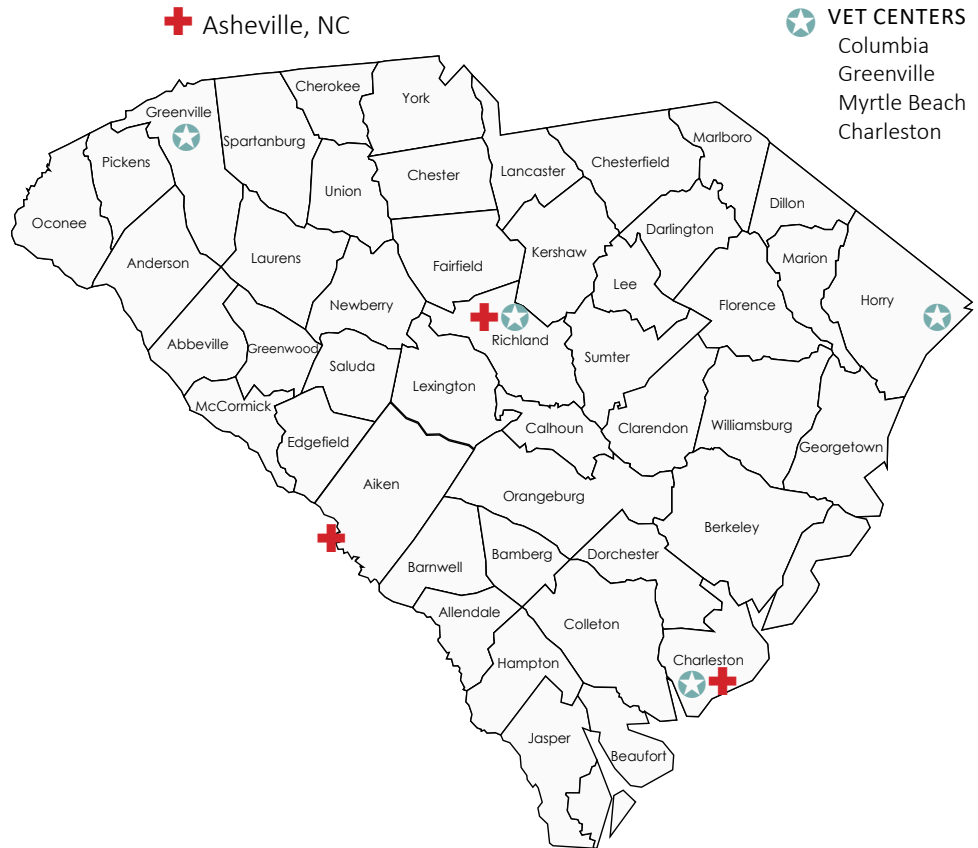
# VA Medical Facilities

**+ WM JENNINGS BRYAN DORN  
VA MEDICAL CENTER**  
6439 Garners Ferry Rd., Columbia, SC  
803.776.4000 or 1.800.293.8262

**+ RALPH H. JOHNSON  
VA MEDICAL CENTER**  
109 Bee St., Charleston, SC  
843.577.5011 or 1.888.878.6884

**+ CHARLIE NORWOOD  
VA MEDICAL CENTER**  
1 Freedom Way, Augusta, GA  
706.733.0188 or 1.800.836.5561

**+ CHARLES GEORGE  
VA MEDICAL CENTER**  
1100 Tunnel Rd., Asheville, NC  
828.298.7911



## Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)

**CHARLIE NORWOOD VA  
MEDICAL CENTER - AIKEN, SC**  
951 Millbrook Ave.  
Aiken, SC 29803  
803.643.9016  
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**ANDERSON CBOC**  
3030 N Hwy. 81  
Anderson, SC 29621  
864.224.5450  
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**BEAUFORT VA CBOC**  
1 Pinckney Rd.  
Beaufort, SC 29902  
843.770.0444  
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**FLORENCE CBOC**  
1822 Sally Hill Farms Rd.  
Florence, SC 29501  
843.292.8383  
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**GOOSE CREEK CLINIC CBOC**  
2418 NNPTC Circle  
Goose Creek, SC 29445  
843.577.5011, Ext. 3100  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

**GREENVILLE VA CBOC**  
41 Park Creek Dr.  
Greenville, SC 29605  
864.299.1600  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

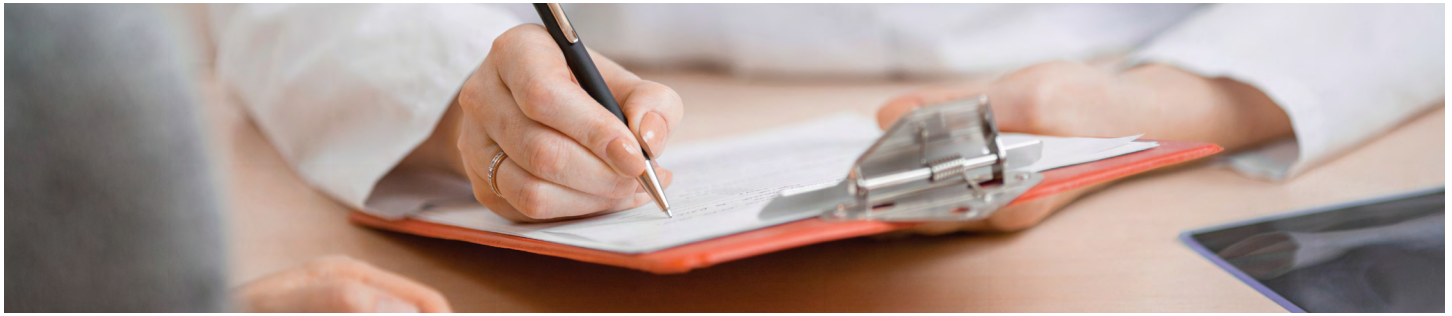
**MYRTLE BEACH VA  
OUTPATIENT CLINIC**  
3381 Phillis Blvd.  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
843.477.0177  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**ORANGEBURG CBOC**  
1767 Villagepark Dr.  
Orangeburg, SC 29118  
803.533.1335  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**ROCK HILL CBOC**  
2670 Mills Park Dr.  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
803.366.4848  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**SPARTANBURG CBOC**  
279 North Grove Medical Park Dr.  
Spartanburg, SC 29303  
864.582.7025  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**SUMTER CBOC**  
407 North Salem Ave.  
Sumter, SC 29150  
803.938.9901  
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM



# VA Healthcare Enrollment

FOR MOST VETERANS, ENTRY INTO THE VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM BEGINS BY APPLYING FOR ENROLLMENT.

To apply, complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits, which may be obtained from a VA healthcare facility or regional benefits office, online or by calling the VA.

Once enrolled, Veterans can receive healthcare at VA healthcare facilities anywhere in the country. Veterans enrolled in the VA healthcare system are afforded privacy rights under federal law.

During enrollment, each Veteran is assigned to a priority group based on their service-connected disability rating and

other factors. VA uses priority groups to balance demand for VA healthcare enrollment with resources.

## STANDARD BENEFITS

VA medical benefits package provides the following healthcare services to all enrolled Veterans:

- Preventive Care Services
- Ambulatory (Outpatient) Diagnostic and Treatment Services
- Hospital (Inpatient) Diagnostic Treatment
- VA Prescribed Medications and Supplies

## ACUTE CARE SERVICES

These services may have limitations and special eligibility criteria:

- Ambulance Service
- Dental Care
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Eyeglasses
- Hearing Aids
- Home Healthcare Services
- Non-VA Healthcare Services
- Orthopedic, Prosthetic and Rehabilitative Devices
- Rehabilitative Services
- Readjustment Counseling
- Sexual Trauma Counseling



## South Carolina VET CENTERS

[www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov)

The goal of Vet Centers is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach and referral services to eligible combat Veterans in order to help make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life. Services are also provided to Veterans who suffer from PTSD as a result of military sexual trauma. Family members may be eligible for services as well. Bereavement counseling services are provided to surviving parents, spouses, children and siblings of Service members who die of any cause while on active duty, to include federally activated Reserve and National Guard personnel.

### COLUMBIA VET CENTER

1710 Richland St., Suite A  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803.765.9944  
877.927.8387  
Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 6:30 PM  
Saturday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

### GREENVILLE VET CENTER

3 Caledon Ct., Suite B  
Greenville, SC 29615  
864.271.2711  
877.927.8387  
Monday - Thursday: 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM  
Friday: 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM  
Saturday: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
(Every 3rd Saturday of the month)

### CHARLESTON VET CENTER

3625 W Montague Ave.  
North Charleston, SC 29418  
843.789.7000 or 877.927.8387  
Monday - Thursday: 7:30 AM - 6:30 PM  
Friday: 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM  
Saturday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM  
(Every 2nd Saturday of the month)

### MYRTLE BEACH VET CENTER

2024 Corporate Centre Dr., Suite 103  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
843.232.2441 or 877.927.8387  
Monday - Friday: 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM  
Saturday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
(Every 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month)



# Presumptive Health Conditions



## THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUPPORT. DO ANY OF THESE APPLY TO YOU?

There are three categories in which Veterans may qualify for service-connected disability based on a condition to be presumed by military service. These groups are: 1) Veterans who were diagnosed with a chronic disease such as arthritis, diabetes or hypertension within one year of being released from active duty; 2) Veterans diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) any time after discharge of service and have at least 90 days of continuous service or; 3) Veterans who served in the conflicts/geographic regions associated with those diagnosed conditions identified below. The VA has a rating system which determines the details of your available benefits. To learn more, please contact your County Veterans Affairs Officer. A directory of VA County Offices is provided for you on pages 6-8 of this guide.

**FORMER POWS** Imprisoned for not less than 30 days and a disability of at least 10 percent disabling.

**VIETNAM VETERANS** (Exposed to Agent Orange) Served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975.

**ATOMIC VETERANS** (Exposed to Ionizing Radiation) Participated in atmospheric nuclear testing; occupied or was a POW in Hiroshima or Nagasaki; service before February 1, 1992 at diffusion plant in Paducah, KY, Portsmouth, OH or Oak Ridge, TN; or service before January 1, 1974 at Amchitka Island, AK.

