



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

Medicare cards to Change: By April 2019, your current Medicare card will be replaced with a card that does not show your Social Security number. The new card will have a new Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) this MBI will be used for billing, checking your eligibility and your claim status. This change is intended to help fight medical identity theft as well as to protect your medical and financial information.

However, scammers will still look for ways to take what doesn't belong to them. Here are some ways to avoid Medicare scams:

- Is someone calling, claiming to be from Medicare, and asking for your Social Security number or bank information? Hang up. That's a scam. First, Medicare won't call you. Second, Medicare will never ask for your Social Security number or bank information.
- Is someone asking you to pay for your new card? That's a scam. Your new Medicare card is free.
- Is someone threatening to cancel your benefits if you don't give up information or money? Also a scam. New Medicare cards will be mailed out to you automatically. There won't be any changes to your benefits.

For more on the new changes to your Medicare card, visit Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services <<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/ssnri/index.html> . And report scams to the FTC <<https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/>>.

To comment on the above article, please go to <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/new-medicare-cards-are-way> (SOURCE: *FTC Consumer Information*)

VA Choice Program Scam: VA is taking action in response to a phone line that appears to be set up to take advantage of Veterans who misdial the Veterans Choice Program phone line.

The two phone lines differ only in area code. The correct Choice Program phone line is 1-866-606-8198, while the imposter phone line is using 1-800-606-8198. The fake line does not provide information on the Choice Program or its eligibility criteria, instead it claims to offer callers a \$100 rebate if they provide a credit card number.

VA would never ask Veterans for this information or offer this type of financial incentive through the Choice Program phone line. VA is acting to ensure Veterans are not exploited by getting the word out and also by working with the Office of Inspector General to take legal action and ultimately shut the fake line down.

Veterans can tell if they have reached the correct phone line, if the phone line automatically states the caller has reached the "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs." (Continued on the next page)

The fake line will incorrectly confirm callers have reached the “Veterans Choice Program”. If Veterans are unsure if they have reached the correct phone line, they should hang up and make sure they dial 1-866-606-8198 correctly.

Please do not hesitate to call the Veterans Choice phone line at 1-866-606-8198 to ask questions about the program and determine if you are eligible. More information on the Veterans Choice Program can also be found here <https://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact> .

In addition, the VA Identity Safety Service <https://www.va.gov/IDENTITYTHEFT/index.asp> offers a toll-free identity theft help line to Veterans and their beneficiaries who believe that they are at risk for identity theft. The number is 1-855-578-5492, and it operates Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST with voicemail for after-hours calls. Any calls pertaining directly to VA data are referred to VA staff and investigated accordingly. Find out more about how you can protect yourself from identity theft at VA’s More Than A Number: Identity Theft Protection website <<https://www.va.gov/IDENTITYTHEFT/index.asp>> at <https://www.va.gov/IDENTITYTHEFT/index.asp> (Source: Veterans Administration)

Veterans Center Services are now available in Lacey

A range of Counseling Services is now available at the Lacey WA Veterans Service Office, by appointment on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays.

To learn more about seeing a counselor at the Lacey Community Access Point call the Tacoma Vet Center at 253-565-7038 or the Federal Way Vet Center at 253-838-3090 to schedule an appointment. Be sure to specify your preference for Lacey.

Mobile Vet Center Schedule:

- Lacey, Cabala’s 10 am to 2 pm 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month
- Yelm, Walmart 10 am to 3 pm 2nd Tuesday and Last Wednesday of the month
- Silverdale Sears 10 am to 2 pm 2nd Wednesday of the month
- Chehalis, Walmart 10 am to 2 pm Last Tuesday of the month
- Buckley, Eagles Lodge 10 am to 2 pm 1st Wednesday of the month
- Port Orchard Bay Street Boat Ramp 2nd and 4th Thursday and 3rd Wednesday of the month
- Enumclaw, Rite Aid 3rd Wednesday of the month
- Aberdeen, Top Foods 1st Tuesday

VA PTSD Treatment Aid: VA has launched a new online tool that will help Veterans compare various treatment options for post-traumatic stress disorder. The [PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](#) is a free, interactive online tool that helps educate patients about effective treatment options for PTSD and encourages them to participate actively in decisions about their care.

