Women's Services | Healthcare | Education | VA Benefits

SCVets

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS, ACTIVE MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES | VOLUME 3

A Community Resource Provided by:

scThrive

Veteran Services | Employment | Homeless to Housing | Other Resources

Thank you, SC Veterans

You matter to us.

SC Thrive is intentional in our approach to serving military members, Veterans, and their families in South Carolina. We appreciate your unwavering dedication to our nation and to our state, and we want you to know that we make that same commitment in ensuring you have access to all the quality-of-life resources you deserve. For years, SC Thrive has built relationships of trust with community-based organizations, nonprofits, healthcare entities, workforce, and federal and state agencies in an effort to help families reach self-sustainability. You worked hard to serve our country, now let us work hard to serve you! 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.

sc Thrive
800.726.8774 | scthrive.org

Tricia Richardson
Chief Executive Officer,
SC Thrive

A Note from SC Thrive's Veterans Team...

The SC Thrive Veterans Team is proud to serve our state's Veterans. We want to thank every person that has served in the United States Armed Forces. We work hard to ensure every Veteran and their loved ones are aware of the many resources available to them. Our team appreciates the sacrifices made by Service members and their families.

Eva Shockey
Training & Veterans Manager,
SC Thrive

Tasha McClendon
SNAP & Veterans Coordinator,
SC Thrive

SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS

310,674 WARTIME VETERANS

2,173 WWII VETERANS

14,636 KOREAN CONFLICT VETERANS

124,740 VIETNAM ERA VETERANS

183,777 GULF WAR ERA VETERANS

79,080 PEACETIME VETERANS

389,754
SOUTH CAROLINIANS ARE VETERANS

47,420
SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN VETERANS

342,334
SOUTH CAROLINA MALE VETERANS

Vet Population 2022, Veterans by State and Period of Service From National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics.
http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Veteran_Population.asp (Accessed 6/10/2022)

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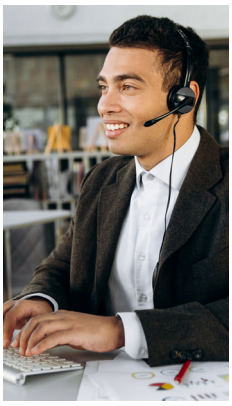

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ABOUT SCVETS RESOURCE GUIDE

The SCVets Resource Guide is produced by SC Thrive in cooperation with numerous community resource agencies serving Veterans, active duty and their families across South Carolina. This resource guide intends to help you break down barriers to ensure you have access to all the benefits you deserve.

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.

ABOUT SC THRIVE

SC Thrive is a nonprofit offering solutions to South Carolinians in need of accessing resources but facing a multitude of barriers. With several online services, training programs and more than 400 strategic partnerships, SC Thrive meets people where they are and helps simplify complex processes - giving South Carolinians more efficient access to the quality of life resources needed to move toward stability.

sc Thrive

800.726.8774 | 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUMTER
14 Law Range
141 N Main St., Room 100
Sumter, SC 29150
Phone: 803.436.2302/2303
Fax: 803.436.2408

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

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

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

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 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 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

TIPS FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Talk to your spouse and children
Involve your spouse and children throughout your transition. This is a big adjustment for everyone. Your family may have routines that they created in your absence. It is important for everyone to communicate openly and honestly with each other throughout the transition.

Be intentional with self-care
Transitioning into civilian life can be difficult and overwhelming for many people. You need to remember to be kind to yourself and take care of yourself. Try to have a couple go-to self-care rituals in place for when you feel like you need to do something for yourself. It could be something as simple as sitting on your favorite bench at the park or writing in a journal.

Take full advantage of educational and professional development opportunities
Veterans suggest that Service members take advantage of every opportunity the military has to better themselves, further their education, and improve their leadership skills, while they're active. Also, remember to take advantage of things like the GI Bill when you get out. For example, you may be able to start on your next steps in education and master's while working as a young captain.

Evaluate your job skills
You probably have a lot of transferable skills from your time serving. Figuring out which job these skills transfer to is part of the problem for many people. Fortunately, there are many online tools available to help you search for a new job. One great resource is **mynextmove.org**. The website is designed to help veterans find jobs. You can search for jobs by industry and you can search for one similar to your military job.

Develop roots in your community
The military provides a sense of community and it can be a big adjustment to leave that. It helps to quickly find a sense of community in your civilian life. You can recreate that sense in Veteran groups, churches, or some other community organization. It can be especially beneficial if the group is involved with some form of charity or way of giving back. Working toward bettering your community can help give you that sense of purpose that the military instills.

These tips were created in collaboration with:
Lefford Fate
Support Services Director at City of Sumter

Brian Rauschenbach
Economic Development Project Manager at Sumter Economic/ TheLINK

Scott Zobrist
Executive Director, Support of Shaw

DID YOU KNOW?

CREDIT OF STATE RETIREMENT FOR MILITARY SERVICE

If you are an active member of one of the retirement systems administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority, you may also establish up to six years of service credit for any period of military service for which you do not already have service credit in one of the correlated defined benefit plans.

Go to www.retirement.sc.gov and log into Member Access to request a cost estimate.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) serves America's Veterans and separating Service members by preparing them for meaningful careers, providing employment resources and expertise and protecting their employment rights.

To visit the DOL webpage, go to **https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/training/veterans**.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Vocational Rehabilitation

The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) 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 assistance to help you find competitive employment, and support you 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
OR CALL 800.832.7526

SC Works

SC Works Centers across the state have staff, many of whom are Veterans or Service members themselves, who are specifically trained to assist military jobseekers find civilian employment.

The Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

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 system partner agencies that support employment and training. Eligible Veterans and spouses are given priority for training and other services. To find a center near you visit **scworks.org**.

Why use SC Works?

Through the support and assistance from our Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) , Veterans can receive priority employment services, which includes group and individual career coaching, job referrals, resume preparation and job training programs and services. Find your nearest SC Works Center at **scworks.org/about-us/statewide-centers**

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)

DVOP representatives provide intensive case management services to targeted Veterans with emphasis in meeting the employment needs of those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER)

LVERs conduct employer outreach to help Veterans gain employment and provide them with individualized job development services. They market job-seeking Veterans as individuals who have highly valuable skills and experience, and serve as advocates for Veterans with businesses, industries, and other community-based organizations.

Other Veteran SC Works Benefits

Veterans not only receive priority service in our SC Works Centers, but also through SC Works Online Services (SCWOS). For the first 24 hours that a job is listed on the SCWOS, only jobseekers that have identified themselves as a member of the military community can view and apply for the position. To visit the SC Works Veteran Portal, go to **https://veterans.scworks.org/vosnet/Default.aspx**

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
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. AUSAs Charleston Chapter helps troops and Veterans 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
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
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
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
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 Department of Employment and workforce (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
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.scchamber.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.

RESOURCE CONNECTION CENTERS

Berkeley Center: 325 E. Main St., Moncks Corner, SC 29461
843.761.6033
Dorchester Center: 1325A Boonehill Rd., Summerville, SC 29485
843.695.4261
www.tuw.org/TUW-RCC
The Resource Connection Centers of Trident United Way helps individuals and families in Berkeley and Dorchester counties increase their financial stability. Free services can include access to resources, employment assistance, technology access, skill building, and referral services.

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.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can navigate the VA claims process with a Veteran Serving organization. Services are always FREE. Paying for services will not expedite the process.

VA BENEFITS

Your Key to Most VA Benefits and Services

PROOF OF MILITARY SERVICE SEPARATION DOCUMENTS

Your key to most VA benefits and services is DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty. This form is often referred to as DD Form 214.
It is proof of your military service and shows:

- The character of your discharge
- Your record of service
- Your current classification code

Remember to keep your DD Form 214 in a safe and accessible location. Make sure that your next of kin or designated representatives know how to access it.

ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS

Members of the National Guard are issued one of the following forms upon separation as proof of service:

- NGB Form 22, Report of Separation and Record of Service
- NGB Form 23, Retirement Points Accounting

Keep in mind, the reserve components do not use any single form similar to DD Form 214. The Air Force Reserve provides a letter on active-duty service from the Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC) that VA regional offices accept in lieu of DD Form 214. If you were discharged from the Selected Reserve, you may submit a copy of your latest annual points statement and evidence of honorable service. If you still serve in the Selected Reserve or the National Guard, you must include an original statement of service signed by your commander showing the length of time that you have been a member of the Selected Reserve

CHARACTER OF DISCHARGE

Character of discharge is one of the most important items on your DD Form 214. Generally, to receive VA benefits and services, your character of discharge or service needs to be one of the following:

- Honorable General discharge (under honorable conditions)
- People who receive other types of general discharge (under honorable conditions), bad conduct, dishonorable or uncharacterized (entry-level separation) may still qualify for VA benefits and services depending on VA's determination.

You should apply no matter what and let VA determine your eligibility. Most importantly, know that there is help available for your questions and someone to connect you with VA resources you need. You can apply for a discharge upgrade at **VA.gov** by answering a series of questions. Department of Defense (DOD) makes the decision for upgrades. If your discharge is upgraded, you will be eligible for VA benefits you earned during your period of service.

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

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** or call for assistance: 803.734.4014.

ENHANCED ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

Veterans, including members of the National Guard and activated reservists, 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 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.

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 guaranty 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. For more information on VA home Loans visit **www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/**.

DO YOU QUALIFY FOR VA INSURANCE?

Visit this website:
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 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 completely separate governmental programs. 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 benefits 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). SGA income is assessed based on the nature of your disability.

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 TO

www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi

EBENEFITS:

This self-service account allows you to view personal data about yourself in VA and DOD systems, apply for benefits online, check the status of your claims, update your address information and much more. It also provides a list of links to other sites that provide information about military and Veteran benefits.

If you are a Veteran, you can:

- Apply for Veteran benefits
- Check the status of your claims applications
- Upload documents in support of your claims
- Search for jobs
- View your Tricare insurance
- And more

If you are a Service member you can:

- Use the eLearning Center for the online transition assistance program
- Transfer Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits
- View Tricare insurance
- Sign up for Service member out-of-pocket medical expenses (CCD)

If you are a family member of a Veteran or Service member you can also access beneficial features.

eBenefits is located at **www.ebenefits.va.gov**. Before you can access and use eBenefits you must get a DS Logon or Common Access Card (CAC). If you are already registered in DEERS, you are eligible for a DS Logon. Once you have a DS Logon, it's valid for the rest of your life.

REGISTER FOR AN EBENEFITS ACCOUNT ONLINE:

There are two types of registration, Basic and Premium. Many people will be able to get a premium account online in minutes. If not, you will be given a basic account which has limited access. You will be told how to upgrade to a premium account which you can often do either by visiting a VA facility, mailing in documents, or answering some questions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

www.ebenefits.va.gov

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. Visit **va.gov/apply** to apply for any of the following VA disability compensation programs.

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.**

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 **va.gov/disability/dependency-indemnity-compensation/**

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, SMC 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.**

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.**

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 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.**

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.**

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 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 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** for more information.

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

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 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.

What happens during a committal service for a Veteran or Service member?

When you arrive at the cemetery, a cemetery representative will meet you and give you the deceased's burial documents. They will lead you to a committal shelter. The committal service takes place at this location, not at the gravesite. The burial happens after the committal service.

Note: Please be aware that viewing facilities aren't available at national cemeteries, and the family must arrange for funeral services at a different location.

The family may choose to have readings by a friend, family member, or member of the clergy of their faith. They may also request to have military funeral honors performed at the committal shelter.

MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS INCLUDE:

- The playing of "Taps"
- A rifle detail
- A color guard
- Uniformed Service members who present the burial flag

Note: If you requested a headstone, marker, or medallion, we will arrange for it to be delivered within 60 days.

HOW CAN I PAY MY RESPECTS AT A COMMITTAL SERVICE?

You may:
Bring flowers to accompany the casket or urn when it's taken from the committal shelter to the gravesite, and visit the gravesite at the end of the workday, but not immediately following the ceremony.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY?

Veterans, Service members, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, as well as other benefits, if they meet requirements. Veterans may be ineligible if they meet certain requirements. For a complete list of eligibility requirements for Veterans, Service members, and family visit **www.va.gov/burials-memorials/eligibility/**.

AM I ELIGIBLE FOR ALLOWANCES TO HELP PAY FOR A VETERAN'S BURIAL AND FUNERAL COSTS?

You may be eligible for Veterans burial allowances if you're paying for the burial and funeral costs and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another government agency or the Veteran's employer. You must also meet all of these requirements.

- One of these relationships or professional roles describes your connection to the Veteran:
- You are the Veteran's surviving spouse (Note: We recognize same-sex marriages.), or
- You are the surviving partner from a legal union (a relationship made formal in a document issued by the state recognizing the union), or
- You are a surviving child of the Veteran, or
- You are a parent of the Veteran, or
- You are the executor or administrator of the Veteran's estate (someone who officially represents the Veteran)

WHAT KIND OF BURIAL BENEFITS CAN I GET?

If you are eligible, you may receive these benefits:

- VA burial allowance for burial and funeral costs
- VA plot or interment allowance for the cost of the plot (gravesite) or interment
- VA transportation reimbursement for the cost of transporting the Veteran's remains to the final resting place

Note: You'll need to pay for these services or other costs first before you apply for an allowance.

IS THERE A TIME LIMIT FOR FILING?

You must file a claim for a non-service-connected burial allowance within two years after the Veteran's burial or cremation. If a Veteran's discharge was changed after death from dishonorable to another status, you must file for an allowance claim within two years after the discharge update.

There is no time limit to file for a service-connected burial, plot, or interment allowance.

WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO SEND WITH MY APPLICATION?

You will need to send copies of these documents:

- The Veteran's military discharge papers (DD Form 214 or other separation documents)
- The Veteran's death certificate
- Any documents or receipts you have for the cost of transporting the Veteran's remains
- A statement of account (preferably with the letterhead of the funeral director or cemetery owner) that has this information:
    - The Veteran's name, and
    - The type of service or item purchased, and
    - Any credits, and
    - The unpaid balance

AS A SURVIVING SPOUSE, DO I NEED TO FILE A CLAIM FOR BURIAL COSTS?

No, you don't need to file a claim as a surviving spouse, as long as you are listed as the Veteran's spouse on the Veteran's profile. When we receive notice of the Veteran's death, we automatically pay a set amount to those eligible surviving spouses to help pay for the plot, the cost of interment, or transportation of the remains to the cemetery.

Honoring Our Veterans

National & State Cemeteries

1 BEAUFORT NATIONAL CEMETERY

1601 Boundary St., Beaufort, SC 29902-3947
Phone: 843.524.3925
Fax: 843.524.8538
Visitation Hours Open daily from 8:00 AM to sunset.

