



A MESSAGE FROM

## THE COMMANDING GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND

Greetings, Retired Soldiers and Families.

When I assumed command of U.S. Army Human Resources Command this July, I also assumed responsibility for the great team of professionals who process retirement requests from all Army components for over 30,000 of our longest serving

Soldiers every year – Soldiers who have spent most of their adult lives defending our great nation.

These “Gray Area” Retired Soldiers – our Army National Guardsmen and Army Reservists who’ve qualified for, but not yet started receiving, retired pay – should know that we take this responsibility seriously. So much so that we recently renamed the branch within The Adjutant General’s Directorate that is devoted to supporting you. The Gray Area Retirements Branch receives your personnel files from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve when you transition to the Retired Reserve, or Gray Area. We keep your files updated, so when it’s time to ask the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to start your retired pay, your file is ready and, most importantly, your retired pay starts on time. We prepare about 10,000 of your retirement requests each year.

Ensuring your file is ready when it’s time to apply for your retired pay is a joint responsibility. We need you to tell us when your circumstances change: if you move; if your marital status changes; if you lose a spouse or child. We need to know because these life events impact your benefits – especially your Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan. Our staff can advise you regarding how these changes impact you and your family. If we have your current contact information, we can keep you informed through this newsletter about changes in laws and policies that affect you. Please call the Human Resources Service Center at (888) 276-9472 when you need to update your file.

When you approach your retirement date, download your retirement application from our website at [https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20\(GAR\)%20Branch](https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20(GAR)%20Branch). Send your completed application to us no more than nine months, but not less than 90 days, before your retirement date.

As a Soldier for Life, we thank you for your long and dedicated service. We also ask that you continue supporting the Army by telling your Army story, by helping veterans get jobs, and by inspiring America’s youth to continue your legacy of service to the Army and nation!

Maj. Gen. Joseph R. Calloway  
Commanding General, U. S. Army Human Resources Command

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## Echoes from the past: News from 60 years ago

*The more things change, the more they stay the same!*

The **October 1959** edition noted that retired members do not understand why their use of facilities in foreign countries was restricted. The edition explained that retired members are generally authorized the use of facilities on military installations when adequate facilities are available, but that this privilege is subject to existing agreements between the United States and the host country. The article specifically noted the Bonn Conventions, which ended the "occupation regime in Germany" and limited access to facilities to personnel performing official military duties and their immediate dependents. [Ed. Note: This issue recently resurfaced when retirees and Service members not living in Germany were denied the use of the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Garmisch, Germany. A new agreement has been worked out with the German government and they can use the Edelweiss again.]

The **November 1959** edition announced a new ID card for retirees – the DD Form 2A (Ret)(gray). The new ID Card replaced the Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (DD Form 1173) that had been given to retirees. The DD Form 1173 continued to be issued to dependents. [Ed. Note: The DOD will soon begin the process of replacing the blue DD Form 2 (Retired) and all paper ID cards with the "Next Gen USID card" that will incorporate an updated design and security features to deter counterfeiting and fraud, and be printed on a plastic cardstock. ID Cards will be replaced only when their expiration date is reached or they otherwise need to be reissued.]

The **December 1959** edition summarized the taxation of retired pay, the tax exempt status of disability retired pay, Internal Revenue Service forms and filing procedures, retirement income tax credits and how those applied to military retired pay, and amending tax returns from previous years. [Ed. Note: Retired Soldiers may now receive free income tax advice from the installation Staff Judge Advocate and volunteers in tax assistance centers on post.]

The **January 1960** edition included a message from the Honorable Wilber M. Brucker, Secretary of the Army. Secretary Brucker's message emphasized the "One Army" concept that there "must be complete acceptance of the concept that the Active Army, the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard constitute one dynamic team . . . We must all – regulars and reserves, civilians and military, infantrymen and engineers, active and retired – close ranks and strive in fact as well as in theory for a true unity of effort, purpose, and spirit." [Ed. Note: Current Army leadership continues to emphasize this very same message.]

*Army Echoes* is the U. S. Army's official newsletter for Retired Soldiers, surviving spouses and their families. *Army Echoes'* mission is to educate Retired Soldiers about their benefits and changes within the U. S. Army and to urge them to remain Soldiers for Life, representing the Army in their civilian communities.

Published as a hard copy and electronic newsletter three times each year in accordance with Army Regulation 600-8-7, *Army Echoes* is also published as a daily blog at <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/blog>. Past editions of the *Army Echoes* newsletter are available for free downloading from <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/army-echoes>.

Inquiries and comments about *Army Echoes* should be sent to Army Retirement Services, Attention: *Army Echoes* Editor, 251 18th Street South, Suite 210, Arlington, VA 22202-3531 or [ArmyEchoes@mail.mil](mailto:ArmyEchoes@mail.mil). Direct all other questions to the Retirement Services Officers listed on pg. 23.

Prior to using or reprinting any portion of *Army Echoes*, please contact the editor at [ArmyEchoes@mail.mil](mailto:ArmyEchoes@mail.mil).

### Leadership

Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1: Lt. Gen. Thomas C. Seamands

Co-Chairs, Chief of Staff, Army Retired Soldier Council: Lt. Gen. David Halverson (USA Retired) and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler (USA Retired)

Director, Army Retirement Services: Mark E. Overberg

*Army Echoes* Editor: Maria G. Bentinck

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## FEDVIP provides vision coverage to TRICARE beneficiaries

**WASHINGTON** — Routine eye exams can help keep your vision strong. The National Eye Institute reports that a comprehensive eye exam can identify common vision problems and prevent diseases that may lead to vision loss or blindness. TRICARE health plans may include an eye exam or other services to diagnose and treat eye conditions. Your eye exam coverage is different based on who you are, your health plan option, and your age.

If you need more robust coverage, including glasses, you may also qualify to purchase vision coverage through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Visit the FEDVIP website at <https://www.benefeds.com/>.