**GULF WAR VETERANS** Served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations during the Gulf Wars with conditions that are medically unexplained, including chronic multi-symptom illnesses defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms that have existed for six months or more.

**CAMP LEJEUNE** (Exposed to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune) There is limited and suggestive evidence of an association between certain diseases and the chemical compounds found at Camp Lejeune during the period of contamination. VA will consider disability compensation claims based on exposure to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune on a case-by-case basis. The water systems were contaminated from August 1953 through December 1987.

## OPTIONS FOR DENIED CLAIMS OR IF YOU DISAGREE WITH A DECISION

If VA denies your claim, you may appeal the decision. You may also appeal if your claim was approved, but you disagree with any part of the rating. An appeal involves many steps, some of which are optional, some that are required. The appeals process has strict time limits that include:

1. Notice of Disagreement (NOD)
2. Statement of Case (SOC)
3. Hearing (Optional)
4. Formal Appeal (Form 9)
5. Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA)
6. U.S. Court Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC)

Unfortunately, this process can take years to come to a final decision, but once a decision has been made, you will be notified by mail. Note: Before you file an appeal, consider obtaining new and material evidence and request your denied claim be reconsidered. This can save time and effort. Talk to your local County Veterans Affairs Officer before you file an appeal.

## AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM

The VA Agent Orange Registry health exam alerts Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to Agent Orange exposure during their military service. The registry data helps VA understand and respond to these health problems more effectively. This comprehensive health exam includes an exposure history, medical history, physical exam and any tests if needed. A VA health professional will discuss the results face-to-face with the Veteran and in a follow-up letter. Contact your local VA Environmental Health Coordinator about getting an Agent Orange Registry health exam.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COORDINATORS

Charleston, SC VAMC	843.789.7300
Columbia, SC VAMC	803.776.4000, Ext. 6179
Greenville, SC VAOC	864.299.1600

## GULF WAR REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM

The VA Gulf War Registry Health Exam alerts Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to environmental exposures during their military service. The registry data helps VA understand and respond to these health problems more effectively. The comprehensive health exam includes an exposure and medical history, laboratory tests and a physical exam. A VA health professional will discuss the results face-to-face with the Veteran and in a follow-up letter.

Important points about registry health exams:

- Free to eligible Veterans and no co-payment
- Not a disability compensation exam
- Not required for VA benefits
- Enrollment in VA healthcare system not necessary
- Based on recollection of service, not on their military records
- Veterans can receive additional registry exams, if new problems develop
- Veterans' family members are not eligible for registry exams

## Eligibility for Gulf War Registry Health Exam

Veterans who served in the Gulf during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation New Dawn are eligible for the Gulf War Registry exam. You do not need to be enrolled in VA healthcare to take part.

**Contact your County Veterans Affairs Officer with any questions. A directory of VA County Offices is provided for you on pages 6-8 of this guide.**

## State Veterans Nursing Homes

Admission to these facilities is limited to Veterans who have been separated from the U.S. Armed Forces under general or honorable conditions and qualify as South Carolina residents who are in need of skilled or intermediate nursing home care. Contact your local County Veterans Affairs Officer or the nursing home to apply for admission.



### CM TUCKER NURSING CARE CENTER

2200 Harden St., Columbia, SC 29203  
803.737.5300

[www.state.sc.us/dmh/dir\\_facilities.htm#CMT](http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/dir_facilities.htm#CMT)

Tucker Center is the long-term nursing care facility of the Department of Mental Health providing intermediate and skilled care.



### RICHARD M. CAMPBELL HOME

4605 Belton Highway, Anderson, SC 29621  
864.261.6734

[www.state.sc.us/dmh/campbell/](http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/campbell/)

Funded by a combination of state and federal funds, the 220-bed facility was dedicated in 1990 to South Carolina Veterans who need skilled nursing home care.



### VETERANS VICTORY HOUSE

2461 Sidneys Rd., Walterboro, SC 29488  
843.538.3000

[www.state.sc.us/dmh/victoryhouse/](http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/victoryhouse/)

Veterans Victory House is a 220-bed state-of-the-art nursing care facility operated by Advantage Veterans Services of Walterboro for the South Carolina Department of Mental Health.



## Caregiver Support

The Department of Defense (DoD) provides resources and information exclusively for military caregivers who assist wounded, ill and injured Service members with activities of daily living. DoD's support to military caregivers includes the Caregiver Resource Directory and monthly Military Caregiver Virtual PEER Forums. Military caregivers should contact a member of the DoD military caregiver team at [OSD.Caregiver@mail.mil](mailto:OSD.Caregiver@mail.mil) to learn more about caregiver support, find local PEER Forums and RSVP for Virtual PEER Forums. Agencies and organizations who want to support military caregivers should visit [www.WarriorCare.mil](http://www.WarriorCare.mil) and [Health.mil/warriorcare](http://Health.mil/warriorcare) for more information.





# Insight from Household Six:

## THE STRENGTH IN VULNERABILITY AND THE VULNERABILITY IN STRENGTH

BY DINA ARMSTRONG-KING



### About the Author:

Dina Armstrong-King is one of two Licensed Practicing Counselors and Licensed Addiction Counselors at Carolina Counseling Consultants. Along with her partner Christalyn Howard this Columbia, South Carolina based duo provides the following services to the military community: family counseling, loss and grief counseling, parent-child conflict, addictions recovery, anxiety and depression, attention deficit disorders, chronic illness related to stress, trauma and post-traumatic

stress. Dina's goal as a counselor and a Military Spouse is to assist the military family who she considers an underserved community. She has been exposed to both sides of this dynamic and looks forward to serving this group as her passion.

I would say without hesitation that being a Veteran Military Spouse of 20 years has been challenging to say the least. Dealing with the long deployments, separation from my family and friends, constant career changes, dual parenting roles and the undeniable fear associated with saying goodbye to my spouse for "potentially" the last time on countless occasions has taken its toll on me.

As my husband and I begin our journey into "retirement," I can't help but think back on the earlier years. I can remember sitting in our bedroom watching my husband meticulously pack his rucksack in preparation for deployment. I can close my eyes and still see the kids running all around the house as my husband is checking off the items on his list. I remember sitting there and forcing back my tears that would occasionally sneak down my cheek and be caught by the end of my sweatshirt as I wiped my face looking out the window. I did not want the kids to see mommy crying and I did not want my husband to worry about me on top of everything else he had to deal with as he prepared himself both mentally and physically to leave.

The next day always came quickly as the hours seemed to move faster than normal. My life stood still for what felt like forever as I watched him get on the bus and waved goodbye. As the bus starts to drive off and I can no longer see its image, reality hits all of us quickly. The fact is daddy is gone and he may never come back. We get back in the car and drive home and I'm still holding back the tears because I was obligated to be strong for the kids and for him.

That became my norm: holding back the tears to be strong. Life went on without our Soldier and we resumed some sense of normalcy. Fast forward seven deployments later, those sad tears turned into anger and resentment. I was tired of being alone and I was tired of being both mom and dad. I was simply tired of everything.

Life would seem perfect for the first few weeks after he returned, however reality would sink in. It was as if we were welcoming a stranger back into our home, as our Soldier would be barking orders and disrupting our new routine we had been accustomed to in his absence. To be fair, we were strangers to him as well. Life went on while he was gone and, to be honest, we were all different. I did not realize the impact "holding back the tears" would have on my life until years later.

It was an unstated rule- to just deal with the fear, anger, resentment of deployment. It wasn't until years later that I would realize the importance of reaching out for help. There is a stigma which surrounds the word "therapy". Often it is associated with being "crazy or sick".

However, therapy is in fact a way to help individuals problem solve and change behavior patterns. Often people avoid therapy due to fear of the unknown or the fear of being vulnerable. This drove me to pursue a degree and receive my licensure in counseling with hopes that I could support others like me through their struggles.

Military culture is one that prides itself on strength and endurance. It is difficult to prepare for the expectations and responsibilities of the military family lifestyle. The children must learn to adapt to an ever-changing environment. They change schools often, must make new friends and learn new social norms. Spouses attempt to find new jobs which can make it difficult to establish long-term career goals. It can lead to feelings of insecurity or inability to be successful that don't necessarily translate in the civilian world. Extended family members are affected also as they must adjust to limited contact with the military family. It can be difficult to maintain strength when faced with so many challenges time and time again.

Although there is struggle with being a part of a military family, there is also excitement and pride. It was always an honor to stand tall waiting to see the bus pull back into the field. I eagerly awaited to see my husband's face following a deployment. As we watched the Soldiers step off the bus and form lines, I can still hear my children screaming, "there he is...I see him...Daddy!!!". I would always hold my head up high as I stood next to my Soldier and random strangers would say, "thank you for your service". I had a deep sense of fulfillment knowing my husband defended this nation.

We are all vulnerable to fear and the anticipation of the unknown that can propel us in directions we can't control. As a Veteran Spouse, I can honestly say my military journey has helped me to let down my walls and recognize the importance of therapy. I felt a sense of freedom once I understood that my feelings of fear, sadness, resentment and anger were normal. The shame of feeling weak because I couldn't handle my husband being gone or the kids driving me crazy no longer controlled me.

I no longer felt as though I had to hide behind that "Supportive Military Spouse" persona that consumed me to the point of almost threatening the very existence of my marriage. Taking the step to seek help through therapy was not only one of the most difficult but one of the most empowering things I have ever done for myself. As a Military Spouse we have a penchant to be the strong one for our Soldier, for our kids and our extended family. However, sometimes we forget that we gain strength through our weakness and vulnerability because it affords others an opportunity to assist and support us.