2 FLORENCE NATIONAL CEMETERY

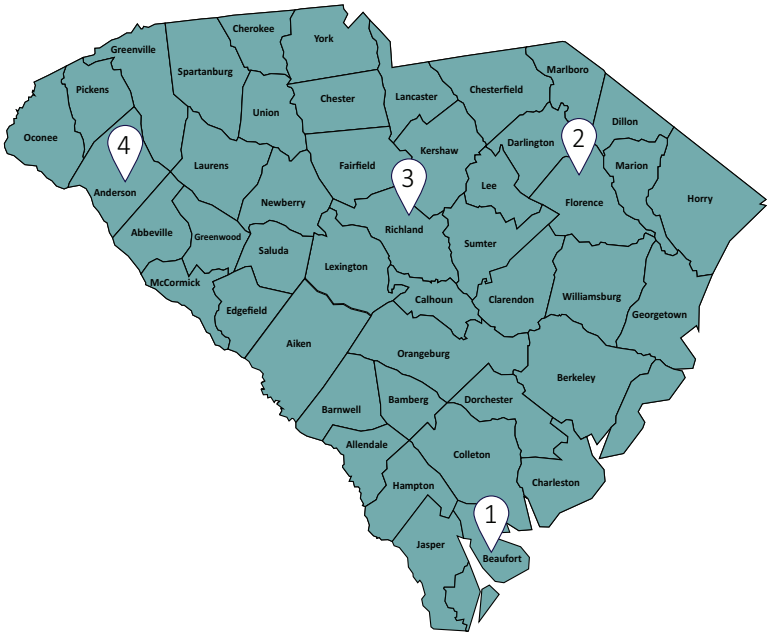
803 East National Cemetery Rd., Florence, SC 29501
Phone: 843.669.8783
Fax: 843.662.8318
Visitation Hours Open daily during daylight hours.

3 FORT JACKSON NATIONAL CEMETERY

4170 Percival Rd., Columbia, SC 29229
Phone: 866.577.5248
Fax: 803.699.3086
Visitation Hours Open daily from sunrise to sunset.

4 M.J. "DOLLY" COOPER STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

140 Inway Dr., Anderson, SC 29621
Phone: 864.332.8022
Visitation Hours Open daily from 8:00 AM to sunset.



Find more details about your nearest national or state cemetery at **www.cem.va.gov/find-cemetery**

CONTACT THE NATIONAL CEMETERY SCHEDULING OFFICE

The funeral director you've chosen can help you with contacting the National Cemetery Scheduling Office and arranging the burial.

• For burial in a national cemetery, fax any discharge papers to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 866.900.6417. You can also scan and email the papers to NCA.Scheduling@va.gov with the person's name you're requesting burial benefits for in the subject line.

• You can call 800.535.1117 to confirm the burial application. Be sure to have all the preparation information handy that's listed at **va.gov/burials-memorials/pre-need-eligibility**

The National Cemetery Scheduling Office is open every day from 8:00 AM to 7:30 PM ET. The National Cemetery Scheduling Office can tell you the available burial times for each cemetery.

CONTACT THE NATIONAL CEMETERY DIRECTLY

You will need to contact a national cemetery directly if you ever need to schedule a burial for an active-duty Service member, cancel or reschedule a burial, change information on-file with the scheduling office, or request disinterment and/or relocation to another national cemetery. You will also need to contact them directly if you need information that is specific to a cemetery, like what can be inscribed on a headstone, the policy for flowers, and the hours of operation.

BURIAL AT SEA PROGRAM

If you have questions about the Burial at Sea program, please contact the United States Navy Mortuary Affairs office toll-free at 866.787.0081.

FINANCIAL HELP FOR BURIAL

You may be able to get financial help for burial and funeral costs if you are the spouse of record (the legally recognized spouse) or a designated (legally chosen) family member of a Veteran at **va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance**.

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

The Veterans Pension program provides monthly payments to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or disability requirements, and who have income and net worth within certain limits. Find out if you are eligible for this benefit.

ELIGIBILITY

You may be eligible for the Veterans Pension program if you meet these requirements.

Both of these must be true:
• You didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, and
your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your net worth includes all personal property you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe. Your net worth includes the net worth of your spouse.

And at least one of these must be true about your service:
• You started on active duty before September 8, 1980, and you served at least 90 days on active duty with at least one day during wartime, or
• You started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and 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 wartime, or
• You were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and you hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

And at least one of these must be true:
• You are at least 65 years old, or
• You have a permanent and total disability, or
• You are a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability, or
• You are getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income

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

Understanding Veterans Pension

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

AID AND ATTENDANCE AND HOUSEBOUND

You may be eligible for this benefit if you get a VA pension and you meet at least one of these requirements.

At least one of these must be true:
• You need another person to help you perform daily activities, like bathing, feeding, and dressing, or
• You have to stay in bed—or spend a large portion of the day in bed—because of illness, or
• You are a patient in a nursing home due to the loss of mental or physical abilities related to a disability, or
• Your eyesight is limited (even with glasses or contact lenses you have only 5/200 or less in both eyes; or concentric contraction of the visual field to five degrees or less)

Housebound benefits eligibility
You may be eligible for this benefit if you get a VA pension and you spend most of your time in your home because of a permanent disability (a disability that doesn't go away).

Note: You can't get Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits at the same time.

How do I get this benefit?
You can apply for VA Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits in one of these ways:
• Send a completed VA form to your pension management center (PMC)
• Fill out VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance) and mail it to the PMC for your state. You can have your doctor fill out the examination information section.

You can also include with your VA form:
• Other evidence, like a doctor's report, that shows you need Aid and Attendance or Housebound care
Details about what you normally do during the day and how you get to places
• Details that help show what kind of illness, injury, or mental or physical disability affects your ability to do things, like take a bath, on your own

If you are in a nursing home, you'll also need to fill out a Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance (VA Form 21-0779).

Make The Most of Your Budget

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR MEDICARE PREMIUMS WITH MEDICARE SAVINGS PLAN

It can be difficult to keep up with rising Medicare monthly premiums. The monthly payment for Medicare has gone from $148 to $170 this past year alone. Luckily, the Medicare Savings Program may be able to help you with some of the costs.

The Medicare Savings Program helps pay for some out-of-pocket costs such as Medicare premiums, deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and prescription drug costs for qualifying individuals.

There are three different Medicare Savings Program options in SC. You may be eligible if you:

- Meet income and asset guidelines
- Have Medicare Part A
- Live in South Carolina
- Meet other qualifications specific to Medicare Savings Program options

Even if you have a Medicare provider, you may still be paying for your Medicare Part B and premiums. You can check to see if you are paying for your Medicare Part B premium by looking at your Social Security Award letter. That letter will indicate the total amount deducted from your monthly Social Security check if you still pay for your Medicare premiums.

Remember, the Medicare Savings Program is not Medicare coverage; it is a benefit to help you pay for Medicare costs. Look at your insurance cards to see what Medicare coverage you have. Most people have a Medicare Advantage plan or a Medicare Supplement plan. Even though you have these plans based on the health coverage you need, you might still be paying for either plan in conjunction with your standard Medicare plan. If you have questions about your current Medicare coverage, call the customer support number listed on the back of your insurance card. If you are working with an insurance agent, you should contact them to see if your current plan is the best for you.

After you submit your Medicare Savings Program application, keep up with mail you receive from the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SC DHHS). They may provide an approval or denial letter or ask for additional supporting documentation. Respond promptly to all requests for supporting documentation to avoid a lapse in coverage or a denial.

Allow 30 to 45 business days for a response after your application is processed. If you have not heard or received anything from SC DHHS within that time frame, please call them at 888.549.0220 for further assistance.

You may be just a phone call away from hundreds of dollars in monthly savings with the help of this program. Call the SC Thrive Contact Center at 800.726.8774 and choose option 1 to get started on a Medicare Savings Program application over the phone.