“The health and well-being of the courageous men and women who have served their country in uniform is the VA’s highest priority,” said VA secretary, Dr. David J. Shulkin. “The PTSD Treatment Decision Aid is an important step in putting Veterans in control of their health care. By helping to bridge understanding and communication between Veterans and providers about the most effective treatment options available, we are ensuring Veterans receive the treatments that best promote their healing and recovery.” The tool includes information about evidence-based PTSD treatments, such as talk therapy and prescription medication options. It also includes useful information designed for people who have served in the military. Users can watch videos of providers explaining different treatment options and what to expect with those treatments and hear from Veterans who have benefited from them. *(Continued on the next page)*

[Watch a video on the PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](#)

Veterans can also build a chart to compare the treatments they prefer and print a personalized summary to share with their providers. All personal information is erased once the tool is closed to protect users' privacy.

According to VA findings, approximately eight of every 100 people will experience PTSD at some point in their lifetimes, and almost 620,000 of the Veterans treated by VA have a diagnosis of PTSD.

“We know from research and our own clinical experience that Veterans can recover and improve their quality of life with the right PTSD treatment plan,” said Dr. Poonam Alaigh, VA’s acting under secretary for health. “We want our Veterans and those who care for them to have access to effective treatment options. Knowing about the latest research can help them get the best care possible.”

To learn more about PTSD visit the National Center for PTSD website at www.ptsd.va.gov. Health-care providers who have questions about the PTSD Treatment Decision Aid or other free resources can email the PTSD Consultation Program at PTSDconsult@va.gov or call 866-948-7880. *(Source VA News Release)*

About VA Mobile Health: VA Mobile Health aims to improve the health of Veterans by providing technologies that expand clinical care beyond the traditional office visit.

VA apps are developed for both Veterans and VA care teams, offering safe and secure mobile access to patient data, and providing more opportunities for Veterans to be active participants in their health care.

VA Mobile Health underscores VA’s commitment to transforming the way care is delivered and to improve communications and health care coordination between Veterans and their care teams. VA recognizes that mobile health is emerging as an essential element of health care, and is dedicated to providing the most up-to-date technologies to enhance patient experiences.

To access available apps, visit the VA App Store <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore> . *(Source URL: <https://mobile.va.gov/about>)*

VA News Release: Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin delivered his first State of the VA address today, highlighting the activity and direction of the agency since his appointment in February. In his address, Secretary Shulkin stated that he wanted to update Veterans on the progress the agency is making while also acknowledging the shortcomings that the VA has identified and will address in the upcoming months.

As a physician, I tend to look at things in terms of the way I was trained assess, diagnose and then aggressively treat the patient, Secretary Shulkin said. Though we are taking immediate and decisive steps, we are still in critical condition and require intensive care.

The address covered a wide spectrum of issues within the VA, including Access to Care; Community Care and Choice; Accountability; and the quality of care provided to Veterans. Secretary Shulkin identified multiple priorities, such as reducing backlogs and getting more Veterans access to mental health care and suicide prevention programs.

Addressing improvements in accountability and VA administration, Secretary Shulkin stated that while he was able to initiate the Executive Order establishing the Accountability and Whistleblower Protection signed by President Trump, further legislation is needed and needed now.

The goal, the Secretary said, is to turn the VA into the organization Veterans and their families deserve, and one that America can take pride in.

A fact sheet highlighting some of the elements of Secretary Shulkins address as well as the text of his address can be found at: http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/StateofVA_FactSheet_5-31-2017.pdf

Address Change Procedures: RETIREES AND ANNUITANTS: Please DO NOT send change of address information to the Retiree Services Section at the Air Force Personnel Center. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is the agency responsible for maintaining and changing correspondence addresses for retired members and recipients of Survivor Benefit Plan annuities who may receive correspondence (including the Afterburner, News for USAF Retired Personnel) from official Air Force agencies.