Often the focus, rightfully so, is placed on the Soldiers need for therapeutic services. However, the family members remain in the background as an under-represented demographic. We walk alongside the long shifts, the deployments and the struggle of reintegration with our Soldiers. However, when it comes to seeking help, we get lost and fall back behind the lines.

Our goal at Carolina Counseling and Consultants is to reach our hands out to those family members who need assistance and to offer others a safe and welcoming environment to open and share their issues. We can assist them with learning effective coping skills that will help them regain the strength that is still there and waiting to reveal itself again. Soldiers, spouses, children, grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles and friends, I remind you that we are all a part of the Military Family and no one should ever be left behind.

# Resources for Veteran Health & Wellness

## BERKELEY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

South Carolina Department of Mental Health  
403 Stony Landing Rd., Moncks Corner, SC  
843.761.8282

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

SCDMH Community Mental Health Center provides adults with serious mental illnesses and children with serious behavioral and emotional disorders with outpatient mental health services. Services include: crisis intervention; assessment; individual, group and family therapies; nursing services; and psychiatric medical assessments. To make an appointment, please call the phone number listed to speak with the lead scheduler.

## BRIDGES FOR END OF LIFE

P.O. Box 417, Mt. Pleasant, SC  
843.216.7323

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

Bridges Resources for End of Life Realities is a hospice and palliative care organization dedicated to providing access to end of life support for patients, caregivers and family members. Bridges also provides the We Honor Veterans coalition effort, which is a program developed between the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Department of Veterans Affairs to meet the specific and often unique needs of Veterans at the end of their lives.

## CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

2301 Cosgrove Ave. #F, North Charleston, SC  
843.529.0700

[www.centerforbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.centerforbehavioralhealth.com)

The Center for Behavioral Health is part of a group of outpatient facilities that treat various problems related to substance abuse, specifically with opiate addiction. Counseling is a crucial part of the treatment plan. Counseling services include individual as well as family and group counseling. The counseling staff offers diversity in background and therapeutic approach that allows the client to find the best fit for their goals and needs.

## HIDDEN WOUNDS, INC.

7001 St. Andrews Rd. #323, Columbia, SC  
1.888.4HW.HERO

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

Hidden Wounds provides short-term emergency counseling for military members, retired Veterans and their family members experiencing mental health struggles or crises.



## PALMETTO WARRIOR CONNECTION

2150 Eagle Dr., Building 100, North Charleston, SC  
843.414.9736

Email: [info@palmettowarriorconnection.org](mailto:info@palmettowarriorconnection.org)

Leaving the military is a huge transition and Palmetto Warrior Connection does not want Veterans to do it alone. They walk with you every step of the way from housing, education, employment, benefits, mental health and everything in between.

## PROJECT JOSIAH RESTORATION MINISTRY

803.403.8460

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

Project Josiah brings combat Veterans together as a brotherhood to discuss and share, helping improve lives by resolving hidden wounds resulting from combat service. They empower combat Veterans to make choices using biblical principles and empower churches to open their facilities. They enable Veterans to help other Veterans.

## SEMPER FI FUND

760.725.3680 or 760.207.1588

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

The Marine Corps Semper Fi Fund was created by nine Marine Corps spouses to support and assist injured soldiers at the beginning of their road to recovery, during the process and in their reintegration following rehabilitation. This fund has evolved to serve all service branches, active and reserves, current military and retired. Support from the fund includes adaptive housing, family support, transportation, rehabilitative sports and therapies and more.

## SUPPORT THE FALLEN

843.847.1001

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

Support the Fallen is a nonprofit organization designed to support and raise awareness for those wounded while serving in the military or as a first responder. All donations help pay medical bills, feed and clothe their family members and meet any other emergency need presented.

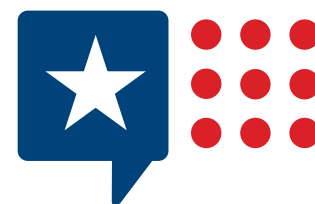
## UPSTATE WARRIOR SOLUTION

864.520.2073

Email: [info@upstatewarriorsolution.org](mailto:info@upstatewarriorsolution.org)

Upstate Warrior Solution is a community-based nonprofit that generates quality of life solutions for Upstate Veterans, active duty, National Guard and Reserve warriors and their families. UWS services span the following counties in the Upstate: Greenville, Spartanburg, Anderson, Oconee and Pickens. The UWS model is centralized around face-to-face outreach to the warrior community, and service lines include mentorship, healthcare and benefits, education and training, housing and employment. The model does not facilitate handouts but dictates that warrior walk alongside his or her peer mentor, program manager or social worker in a team environment to generate goals and actionable solutions.

# Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255

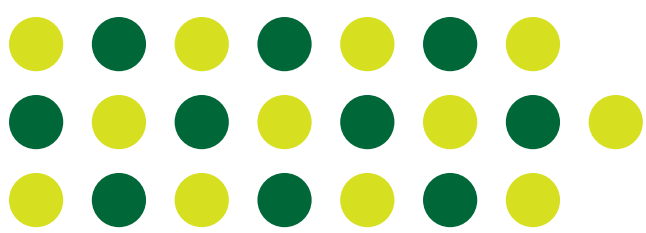
**PRESS 1**

If you are a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, responders at the Veterans Crisis Line online chat offer help that can make a difference. Caring, qualified VA responders are standing by to provide free and confidential support. Use the Veterans Chat at [www.VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net) to get online support anonymously, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year — even if you are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA healthcare. Responders will work with you to help you get through any personal crisis, even if that crisis does not involve thoughts of suicide.

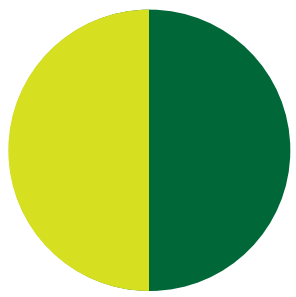




**START** the conversation. **SAVE** a life.

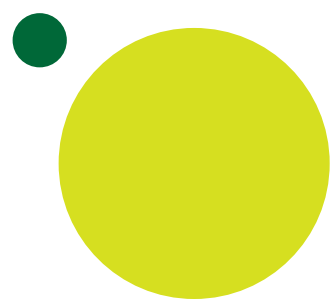


**An estimated 22 Veterans complete suicide each day in the United States.**



**Only approximately 50% of returning Service members who need treatment for mental health conditions seek it.**

**The rate of depression in military members or Veterans is five times higher than that of civilians according to the 2014 JAMA Psychiatry study.**



## What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based public education training program that introduces participants to the risk factors and warning signs of mental illness, builds understanding of their impact and provides information about local resources.

## Why Mental Health First Aid?

Do your part to reduce mental health stigmas and strengthen your community by taking Mental Health First Aid!

**To find a course in your area,** visit [scthrive.eventbrite.com](http://scthrive.eventbrite.com).

**To contact an instructor,** email [training@scthrive.org](mailto:training@scthrive.org).

**sc Thrive**  
800.726.8774 | [scthrive.org](http://scthrive.org)



## PROJECTED GROWTH

The National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics projects that the percentage of women Veterans will nearly double in the next 30 years, while overall Veteran population will decrease. Over 44,000 women Veterans call South Carolina home.

# WOMEN'S SERVICES

## Women's Services at William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center

### PRIMARY CARE

- General care includes health evaluation and counseling, disease prevention, nutrition counseling, weight control, smoking cessation and substance abuse counseling and treatment as well as gender-specific primary care, such as cervical cancer screens (Pap smears), breast cancer screens (mammograms), birth control, preconception counseling, Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine and menopausal support (hormone replacement therapy).

- Mental health includes evaluation and assistance for issues such as depression, mood and anxiety disorders; intimate partner and domestic violence; sexual trauma; elder abuse or neglect; parenting and anger management; marital, caregiver or family-related stress; and post-deployment adjustment or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

- Military sexual trauma (MST):** Women, as well as men, may experience repeated sexual harassment or sexual assault during their military service. Special services are available to women who have experienced MST. VA provides free, confidential counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to MST. More information is available about MST from the national Women Veterans Healthcare program and the VHA Office of Mental Health.

### SPECIALTY CARE

- Management and screening of chronic conditions includes heart disease, diabetes, cancer, glandular disorders, osteoporosis and fibromyalgia, as well as sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Reproductive healthcare includes maternity care, infertility evaluation and limited treatment, sexual problems, tubal ligation, urinary incontinence and others. VA is prohibited by legislative authority from providing either in-vitro fertilization or abortion services.

- VA rehabilitation, homebound and long-term care referrals are given to those in need of rehabilitation therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, exercise therapy, recreational therapy and vocational therapy. Homebound and long-term care services are available as well, limited to those meeting specific requirements.

**Women Veterans Call Center**  
**855.VA.WOMEN**







## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE COLUMBIA VA REGIONAL OFFICE

# What is PTSD?

BY LEANNE WELDIN



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Mrs. Leanne Weldin was appointed Director of the Columbia VA Regional Office on July 14, 2013. As Director, she is directly responsible for the delivery of benefits and services to more than 400,000 Veterans in the state of South Carolina. Disability Compensation and Pension benefits administered by the Columbia Regional Office total over \$120 million each month. With a staff of more than 700 employees, the Columbia VA Regional Office has additional national missions that include a National Call Center and a Fiduciary Hub.

As the Columbia VA Regional Office Director, I am honored to serve my fellow Veterans alongside hundreds of compassionate and dedicated VA employees. I am also a grateful Operation Iraqi Freedom Army Veteran. I was a Lieutenant in the 2220th Transportation Company, AZ ARNG, as we ran convoys in Iraq from March 2003 to March 2004 without any serious casualties.

While serving in Iraq, I took a soldier in my platoon to treatment when he was suicidal on Christmas Day 2003 near Nasiriyah after suffering from panic attacks on convoys. There was a month we woke to the yelling of a soldier in another platoon during his nightmares in the combat zone. People might assume those soldiers had Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (known as PTSD). I can't confirm if they had PTSD as I am not a clinician, yet I remain concerned for those soldiers as well as anyone diagnosed with the condition.