### What is FEDVIP vision?

FEDVIP is a voluntary program that offers eligible TRICARE beneficiaries a choice among a number of vision and dental carriers. It's administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. The FEDVIP vision plans provide comprehensive vision coverage. Most include routine eye exams, vision correction, glasses, and more.

### Who can enroll in a FEDVIP vision plan?

Retirees, retiree family members, and active duty family members who are enrolled in a TRICARE health plan may qualify to purchase FEDVIP vision coverage.

### When can you enroll in FEDVIP?

You may enroll during the annual federal benefits open season. This period is your annual opportunity to enroll in, change, or cancel a FEDVIP plan. This year, open season is from Nov. 11 to Dec. 9, 2019. If you enroll during this time, your FEDVIP coverage will be effective on Jan. 1, 2020. You may also enroll after you've experienced a FEDVIP qualifying life event (QLE).



Remember, FEDVIP QLEs may be different from the TRICARE QLEs. You may check your eligibility, enroll, and manage your FEDVIP vision benefit online.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only half of the estimated 61 million U.S. adults at high risk for vision loss visited an eye doctor in the last 12 months. Regular vision screenings can help prevent certain vision loss. Take command of your eye health by staying informed about your available vision coverage options.

Learn more about TRICARE vision coverage. For more information about FEDVIP vision, go to the FEDVIP website at <https://www.benefeds.com/Portal/EducationSupport?EnsSubmit=dental-vision-plans&ctoken=FeLrJcQV>.

## The Soldier for Life sticker

The Soldier for Life sticker promotes the Soldier for Life mindset among Soldiers, Retired Soldiers, and veterans, uniting them in their desire to be Army advocates and demonstrate the value of a lifetime of service to the nation.

The stickers are officially known as Department of the Army Label 180 (Exterior) and 180-1 (Interior). DA Label 180 uses normal adhesive and is affixed



to the outside of windows, on books, and other appropriate surfaces. DA Label 180-1 uses electrostatic cling and is affixed to the inside of windows.

Both stickers may be provided by your RSO or purchased from the Exchange and other retail businesses.

**The sticker does not include the word "Retired" because it represents every Soldier for Life, including veterans who are not retired.**



## Military health care consolidation moves to next phase

**WASHINGTON** — The Defense Health Agency (DHA) will take the next step this fall in evolving health care across the military health system, which oversees the care and well-being of some 9.5 million people, including service members, families and retirees.

On Oct. 1, 2019 all military treatment facilities in the United States that had been previously operated by the Army, Navy or Air Force transitioned to the DHA.

Eventually, every military treatment facility will move under the DHA, and the agency has opted to manage those facilities by dividing them into a variety of "markets."

The large-market segment includes the national capital region, San Diego, San Antonio and Southwestern Kentucky, among others. The DHA has identified about 20 such large markets.

Small markets will include Central Louisiana, Las Vegas, New England, Central Virginia and Central Oklahoma. About 16 similar small markets have been identified.

Finally, the nearly 70 treatment facilities that don't fall within the boundaries of either a small or large market will be part of a "stand-alone" segment managed by the same office that manages the small markets.

Similar markets eventually will be formed in Europe and the Indo-Pacific region, home to about 75 military treatment facilities.

Navy Vice Adm. (Dr.) Raquel Bono, the Defense Health Agency's director, said these changes should be transparent, rather than disruptive, to health care beneficiaries around the nation.

"From the patient's perspective, the way I like to describe it is that at first it should be very transparent to them," she said. "They won't see any real visible changes."

What will eventually change, Bono said, is that things across all military treatment facilities will become easier for patients.

For example, Bono said, as the military treatment facilities and the markets continue to evolve under the DHA, beneficiaries will find that how they make an appointment

in the Tidewater area of Virginia will be the same way they make an appointment at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio or at a facility in San Diego.

A move to joint electronic health records also is part of the military health system transformation, making the movement of beneficiary health records between different facilities seamless, Bono said. This will help them to be treated anywhere, including at facilities run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, she added.

"This is one of those efforts we've been trying for some time now to accomplish," Bono said. "Being able to share the medical data in a seamless way and make it actionable is a very big step in the right direction. And it's a direction that private health care or commercial health care is also

trying to do, ... making the data about patient and patient care more visible not only to the patient, but also to other people that are providing care to that individual."

That data sharing, she said, means patients won't have to retrieve their records and make copies of them and bring them to their provider. This makes things easier for patients and also ensures that different providers don't run tests multiple times because they can't access existing results, the admiral noted.

Bono retires soon, and she said she hopes her successor will be able to

keep the changes and improvements happening at the same pace they are already moving.

"Going forward, what I'd like for all the folks to bear in mind is that we've built a head of steam," she said. "We've got now some momentum. More and more people are becoming more informed about the reasons for why we are doing this in the first place, and I think it's easier for them to see now the role that they have in being able to make these changes happen. I think this is a real pivotal time. I think we are at a major inflection point for military health."

Overseas markets will transition to the DHA no later than Sept. 30, 2021.



*Lt. Col. Juli Fung-Hayes (center), a U.S. Army Reserve emergency medicine physician with the 2nd Medical Brigade, leads a medic team from the 396th Combat Support Hospital, headquartered at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, through a trauma and critical care scenario in a field hospital during a promotional photo shoot for Army Reserve marketing and recruiting at Fort Hunter Liggett, California, July 18, 2018. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)*



## Get to know your TRICARE Retired Reserve Plan

**WASHINGTON** — TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR) is a premium-based health plan available for purchase by qualified retired members of the National Guard and Reserve under age 60. A premium-based health plan means you pay monthly premiums, in addition to other costs for your health care. TRR coverage is similar to TRICARE Select coverage for retirees whose initial enlistment or appointment occurred on or after Jan. 1, 2018 (Group B). They both have the same retiree copayments or cost-shares and choice of providers.

As outlined in the TRICARE Choices for National Guard and Reserve Handbook, <https://www.tricare.mil/publications>, Retired Reserve members have different TRICARE options prior to turning age 60 and once turning age 60. Up to age 60, TRR is an option. Here are a few questions and answers to help you better understand the key features of the health plan.

