



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

PREPARING FOR TAX SEASON: This is the time of the year that we can best help retirees and annuitants prepare for the upcoming tax season. There are several key tasks that every retiree and annuitant can do to make the tax season easier.

Retirees and annuitants need to know:

- Easy ways they can help themselves
- Accounts should be up to date (especially their mailing address)
- Tax documents they can expect to receive from DFAS

There are several self-serve options for retirees.

The best way is to have a *myPay* account. Currently, only 54% of retirees have an active *myPay* account. *myPay* allows members to view and download current and historical documents such as Retiree Account State-ments, 1099Rs and 1095s. *myPay* also allows members to make changes online to their allotments, their direct deposit information, their mailing address and their Arrears of Pay beneficiary.

Having an active *myPay* account will also ensure that members receive emails about changes in policy that may affect their accounts.

myPay is the single, most convenient way for retirees to make their tax season easier.

If retirees are hesitant to use *myPay*, but still want to avoid calling our Customer Care Center, the website has other self-serve options:

- First, retirees can request a 1099R by clicking on the gray box at the top of the R&A website main page. This link will take them into AskDFAS, where they can input their information and a 1099R will be mailed to their address on record.
- Members can also use the website to access AskDFAS to change their mailing address.
- The website has links to commonly used forms, along with detailed instructions.
- Members can see the retiree newsletter, as well as read other information that could impact their pay, like the change from Tricare dental to FEDVIP.

When retirees log on to *myPay*, they should use the opportunity to ensure their retired pay account information is correct. After members verify their payment and correspondence information, they should verify that their Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) information is current by checking their RAS. If they are paying for SBP, but do not have an eligible beneficiary, they need to let DFAS know by sending the appropriate documentation (available on the Forms page on our website).

It is important to remind retirees that notifying DEERS about a change in beneficiary will not change their account with DFAS. They need to notify DFAS, as well. Timely notification will ensure that members don't miss out on money that may be owed to them or end up with a debt.

Tax season is a busy time for retirees, DFAS and the RSO's. Helping customers help themselves will make the tax season easier on everyone. (Source: DFAS)

App PTSD Treatment Decision Aid: There are several effective PTSD treatments. This means that if you have PTSD, you have options. The [PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/decisionaid_public.asp) https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/decisionaid_public.asp helps you learn about these options and think about which treatment might be best for you. It also gives you tips on how to work with your provider to decide on a treatment.

Using the PTSD Treatment Decision Aid, you can:

- Learn about effective PTSD treatments
- Watch videos of providers explaining how treatments work
- Build a chart to compare the treatments you like the most
- Print a personalized summary

How to Use the PTSD Treatment Decision Aid: If you have - or think you have - PTSD, the [PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](#) is one of the best ways to learn about effective treatment options. You can go through this decision aid in order, or skip around to the sections that interest you. At the end, you can print or save a personalized summary of your symptoms, goals, and preferences. Share this summary with your provider at your next visit.

NOTE: *This Decision Aid is not a substitute for medical care or advice from a provider. Only a licensed professional can diagnose PTSD.*

Privacy and Security: The information you enter as you move through the decision aid will be available to you until you close your browser window. At that time, your information is deleted. This is why we give you the option to print or save your personal summary. None of the information you enter will be stored or shared. Some anonymous information is collected automatically, however. Please see the [VA privacy policy](#) for a list of information that is collected automatically. *(Source: Department of Veterans Affairs)*

Expanded TRICARE Coverage for Ambulance Services

TRICARE expanded [ambulance services](#) to cover both treat-and-release and joint response services this year. TRICARE now covers: Treat-and-release: This is when an ambulance treats you, but doesn't take you to the hospital. Joint response: This is when an ambulance crew needs the help of a paramedic or intermediate EMT to give you advanced life support services.

Ambulances can be [network or non-network providers](#). In an emergency, sometimes a non-network ambulance may treat or transport you. If a non-network provider bills you for treat-and-release or joint response, they can charge up to 115 percent of the [TRICARE-allowable charge](#).

Active duty service members aren't liable for payment for treat-and-release or joint response services.