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 & MENTAL HEALTH

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's 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

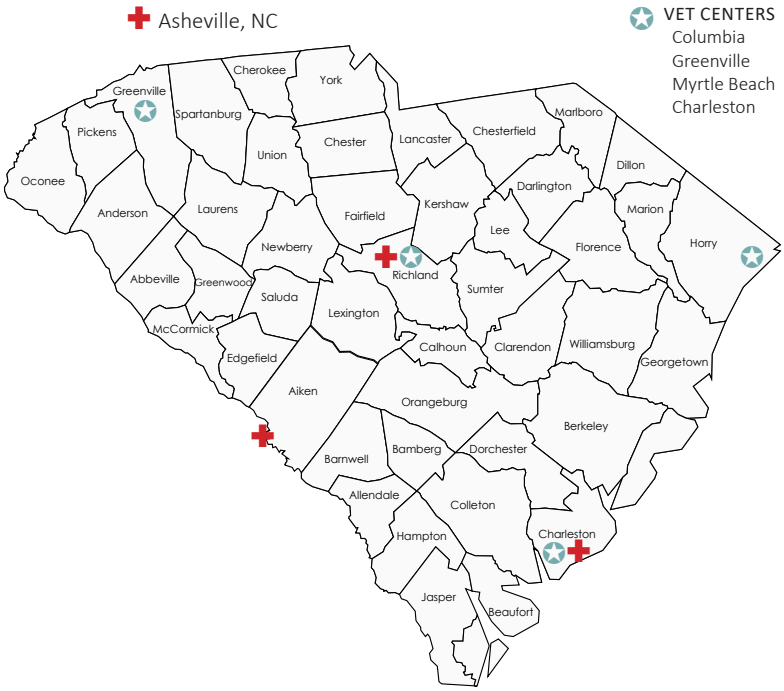
VA Medical Facilities

WM JENNINGS BRYAN DORN VA MEDICAL CENTER
6439 Garners Ferry Rd., Columbia, SC
803.776.4000 or 800.293.8262

RALPH H. JOHNSON VA MEDICAL CENTER
109 Bee St., Charleston, SC
843.577.5011 or 888.878.6884

CHARLIE NORWOOD VA MEDICAL CENTER
1 Freedom Way, Augusta, GA
706.733.0188 or 800.836.5561
Mental Health Ext. 26237

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



SOUTH CAROLINA VET CENTERS

www.vetcenter.va.gov

The goal of the 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

GREENVILLE VET CENTER
3 Caledon Ct., Suite B
Greenville, SC 29615
864.271.2711

CHARLESTON VET CENTER
3625 W. Montague Ave.
North Charleston, SC 29418
843.789.7000

MYRTLE BEACH VET CENTER
2024 Corporate Centre Dr., Suite 103
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
843.232.2441

VET CENTER CALL CENTER
877.927.8387 is a free, around the clock confidential call center where Veterans, Service members and their families can talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in transitioning after military service or trauma and get connected to their nearest Vet Center. The call center team is comprised of combat Veterans from several eras as well as family members of Veterans.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)

AIKEN VA CLINIC
951 Millbrook Ave.
Aiken, SC 29803
803.643.9016

ANDERSON CBOC
3030 N Hwy. 81
Anderson, SC 29621
864.224.5450
Mental Health Ext. 2312

BEAUFORT VA CBOC
1 Pinckney Rd.
Beaufort, SC 29902
843.770.0444
Mental Health: 843.789.7311

FLORENCE CBOC
1822 Sally Hill Farms Rd.
Florence, SC 29501
843.292.8383
803.776.4000
Mental Health Ext. 2016

GOOSE CREEK CLINIC CBOC
2418 NNPTC Circle
Goose Creek, SC 29445
843.577.5011, Ext. 3100
Mental Health: 843.789.7311

GREENVILLE VA CBOC
41 Park Creek Dr.
Greenville, SC 29605
864.299.1600
Mental Health Ext. 2873

MYRTLE BEACH VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC
3381 Phillis Blvd.
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
843.477.0177
Mental Health: 843.789.7311

NORTH CHARLESTON CLINIC
6450 Rivers Ave.
North Charleston, SC 29406
843.818.5100

ORANGEBURG CBOC
1767 Villagepark Dr.
Orangeburg, SC 29118
803.533.1335 or 803.726.4000, Ext. 2242

ROCK HILL CBOC
2670 Mills Park Dr.
Rock Hill, SC 29732
803.366.4848
Mental Health: 803.325.9526

SAVANNAH VA CLINIC
1170 Shawnee St.
Savannah, GA 31419
912.920.0214

SPARTANBURG CBOC
279 North Grove Medical Park Dr.
Spartanburg, SC 29303
803.726.4000 or 864.582.7025 Ext. 2113

SUMTER CBOC
407 North Salem Ave.
Sumter, SC 29150
803.938.9901 or 803.776.4000 Ext. 2442

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.

E. ROY STONE VETERANS PAVILION
2200 Harden Street
Columbia, SC 29203
Phone: 803.737.5301
Fax: 803.737.5364

PALMETTO PATRIOTS HOME
120 Hampshire Drive
Gaffney, SC 29341
Phone: 864.649.2000
palmettopatriotshome.com

RICHARD MICHAEL CAMPBELL VETERANS NURSING HOME
4605 Belton Highway
Anderson, SC 29621
Phone: 864.261.6734
Fax: 864.261.6808
www.state.sc.us/dmh/campbell/

VETERANS VICTORY HOUSE
2461 Sidneys Rd.,
Walterboro, SC 29488
Phone: 843.538.3000
www.state.sc.us/dmh/victoryhouse/

VETERAN VILLAGE
1200 E. National Cemetery Road
Florence, SC 29506
Phone: 833.444.1776
veteranvillagesc.com

Caregiver Support

If you are caring for a Veteran, the VA Caregiver Support Program offers training, educational resources, and a variety of tools to help you succeed. Call 1.855.260.3274, 8 AM–8 PM ET, Monday–Friday for advice on being a caregiver and find your local Caregiver Support Coordinator.

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 5-6 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 the 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

VAs 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

VAs 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 VAs 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 5-6 of this guide.

Popular VA Health Care Questions

REVIEW OF HEALTH CARE FAQS

What are the 2022 copay rates for VA and VA-approved healthcare?
As of October 1, 2021, the VA Health Care System has started to collect copayments again for medical care and pharmacy services. They continue to offer options for financial hardship assistance.

If you need help, call the VA Health Care System at 866.400.1238 (TTY: 711). They are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

Does VA address the specific health needs of LGBTQ+ Veterans?
Yes. VA is committed to serving the health needs of LGBTQ+ Veterans and providing care in a sensitive, safe environment at all VA health facilities. You can also find out more about LGBTQ+ programs at VA medical centers across the nation.

What if I need help understanding my benefits or accessing services?
If you want to know more about your VA health care benefits, your health care team, and where you will go for care, we can help. If you need help accessing services, call their toll-free hotline at 877.222.8387, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

What are my dental care options?
If you qualify for VA dental care benefits, you may be able to get some or all your dental care through VA. Find out how to get VA dental care or how to buy dental insurance if you don't qualify at **va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits/dental-care/**. You can apply online by filling out the 10-10EZ health care application.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are Special Provisions for Combat Veterans

POST 9/11 MILITARY 2VA (M2VA) CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Serving Service Members and Veterans During Transition and Beyond (Times of War- Times of Peace), the M2VA Program offers assistance with access to health care and benefits through outreach, case management and advocacy services.

Priority is given to all Veterans who have served in combat theater since November 11, 1998 and are transitioning to civilian life.

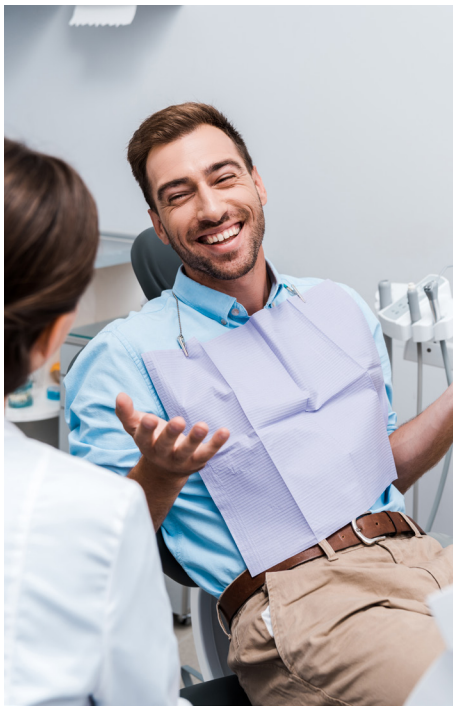
Benefits Include:
- Free medical and/or mental health care for five years from separation from active duty for conditions possibly related to service
- Free dental care within 180 days of discharge from active duty. Must have 90 consecutve days on active duty
- Once you enroll, you have lifetime benefits

Enrollment Process:
Complete VA Form 10-10EZ (Application for Health Benefits) Attach your DD Form 214 (copy 4)

Send to:
Enrollment/Eligibility Office
Dorn VAMC
6439 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC 29209

An enrollment letter will be sent to you confirming your eligibility as a Combat Veteran. The letter may also remind you to contact the M2VA team. When contacting VA let the staff know you are an OEF-OIF-OND Combat Veteran.