### Who can enroll in TRICARE Retired Reserve?

Qualified Retired Reserve members, their family members, and their survivors may be eligible to enroll in TRR. These Retired Reserve members must be under age 60 and not eligible for, nor enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.

You may check your eligibility on the milConnect website at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>. Log in to milConnect, click on the "Benefits" tab, and then select "Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE)" from the menu. You can also visit <https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/PlanFinder> to see what plans you and your family may qualify for.

### How do you enroll?

"You may enroll in TRR at any time throughout the year," said Brian Smith, program manager for Reserve Component health plans at the Defense Health Agency. "As with all TRICARE premium-based health plans, you don't need to wait until TRICARE Open Season to enroll."

You may purchase TRR online on the milConnect website. Log in to milConnect, click on the "Benefits" tab, and then select "Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE)" from the menu. You can also call your regional contractor, visit <https://tricare.mil/About/Regions>. An initial two-month premium payment is due with your enrollment request. You can also mail or fax your completed Reserve Component Health Coverage Request Form (DD Form 2896-1) along with the initial premium payment to your regional contractor within the specified deadline. If you live overseas, you can also purchase TRR coverage in person at a TRICARE Service Center.



### How do you get care with TRR?

To get health care, schedule an appointment with any TRICARE-authorized provider. Referrals aren't required, but some services require prior authorization. You save money if you see a TRICARE network provider. That provider will file your claims for you. If you get care from a non-network provider, you may pay more and have to file your own claims. If you want to get care at a military hospital or clinic under TRR coverage, you can only do so if space is available. Pharmacy services are also provided at a military hospital or clinic. You can also use TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery and TRICARE retail network pharmacies to fill your prescriptions.

### What are the costs associated with TRR?

With TRR coverage, you pay monthly premiums, a yearly deductible, and applicable copayments or cost-shares for covered services. Learn more about TRR costs and view costs, including monthly premiums and copayments on the TRICARE website at <https://tricare.mil/>.

If you're a Reserve member approaching retirement and below age 60, visit TRICARE Retired Reserve to learn more about costs and coverage under TRR. For more information about TRR and your options at age 60 and up, you can also download the TRICARE Choices for National Guard and Reserve Handbook at <https://www.tricare.mil/publications>. Getting to know your health plan will help you make informed choices and take command of your health.



## Benefits of using myPay for SBP annuitants

**CLEVELAND** — If you are the receiving a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity payment and you're not using myPay, you're missing out.

myPay, the pay management system from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), provides convenient access to a range of information about your payments. It also lets you easily update your account information and submit your annual certification.

Plus, when you have an email address in myPay, you can receive important email messages from DFAS about your pay account and information from the Army.

In addition, later this fall, DFAS will begin sending email reminders to college-age students who are receiving an SBP annuity and are required to submit school certifications. Student child annuitants who would like to receive these reminders just need to have a myPay account with a valid email address, and DFAS will email reminders when it is time for school certifications to be submitted.

myPay is available using your computer or your mobile device browser at: <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Using myPay you can:

- View, print or download your Annuitant Account Statements (AAS)
- View, print or download your current IRS Form 1099-R and up to two prior years
- View, print or download your current IRS Form 1042-S and up to two prior years
- Change your federal tax withholding
- Submit your Certificate of Eligibility (COE)
- Submit your Report of Existence (ROE)
- Change your mailing address
- Change your direct deposit information
- Update your email address

With an email address in myPay, you can:

- Receive an email when your 1099R is available
- Receive email notifications from DFAS about your annuity payments or account
- Receive email notifications about Army news and events
- Receive an email notification when school certifications are coming due
- Reset your myPay password online

Any military annuitant who is receiving SBP annuity pay through DFAS can use myPay. If you've never used myPay, it's easy to get started: To set up your access for the first time, request a temporary password:

A-Go to <https://mypay.dfas.mil> on your computer or mobile device.

B-Click "Forgot or Need a Password?"

C-Enter your Social Security Number and click the "Yes" button on the bottom right.

D-Choose "mail to my address of record" and click "Send me a Password."

You should receive your temporary password in 10 business days by postal mail.

Once you receive your temporary password, go back to [mypay.dfas.mil](https://mypay.dfas.mil) and select "Create your myPay Profile. Start here."

You will be asked to enter your Social Security Number and temporary password. Follow the on-screen prompts to log in to myPay and set up your profile.

There are also helpful videos about using myPay on DFAS' YouTube channel, including "New to myPay? Get Started." Watch them at: [YouTube.com/DFAS](https://YouTube.com/DFAS)

If you need assistance with your myPay account, please call DFAS' customer care center toll-free at (888)332 - 7411 (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.. to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time).



## Get ready now for the coming tax season!

**CLEVELAND** —For a growing number of military retirees and annuitants, myPay is becoming the preferred way to manage their retired and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity pay accounts and retrieve important documents, such as the annual 1099R tax statement. If you visit infrequently, this tax season you will see a myPay that looks and feels different.



In May, the pay management system from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) underwent a refresh that improved the design and navigation of the site while maintaining the functions customers have come to expect. It also made myPay more mobile-friendly for smartphone and tablet users.

According to the myPay project manager, now is a good time for retirees and annuitants to plan for renewing their myPay passwords to avoid any delays when 2019 1099R forms become available in December.

DFAS produced a number of “how to” videos that are available at its YouTube channel to help you perform common updates in your myPay accounts. In addition to updating passwords or retrieving Login IDs, the videos can also help you if you need to update your email and mailing address.

The videos area available at the DFAS channel (<https://www.youtube.com/DFAS>), or go direct to a specific video:

- Getting started in myPay: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0rVZBrv57U>
- Change your password: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YM8rQYwhsYl>
- Request your Login ID: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7\\_g2H5sTjE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7_g2H5sTjE)
- Change your email address: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgyA\\_F2lShI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgyA_F2lShI)
- Change your mailing address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8phpCKbaBg>
- Change your bank direct deposit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivxL1fxWJiA>

The channel also features a video produced to introduce customers to the design and navigation changes made in May: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lR3lgetufg>.