Learn more about [TRICARE ambulance services](#) and [your costs](#). And take command of your health. *(Source: Tricare.mil)*

Robo Calls: The US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) continue to team up to combat illegal robocalls targeting Americans, including Veterans and their families.

Each year, the FCC receives more than 200,000 complaints about unwanted calls. While this may seem like a big number, it pales in comparison to the millions of robocalls being made each day. The calls interrupt dinners and family time; they flood landline and mobile phones. Scam calls frequently solicit money for fake charities, including ones claiming to support America's Veterans - some even claiming to be VA representatives.

We know that scam activity increases during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, so the FCC and VA urge you to be vigilant. We offer the following tips to help you avoid unwanted calls and scams. Don't answer calls from unknown numbers. Scammers may spoof their caller ID to display a fake number that appears to be local. If you answer such a call, hang up immediately. Never give out personal information such as account numbers, Social Security numbers, mother's maiden names, or passwords in response to unexpected or suspicious calls. Be sure to set a password for all voice mail accounts to avoid being hacked. Register your number on the [Do Not Call List](#) to block calls from legitimate telemarketers. Ask your phone company about call-blocking tools and services for your landline phone, and check for helpful apps that you can download to your mobile phone. Please help spread the word about robocall fraud among those who may need assistance particularly those who are frequently targeted by phone scams. For more information, visit: fcc.gov/robocalls. (Source: Veterans Benefits Administration)

MILITARY STAR Launches Mobile App for Streamlined Customer Experience: For military shoppers, the MILITARY STAR® card experience just got more convenient.

The military exchange store credit card [rolled out a mobile app, MILITARY STAR Mobile, that will allow shoppers to make payments, sign up for push notifications and view account information](#), including all transactions and past billing statements. Biometric security features ensure that all account information stays safe.

App users can track rewards points and see how close they are to their next \$20 rewards card, which cardholders automatically earn every 2,000 points. The MILITARY STAR rewards program earns shoppers two points per dollar. Shoppers can check out ongoing MILITARY STAR savings and discounts on the app, as well.

“We’re listening to our cardholders’ feedback about how we can make MILITARY STAR a better fit for their lifestyle,” said Tommy Ward, Exchange Vice President of Credit Operations. “This mobile app puts all the MILITARY STAR information they need right in their hands.” The app is available now for iPhones, and an Android version is coming soon.

MILITARY STAR is administered by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service. Other benefits of the card include:

- The lowest flat-rate APR (12.24 percent) among store cards—rate is offered to all cardholders.
- No annual, late or over-limit fees.
- 10 percent discount on first day of use.
- Reduced-interest deployment plan with no payments required for eligible customers.

Facebook-friendly version: MILITARY STAR® card shoppers have a new and convenient resource: a mobile app where they can review account information, track rewards points, sign up for push notifications and see the latest deals and discounts. Read more: <https://wp.me/p9Q7PG-Oy>. (Source; Army & Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs)

AGENT ORANGE NEWSLETTER: The newest Agent Orange Newsletter is out. You can find it at www.publichealth.va.gov or simply search Agent Orange Newsletter 2018. It contains articles on Disability Compensation for Vietnam Veterans Exposed to Agent Orange and Camp Lejeune Health Care and Benefits as well as helpful websites and phone numbers.

Volunteers Welcomed!!! Volunteering is a rewarding experience. There are many programs and activities within the military community that could not exist if it were not for the many volunteers doing the work to make things happen.

Be a Volunteer at the RAO, If you have been looking for a fun, a creative and rewarding way to stay involved in the McChord Military Retiree community, then volunteering is the answer. At the McChord Retiree Activities Office, you can easily join our volunteer staff. Hands on training will be provided and you will be working with a great team of volunteers who are military retirees and spouses providing their time, skills, talents and wisdom towards helping the military community. For more information you can contact us at (253)-982-3214

There are many opportunities for volunteers, if you are a retired aircraft mechanic the McChord Heritage Museum can use your help restoring and maintain the museum's heritage aircraft, contact Mr. Jordon at (253)-982-2485. The USO, the Red Cross, the base clinic and the American Lake VA Hospital also need volunteers.

HELPFULL 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,