PTSD is frequently mentioned by the media and others. Some people throw the term around loosely and jump to conclusions about who has PTSD and why. In reality, it is a psychological diagnosis recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. It is not a joke or merely a mood swing; it is a serious medical condition which affects individuals and their families in every community.

So, what does this phrase PTSD mean? PTSD is a mental health condition some people develop after seeing or experiencing a threatening situation such as combat, assault or abuse, a natural disaster or a vehicle accident. It is not just a military disease. Children and adults, civilians and Veterans, men and women, wealthy and poor, in fact anyone we know, could have experienced a dangerous or tragic event and be adversely impacted enough to have PTSD. Meanwhile, some other people experience these same dangers or tragedies, yet they don't develop PTSD. People are different in their reactions, their coping mechanisms, their levels of social support and many other factors. So, it makes sense people have different mental health needs.

VA's National Center for PTSD has experts who explain, "It's normal to have upsetting memories, feel on edge or have trouble sleeping after a traumatic event. At first, it may be hard to do normal daily activities, like go to work, go to school or spend time with people you care about. But most people start to feel better after a few weeks or months. If it's been longer than a few months

and you're still having symptoms, you may have PTSD. For some people, PTSD symptoms may start later on, or they may come and go over time." <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/gethelp/index.asp>

## MYTH OR TRUTH?

*Every Veteran who has served in combat has PTSD.*

That is a myth. It is estimated between 11% - 20% of U.S. Veterans have PTSD in any given year and that is certainly not everyone deployed. It is also noted 50% - 60% of the entire U.S. population experiences some sort of traumatic event during their lifetime while 7% - 8% of Americans suffer from PTSD at some point in life. So, Veterans who served in a combat zone have higher rates of developing PTSD yet every combat Veteran does not have PTSD.

*People can simply choose to ignore trauma and get on with life, so PTSD could be a ruse for sympathy or ploy for disability benefits.*

Another myth. Whether Veterans or civilians, those with PTSD don't choose to have nightmares, flashbacks, hyperarousal and other symptoms. It is a diagnosable and legitimate medical condition. It also can be treated with therapy, peer support groups, medication, positive coping strategies and many other effective treatments. The VA is recognized for expertise in treating PTSD. It is a condition that can indeed improve, and it is not necessarily a life-long disability for those who are diagnosed and helped.

VA offers treatment at over 1,200 VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) and Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) and currently serves nine million Veterans in the full-range of healthcare. There are also Vet Centers around the country offering free readjustment counseling and support groups in a less clinical setting to include family counseling if desired by any Veteran previously stationed in a combat zone. <https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp>

Also, any Veteran, male or female, who experienced sexual assault or other similar trauma while serving in the military can receive free and compassionate mental health treatment. [https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Military\\_Sexual\\_Trauma.asp](https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Military_Sexual_Trauma.asp)

## DISABILITY CLAIMS

VA may also compensate Veterans who are disabled from service-connected PTSD by paying disability compensation in addition to treatment. Filing a claim can be a confusing process, but my staff and I are here to help. A Veteran can call 1.800.827.1000, go to their nearest VA Regional Office, go to an accredited Veteran Service Officer for assistance who partners with VA to submit a claim or go online to file at VA.gov.



VA follows numerous laws and regulations when processing disability claims including the 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations). To be granted service-connected benefits for PTSD, there must be stressful events (stressors) on active duty that resulted in the mental disability. Therefore, claims must show supporting evidence that the claimed in-service stressor occurred, medical evidence diagnosing the condition and a link by medical evidence between current symptoms and the stressor.

VA may need a Veteran to provide specific details such as dates and places of a stressor in order to verify the event with DoD or other sources. However, statements from a Veteran may, under certain circumstances, also establish the occurrence of an in-service stressor if the stressor is 1) based upon being a former POW, 2) related to an in-service diagnosis of PTSD or 3) a VA clinical diagnosis as a result of fear for one's life while in hazardous duty locations with hostile military or terrorist activity.

That last category above is a helpful change to the regulations since 2010. If any Veteran who served in a combat zone was denied disability benefits prior to July 2010 because a PTSD stressor was unverifiable, yet his/her VA doctor has diagnosed PTSD, I highly recommend the Veteran file a reopened claim in case the revised regulations now allow the Regional Office to grant benefits.

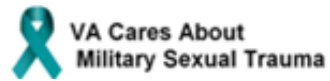
Veterans who were traumatized by non-combat events on active duty or military sexual trauma also can file for disability benefits to include a claim for PTSD at anytime. VA may need detailed

information from a Veteran to corroborate the stressors and obtain a current diagnosis, yet we never want those required procedures to prevent Veterans from seeking help or filing for benefits. A VA Regional Office employee or an accredited Veterans Service Officer (who will never charge a fee) can help Veterans through the claim process. <https://www.benefits.va.gov/vso/>

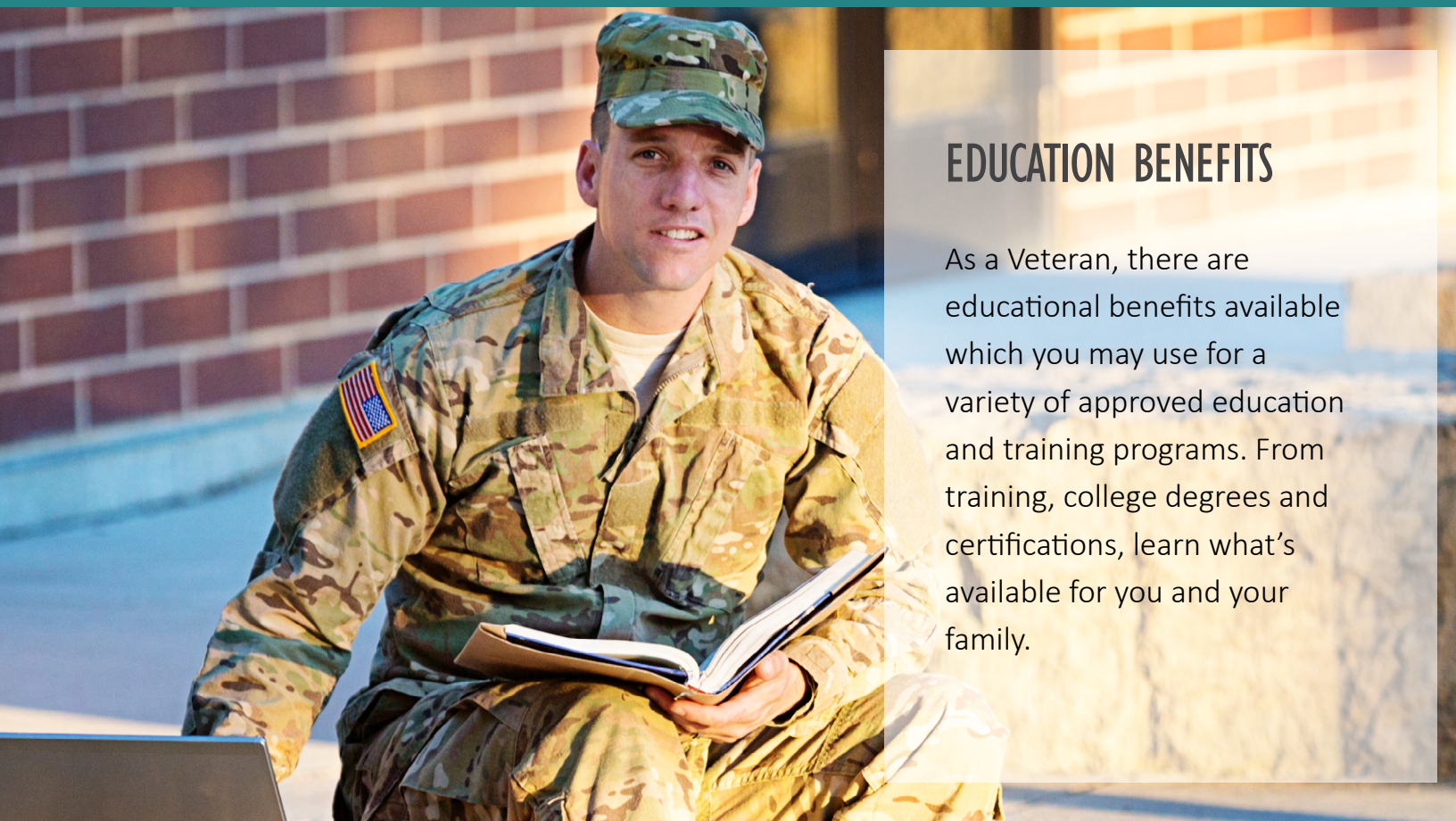
### PLEASE NOTE:

All VA Medical Centers offer PTSD treatment. Contact your local VA Medical Center and ask for the Mental Health Clinic.

**IF YOU NEED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE, CONTACT 911  
OR 1-800-273-TALK/8255, PRESS 1.**



# EDUCATION



## EDUCATION BENEFITS

As a Veteran, there are educational benefits available which you may use for a variety of approved education and training programs. From training, college degrees and certifications, learn what's available for you and your family.

# Post 9/11 GI Bill - Are you eligible?

The Post 9/11 GI Bill is an education benefit program for individuals who served on active duty after September 10, 2001.

## Am I Eligible?

You may be eligible if you served at least 90 aggregate days on active duty\* after September 10, 2001, or were honorably discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability after serving 30 continuous days following September 10, 2001.

Note: Children of a member of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001, may be eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits under the Marine Gunnery John David Fry Scholarship Program.

## What will you receive?

You may receive a percentage of the following payments (see chart below):

- **A Tuition and Fee payment that is paid to your school on your behalf**
- **A Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)\*\* that is equal to:**
  - The Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) payable for the zip code of your school to a military E-5 with dependents for students pursuing resident training
  - One-half the BAH national average for students training solely by distance learning
  - The national average BAH for students pursuing training at foreign schools.
- **A Books and Supplies Stipend of up to \$1,000 per year**

\*Includes active service as a National Guard member under title 32 U.S.C. for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing or training and active service under section 502(f) of title 32 for the purpose of responding to a national emergency.