### New online option for submitting school certification forms

**CLEVELAND** —Student Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) child annuitants who need to send school certifications have a new, convenient, online option for submitting their school certification forms.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) created a new online module where child annuitants can upload a school certification form through AskDFAS on the <https://www.dfas.mil/AskDFAS.html> website, which is also accessible on a mobile browser. The online submission module is at <https://go.usa.gov/xymaH>.

To use the new, online module to submit a school certification form, students just need to fill in the required information in the online screen, and then upload a PDF of their completed and

signed DD 2788 - Child Annuitant's School Certification form. This online module can only accept school certification forms and accompanying documentation. It cannot be used for other types of annuitant documents or requests.

In addition, DFAS is developing new email reminders when it is time to submit school certifications. Student child annuitants who would like to receive these reminders just need to have a myPay account with a valid email address, and DFAS will email reminders when it is time for school certifications to be submitted. Information on getting started with myPay is at: <https://myPay.dfas.mil>. Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity payments typically stop for child annuitants covered under SBP when they reach age 18, unless they are incapacitated. However, if the child

annuitant attends school full-time (in high school or at an accredited college or university), the SBP annuity payments can continue until they reach age 22 or otherwise become ineligible.

To continue the annuity payments, a child annuitant over 18 must submit a school certification form each term/semester. DFAS must receive the form no later than the last day of the school term to continue payments without interruption.

In addition to using the online school certification submission module, student child annuitants can submit their school certification forms through the mail or via fax. Please see the DFAS School Certification webpage for more information visit: [www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/School-Certifications](http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/School-Certifications).



# ARMY ECHOES

## Ask Joe: Your Benefits Guru



### MyArmyBenefits

The U.S. Army official benefits website



Dear Joe,

My husband, Bert, served in the Army for 22 years, retired in 1995, and we were RV'ing around the country visiting the grandkids until we decided to live in Tucson, AZ. He became ill a few years back with what the VA says is Agent Orange related cancer and he did okay for a while, but then began to decline. Sadly, he's now in hospice care and the doctors don't give him much time. Bert always said he wanted to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery, so that's what I'm going to do if I can. But I heard it might be months after the death before his funeral can even happen. That isn't true, is it?

Adele in Arizona

Dear Adele,

First, thanks to both of you for your service to the country. I'm sorry to hear about Bert's state of health but glad to see you're trying to get a handle on what can sometimes be a confusing process during a difficult time. Burial at Arlington National Cemetery is truly beautiful because the rich history of military honors makes the service special and it's obvious, they consider caring for our nation's heroes and their families during their time of need a sacred duty.

Yes, Adele, your information is correct, and it can take months after the death before interment can happen at Arlington National Cemetery. On average, the cemetery conducts between 27 and 30 funeral services each day with varying degrees of military funeral honors, chaplain support, chapel services, and fly overs; they schedule services based on available cemetery and military resources. The demand for Arlington National Cemetery burial is great, but resources are limited.

I would advise beginning to put together the necessary documentation i.e., Bert's DD Form 214, Release or Discharge from Active Duty, researching potential funeral directors and, upon death, contact the Arlington National Cemetery Customer Service Center at (877)907-8585 to begin arrangements for the interment service.

As always, MyArmyBenefits has details on all your benefits. Check the Arlington National Cemetery and Burial and Memorial Fact Sheets at <https://MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil> for further information.

Joe

Dear Joe,

I retired over 15 years ago. Me and Betty are living in the mountains of West Virginia to be near her sister. Times are tight but we're getting by on my Army retired pay and our social security – she also has a small check from her job as a teacher. Now, my sister lives in South Carolina and has invited us to live with her in New Bern and we're thinking of moving there to live. How do I convince Betty this is a good idea?

Matt from the Mountaintop

Dear Mountaineer,

I can't tell you what to do, that's your decision. But I can help you make a logical decision instead of an emotional one. MyArmyBenefits (<https://MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil>) has fact sheets for every state. These contain current information on taxes, low cost loans and financial incentives, elections, bonuses and rewards. West Virginia, for example, does not tax military pensions, while South Carolina is more complicated with a phased-in rate. But each state has distinct advantages. Other states do not charge property tax for veterans and some even exempt them from sales tax. So, start with your combined retired income, tabulate your mandatory expenses, like medical, transportation, insurance, and then use the fact sheets to see what living in the mountains or the beach will cost you. (There are even internet websites that can give you estimates of the local cost of living.) Good luck.

Joe



## Knowing what you need to know about retirement

Retirement is not always what is expected and there are challenges along the way that can be daunting. Just knowing what you need to know can be one of those challenges. Though proper retirement planning can help smooth the path; sometimes the path becomes an information superhighway with a labyrinth of outdated, conflicted, or unofficial opinion. There is so much information readily available that can seem overwhelming. Fortunately, there is one valuable resource to help navigate through the information.

**Tip:** The MyArmyBenefits (MAB) website (<https://MyArmyBenefits.us.army.mil>) is a really good place to start in the search for information, and your planning needs, both before, in preparation of, and after retirement. The MAB website will allow you to put your finger on accurate information you need – immediately, up-to-date, and all in one place.

In 2007, Congress directed the Army to provide a web-based one-stop source providing comprehensive pay, benefits, and entitlements information to Active, Army National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, Retired Soldiers, families, and survivors as they transition from reserve or active duty to retirement or by completing military service and returning to their civilian communities.

MAB provides over 150 Federal fact sheets, open and available to the public, that cover every federal benefit for which Soldiers, family members, retirees, and survivors are eligible – important topics like scholarships, TRICARE, Thrift Savings Plan, moving, ID cards, all Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits and disability compensation topics, Survivor Benefit Plan, pay, space available travel, and burial and memorial benefits. MAB federal fact sheets also provide the information and procedures for claiming compensation such as Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) or Concurrent Retired and Disability Pay (CRDP), Social Security compensation, and other special benefits.

