

October 2015



Hangar Flying Newsletter

A Publication of the JBLM McChord Field Retiree Activities Office for Air Force Retirees, their spouses and survivors. Department of the Air Force, 100 Joe Jackson Blvd, Customer Service Mall Rm 1001, JBLM McChord Field WA 98438-1114; Phone (253) 982-3214 (Voice Mail 24 hours a day) Fax 253-982-5234. Email – retaffairs@us.af.mil Web Site www.mcchordrao.com Retiree Activities Office: Open 0900-1200 Monday - Friday

Retiree, family must register for base access: The Defense Biometric Identification System, or DBIDS, uses scanning devices to manage access at most Air Force installations.

DBIDS verifies access privileges for cardholders through the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. Guards scanning ID cards will see a red or green display at the bottom of their scanner screens. A red display will say “stop” to indicate why base entry is not authorized, giving up to 26 different messages. Besides showing if access is authorized or denied, the scanner allows a gate guard to see a detailed view that provides more information about the card holder. The photo of the card holder will be the image taken when the card was registered in the system.

The system also crosschecks information with the National Crime Information Center every 24 hours to determine whether or not Department of Defense cardholders have any active wants or warrants. Finally, DBIDS also displays installation debarments and law enforcement alerts.

Updates have been made which allow the majority of people -- active-duty and civilian personnel, retirees, dependents, etc. -- to register in the lane of traffic without adding to wait times, according to Air Force Security Forces officials.

The system has been used to successfully enroll more than 5 million people, provide installation security forces with over 4,000 wants/warrants, 9,000-plus suspended driving privileges and more than 500 debarments to date, said officials.

One issue with DBIDS specific to retirees is the expiration of the Department of Defense Form 2 (Retired). Although the expiration date on the front of the retiree ID reads “INDEF”, there is an expiration date printed on the back of the card which coincides with the retiree’s 65th birthday. Retirees will be required to obtain a new ID card after their 65th birthday. (*Courtesy of Air Force Security Forces*)

Veterans Choice Program: Public Law 114-41, the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015, was signed into law on July 31, 2015, and aims to “provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services and other purposes.” Thanks to the new law, VA is able to enhance the Veterans Choice Program in a number of ways, including expanding eligibility to all enrolled Veterans.

The department will implement these changes in several phases, with the first phase being effective immediately. Veterans are no longer required to have been enrolled in VA health care on or before August 1, 2014, in order to meet basic eligibility requirements for the program. If a Veteran is enrolled in the VA health care system and meets one of the specific eligibility criteria, he/she may be eligible for the program. In other words, any Veteran who is enrolled in VA health care, regardless to when they enrolled, may now be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program.

Along with being enrolled in VA health care, Veterans must meet at least one of the additional wait times, distance or other criteria in order to be considered eligible for the Veterans Choice Program. You can find additional details on the full eligibility criteria [here](#). This modification, and the additional changes that will follow in the upcoming months, serve a critical purpose of allowing greater numbers of Veterans access to care under this Program. VA is continually working to make improvements to the Veterans Choice Program, so please check www.va.gov/opa/choiceact periodically for the latest updates. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with Veterans and our partners to ensure continued improvements to Veterans’ access to care. For more details about the Veterans Choice Program, see www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.
(Source VA.gov)

Prostate Cancer and Agent Orange: Veterans who develop prostate cancer and were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service do not have to prove a connection between their prostate cancer and service to be eligible to receive VA health care and disability compensation.

About prostate cancer Prostate cancer is cancer of the prostate, a small gland in the male reproductive system. Some men may have urinary problems, but some men don't have symptoms early on. If you have any health concerns, talk with your health care provider. The greatest risk factor for prostate cancer is increasing age. Other risk factors include having a father or brother with the disease and being African American. Prostate cancer is often first detected with a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test or digital rectal exam.

Talk with your health care provider about your risk and the pros and cons of screening. Visit Medline Plus to learn about treatment for prostate cancer, the latest medical research, and more from the National Institutes of Health. Reduce your risk for cancers and other diseases Here's how: Follow a healthy diet. Don't have more than 2 alcoholic drinks a day. Get help to quit smoking. Learn more about healthy living. *(Continued on the next page)*

VA benefits for prostate cancer: Veterans with prostate cancer who were exposed to herbicides during service may be eligible for disability compensation and health care. Veterans who served in Vietnam, the Korean demilitarized zone or another area where Agent Orange was sprayed may be eligible for a free Agent Orange registry health exam. Surviving spouses, dependent children and dependent parents of Veterans who were exposed to herbicides during military service and died as the result of prostate cancer may be eligible for survivors' benefits.