\*\*The MHA is not payable to individuals on active duty or those enrolled at half-time or less.



## How many months of assistance can I receive and how long am I eligible?

Generally, you may receive up to 36 months of entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. You will be eligible for benefits for 15 years from your last period of active duty of at least 90 consecutive days.

## What kind of training can I take?

You can use the Post-9/11 GI Bill at colleges, universities, trade schools and for on-the-job training, apprenticeships and flight schools. To see what programs are currently approved for VA benefits, visit [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/).

You can use the Post-9/11 GI Bill for tutorial assistance, licensing (attorney license, cosmetology license, etc.) and certification tests (SAT, LSAT, etc.).

Note: If the program you are interested in is not on the website above, contact your State Approving Agency (list available on [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/)) to see if it can be approved.

## Can I transfer my entitlement to dependents?

You must be a member of the uniformed services to transfer your unused benefits to your spouse or dependent(s). Generally, you must agree to serve four more years when transferring benefits.

## What is the Yellow Ribbon Program?

The Post-9/11 GI Bill can cover all in-state tuition and fees at public degree granting schools, but may not cover all private degree granting schools and out-of-state tuition. The Yellow Ribbon Program provides additional support in those situations.

Institutions voluntarily enter into an agreement with VA to fund uncovered charges. VA matches each dollar of unmet charges the institution agrees to contribute, up to the total cost of the tuition and fees.

Individuals serving an aggregate period of active duty after September 10, 2001, of:	Percentage of Maximum Benefit Payable
At least 36 months	100%
At least 30 continuous days and discharged due to service-connected disability	100%
At least 30 months < 36 months	90%
At least 24 months < 30 months	80%
At least 18 months < 24 months	70%
At least 12 months < 18 months	60%
At least 6 months < 12 months	50%
At least 90 days < 6 months	40%



# Resources for EDUCATION

## VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

VEAP is only available to those who made monetary contributions to the program. The government matches your contributions on a \$2 for \$1 basis. You may use these benefits for degree, certificate, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs, vocational flight training programs, high-tech training, licensing and certification tests, entrepreneurship training, certain entrance examinations and correspondence courses. In certain circumstances, remedial, deficiency and refresher training may also be available. Benefit entitlement is one to 36 months depending on the number of monthly contributions. You have 10 years from your release from active duty to use VEAP benefits. If not used after the 10 years, your portion remaining will be refunded. Contact your local VA Regional Office for more information at 1.888.442.4551 or visit [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/veap.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/veap.asp) to learn more.

## RESERVE TUITION ASSISTANCE

Members of the Selective Reserves are eligible for tuition assistance. However, each of the Armed Forces determines how to administer their own Tuition Assistance (TA). In addition, each state may offer its National Guard Service members state funded education incentives based on state guidelines and eligibility (i.e. TA, waivers, exemptions, student loan repayment, etc.). Military.com has gathered the following information about reserve TA benefits for each service:

### Army Reserve (USAR)

The Army Reserve offers opportunities for selected reserve soldiers to pursue their education on a voluntary basis. Voluntary education plays a vital role in a Reserve's career because it enhances promotional opportunities. Voluntary education differs from military education and training which is required for MOS/AOC. If you are interested in participating, voluntary education must be completed on personal time with financial assistance provided by the Army Reserve. You are strongly encouraged to become familiar with and utilize all available education benefits and programs. Army Reserves may go to [GoArmyEd.com](http://GoArmyEd.com) and sign in using their AKO login and password to submit TA requests online.

The USAR offers: 100% tuition assistance up to \$250 per semester hour, or \$166 per quarter hour, not to exceed \$4,500 annually per Service member; 75% up to \$250 per semester hour, \$166 per quarter hour, and \$4,500 per fiscal year for officers pursuing a bachelor's degree.

Contact your local Army Reserve Education Office for information on eligibility or assistance with TA or any other voluntary education assistance.

### Navy Reserve (USNR)

There are currently no Tuition Assistance programs for the Navy Reserve. However, if you are activated under Title 10, then you qualify for the active-duty Navy Tuition Assistance.

### Marine Corps Reserve (USMCR)

There are currently no Tuition Assistance programs for the Marine



Corps Reserve. However, if you are activated under Title 10, then you qualify for the active-duty Marine Corps Tuition Assistance.

### Air Force Reserve (USAFR)

In an effort to support the professional and education goals of Air Force Reservists, the Air Force provides several voluntary education programs for its reserve members.

USAFR offers:

- Undergraduate (Associate's and Bachelor's Degrees)
- 100% tuition assistance for undergraduate degree programs
- Not to exceed \$250 per semester hour or \$166.67 per quarter hour
- Up to \$4,500 annually per Service member
- Graduate Studies (Master's Degree)
- 75% tuition assistance for graduate degree programs
- Not to exceed \$250 per semester hour or \$166 per quarter hour

Visit the Air Force Reserve website or the Air Force Education Services Programs website for more information. Contact your Education Service Officer for information on how to apply for tuition assistance and other programs.

### Coast Guard Reserve (USCGR)

Coast Guard Reserve units have integrated with active-duty sites, so in the spirit of "Team Coast Guard," USCG Reserves have access to all the educational programs available to active-duty members. The Coast Guard Institute website has a complete synopsis of available programs and applications.

The Coast Guard offers selected Reserves:

- 100% tuition assistance up to \$250 per semester hour or \$166.67 per quarter hour
- Not to exceed \$4,000 annually per Service member

Contact your Coast Guard ESO for information on how to apply for tuition assistance and other programs.

### Air Force Association

The Air Force Association (AFA) is a professional military and aerospace education association promoting public understanding of aerospace power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation. It sponsors professional development seminars and recognizes excellence in the education and aerospace fields through national award programs. AFA presents scholarships and grants to Air Force active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members and their dependents.

# Learn about the Montgomery GI Bill

## Are you eligible?

You may be eligible to receive Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) benefits while you are on active duty or after you are separated from active duty. Eligibility requirements are set by law and are complex. To simplify, we have grouped them into four categories. You must establish eligibility under one of these four categories.

**Category 1:** For those who first entered active duty after June 30, 1985, and didn't decline the MGIB in writing upon entry into active duty.

**Category 2:** For those with remaining entitlement under the Vietnam Era GI Bill (Chapter 34, Title 38, U.S. Code).

**Category 3:** For those who were involuntarily separated for certain reasons or those who were separated under the VSI (Voluntary Separation Incentive) or SSB (Special Separation Benefit) program.

**Category 4:** For former Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) participants who elected to convert to MGIB during the open window periods, and for a small group of National Guard.

## Requirements for all categories

You must meet the following two requirements, no matter which category your eligibility falls under:

- To use MGIB after you are separated from active duty, your discharge must be fully honorable. Discharges under honorable conditions and general discharges do not establish eligibility for MGIB. However, if you have more than one period of service and receive an other than honorable discharge from one period of service, you may be able to qualify if you received an honorable discharge from another period of service. (A period from which you were discharged in order to reenlist may meet the eligibility requirements.)
- Complete high school, obtain an equivalent certificate or complete 12 hours toward a college degree, before you apply for benefits.

## Qualifying National Guard or Reserve Service

Service in the National Guard or Reserve is qualifying as active duty for MGIB benefits only under these conditions: Full-Time Title 10, U.S. Code (Federal) Service – National Guard or Reserve service authorized under Title 10, U.S. Code, (Active Guard/Reserve, or AGR) is considered active duty for purposes of qualifying for VA education benefits, unless the service is active duty for training.

## Type of service

The National Guard service must be full-time under Title 32, U.S.

Code (state authority), and the service must be for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing or training the National Guard. Duty for the purpose of performing operations (such as drug interdiction, for example), is not considered active duty for MGIB benefits.

## Dates of service

Your full-time Title 32 National Guard service must meet one of the following requirements:

- The service was first performed after November 29, 1989 (again, with no previous active duty)
- If service was between July 1, 1985, and November 29, 1989, you must have elected MGIB during the period October 9, 1996, through June 8, 1997; only a small group of individuals who are eligible under Category 4 meet these requirements.

## Go to [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) for info on:

- Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (MGIB – SR)
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
- Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), or Educational Assistance Pilot Program (Section 903 of Public Law 96-342)
- Educational Assistance Test Program, (Section 901 of Public Law 96-342)
- Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) Program
- Post 9/11 GI BILL

For Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for Veterans with service-connected disabilities, go to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

## How long are you eligible?

Your eligibility for the MGIB (including the College Fund, if you qualify for the College Fund), generally ends 10 years from the date of your last separation from active duty, or when you use all your months of entitlement, whichever is earlier.

## How many months of benefits can you receive?

"Entitlement" is the number of months of benefits you may receive. You may receive up to 36 months of benefits under MGIB (including the College Fund). You may receive benefits for a wide variety of approved training, including:

- An undergraduate or graduate degree at a college or university
- An accredited independent study program (which may be offered through distance education), leading to a standard college degree
- A cooperative training program (a full-time program alternating





school instruction and job training in a business or industrial establishment)

- A certificate or diploma from a business, technical or vocational school, including cooperative programs
- Accredited independent study courses leading to a certificate at colleges, universities and other degree-granting educational institutions
- An apprenticeship or on-the-job training (OJT) program offered by a company or union; apprenticeships or OJT programs may offer an alternative to college or vocational school for helping you gain experience in the field you choose
- A correspondence course
- Preparatory courses for tests required or used for admission to an institution of higher learning or graduate school
- Flight training; you must have a private pilot certificate and meet the medical requirements for the desired certificate when you begin training
- Programs overseas that leads to a college degree

### How do you apply for benefits?

How you apply for benefits depends on whether you have decided on your program. If you have decided on the program you want, just follow these steps:

- Find out if the program is approved for VA benefits —check with the school’s Financial Aid Office or training facility employment office, or contact VA; then
- Complete the application (VA Form 22-1990) and submit it to

the appropriate VA regional office; then

- Ask the school or training official to certify your enrollment to VA. If the program has been approved for VA benefits, check in with the school or training facility official who certifies enrollments for VA benefits. At a school, this certifying official may be in one of the following offices: Financial Aid, Veterans Affairs, Registrar, Admissions, Counseling or others. For on-the-job training or an apprenticeship, the official may be in the Training, Finance, Personnel or other office.