Additionally, there are 54 MAB state and territory fact sheets that have done the research for you and provide, in one place, invaluable information with every benefit each state provides including taxes, health insurance, education, park and recreation, licenses, employment benefits, unemployment compensation, and scholarships. These fact sheets can help you in the decision process about where to live after you've left the Army.

MyArmyBenefits offers a Resource Locator that is updated annually to provide the most current contact information for local benefit providers at installations and facilities in all 54 states and territories and 11 foreign countries. Whether you are researching VA medical facilities in your new home state or looking for the nearest military commissary while vacationing in Florida, the Resource Locator is an essential tool.

MAB also provides a benefits news feed featuring the latest information on military benefits, and several videos to familiarize users with basic site navigation.

Finally, MyArmyBenefits offers a Benefits Help Desk, available Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, to answer any benefits related questions or issues. To contact the Benefits Specialists at the MAB Help Desk, call (888) 721-2769, email [usarmy.myarmybenefits@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.myarmybenefits@mail.mil), or complete the web form at <https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Help/Contact-Us>.



<http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil>



## What you need to know about your Survivor Benefit Plan election

By **Bill Hursh**, *Army Survivor Benefit Plan Program Manager*

The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) was designed to provide income protection not only to your spouse, but also to your children until they become self-supporting (i.e., until they are no longer dependents). Child coverage may be elected with or without spouse former spouse coverage.

Children are eligible for SBP until age 18 if unmarried or age 22 if an unmarried full time student. A child who is disabled, and permanently incapable of self-support remains eligible if the disability occurred before age 18 (or before age 22 if a full time student). An unmarried child over age 18 who previously was not a full time student but becomes a full time student prior to age 22 regains eligibility for SBP as a child. Marriage at any age makes a child ineligible for SBP coverage even if that marriage ends in death or divorce.

All eligible children are covered when you have children only or spouse and children SBP elections. You cannot choose which SBP eligible children to provide coverage. The only exception to covering all eligible children is when your SBP election is for former spouse and children. Only your children with your former spouse are covered. If you have SBP eligible step children who are living in a parent child relationship with you, they are your children for SBP coverage.

The SBP for children is 55 percent of the amount of your retired pay you elected to cover for SBP. That 55 percent is divided equally between all of the eligible children. As each child loses eligibility, SBP is re-divided among the remaining children until there is no eligible child left and child SBP stops.

If you elected spouse and children SBP, your spouse is the your primary beneficiary and the SBP only goes to your eligible children if your spouse remarries prior to age 55 or dies. If your spouse lost SBP eligibility due to remarriage and the annuity went to your eligible children, the SBP annuity will go back to your spouse if that marriage ends.

If you did not have an eligible child when you retired and now have your first eligible child, you can elect SBP for your child as long as you do it within one year of acquiring the child. If you do not take any action within one year to elect SBP for that child, you close SBP for that child and any future child. To add child SBP coverage, submit a DD Form 2656-6 (SBP Election Change Certificate) to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) with supporting documentation (birth certificate, adoption decree, or guardianship decree). The address is on the DD Form 2656-6. Your child SBP election is effective and premiums start on the first anniversary of acquiring your child. If you previously had spouse coverage, your election will change to spouse and child.

Retired Soldiers with children who meet the SBP criteria as a disabled dependent child incapable of self-support may request payment of SBP to a Special Needs Trust (SNT). Payment to a SNT eliminates the SBP income that can negatively impact other benefits the child receives. If your SBP coverage includes coverage for a totally disabled dependent child, you may substitute an irrevocable election to pay the SBP annuity for the child to a SNT. The SNT will be treated as a child when determining the division of SBP. Your installation Retirement Services Officer (RSO) can provide you more information on electing payment of SBP to an SNT on behalf of a totally disabled dependent child.

Contact information for installation RSOs, is available on page . You can also find information on payment of SBP to a SNT for a totally disabled dependent child on the Defense Finance and Accounting Service homepage at <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/provide/sbp/special-needs-trust.html>.



# How retirees and the Exchange are helping warfighters and military families

By Army & Air Force Exchange Service Director/CEO Tom Shull

A Soldier for Life is a lifetime member of the Army family. Whether active-duty, veteran, retiree, spouse or Army brat, you're a member of a very special group that looks out for each other and supports your brothers and sisters in arms. Soldiers for Life never stop serving; when looking for something for their home or family, their first stop is always their earned Exchange benefit.

Retirees who shop their Exchange help fund critical quality-of-life programs on installations, such as Child, Youth and School Services, Armed Forces Outdoor Recreation and more. In 2018, Exchange shoppers generated more than \$223 million for these programs that support warfighters and their families. Thank you for making life better for the next generation of our Army family.

The Exchange earnings you create also play a pivotal role in stocking and deploying mobile field Exchanges (MFEs), which are Exchanges on wheels. These MFEs are stocked with toiletries, snacks and basic necessities for troops in remote areas. Additionally, the Exchange provides Wi-Fi services in deployed locations to allow warfighters to stay connected with friends and family back home.

In 2018, MFEs brought a taste of home to warfighters deployed at the tip of the spear in Eastern Europe, Southwest Asia and the Middle East; supported troops

near the U.S. southern border; and helped the Tyndall Air Force Base community devastated by Hurricane Michael get supplies when every other store for miles was closed.

Your support allows the Exchange to sell military uniforms at cost, meaning the Exchange makes no profit on the sales. The Exchange is the only government-certified source for military uniforms. You also help make the Exchange's school meal program possible, providing balanced school lunches to military children overseas at cost.

Earnings help underwrite efforts to recruit more veterans and military spouses to work at the Exchange, as well. The Exchange has hired 1,400 wounded warriors since 2010 and are committed to hiring 50,000 veterans and military spouses by 2020.

Thank you for your support and thank you for your continued service to our nation—and Army family—by shopping the Exchange.

Soldier for Life!

*Tom Shull, a former infantry company commander, served as Military Assistant to Robert C. McFarlane, National Security Advisor to President Reagan. Currently, he is the Army & Air Force Exchange Service's Director/CEO and has served as CEO for retail and consumer packaged goods companies.*

## RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS

Attend and receive benefits information, renew acquaintances and ID Cards, get medical checkups, and receive other services. Some RADs include dinners or golf tournaments. For more information, contact the Retirement Services Officer sponsoring the RAD.