Phone: 803.776.4000 Ext. 57303
Fax: 803. 647.5730



Get Support When You Need It Most

HOW REAL FAMILIES CAN ACCESS RESOURCES

Sometimes it's difficult navigating all the benefits that a person may be eligible for. Oftentimes we simply do not know where to start or even where to go to find help. There is a common misconception that service members or their surviving spouses are not eligible for certain public benefits because of their income, length of service, or discharge status. When it comes to public benefits, state agencies look at household income, assets, expenses, and other categorical criteria. One of the simplest benefits that a service member or veteran may be eligible for is a program called SNAP. SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that helps service members, and their families, increase their grocery budgets by allowing you to buy food at grocery stores, farmers markets, roadside stands, convenience stores and other retailers that accept EBT payments. SNAP benefits must be re-certified each year, however they come with added benefits such as reduced cost or free memberships to Sam's Club and CostCo, two-for-one fruit and vegetable programs called Healthy Bucks, Farmers Market vouchers for seniors, and many other benefits. For Veterans who are at least 60 years old, you may qualify for ESAP, which is a simplified SNAP application process, and has a longer eligibility term of three years. For ESAP or the Elderly Simplified Application Project, household members must not be working, meet the income guidelines, and are not currently receiving SNAP benefits.

When applying for SNAP or ESAP it is very important for veterans and service members to list all the expenses their household incurs, especially medical expenses. Out of pocket medical expenses shared on the SNAP application will help state agencies determine the amount of monthly benefits for which you are eligible. If you pay medical expenses of $35 or more per month including Medicare premiums that are deducted from Social Security payments, these can be disclosed on the application and will be calculated as a medical deduction expense. The key thing to remember is to share all your expenses and let the eligibility workers give you the results. Here is one example of how a surviving spouse of a veteran was helped through SC Thrive's SNAP outreach. This story was shared with our Veterans Coordinator, Tasha McClendon, also a Navy Veteran.

I met a widow of a Veteran at the Sterling Senior Center, and made a presentation about SNAP, ESAP, and other benefits offered through SC Thrive. I also completed applications on site to make it convenient for the seniors. After the presentation I noticed a woman walking up to me. We exchanged pleasantries, and instantly connected. She began telling me how she recently became a widow and had no clue where to start to receive VA benefits as a surviving spouse. She was really struggling to pay for food and her household expenses. I immediately completed her SNAP application, and as a veteran myself, I connected her to VA resources. A few weeks later I saw the woman at another event, and she shared with me that not only did she get approved for SNAP benefits; she was also receiving what she was entitled to from her spouse's years of service. I was so encouraged to know we could help a fellow military family go from a crisis situation to Surviving and Thriving. SC Thrive helps thousands of South Carolinians connect to resources they may be eligible for. We partner with The South Carolina Department of Social Services and The AARP Foundation to ensure more families get connected to SNAP and other life stabilizing resources. To learn more or to see if you are eligible, call SC Thrive at 1.800.726.8774.

scThrive

AARP Foundation
For a future without senior poverty.

Senior Food Security

AWARENESS, RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

Food insecurity is not having access to quality nutritious foods or enough food. Many Veterans and Service members suffer from food insecurity. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, research shows that U.S. military families and Veterans experience food insecurity at higher rates than the general population. Seniors are also at a higher risk of becoming food insecure. For older adults medical costs, chronic illness, and increased cost of living all factor into the reason for food insecurity. This applies to people who are not sure where their next meal is coming from and those who do not have access to the healthiest possible food options. One way we combat food insecurity is through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP helps people in need purchase healthy foods.

For older adults, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) implements the Elderly Simplified Application Process (ESAP). This process seeks to increase participation for seniors in SNAP by streamlining the application and certification process. Seniors who qualify receive benefits for a longer time period. According to SCDSS, the qualifications for ESAP in South Carolina are:

- everyone in the household must be aged 60 or older;
- or all household members aged 60 or older purchase and prepare food separately from the other household members;
- and no member receives earnings from work.

To apply for this program, call SC Thrive at 800.726.8774.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP can help increase your grocery budgets for healthy foods. SC seniors may qualify for an easier SNAP application process and a longer benefit period.

Call to apply today at 800.726.8774

scThrive

Mental Health & Wellness

BERKELEY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

South Carolina Department of Mental Health
403 Stoney Landing Rd., Moncks Corner, SC
843.761.8282
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; 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
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
The Center for Behavioral Health is part of a group of outpatient facilities that treat various problems related to substance abuse, specifically with opioid 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
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
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.

SEMPER FI FUND

760.725.3680 or 760.207.1588
www.thefund.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
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

P.O. Box 27232, Greenville, SC 29616
864.520.2073
Email: 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, health care and benefits, education and training, housing and employment. The model does not facilitate handouts but dictates that the warrior walk alongside his or her peer mentor, program manager or social worker in a team environment to generate goals and actionable solutions.

QUIT VET

1.855.QUIT.VET (1.855.784.8838), 9:00 AM–9:00 PM, Monday–Friday.
Tobacco quitlines can double your chance of quitting, compared with getting no support at all. Any Veteran receiving health care through VA is eligible to use the Quit VET quitline. Call the quitline to speak with a tobacco cessation counselor.

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 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.

Mental Health & Wellness

WAR VET CALL CENTER

877.WAR.VETS (1.877.927.8387), 24/7 The War Vet Call Center is a confidential call center where combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life.

WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER

855.VA.Women (1.855.829.6636) 8:00 AM –10:00 PM, Monday–Friday; 8:00 AM -6:30 PM, Saturday

The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) provides VA services and resources to women Veterans, their families, and caregivers. You can also chat online anonymously with a WVCC representative. Chat 24/7 at **www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/chat**.

REAL WARRIORS

866.966.1020, 24/7

Real Warriors, a program through the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE), provides information and resources about psychological health, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and traumatic brain injury.

www.realwarriors.net

COACHING INTO CARE

888.823.7458

This VA program provides guidance to Veterans' family members and friends for encouraging a reluctant Veteran they care about to reach out for support with a mental health challenge. Free, confidential assistance is available over the phone Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM, or emailing CoachingIntoCare@va.gov.

SC HOPES SUPPORT LINE

844.724.6737

This support line connects you with an experienced mental health and addiction counselor 24/7.

VETS4WARRIORS

855.838.8255

Vets4Warriors provides immediate, free, and long-term peer support through confidential phone, chat, text, and email conversations to help those we serve live better lives. They serve anyone who served in the military, as well as their caregivers and loved ones. Talk with someone today by visiting **vets4warriors.com**.

MAKE THE CONNECTION

Provides Veterans and their families a place to watch and share their experiences with mental health issues. Veterans can learn about others stories through reading, watching videos, or listening to podcasts. MTC also has information or signs and symptoms of different mental illnesses and resources on how to deal with them. Visit **maketheconnection.net**.

DOWNLOAD VA'S SELF-HELP APPS

Tools to help deal with common reactions like stress, sadness, and anxiety. You can also track your symptoms over time. There are also apps that help connect Veterans with PTSD treatment companions. Visit **ptsd.va.gov/appvid** to see the full list of apps.