If you haven’t decided on a program, or simply want a determination of your eligibility for the MGIB, just submit the application to the appropriate VA regional office. If you are eligible, you will receive a Certificate of Eligibility showing how long you are eligible and how many months of benefits you can receive.

### Apply

Go to [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) and apply online or call 1.888.442.4551. Be advised you may have difficulty getting through quickly. If you are on active duty, your Education Services Officer must also sign your application. You may be able to pick up the application from the school or training facility you are attending.



**EASTERN CAROLINA HOMELESSNESS ORGANIZATION**

Rent | Deposit Assistance | Case Management | Housing Search Assistance

### Supportive Services for Veterans and Families

SSVF provides short-term rapid rehousing and homeless prevention assistance for low-income Veteran families to help obtain and maintain stable permanent housing

Serving Veterans and their families in Horry, Georgetown, Florence, Sumter, Lee, Dillon, Darlington, Marion, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Marlboro, and Williamsburg Counties

Ongoing support for tenants including eviction prevention and tenant/landlord mediation

Call our Horry County office to learn more  
Phone: (843) 213-1798 | 1 (844) 705-0316  
[www.echomeless.org](http://www.echomeless.org)



## “Combat Veterans helping Combat Veterans”

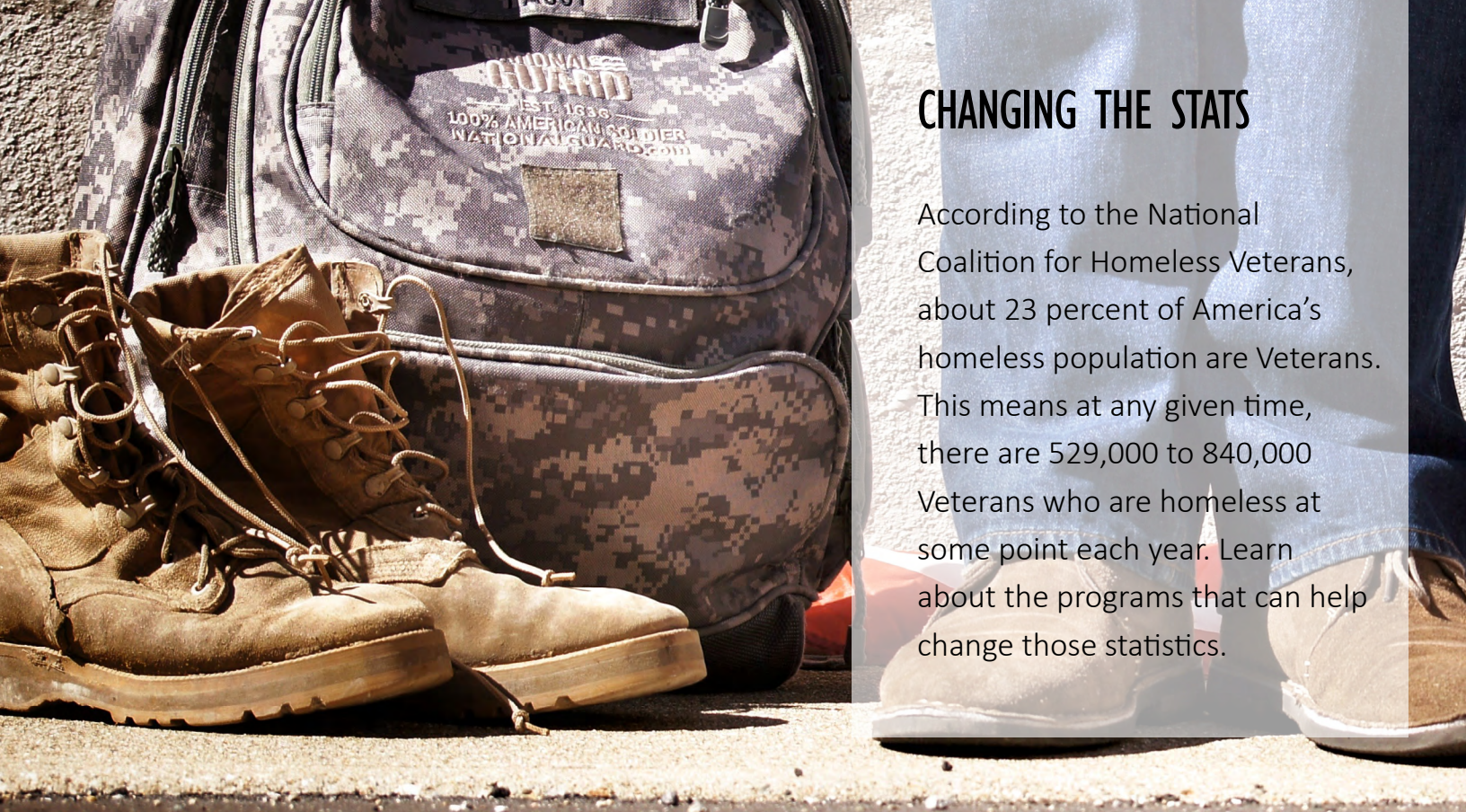


## Project Josiah Restoration Ministry

POC: LANCE NEWMAN  
(803) 403-8460

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





## CHANGING THE STATS

According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, about 23 percent of America's homeless population are Veterans. This means at any given time, there are 529,000 to 840,000 Veterans who are homeless at some point each year. Learn about the programs that can help change those statistics.

# HOMELESS TO HOUSING

## HUD VASH PROGRAM

**If you need housing assistance, call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1.877.4AID.VET. When you call, you will be connected to a trained VA responder.** This joint Supportive Housing Program with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides permanent housing and ongoing case management treatment services for homeless Veterans who would not be able to live independently without the support of case management. HUD's Section 8 Voucher Program has designated more than 10,000 vouchers to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) throughout the country for Veterans who are homeless.

This program allows Veterans to live in a Veteran selected apartment unit with a Housing Choice Voucher. These vouchers are portable so that Veterans can live in communities served by their VA medical facility where case management services can be provided. See your local county social services office for more information.

## VA HOMELESS PREVENTION & WALK-IN CLINIC

All VA Medical Centers offer a walk-in clinic for Veterans searching for re-housing assistance and means to prevent homelessness. In addition to referral services, the walk-in clinic offers basic outpatient medical care. **See page 24 for the contact information to each VA Medical Center.**

## TRANSITIONS

803.708.4861  
[www.transitionssc.org](http://www.transitionssc.org)

Transitions Homeless Center provides 260 emergency beds to homeless men and women from 14 counties across South Carolina. The facility also operates a Day Center and visitors have access to a meal, showers and laundry machines seven days a week. Transitions collaborates with 45 community organizations who provide a variety of programs and services. Since opening in 2011, Transitions has helped 1,399 individuals secure permanent housing and another 4,783 have progressed into more positive situations.

## CRISIS MINISTRIES

843.723.9477  
[www.charlestonhomeless.org](http://www.charlestonhomeless.org)

Crisis Ministries is a service provider in South Carolina, serving a hot meal daily in the Charleston-area homeless shelter and the Palmetto House shelter in Summerville, South Carolina. Crisis Ministries staff are certified to oversee comprehensive case management for all clients, including military Veterans, civilians, individuals and families.

## THE SALVATION ARMY

1.800.SAL.ARMY  
[www.salvationarmycarolinas.org](http://www.salvationarmycarolinas.org)

The Salvation Army provides food, clothing, shelter, financial assistance and after school programs to all those in need without discrimination all throughout the state.





BY COLONEL CRAIG CURREY, USA, RETIRED

**About the Author:** Colonel (Retired) Craig Currey was appointed as the Chief Operating Officer and Interim Executive Director at Transitions on April 16, 2012 after retiring from a 30-year career in the U.S. Army where he served with distinction. Craig was chosen to lead Transitions because of his commitment to service. His final posting with the Army was as the Deputy Commanding Officer of Fort Jackson, South Carolina.



The Department of Veterans Affairs has made significant progress in fighting Veteran homelessness in recent years. Cities functionally ending homelessness, increased funding for services, more Veteran housing vouchers and better outreach have all helped to decrease the total amount of homeless Veterans on the street. So what must we do besides continue the good fight with effort and resources? Examining Transitions Homeless Center in Columbia, SC, a facility with 9% Veterans, there are some improvements that may be beneficial for others to consider. We must always be looking for better ways to do

business and keep our weapons and tools as sharp as possible.

Observing trends at Transitions, substance abuse remains a continuing problem for homeless Veterans. Some are so frustrated by their inability to break the cycle of relapse. They have struggled with addiction for years and are slow to engage recovery as aggressively as they should. They need to be “all in” for treatment and not half-step. Addiction limits jobs programs, housing stability and personal esteem as they keep fighting an endless, losing battle. More availability of various treatment options at the VA or with local partners is critical to enabling many homeless Veterans to reach a better recovery level. Additionally, transportation remains a traditional problem for homeless people, especially Veterans. For example, they must make appointments at the VA hospital or community clinic, but they have no way to get there. Normal homeless centers rely on different, non-VA providers, so the transportation assets are not taking clients there as regularly. There are VA-provided vans and bus tickets supposedly available to meet appointment needs, but they require coordination and planning that often needs to be done at a VA office. Often, the homeless provider uses their assets to get the homeless Veterans to the VA to initiate the process. Sometimes the homeless center does not know about the appointment or the client has not coordinated properly. The “blame game” accomplishes nothing—expect coordination issues. Transportation and communication among providers are always immediate concerns and needs to be considered in any care plan.