Location	Date	Contact	Location	Date	Contact
JB Myer-Henderson Hall, VA	Oct. 4	(703) 696-5948	USAG-Rheinland-Pfalz/Ramstein	Oct. 22	0631-411-8838
Carlisle Barracks, PA	Oct. 5	(717) 245-4501	Fort Rucker, AL	Oct. 25	(334) 255-9124
Rock Island, IL	Oct. 5	(563) 445-0191	Fort Meade, MD	Oct. 25	(301) 677-9603
JB Ellington Field-Houston	Oct. 12	(210) 221-9004	Redstone, AL	Oct. 25	(256) 876-2022
Fort Riley, KS	Oct. 12	(785)239-3320	Fort Hamilton, NY	Oct. 25	0503-353-3872
USAG-Bavaria	Oct. 15	0964-183-8709	Fort Knox, KY	Oct. 25	(502) 624-1765
USAG-Ansbach	Oct. 16	0981-183-3301	Fort Hood, TX	Oct. 25-26	(254) 287-5210
USAG-Stuttgart	Oct. 17	07031-15-3442	Fort Leavenworth, KS	Oct. 26	(913) 684-5583
Schinnen, Netherlands	Oct. 18	0032-65-44-7267	USAG-Wiesbaden	Oct. 26	0611-705-5338
Fort Bragg, NC	Oct. 18-19	(910) 396-5304	USAG-Italy	Oct. 28	0039-0444-61-7747
Fort Polk, LA	Oct. 19	(337) 531-0402	Fort Benning, GA	Nov. 1	(706) 545-1805
Fort Wainwright, AK	Oct. 19	(907) 353-2095	Daeugu, Korea	Nov. 2	0505-768-8803
JBSA Fort Sam Houston and Brooke	Oct. 19	(210) 221-9004	Schofield Barracks, HI	Nov. 2	(808) 655-1514
USAG-BENELUX-Brussels	Oct. 19	011-32-65-32-6293	Fort Gordon, GA	Nov. 2	(706) 791-2654
Camp Humphreys, Korea	Oct. 19	010-8944-2188			



## TRICARE open season and federal benefits open season begins Nov. 11

**WASHINGTON** — Open season is an annual period when you can enroll in or change health plans for the next year. Now is the time to think through whether you or your family members want to make changes to your current health, dental, and vision plan coverage.

Two open seasons run at the same time this fall: TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season. TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for a TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select health plan. Federal Benefits Open Season is for enrollment in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Both the TRICARE and FEDVIP open seasons begin on Nov. 11 and end on Dec. 9. Enrollment choices made during this period will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

“Open season is a good time to look at 2020 costs and think about how much health, dental, or vision coverage you’ll need for the coming year,” said Mark Ellis, with the Policy and Program Section of the TRICARE Health Plan at the Defense Health Agency. “If you aren’t sure what your options are, or want to learn the key components of TRICARE and FEDVIP plans, visit the TRICARE (<https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/PlanFinder>) and FEDVIP (<https://www.benefeds.com/>) websites.”

On the TRICARE website, you can use tools, like the TRICARE Plan Finder and TRICARE Compare Cost Tool. These resources help you see which plans you’re eligible for and help you to compare plans and costs. On the FEDVIP enrollment website, you can enroll in or make changes to your FEDVIP plan. The website also provides tools to help you find the right dental and/or vision plans for you and your family.

### What can you do during TRICARE Open Season?

If you’re eligible to participate in TRICARE Open Season, you have three choices for your 2020 health coverage:

- Do nothing. If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health care plan, you don’t have to take any action. You’ll continue in your current health plan through 2020 or as long as you’re eligible.
- Enroll in a plan. If you’re eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan now.
- Change plans. If you’re already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime option, or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

If you choose to enroll in a plan or change a plan, visit “Enroll or Purchase a Plan” on the TRICARE website for details.

TRICARE Open Season doesn’t apply to TRICARE For Life (TFL) or premium-based plans. TFL coverage is automatic if you have Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B. You can purchase premium-based plans (for example, TRICARE Retired Reserve and TRICARE Young Adult) at any time.

Outside of TRICARE Open Season, you can only enroll in or make changes to your TRICARE Prime (including the US Family Health Plan) or TRICARE Select plan following a qualifying life event (QLE). A QLE is a certain change in your life, such as marriage, change of address, losing or gaining other health insurance, or becoming eligible for Medicare. Different TRICARE health plans may be available to you and your family members after a QLE.

Learn more about TRICARE Open Season at [www.tricare.mil/openseason](http://www.tricare.mil/openseason).

### What can you do during Federal Benefits Open Season?

If you’re already enrolled in a FEDVIP dental and/or vision plan, your enrollment will automatically continue in 2020. If you wish to make changes to your existing plan, you must do so during open season.

You may choose between multiple vision and dental plans and carriers. Some plans offer both high and standard options. But to enroll in FEDVIP vision, you must be enrolled in a TRICARE health plan or have TFL coverage.

Individuals covered under any of the following programs are not eligible for FEDVIP:

- TRICARE Young Adult
- Transitional Assistance Management Program
- Continued Health Care Benefit Program
- Foreign military (including NATO) sponsor/family coverage

Learn more about Federal Benefits Open Season at [www.benefeds.com](http://www.benefeds.com).

Take command of your health and prepare to participate in this year’s TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season. If you want to change your 2020 coverage, you must take action during open season. Sign up for email updates about open season on the TRICARE website.

## Veterans reflect on their experiences with Army Emergency Relief

By Emily Bulkeley, Development Analyst for Army Emergency Relief Headquarters

As a part of this year's annual campaign for donations, Army Emergency Relief (AER) asked Retired Soldiers to share their experiences with our program. The responses we received were incredibly informative and there were a few cases where we had the opportunity to clarify AER's mission and programs.