VA MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES GUIDE

This guide will help Veterans determine what kind of help they need and then show them where and how to sign up and access mental health services. You can access this page by visiting **va.gov** and going to the Health Needs and Conditions page.

PROJECTED GROWTH

The Palmetto State is home to more than 45,000 women veterans. Women Veterans are one of the fasting growing populations. According to the National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics, the women veteran population in South Carolina will continue to increase by 1% yearly for the next three years.

WOMEN'S SERVICES

VA Medical Centers Women's Services

PRIMARY CARE

General services provided include disease prevention, health evaluations, nutrition counseling, weight control, smoking cessation and substance abuse counseling and treatment. Gender-specific primary care is also provided. These services include birth control, preconception counseling, menopausal support (hormone replacement therapy), and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, as well as screenings for cervical cancer (Pap smears) and breast cancer (mammograms).

Mental health services include evaluations and assistance for depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), mood and anxiety, and substance use problems. Assistance is also provided for those dealing with 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.

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA (MST)

Free, confidential (private) counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to military sexual trauma (MST) are available to women who have experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault during their military service.

SPECIALTY SERVICES

Screening and management of chronic (long-lasting) conditions, like heart disease, cancer, glandular disorders, diabetes, osteoporosis, and fibromyalgia. The services also include screening and management of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) like HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Reproductive care services include maternity care, sexual problems, tubal ligation, urinary incontinence, and more. It is illegal for VA to provide abortion or abortion counseling services.

VA provides infertility evaluation, management, and treatment services to Veterans who are enrolled and are eligible for VA healthcare. All enrolled and eligible Veterans may be provided with infertility services regardless of service connection, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, relationship, or marital status.

Other specialty services provided include prosthetic and sensory aid (PSA) services, like prosthetic limbs, hearing aids, and post-mastectomy items.

(Continued from previous page)

Referrals for physical therapy, exercise therapy, vocational therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, and other rehabilitation therapies are given to those in need of these services. Homebound and long-term care is provided for those who meet specific requirements.

Changes in IVF Coverage

Through legislation, the VA announced January 19, 2017, they were expanding fertility services to include counseling and treatment using assisted reproductive technologies—including in vitro fertilization (IVF). These services are available to Veterans and spouses of Veterans who have a service-connected disability that makes it impossible for them to have a baby without the help of fertility treatment. Veterans can begin scheduling appointments to find out if they qualify and to get a clinical exam, consultation, and initial treatment through this program.

Telephone Care

If you are a woman Veteran and you are currently signed up for VA healthcare, you can reach a VA healthcare provider at your local VA medical center by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This provider will answer questions and give you advice on health concerns. If you are currently signed up for VA healthcare, contact your VA medical center and ask for the provider's phone number.

scThrive

Survive 2 Thrive

A Women Veterans Support Group

Learn More:

Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Services for Women

VA Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) collaborates closely with the VA Center for Women Veterans, and VA Women Health Services to provide comprehensive and advanced prosthetic devices, sensory aids, and associated services to specifically meet the unique medical needs of women Veterans. The term "prosthetic" includes any medical device that supports or replaces loss of a body part or function. Any medically indicated item that is commercially available may be procured based on the Veteran's individualized needs, including customized devices such as bracing, artificial limbs and orthotic items, and wheelchairs.

WOMEN SPECIFIC PSAS

Items are custom sizes and include but are not limited to:

- Breast Pumps
- Nursing Bras
- Post Mastectomy Items
- Wigs for Alopecia
- Long Acting Reversible Contraception (e.g.Intrauterine Devices)
- Maternity Support Belt Items
- Vaginal Dilators

ELIGIBILITY

General eligibility for prosthetic services includes Veterans who are:

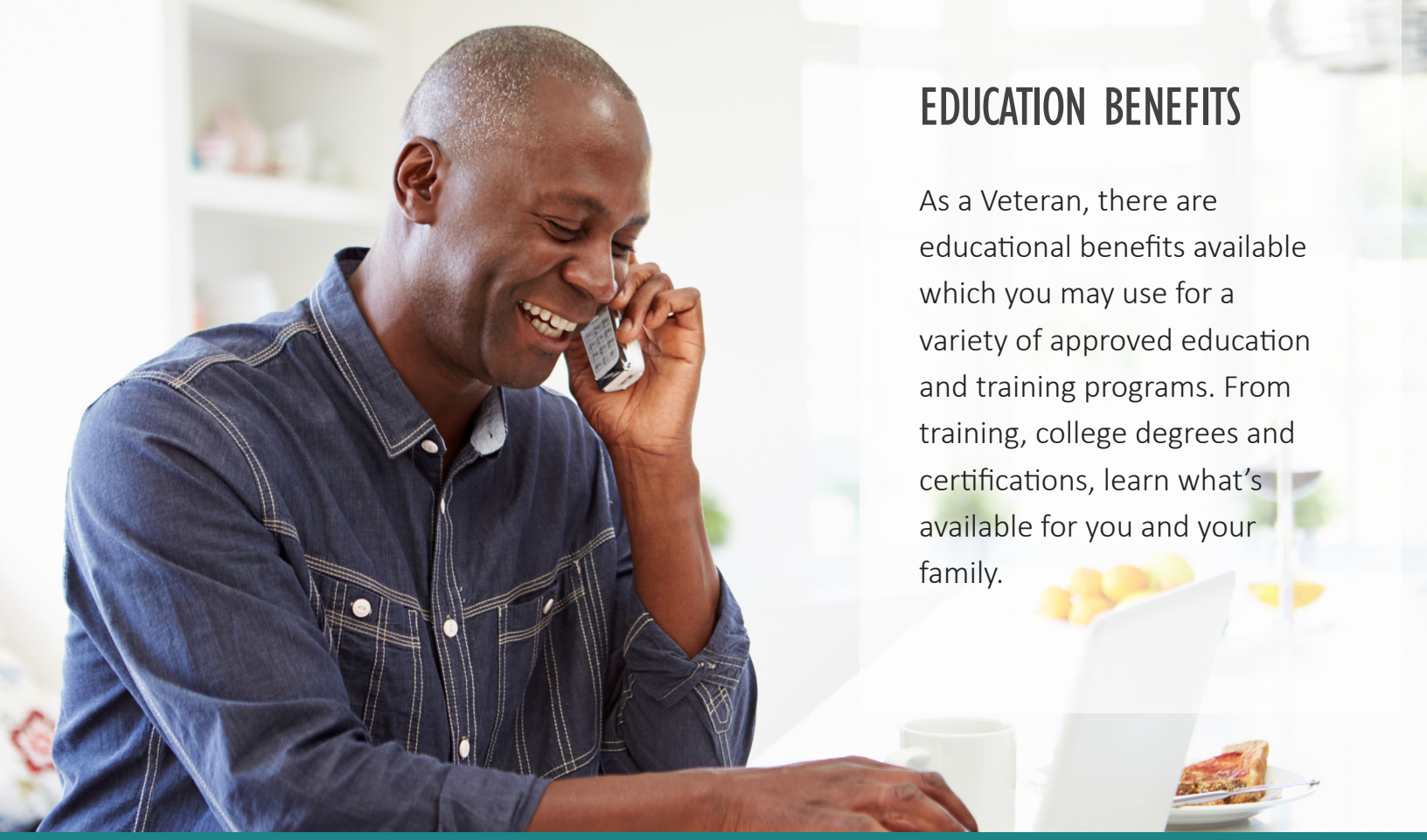
- Enrolled in the VA healthcare system, and
- Have a medical need for a prosthetic service/item

Additional eligibility criteria may apply for certain programs.