Additionally, women Veterans need help equal to men. Sometimes harder to identify because screening may be slower to identify them, they need the same access to beds and services as their male counterparts. Non-Veteran facilities can help provide needed contract or per diem beds for the VA. VA knows best the regional bed needs for women, but it must not hesitate to have women beds available as the percentage of women increases in the military, inevitably leading to more homeless women Veterans in the future. Finally, homeless Veterans need to talk to people—ideally other Veterans on staff at homeless centers. As with addiction, Veterans can be burdened by a “rucksack load” of emotional issues. Some have serious mental health issues that require licensed counselors, but some just need simple encouragement and to be heard. They have not found solitude and peace in a long time. Maybe their years in the service were the last time they really felt part of a team and were less burdened. Homeless centers need to talk to Veteran clients, letting them vent. Just listen sometimes and offer encouragement. It takes time to help some people into permanent housing, especially since there is limited affordable housing around the country. Talking to clients and listening will help overcome barriers and ensure that the root issues are addressed.

To recount the sharpened weapons against homelessness, homeless centers must partner with the VA to end Veteran homelessness. Attention to detail will improve the processes and better care for individual needs. Thousands of Veterans will be placed into permanent housing, one Veteran at a time. Homeless programs should provide aggressive addiction treatment. They may partner with other agencies, but substance abuse is a barrier that must be defeated. Support meetings of all types should be offered on site or within easy travel distance. Transportation, therefore, is critical to get to appointments and important locations. Veterans, due to VA resources, have more opportunities than other homeless to regain housing. VA is available with excellent services and so are many other partnering agencies. But if the Veteran cannot get there, it is all for nothing. VA and homeless centers must also be on the lookout for women Veterans who need help. Many facilities may be single gender, but that does not mean a woman Veteran will not need help. Ultimately, homeless Veterans need encouragement like everyone else. Overcoming obstacles is always easier as a team and with supporting buddies. Talk to Veterans and care—it will always make a difference. Thanks to the VA and everyone who has helped homeless Veterans gain housing. Keep doing what you are doing, and sharpen your precision in helping homeless Veterans.

**Visit [www.transitionsc.org](http://www.transitionsc.org) to get updated information about making a difference in the fight against homelessness in South Carolina.**





SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES  
HUNTING/FISHING LICENSES  
STATE PARKS BENEFITS  
CERTIFICATE VERIFICATION  
PARKING EXEMPTIONS  
EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

# PERSONAL SERVICES

## ARMY ONESOURCE

Army OneSource is a website that provides a network of services to support Active, Reserve and Guard Soldiers and their families regardless of their component or geographical location. The Army OneSource website provides access to information on standardized programs and services at installations, Army National Guard Family Assistance Centers and Army Reserve Centers for the geographically dispersed. Through established community partnerships, Army OneSource works with sister services to increase and sustain support to those not living near a garrison. To learn more about resources and services to support Soldiers and their families, visit [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com).

## MILITARY ONESOURCE

Military OneSource is a Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, National Guard and Reserve Service members and their families. Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationships, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting and child care and much more. It includes:

- Call center and online support 24/7 from master's-level consultants for practical information and referrals on issues such as handling a move or finding resources in your area

- Specialty consultations with trained professionals on health and wellness, wounded warriors, financial issues, education, adoption, language translation and interpretation, special needs and spouse education and careers
- Non-medical counseling services online, via telephone or face to face; eligible individuals may receive non-medical counseling addressing issues requiring short-term attention including everyday stressors, grief, deployment and reintegration concerns
- Articles, resources and products on a wide range of military life topics such as parenting, deployment, relocation, spouse education and careers and much more
- Electronic library resources including, but not limited to, auto repair, study guides, practice tests and one-on-one online homework help

Call 800.342.9647 or visit [www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil) to learn more.

## PARKING FEE EXEMPTION

Provides for an exemption of municipal parking meter fees when a Veteran's vehicle bears a disabled Veteran ("V" tag), Purple Heart or Medal of Honor license plate. For more information, contact your county and municipal government offices.



## SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES

Upon establishing proof of eligibility to entitlement, the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles may issue a special motor vehicle license plate to the following:

- National Guard
- National Guard Retirees
- Disabled Veterans
- Purple Heart Recipients
- Ex-Prisoners of War
- U.S. Armed Forces Retirees
- Marine Corps League
- Medal of Honor Recipients
- Pearl Harbor Survivors
- Normandy Invasion Survivors

Contact the DMV to inquire about more special plates. Certain registration fees may apply. For more information, visit the Department of Motor Vehicles at [www.scdmvonline.com/DMVNew/PlateGallery.aspx?q=Military](http://www.scdmvonline.com/DMVNew/PlateGallery.aspx?q=Military) or call 803.896.5000.

## EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (FREE TUITION FOR CERTAIN VETERAN'S CHILDREN)

Provides for free tuition to the children of certain war Veterans attending South Carolina state-supported colleges and universities as well as state-supported post high school technical education institutions. Certain residency requirements apply. For more information, visit South Carolina Office of Veteran's Affairs at [www.oep.sc.gov/va/benefits.html](http://www.oep.sc.gov/va/benefits.html) or call 803.255.4255.

## MARRIAGE, BIRTH, DEATH & DIVORCE VERIFICATION

Verification of marriage, birth, death and divorce records are provided without cost when such is required by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the South Carolina Division of Affairs, the County Veterans Affairs Offices or any out of state Veterans Affairs entities. For more information call 803.734.0200.

## RECORDING OF DISCHARGES

A certified copy of the recorded discharge may be obtained upon request. Any person desiring a certified copy of any discharge or certificate of lost discharge, may apply to the County Clerk of Court or the County Veterans Affairs Officer in which the discharge or certificate of lost discharge is registered and shall be furnished a certified copy. Fees for furnishing a certified copy of discharge or DD-214 may be established by each county, but may not exceed fifty cents.

## FREE HUNTING/FISHING LICENSES

Free hunting and fishing licenses are provided to Veterans who are totally disabled. License must be applied for directly from South Carolina Department of Natural Resources showing proof of disability. For more information, call SCDNR at 803.734.3838 or [www.dnr.sc.gov](http://www.dnr.sc.gov).

## STATE PARKS BENEFITS

Any South Carolina resident who is a permanently and totally disabled Veteran may enter any state park at a reduced rate upon presentation of supporting disability documentation. The Veteran may also apply for a reduced rate fee "Palmetto Passport." Certain services may require an additional fee. For more information, call South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism at 803.734.0156 or [www.southcarolinaparks.com](http://www.southcarolinaparks.com).



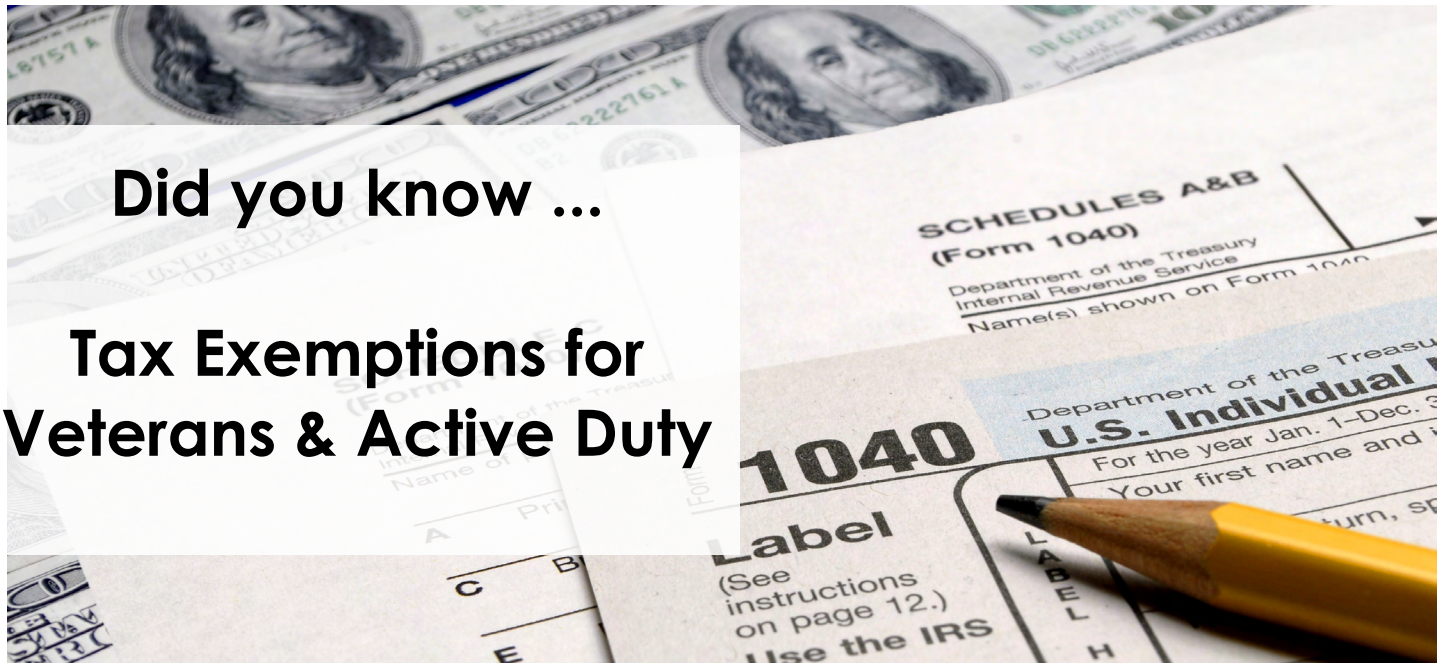
# Learn about Transition Assistance Programs (TAP)

## Access TAP Virtual Curriculum

In 2011, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the "Veterans Opportunity to Work and Hire Heroes Act of 2011" (VOW Act). The VOW Act requires, among other things, that separating Service members must attend the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The VOW Act also required that the Department of Labor redesign its employment workshop, the largest component of the TAP curriculum, to be more applicable to the realities of today's job market. VETS fulfills this requirement for DOL and manages the implementation of the employment workshop at hundreds of military installations worldwide for thousands of separating Service members.