While most Soldiers and their spouses are familiar with AER as a source of funds for emergency travel, there's a wide range of assistance categories (over 30 of them) that many are not aware of. In particular, the free financial counseling services available from our experts is an underused resource. 1st Sgt.(Ret) Joan Murray expressed her thanks for this service saying, "30 years ago, AER helped me to get myself out of debt and begin to plan financially. It changed my life."

Our main mission is to assist Soldiers during financial hardships, however, the best way to begin addressing this is through a careful review of individual/family finances and budgeting. To achieve this, we work closely with the U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Financial Readiness Program (FRP) Directors located at every installation. You do not need to have a pending assistance case to take advantage of this service. Simply contact the FRP through your local ACS office ([www.armymwr.com/communities](http://www.armymwr.com/communities)) to schedule an appointment or sign up for a class. The more prepared you are for future emergencies, the less strenuous they will be on your finances.

For 77 years, AER has assisted Soldiers and their Families. Unfortunately, our extensive history means that some of our processes are outdated. One retired staff sergeant shared his frustration with this, stating "I asked for assistance on a Friday afternoon and was given the run around and told I would need a lot of paperwork to process. This system needs to be streamlined." We--especially our officers in the field--couldn't agree more!

AER will field a new software system in 2020, which will simplify and speed up the process of providing assistance. Specifically, this new system will have a web-based, on-line application, giving us the ability to more quickly respond to our Soldiers' needs, no matter how big or small.

According to 1st Sgt. (Ret) Keith Marceau, AER was able to provide a variety of assistance throughout his career. For him, "AER was a blessing in my career. From that first electric bill I couldn't pay, to assistance for my wife's college education later in life." 1st Sgt. Marceau's experience perfectly summarizes the services AER offers to a Soldier and their family, from basic essentials to scholarships for dependents' education. More information on our scholarship programs can be found on our website ([www.aerhq.org/Apply-for-Scholarship](http://www.aerhq.org/Apply-for-Scholarship)); if you're an Army spouse or a dependent under the age of 24, it's very likely you're eligible to apply.

If you have any questions about AER's programs, we encourage you to reach out to your local AER office. Go to [www.aerhq.org/Office-Locator](http://www.aerhq.org/Office-Locator) and enter your zip code to find the contact information for the nearest office. Or you can contact AER HQs at (866) 878 - 6378.



**"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." — Abraham Lincoln**



# ARMY ECHOES

## Enjoying what you've earned

By Maj. Chris Henderson, USAR Retirement Services Program Manager

You've spent many of your formative years in the Army and or the Army Reserve and you made it to that glorious 20 year mark! Not many make it that far, but you did it. For the Army Reserve Soldier, that qualifies you for retired pay when you reach either your 60th birthday, or earlier if you have qualifying deployments or mobilizations. If you are reading this, it is very likely that you have transitioned into the "gray area" and are awaiting that 60th birthday or eligibility day to come so you can begin to receive your well-deserved retired pay. While you are in the "gray area" waiting to apply for your pay, there are some benefits that you can take advantage of before you receive your retired pay.

Have you ever been to Germany? How about Italy? Hawaii? Japan? How about the Azores? As a "gray area" member you can use space-available travel to get to these locations at minimal expense and in some cases, no expense. Your spouse will not be able to travel with you while you are in the "gray area", but when you turn 60, they can join you in your world travels. There is a plethora of information on the internet on how to best find and use the space available travel. For starters use the following link, <http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site/>. On this page you will be able to find the air base or air station that is closest to where you would like to go. Then, you can "friend" the different air bases on Facebook and follow their 72 hour flight schedule. There are even contracted flights that fly more regularly and use civilian aircraft. You can think food and movies for those flights and not the cargo planes with the cots on the side walls! The key to space available travel is to be flexible. Being that you are retired, you have nothing but time!

While you enjoy your retirement, share your stories and experiences with those your encounter. Tell your Army story and share the good with the bad, because those experiences helped shape you and have put you where you are to enjoy the benefits you are receiving now!

Below are links to additional information that you may find useful to bookmark for quick reference to various other benefits available to you.

<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil>

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>

<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay>

<https://soldierforlife.army.mil>

<https://www.tricare.mil>

<https://www.usar.army.mil/Retirement>

## Upcoming Army Reserve preretirement briefings

Location	Date	Contact	Location	Date	Contact
Sacramento, CA	19-Oct-19	(650) 526-9513/9512	Miami, FL	14-Dec-19	(803) 751-9864/9698
Little Falls, MN	19-Oct-19	(608) 388-7448/9321	Camp Williams, UT	11-Jan-20	(608) 388-7448/9321
Darien, IL	26-Oct-19	(608) 388-7448/9321	Fort Story, VA	11-Jan-20	(609) 562-1696/7055
JBMDL, NJ	26-Oct-19	(609) 562-1696/7055	Hot Springs, AR	25-Jan-20	(650) 526-9513/9512
Broken Arrow, OK	2-Nov-19	(650) 526-9513/9512	Puerto Rico	25-Jan-20	(803) 751-9864/9698
Salina, KS	9-Nov-19	(608) 388-7448/9321	St. Louis, MO	25-Jan-20	(608) 388-7448/9321
Augusta, GA	16-Nov-19	(803) 751-9864/9698	Barrigada, Guam	26-Jan-20	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553
Fort Lee, VA	16-Nov-19	(609) 562-1696/7055	Wailuku, Maui	8-Feb-20	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553
Camp Humphreys, S. Korea	17-Nov-19	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553	Las Vegas, NV	8-Feb-20	(650) 526-9513/9512
San Diego, CA	7-Dec-19	(650) 526-9513/9512	Charlotte, NC	8-Feb-20	(803) 751-9864/9698
Fort McCoy, WI	7-Dec-19	(608) 388-7448/9321	San Marcos, TX	22-Feb-20	(650) 526-9513/9512
Tafuna, Am. Samoa	8-Dec-19	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553	Columbus, OH	22-Feb-20	(608) 388-7448/9321
Honolulu, HI	14-Dec-19	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553	Niantic, CT	22-Feb-20	(609) 562-1696/7055
Phoenix, AZ	14-Dec-19	(650) 526-9513/9512	Camp Zama, Japan	7-Mar-20	(808) 438-1600 ext. 3553

## Thank you for your service; stay in touch!

By **Maj. Monique G. Pulley**, Army National Guard Retirement Services Section Chief

As the new Army National Guard (ARNG) Retirement Services Section Chief, Personnel Division in the ARNG G1 Directorate, I am honored to thank you for your service to your respective state, territory or District of Columbia Army National Guard, the Army and our great nation.