Research on prostate cancer and herbicides: The Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences concluded in its 1996 report *Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 1996* and in future updates that there is limited/suggestive evidence of a positive association between prostate cancer and exposure to herbicides used in Vietnam. A 2013 study conducted at the Portland VA Medical Center and Oregon Health and Science University found that Veterans exposed to Agent Orange are not only at higher risk for prostate cancer, but they are more likely to have aggressive forms of the disease. Read the abstract for the publication, *Agent Orange as a risk factor for high-grade prostate cancer*. View more research on health effects of Agent Orange.

- See more at:

http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/conditions/prostate_cancer.asp#sthash.tBk8a9t1.dpuf (Source *Veterans Administration*)

No-cost flu shot options for Veterans: Free at Walgreens – Bring your VA ID and use Use Group Code # 5933XBAYV. Flu season is here, and getting your flu shot has never been easier. Remember that getting vaccinated is the single best way to protect yourself, as well as your loved ones, against the flu virus. This year, enrolled Veterans of the VA health care system have several options to get a seasonal flu shot. VA offers more options, easy access, and seamless records – the choice is yours.

So what are your options?

- You may opt to get a free flu shot at your local VA health care facility.
- Or you may choose to go to your neighborhood Walgreens.

As an enrolled VA patient, you can get a no-cost flu shot at Walgreens thru March 31, 2016.

VA health care facilities: You may receive a no-cost flu shot during any scheduled appointment, if you are admitted to one of our VA health care facilities, or at one of the convenient walk-in flu stations. For more information on locations and hours [contact your local VA health care facility](#).

Walgreens nationwide: If you are a Veteran patient in the VA system, you may choose to get a no-cost flu shot at a local Walgreens between now and March 31, 2016.

No appointment is required; simply go to any Walgreens, tell the pharmacist you receive care at a VA facility and show your Veterans Identification Card and another form of photo ID. Use Group Code # 5933XBAYV. Your immunization record will be updated electronically in your local VA electronic health record. *(Continued on the next page)*

Non-VA Providers and Pharmacies: Many local retail pharmacies offer flu shots that may be covered by private insurance or programs such as Medicare. If you do not have insurance, there will usually be a charge. *(Continued on the next page)*

[View this video for more information](#) about VA's national immunization initiative to provide Veterans more options, easier access, and seamless records when it comes to getting their seasonal flu shot.

Reference to non-VA pharmacies, including Walgreens, does not constitute or imply endorsement of these organizations, their services or products. If your local pharmacy is currently not participating in the VA Retail Immunization Program, it may participate in the future as the program expands. Vaccine is subject to availability. State and health-related restrictions may apply. If you do not have insurance coverage, there may be a charge for a flu shot after March 31, 2016.

(Source: Author: Dr. Margaret A. Donahue is the Director for the Veterans Health Information Exchange)

Elks Pledge Four Million Dollars to End Veteran Homelessness

The Department of Veterans Affairs is strengthening community and non-profit partnerships to better serve Veterans. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America has announced that it has committed \$4 million over a 4-year period to help end Veteran homelessness. *(Source: Department of Veterans Affairs)*

Address Changes: Please DO NOT send your U.S. Postal Service change-of-address announcements to the *Afterburner* office as the editor does not have the ability to make official address changes. Mailing labels used to send out the *Afterburner* are based on addresses already on file with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. Any change announcements sent to the *Afterburner* cannot be processed or forwarded, and are shredded.

Retirees must change their address by calling 800-321-1080. (Do not mention the *Afterburner* or you may be referred elsewhere.) If you have a myPay account you can make the change online. You can fax your change to 800-469-6559, or send it to DFAS, US Military Retirement Pay, PO Box 7130, London KY 40742-7130.