VA HEALTHCARE FOR WOMEN

A Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) is designated at each VA medical center to advise and advocate for women Veterans. The WVPM can help coordinate all services a woman Veteran might need, from primary care to specialized care for chronic medical or reproductive health conditions. Women Veterans interested in receiving care at VA should contact the nearest VA Medical Center and ask for the WVPM. Women Veterans can also call the Women Veteran Call Center at 855. VA WOMEN (1.855.829.6636) for more information about care in VA.

For more information visit: **www.prosthetics.va.gov**



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.

EDUCATION

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 (1) 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** to learn more.

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 Veterans Affairs at **www.oepp.sc.gov/va/benefits.html** or call 803.255.4255.

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 Reservist'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 Reservists may go to **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;

Resources for Education

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 educational 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 reservists have access to all 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 reservists:
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.

Student Veterans of America

Connects student Veterans with resources, network support and advocacy to ensure success. Find a campus chapter to connect with by visiting **studentveterans.org**

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 (DOL) redesign its employment workshop, the largest component of the TAP curriculum, to be more applicable to the realities of today's job market. Veterans' Employment and Training Services 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/agencies/vets/programs/tap.**

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.

Are you 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 for percentage of maximum benefit payable)

- **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.

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%

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/**.

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/**) 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.

Visit va.gov/find-locations to discover your nearest VA office and get an application started.

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.

• 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.

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 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**.

How long are you eligible?

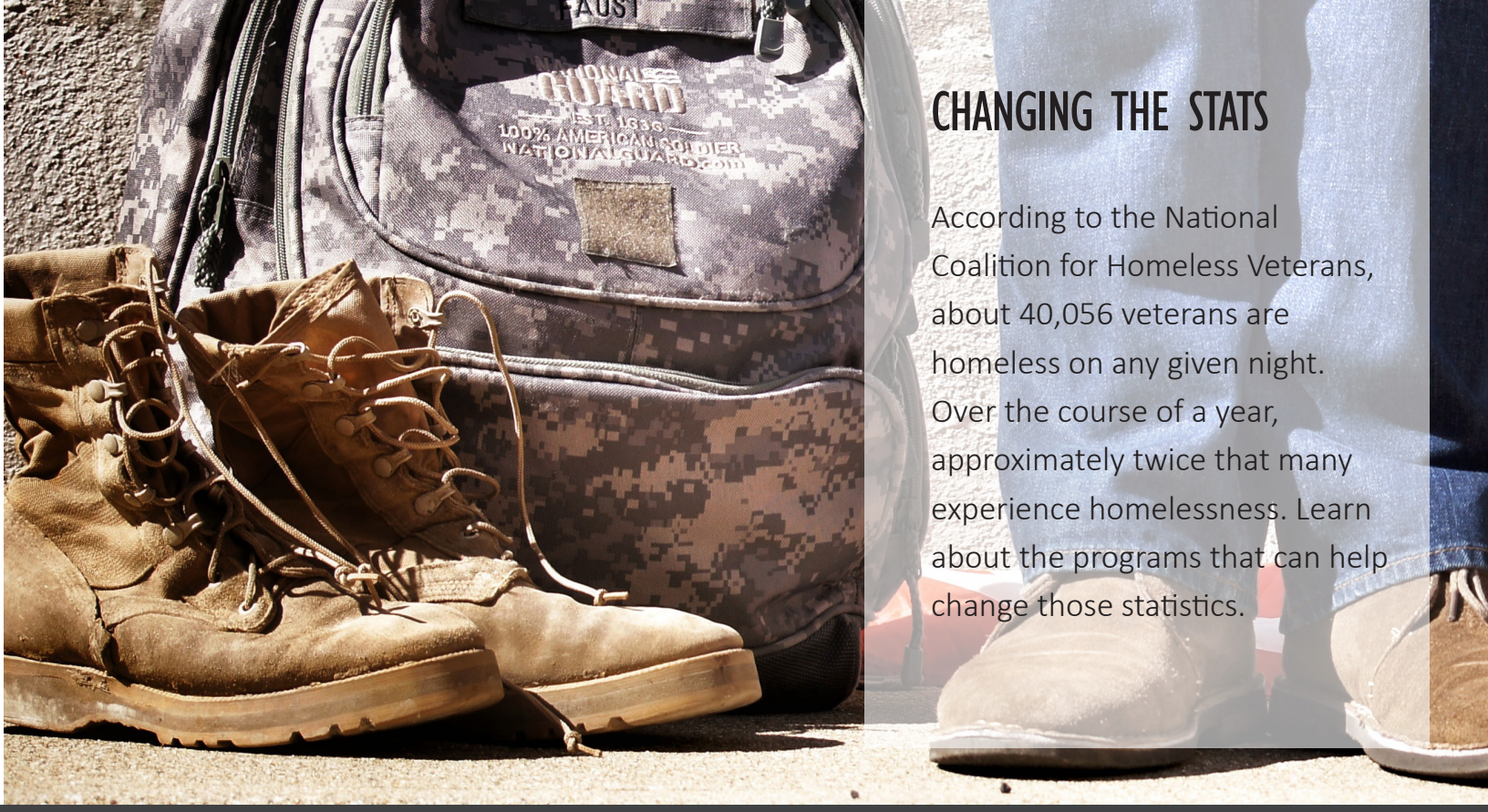
Your eligibility for the MGIB (including the College Fund, if you qualify for the College Fund), generally ends 10 years from the date of your last separation from active duty, or when you use all your months of benefits, whichever is earlier.

How many months of benefits can you receive?

The number of months of benefits you may receive is known as "entitlement". You may receive up to 36 months of entitlement under MGIB (including the College Fund). You may receive benefits for a wide variety of approved trainings.

How do you apply?

Just go to **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.



CHANGING THE STATS

According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, about 40,056 veterans are homeless on any given night. Over the course of a year, approximately twice that many experience homelessness. 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
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 community organizations who provide a variety of programs and services. Since opening in 2011, Transitions has helped more than 3,207 individuals secure permanent housing and served more than 2,178,600 nutritious meals.

CRISIS MINISTRIES

843.723.9477
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
The Salvation Army provides food, clothing, shelter, financial assistance and after school programs to all those in need without discrimination all throughout the state.

Free Help for Homeless Veterans

EASTERN CAROLINA HOUSING ORGANIZATION (ECHO)

843.213.1798
www.echohousing.org
ECHO uses a 'Housing First' approach to quickly and successfully connect families and individuals experiencing homelessness to housing without any barriers of entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Support services are offered to the residents to maximize housing stability. This approach was built on the idea that everybody is "housing ready" regardless of sobriety, compliance in treatment, or criminal histories. ECHO believes that most people experience an improvement in their quality of life after achieving housing.

ONE 80 PLACE

843.737.8357
www.one80place.org
One80 Place is the largest provider for homeless services in South Carolina. They also provide services specifically designed for Veterans experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. They help connect Veterans and their families to housing, while offering other services they may need.

NATIONAL CALL CENTER FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

877.4AID.VET (877.424.3838)
Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness—and their family members, friends and supporters—can make the call or chat online with the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans, where trained counselors are ready to talk confidentially, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Who can call?
- Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Family members, friends and supporters calling on behalf of Veterans
- VA Medical Centers and other VA facilities and staff
- Federal, state and local partners
- Community agencies and providers who serve homeless Veterans

Why make the call to 877.4AID.VET (877.424.3838)
- It's free and confidential
- You will get access to trained VA counselors
- It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- You will get information about VA homeless programs, health care and other services in your area

What happens when Veterans make the call?
- A trained VA staff member asks a few questions to find out what you need
- Then, you are connected to the nearest VA staff person who can help

What happens when others make the call?
- Family members and non-VA providers receive information about available homeless programs and services
- They can keep their information confidential or leave contact information so staff can follow up

VA is committed to helping all Veterans stay well and avoid becoming sick from COVID-19:
- If you are enrolled in VA's Homeless Program, contact your VA Homeless Program Case Manager for information about scheduling your COVID-19 vaccination
- If you are not enrolled in VA's Homeless Program, please call 800.MyVA411 (800.698.2411) to find your local VA medical center for priority scheduling of your COVID-19 vaccination

VETERAN SERVICES

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** 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** or call 803.896.5000.