Individuals with Internet Access; People with myPay accounts may change their address on the internet by going to <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>, entering their personal identification number and then changing their correspondence address. Because there are other changes that can be made electronically, retired members and annuitants are encouraged to go this route. Those people without a personal identification number, or PIN, should use the same website and request a PIN which will be sent through the mail. Those people who subscribe electronically to the Afterburner can change their email address by sending their old and new email addresses to afpc.retiree@us.af.mil. People should also remember to change their email address, if necessary, with the DFAS using their myPay account.

Individuals without Internet Access; Retirees receiving, or entitled to receive, retired pay, including retirees whose pay (part or all) comes from Veterans Affairs or from Civil Service (because of combined federal service), should send their change of address to:

DFAS

US Military Retirement Pay
8899 E 56th Street
Indianapolis IN 46249-1200

This may also be accomplished by calling toll free 800-321-1080 or commercial 216-522-5534. The fax number is 800-469-6559. Include a Social Security number and signature when mailing or faxing a request.

Those surviving spouses who are receiving, or entitled to receive, the SBP/Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan annuity (this includes surviving spouses of retirees who were enrolled in SBP but who are receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation in lieu of the SBP) must send a change of address to:

DFAS

US Military Annuitant Pay
8899 E 56th Street
Indianapolis IN 46249-1300

The toll-free phone number is 800-321-1080 or commercial 216-522-5534. The fax number is 800-982-8459. If mailing or faxing, include your and the deceased sponsor's Social Security number and sign the request.

Non-SBP/RSFPP annuitants who are registered to receive the *Afterburner, News for USAF Retired Personnel* (but who may or may not be receiving DIC from the VA), mail the new address and include the sponsor's retired grade and SSN to:

HQ AFPC/DPFFF
550 C Street West
JBSA-Randolph TX 78150-4713

NOTE: HQ AFPC/DPFFF is not staffed to handle changes of address by phone. **Other Agencies to Contact;** There may be other agencies you should contact to change your address such as DEERS, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, TRICARE and Medicare. See Resources for more information.

Attention all retirees and annuitants,

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service's addresses changed effective May 1, 2017. The old addresses are being discontinued and will be replaced by addresses in Indianapolis. The new addresses are:

Retired Pay:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retired Pay
8899 E 56th Street
Indianapolis IN 46249-1200

Annuitant Pay:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
8899 E 56th Street
Indianapolis IN 46249-1300

The old PO Boxes in London KY will remain open and all mail will be forwarded to the new address for one year. However, sending mail to the old address will add three to five days to the normal processing time.

The telephone and fax numbers are not changing.

Please copy and paste the following web address into your web browser for additional contact information:
<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html> (Source: *Retired Pay DFAS-Cleveland*)

RAO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Is retired life getting you down? Do you need a little something extra to help fill your days? The McChord Retiree Activities Office would like to help you out, we have ongoing needs for dedicated volunteers. The RAO desk is staffed by retiree volunteers, spouses and survivors. Our hours of operation are 0900 to 1200 hours Monday thru Friday. You may volunteer for one day a week, one day a month or as many days as you like, the choice is yours. *(Continued on the next page)*

Volunteers answer phones and do research on questions from fellow retirees, their spouses and survivor's questions on benefits such as Tricare, Tricare for Life, Delta Dental, Retiree Pay matters, and Veterans programs and more. Working with fellow retirees can be extremely enjoyable; it is a satisfying feeling knowing that you have helped a fellow retiree or survivor with their needs. It is also great to get together and rub elbows with your fellow retirees and their spouses all working together to help the local military retiree community. We host a business luncheon at the McChord Club on the second Thursday of each month. Feel free to stop by and check us out or you can call and volunteer at (253) 982-3214 or e-mail us at rao@mcchord.af.mil.

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.

Veterans Crisis Hotline

1-800-273-8255 press 1

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

Thank you,