Air Force Survivor Benefit Plan annuitants must call DFAS at the number above, or use their online myPay account. The fax number for annuitants is 800-982-8459 or mail the change to DFAS, US Military Annuitant Pay, PO Box 7131, London KY 40742-7131. *(Source USAF Afterburner Newsletter)*

TriCare Pharmacy Changes: As of Oct. 1, most TRICARE beneficiaries are required to fill their long-term prescriptions via mail-order or through military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies. Maintenance medications are used to treat long-term conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. *(Continued on the next page)*

According to the Defense Health Agency, moving TFL beneficiaries into the mail-order program helped result in almost 80 percent of the cost savings. Using mail-order for a 90 day supply of medication saves 66 percent from what retail locations charge. By now, most TRICARE beneficiaries should have received notices about switching maintenance medications into the mail-order system.

Categories of beneficiaries exempt from the new requirements are:

- Beneficiaries currently serving on active duty
- Beneficiaries with other health insurance (OHI) that provide drug coverage; and
- Beneficiaries living overseas

Beneficiaries using maintenance medications need to enroll in the mail-order system or obtain medications through MTF pharmacies. If you are unsure if your prescriptions are affected, you can call the number provided by Express Scripts: 1-877-882-3335. (Source TriCare)

Assistance available for surviving family members: The surviving family member of a retired Air Force member residing in the United States can receive personal assistance in applying for eligible benefits on his or her behalf by contacting one of the following organizations for assistance:

- The nearest Air Force base military personnel section customer service.
- The Air Force Casualty Assistance Representative Locator at 877-353-6807. Voicemail is available after duty hours and individuals who leave a message will be called back the next duty day.
- The Defense Finance and Accounting Service at 800-321-1080 or visit them online at <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/Retiree-death.html>.
- The nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for families overseas.

People should have the following information available when making a notification:

Retiree's full name, grade, Social Security number and date of retirement. Date, city and state of death. Name, relationship and phone number of next of kin. For general officers -- date and place of funeral, if known. Information may also be sent to AFPC Casualty Matters. Mail the information listed above to:

Air Force Casualty Services

550 C Street W

JBSA-Randolph AFB, TX 78150 (Source: Air Force AfterBurner)

The Commanding General, I Corps

cordially invites you

to attend the

Korean Era Veteran's Salute Ceremony

on Friday, the Thirteenth of November

at ten o'clock in the morning

Watkins Field

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington

R.S.V.P. by 6 November 2015

*Carol.a.armistad.civ@mail.mil (preferred)
(253) 967-1359*

Dress

Civilian: Business Attire

Military: Duty

Experian and T-Mobile Customers Hacked: Hackers have stolen personal information belonging to about 15 million T-Mobile wireless customers, including Social Security numbers, home addresses, birthdates and other personal information.

The hackers got the information from credit reporting agency Experian, which Bellevue-based T-Mobile uses to check the credit of its customers. Experian said T-Mobile customers who applied for wireless service between Sept. 1, 2013 and Sept. 16, 2015 may have had their information stolen.

Experian said it immediately notified law enforcement authorities after discovering the hack and that "there is no evidence to-date that the data has been used inappropriately." The companies said that payment card and banking information was not affected.

T-Mobile customers can sign up for two free years of credit monitoring services at <http://www.protectmyid.com/default.aspx?sc=678628>, a service owned by Experian. The company said that affected customers should "remain vigilant" against identity theft and watch for phishing email scams that ask for sensitive information such as bank account and Social Security numbers.

HELPFUL LINKS

To find your state representative:

<http://www.house.gov/representatives/>

To find your state senators:

<http://www.senate.gov>

To find the VA:

<http://www.va.gov>

To find DFAS:

<http://www.dfas.mil>

To find Tricare:

<http://www.tricare.mil>

To schedule appointment to renew ID Card

<https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil>

Link to Retiree Publications

Army Echoes:

<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

Navy Shift Colors:

www.shiftcolors.navy.mil

Air Force Afterburner:

www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:

www.usmc-mccs.org

Coast Guard Evening Colors:

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>

List of businesses who give military discounts

<http://www.rather-be-shopping.com/blog/2014/05/29/veteran-military-discounts/>

VA benefits book available

The Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents & Survivors handbook is available – with 18 pages of new information. The book can be found at

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/2014_Federal_Benefits_for_Veterans_English.pdf.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Thank you for your support of the Hangar Flyer newsletter. If you have questions about anything pertaining to military retiree benefits and services, email us at; retaffairs@us.af.mil or call us at the RAO. Hours are 9 to 12 Monday through Friday. After 12 please leave a message and we will call you back. The phone number is 253-982-3214

*Jack Whitaker
Editor*