

# **SERVICE OFFICERS REPORT**

**JAN 10, 2019**

## **SERVICES FOR HOMELESS VETERANS**

Many Veterans face challenges that may lead them to become homeless. VA understands that every homeless Veteran's story is different--and so are their specific needs. To help meet these needs, homeless Veterans may be eligible for a wide variety of VA benefits and services. For more information go online and look up VA Benefits or contact the local VA Benefits Office in Decatur GA.

## **FIND YOUR BENEFITS**

The Benefits.gov Benefit Finder can provide you with a list of government benefits you may be eligible fo receive. Answer questions and receive you results in just a few minutes.

## **TELEHEALTH AT VFW POST**

During the Anywhere to Anywhere Tele-health Summit, VA announced Project ATLAS, which is in partnership between VA, Phillips, and the American Legion to provide VA tele-health at VFW and Legion posts in rural areas. The first Project ATLAS location, VFW Post 6787 in Eureka, Montana, is set to begin offering VA mental health care to veterans soon. The VFW is proud to partner with VA, the Legion and Philips to expand access to care for veterans. Learn more about VA's tele-health

“Anywhere to Anywhere” initiative at  
(<https://connectedcare.va.gov/>)

## **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**

As of 30 Nov., VR&E Tele-counseling service was fully capable. VA Video Connect. There is no need to download specialized software or obtain unique usernames and passwords. Access to a scheduled counseling session is obtained through a unique link sent directly to you and is valid for that counseling session only.

Tele-counseling increases VA’s responsiveness to your needs, reduces your travel costs and time, and improves your access to necessary VR&E services. If interested in the service, we encourage you to contact your VRC as soon as possible, and ask him or her to help you get set up. Participation is voluntary and not required.

## **BLUE WATER NAVY**

A final deal to provide Department of Veterans Affairs benefits to thousands of veterans who served off the coast during the Vietnam War failed in the Senate on Monday night with only days remaining in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act would extend eligibility for disability compensation and health who were aboard aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other ships, some of whom have fought for years to prove they were exposed to Agent Orange. The dioxin-laden herbicide has been

found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson's disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

The House voted 382-0 in favor of the legislation in June. Since then, it's been stuck in the Senate. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie voiced his opposition to the bill in September, citing cost concerns and insufficient scientific evidence.

For more information go to [military.com](http://military.com) dated 11 Dec 2018

**BILL TO BE ENTILED AN ACT:**

To amend Chapter 7 of Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to income taxes, so as to provide that retirement income received as retirement benefits from military service shall not be subject to state income tax; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date and applicability; to provide for an automatic repeal; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA

Chapter 7 of Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to income taxes, is amended in Code Section 48-7-27, relating to computation of taxable net income, by adding a new paragraph to subsection (a) to read as follows:

**“(12.4) Retirement income received as retirement benefits form military service of the United States, including any survivor benefits derived therefrom.”**

## **SECTION 2**

This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval and shall be applicable to all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2020, and ending December 31, 2030. This Act shall stand repealed in its entirety on December 31, 2030

## **SECTION 3**

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.

### **QUILTS OF VALOR**

A Quilt of Valor is a single lifetime award. We will need your help on making this award including verifying that you nominee has not previously been awarded a Quilt of Valor.

We will be contacting you to arrange a presentation time and place. If you are not the person who will make those arrangements, please have that information ready for the QOFV volunteer who contacts you.

Please let us know if there are any special circumstances that affect making this award (currently deployed, hospice, surprise,

etc.). Awards for service members currently deployed will be planned to take place upon their return to the States.

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.

For more information you can go to [www.QOVF.org](http://www.QOVF.org)

### **ACHIEVE YOUR POST-MILITARY CAREER GOALS WITH HELP FROM VA.**

If you want to make a career move or are interested in enhancing your skill set, VA employment services is a good place to start.

Here are some career and training resources to get you going:

- Search nearly 3 million jobs at the Jobs Bank to find employers looking to hire veterans.
- Check out federal jobs by visiting the Veteran Employment Services Office.
- Search for a variety of health care-related careers.
- Earn a degree or attend a technical school with education and training benefits.

Veterans with a service-connected disability may be eligible for one-on-one support, counseling and training to meet employment goals through VA's Vocational Rehab and Employment Program.

Spouses, dependents and survivors of Veterans may also be eligible for career assistance, counseling and other services.

Visit [Explore.VA.gov](https://www.explore.va.gov) for more on VA employment services.

## **HEALTHY START**

Kicking off the new year with new health goals? VA is here to help you reach them. With the growing availability of wellbeing programs, VA is offering care private insurance often doesn't cover.

Check with the VA for more information.