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.

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**.

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 “Palmetto Passport" at a reduced rate. 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**.

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 monies 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 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 agency, 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 South Carolina Department of Revenue can be found on the web at **sctax.org** or at 803.898.5700.

SPECIALLY 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 South Carolina Department of Revenue can be found on the web at **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 South Carolina Department of Revenue on the web at **sctax.org** or 803.898.5709.

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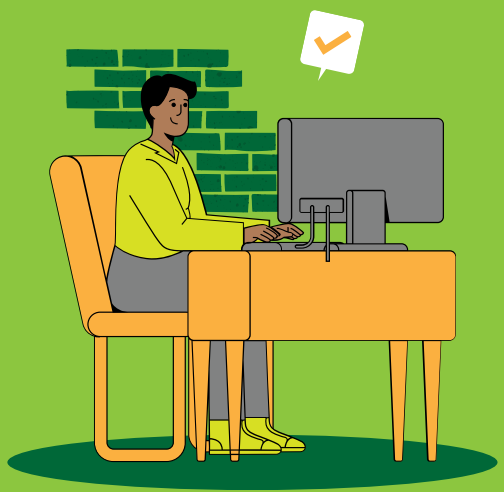
FILE FOR FREE!

FILE YOUR TAXES TODAY!

scthrive.org/filetaxes



COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

OTHER RESOURCES

AMERICAN RED CROSS MILITARY VETERAN CAREGIVER NETWORK

Provides support for caregivers by connecting them with each other online and in-person. Caregivers can also find a mentor. Call the Hero Care Network at 877.272.7337 or visit **redcross.org**.

AMERICA'S WARRIOR PARTNERSHIP

National coordination center that provides local Veteran-serving organizations with a connection to national resources when a Veteran's request cannot be met locally. Call 866.AWPVETS or visit **americaswarriorpartnership.org**.

CODE OF SUPPORT

Connect Service members and their loved ones to the nation's full spectrum of resources to ensure they receive the benefits and support they need and have earned. Call 571.418.6339 and press 1 or visit **codeofsupport.org**.

ELIZABETH DOLE FOUNDATION HIDDEN HEROES

Support for caregivers of Service members. EDFHH provides a safe space to talk and helps you navigate available benefits. Join the community and call 202.249.7170 or visit **hiddenheroes.org**.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA (IAVA)

Connect and provide resources for Post-9/11 Veterans. Help ensure Veterans understand all the resources available to them. Call 855.917.2743 or visit **iava.org**.

RALLYPOINT

Social network that connects Veterans to peer counseling, job opportunities, mentorship, and each other. Visit **rallypoint.com** and connect with someone today.

TEAM RED, WHITE & BLUE

Guides Veterans on their health and wellness journey with real-life and virtual opportunities focused on building a healthier lifestyle. There are hundreds of events weekly. Find a chapter in your area by visiting **teamrwb.org** or call 833.TEAM.RWB.

TOGETHER WE SERVED

Together We Served (TWS) offers Veterans a "Virtual Base" through their website. TWSs membership is made up of only active Service members and Veterans. Find your battle buddies by visiting **togetherweserved.com**.

TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS (TAPS)

Provides comfort and hope 24/7 through a national peer support network and connection to grief resources, all at no cost to surviving families and loved ones. Call 800.959.TAPS or visit **taps.org**.

TRAVIS MANION FOUNDATION

Empowers Veterans and families of fallen heroes to develop character in future generations by providing opportunities to create a sense of togetherness in their communities. Call 215.348.9080, visit **travismanion.org** or email info@travismanion.org.

VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE

Toll-free number for caregivers, family members, friends, Veterans, and community partners to contact for information related to caregiving and available supports and services. Call 855.260.3274 (M-F 8:00 AM – 10:00 PM & SAT 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM).

VA.GOV | VETERANS AFFAIRS

Apply for and manage the VA benefits and services you have earned as a Veteran, Service member, or family member—like health care, disability, education, and more.

VETERAN WELLNESS ALLIANCE

Connects Veterans with the support and services they need to live happier, healthier, more successful lives. Call 630.522.4904 and talk to someone now or chat with someone by visiting **bushcenter.org** or email checkin@veteranwellnessalliance.org

WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT

Support for Veterans and Service members who incurred a physical or mental injury, illness, or wound while serving in the military on or after September 11, 2001. Connect with your peers. Call 888.WWP.ALUM or visit **woundedwarriorproject.org**.

Navigate Post-Military Life with Support

PALMETTO PATHFINDER PROGRAM – SCDVA

Navigating post-military life can be challenging, but there are great resources available to Veterans in South Carolina that can help. Whether you're transitioning from the military or are new to South Carolina, it's important to know what resources are available to you and your family.

Often, nonprofits meet people during a crisis which is why, "the partnership between SCDVA and SC Thrive is critical," shared David Rozelle, Director of Operations of SCDVA. SC Thrive understands the landscape of social care and SCDVA is Veteran-focused. SCDVA handles a lot of Veteran-specific needs. Partners ,like SC Thrive provide solutions such as referrals and case management for people in need. With a common goal in mind, SCDVA and SC Thrive have established an excellent partnership that impacts Veterans across the state.

It is important for community members and employers to have conversations with Veterans because they may not know about the small business in town that offers a military discount or where to find Veteran parking spots. Fortunately, SCDVA offers a program specifically for South Carolina Veterans that helps bridge the gaps Veterans may face during periods of transition.

The Palmetto Pathfinder Program is a South Carolina Veteran peer-support program that provides personal support for transitioning Veterans by connecting them to relevant resources and services in their community and assist them in accomplishing their personal and professional goals after military service.

The program is comprised of military Veterans from all demographics who desire to guide and support Service members and fellow Veterans transitioning into civilian life in South Carolina. Potential Pathfinders are immersed in the Vantage Point Foundation three-day intensive Leadership Development Course, spending time on interpersonal growth as a part of the preparation to become an SCDVA Palmetto Pathfinder. These volunteers will work directly with the SCDVA. Each Pathfinder will guide up to ten fellow Veterans in their communities across South Carolina to ensure they find the right resources and support.

SCDVA has a goal to continue building this program to ensure that Pathfinders are available in all 46 counties of the state. To learn more about this program visit **https://scdva.sc.gov/palmetto-pathfinder-program**

"The problem with using the word mentor is there's a stigmatism to it but truthfully everybody needs a mentor. […] A Pathfinder then is armed, if you will, with the ability to provide effective referrals to Veterans to get them what they need in their community while they're in a position of transition."- David Rozelle SCDVA

About David Rozelle

David Rozelle has a deep passion for South Carolina. While growing up he spent his summers in the Palmetto State with his maternal grandparents, has been a landowner his entire life, and married his wife who is from Fort Mill. David is a 1995 Davidson College graduate and earned an active-duty commission through the U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Program as an Armor Officer.

David served primarily as an Armor/Cavalry Officer in the U.S. Army. He has served in leadership positions from tank platoon leader to combined arms battalion command, where he served as the battalion commander of 1-72 Armor Battalion in the Republic of Korea. David has had numerous assignments around the globe, with four years of service in Korea, three deployments to Iraq, and one year in Afghanistan. His battalion command and last three combat deployments were as a Military Amputee. He lost his right leg below the knee to a land-mine in Iraq in June of 2003, during his first deployment. David retired out of Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and currently serves the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs as the Director of Operations.

David earned two Master Degrees: Military Studies (Marine Corps University) and Strategic Studies, Military and Strategic Leadership (U.S. Army War College).

We make it easier to find the help you need, when you need it most.

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