In 2013, the Department of Defense launched a TAP virtual curriculum through their Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) learning management system. This TAP virtual curriculum is designed to provide Service members who are unable to attend the TAP in-person due to military exigencies with the ability to fulfill their TAP obligations. The Departments of Defense, Veterans' Affairs and Labor were informed that providing the TAP curriculum to Veterans and spouses of Service members might be helpful to them too, so the JKO system now provides the full TAP curriculum to anyone who might benefit. Access the TAP Virtual Curriculum here:

[www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap](http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/tap).



**Did you know ...**

## **Tax Exemptions for Veterans & Active Duty**

### **INCOME TAX EXEMPTION ON RETIREMENT PAY**

Any person retired from the uniformed services or their surviving spouse, shall be allowed an exemption from the South Carolina State Income Tax of \$3,000 until age 65. At age 65 \$10,000 of retirement pay is exempt. For more information call 803.898.5709.

### **TAX EXEMPTION FOR COMPENSATION, PENSION, DISABILITY RETIREMENT PAY AND VA PAYMENTS**

Provides that federal tax exempt moneys received from pension or compensation provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, or disability pay from the Armed Forces will not be included in South Carolina tax. For more information call 1.800.827.1000.

### **PROPERTY TAXES - HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION**

All persons who have been declared permanently and totally disabled by the Social Security Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or other state or federal agencies, are eligible for a homestead exemption in an amount set by the General Assembly. This also applies to persons over age 65. For more information, contact your county and municipal tax offices.

### **ADMISSIONS TAX EXEMPTION**

Provides for the exemption of admissions taxes to athletic contests in which junior American Legion athletic teams are participants unless the proceeds are given to individual players in the form of salary or otherwise. For more information call 803.612.1171.

### **PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

Provides that the dwelling house in which a Veteran resides who has been rated as 100 percent permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected disability by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, an Ex-POW, or a Medal of Honor recipient may be tax exempt. The tax exemption applies to the surviving spouse and may be transferred when purchasing another dwelling. For more information, contact your county and municipal tax offices. The Department of Revenue can be found on the web at [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org) or at 803.898.5700.

### **SPECIALY ADAPTED HOUSING**

Provides for the exemption of state, county and municipal taxes on the residence of Veterans who have lost the use of their lower extremities or who have paralysis of one lateral half of the body resulting from injury to the motor centers of the brain. For more information, contact your county and municipal tax offices. The Department of Revenue can be found on the web at [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org) or at 803.898.5700.

### **ACTIVE-DUTY PAY RELEVANT TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE & TAXATION**

Non-resident armed services personnel, who are legal residents of other states, stationed within South Carolina by virtue of military orders are not subject to South Carolina income tax on their service pay. They are, however, subject to tax on any other income earned in South Carolina by spouses of service personnel. For more information, visit the Department of Revenue on the web at [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org) or 803.898.5709.



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- A government issued ID
- Social Security Numbers
- Any income information
- Deduction and credit information
- Healthcare coverage information (Forms 1095-A, 1095-B, 1095-C)
- **TO E-FILE, you must have last year's AGI or PIN**

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FORT JACKSON | SHAW AFB | CHARLESTON AFB | MCENTIRE JOINT NATIONAL GUARD BASE | MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT PARRIS ISLAND  
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT | NAVAL WEAPONS STATION CHARLESTON | CHARLESTON COAST GUARD SECTOR

# ACTIVE MILITARY



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. ERIC HARRIS/RELEASED

## ARMY FORT JACKSON

Fort Jackson is the largest and most active Initial Entry Training Center in the U.S. Army, training 50% of all Soldiers and 70% of the women entering the Army each year. Providing the Army with trained, disciplined, motivated and physically fit warriors who espouse the Army's core values and are focused on teamwork is the post's primary mission. Accomplishing that mission means training in excess of 50,000 basic training and advanced individual training Soldiers every year. Fort Jackson is home to the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute, the U.S. Army Chaplains Center and School and the Defense Academy for Credibility Assessment. The Fort will continue to grow in the coming years as a result of the recent Base Realignment and Closure Commission's decision to make Fort Jackson the home of the Army's only Drill Sergeant School, the Department of Defense Joint Center of Excellence for Military Chaplaincy and one of four new Regional Readiness Sustainment Commands. Fort Jackson is located in the city of Columbia.

Pictured Above: Retired U.S. Army Col. Walter Marm, a Medal of Honor recipient, speaks with Soldiers after observing chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives training during Medal of Honor week at Fort Jackson.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN KENNY HOLSTON/RELEASED

## AIR FORCE SHAW AIR FORCE BASE AND CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE

Shaw Air Force Base is home to the Air Force's largest combat F-16 wing -- the 20th Fighter Wing-- whose mission is to provide, project and sustain combat-ready air forces. Shaw also serves as home to Headquarters Ninth Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces, whose primary mission is to project decisive air and space power for U.S. Central Command and America. Shaw Air Force Base is located adjacent to Sumter.

Charleston Air Force Base, the 437th Airlift Wing, together with the 315th Airlift Wing (Reserves), provides a large part of Air Mobility Command's global reach airlift capability. The mission is to fly C-17s and provide airlift of troops and passengers, military equipment, cargo and aeromedical equipment and supplies. Twenty C-17 Globemaster III's took off from Charleston Air Force Base on December 21, 2006 which launched a record-breaking formation of C-17 aircraft. It was the largest formation of C-17's to take flight from a single base. Charleston Air Force Base is located near Charleston.

Pictured Above: U.S. Air Force Capt. Betsy Hand, a 77th Fighter Squadron (FS) pilot, situates her gear inside the cockpit of a U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter aircraft before climbing into the aircraft January 31, 2012, at Shaw Air Force Base.





U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SGT. BRIAN CALHOUN/RELEASED

## NATIONAL GUARD

### MCENTIRE JOINT NATIONAL GUARD BASE

The South Carolina Air National Guard was formed in December 1946 and today is made up of 1,200 members who train at McEntire Joint National Guard Base. About 900 of those assigned to the SCANG are traditional Guard men and women who work in the community and train part-time with the Air National Guard. About 300 federal employees serve as full-time technicians at McEntire and drill with their respective Air Guard units. The 169th Fighter Wing is the primary unit of the SCANG. The mission of the 169th FW is to maintain wartime readiness and the ability to mobilize and deploy expeditiously to carry out tactical air missions or combat support activities in the event of a war or military emergency. The SCANG operates as part of the Total Force of the U.S. military and is fully integrated with the active duty Air Force to perform its military mission. The 169th FW flies the F-16 Fighting Falcon, a single-seat multi-purpose fighter with the capability to fly at up to twice the speed of sound. McEntire Joint National Guard Base is located near Eastover and 12 miles from Columbia.

Pictured Above: Sgt. Jacob Reese, an AH-64D “Apache” Attack Helicopter Repairer, with the S.C. Army National Guard’s 1-151 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, installs a blade wedge on the main rotor of the aircraft, October 5, 2014, at McEntire Joint National Guard Base.



U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTO BY CPL. CAITLIN BRINK/RELEASED

## MARINE CORPS

### MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT PARRIS ISLAND

### MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT

Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island is an 8,095 acre military installation tasked with the training of enlisted Marines. Male recruits living east of the Mississippi River and female recruits from all over the U.S. report here to receive their initial training. Parris Island, located near Beaufort, is one of the most visited military facilities in the world.

Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort is the home of Marine Aircraft Group 31, which is comprised of seven F/A-18 Hornet squadrons, an aviation logistics squadron and a headquarters element. The mission of Marine Aircraft Group 31 is to conduct anti-air warfare and offensive air support operations in support of Fleet Marine Forces from advance bases, expeditionary airfields and aircraft carriers, and to conduct such other air operations as may be directed.

Pictured Above: Marines from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island’s burial team salute the Nation’s flag as it is held over the casket of Medal of Honor recipient Capt. John James McGinty III, during his funeral January 23, 2014.



DOD PHOTO BY JAMES M. BOWMAN, U.S. AIR FORCE/RELEASED

## NAVY

### NAVAL WEAPONS STATION CHARLESTON

Naval Weapons Station Charleston is located on the west bank of the Cooper River near Charleston. The base encompasses more than 17,000 acres, 16-plus miles of waterfront, four deep-water piers and 38.2 miles of railroad and 292 miles of road. The Weapons Station has expanded its mission with over 40 tenant commands, and today is a training center, with the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command, Nuclear Power Training Unit, Propulsion Facility and Border Patrol satellite academy; East Coast Consolidated Brig; Mobile Mine Assembly Unit; Explosive Ordnance Detachments; Marine Corps Reserve Center; an engineering complex, with the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center (SPAWAR, this is the largest employer in the Charleston area) and is close to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southeast; 100+ above-ground ammunition magazines, maintenance and storage of military ordnance including mines and serves as an Army logistics hub, the busiest continental United States surface port in the defense transportation system.

Pictured Above: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Errol Samuel, left, instructs Capt. Andrew Cawood on aiming procedures during an M-16 qualification course at Naval Weapons Station Charleston.



U.S. COAST GUARD PHOTO BY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS WALTER SHINN/RELEASED

## COAST GUARD

### COAST GUARD SECTOR CHARLESTON

Coast Guard Sector Charleston is located on the east side of the Ashley River within the historical district of the City of Charleston. This base participates in the five missions of the Coast Guard: maritime safety, maritime security, maritime mobility, national defense and protection of natural resources. The Coast Guard Charleston Base was first commissioned at its present site in 1914 and the administration building, built in 1859, is included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Pictured Above: Crew members aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton, the first National Security Cutter on the East Coast, render honors during a commissioning ceremony held at the Charleston-Union Pier Terminal in Charleston.

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2

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