Did you know that as a Retired Soldier you have the ability to reach out to any Retirement Services Officer (RSO)? You can contact any RSO on an active duty Army installation or your State Joint Forces Headquarters (JFHQ) if you have questions about your Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Program or Survivor Benefit Program (SBP). Did you also know that it is your responsibility to update your contact information such as your mailing address, phone number and email address with the Gray Area Retirements Branch at U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC)?

The email address at HRC is:

[usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-retirement-application-request@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-retirement-application-request@mail.mil)

The mailing address is:

Department of the Army  
US Army Human Resources Command  
ATTN: AHRC PDP TR  
1600 Spearhead Division Avenue Dept. 482  
Fort Knox, KY 40122  
telephone number: (502) 613-8950

It is important to keep your contact information accurate in the event that HRC needs to contact you with new information pertaining to your retirement benefits. For those who are retired but not yet in receipt of retired pay, it is your responsibility to apply for retired pay and you can do so as early as 9 months and no later than 90 days prior to your 60th Birthday or early age eligibility (if you qualify). HRC keeps a retired pay application checklist on their website: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Reserve%20Component%20Retirements>

Your state or territory JFHQ RSO is happy to provide assistance in completing your retired pay application should you need any assistance. Again, thank you for your service and your continued support.

Once a Soldier, Always A Soldier...Soldier For life.

### Army Reservists and Army National Guardsmen, don't forget!

- While you're in the Retired Reserve, keep your mailing and email address up to date with HRC by [email](#), by using the [HRC Records Portal](#) or by calling the Gray Area Retirement Branch at (502) 613-8950.
- To determine if you qualify for the reduced age retirement, visit [HRC's website](#). If you are eligible, contact your Army Reserve or Army National Guard RSO for help in calculating your retirement eligibility date.



# ECHOES

## Mass gathering events – take charge of your personal safety

**FALLS CHURCH, Va.** — Terrorism is a persistent and pervasive threat to the Army and our nation. Attacks by terrorists and violent extremists continue to take place at public events, both indoors and outdoors, including the perimeter surrounding events. A mass gathering occurs when a large number of people come together for a specific purpose. Some of these locations are selected for attack because they represent “soft targets” and often lack adequate security. Examples of soft targets include large public gatherings such as a sporting event (stadium/arena), parade, holiday celebration or festival, all of which are likely to draw large crowds and are often conducted outdoors. Terrorists or violent extremists may also target large public conferences, conventions, and concerts. When planning their attacks, adversaries may choose tactics that focus on the crowds gathering outside the event, where ticketing, parking, pedestrian zones, access roads, and parks surround the venue. Tactics employed range from active shooter with small arms, improvised explosives, vehicle ramming and edged weapons.

The October 2017 Las Vegas shooter who targeted the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival is a reminder of the type of attacks that can occur at public events. When the public attending these events maintains an active awareness of their surroundings and reports suspicious behavior to security or law enforcement, these events can remain safe and secure.

The information provided below will help keep yourself, family, and friend’s safe when attending these type of events.

### Be Prepared

- Take notice of your surroundings and identify potential emergency exit routes.
- Be aware of unusual behaviors, unattended objects, unexplained odors, or vehicles traveling at abnormal speeds or erratically.



- Establish a location to meet if separated from your family or group.
- Report any suspicious behavior or activities to law enforcement or onsite security personnel for investigation.

### Don’t Hesitate to Take Action

- If an attack occurs, run to and out the nearest exit, making use of available concealment while moving away from the source of the hazard.
- If you are unable to safely evacuate, hide in a secure area where access can be blocked or entryways can be locked.
- If no secure areas are available, protect yourself from harm by seeking cover behind any available objects that eliminate direct line of sight from the source of the hazard.
- Cover your nose and mouth if you notice unusual odors or eye irritation.
- If necessary, be prepared to defend yourself by attempting to incapacitate the assailant with any means available.

### Assist and React

- Call 9-1-1 and remain alert for potential direct attacks.
- Maintain situational awareness while providing assistance to others.
- Render first aid when safe to do so.
- When help arrives, follow instructions given by law enforcement and first responders.

Attending large public gatherings is a natural part of our everyday lives, especially during the holiday seasons. All of the public attending these events should remain vigilant and aware of their surroundings. Always remember, if you See Something, Say Something!



# For healthy older adults, new shingles vaccine is worth the wait

By Military Health System Communications Office

Availability of the new shingles vaccine is improving across the Military Health System, according to Defense Health Agency Immunization Healthcare. The vaccine, Shingrix, is recommended for healthy adults 50 and older to prevent the painful skin rash that can have debilitating long-term effects for older people.

Shingrix was licensed in late 2017. "Supplies are still limited nationwide because of the overwhelming demand," said Army Lt. Col. Christopher Ellison, deputy director of operations for the DHA's Immunization Healthcare Division.

"But availability to the Department of Defense has improved from a year ago and continues to get better," he said, adding that beneficiaries should contact their local MTF to confirm supplies. "Now is the time to get your shingles immunization."

**Who's at risk for getting shingles?** "Anyone who's had the chickenpox," said retired Air Force Col. David Hrnrcir, an allergist-immunologist at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

A virus called varicella zoster causes shingles. It's the same virus that causes chickenpox. After chickenpox clears, the virus stays dormant in the body. The virus may reactivate many years later as shingles. It's not clear what causes this eruption, said Hrnrcir, who's also medical director of Central Region Vaccine Safety Hub, Immunization Healthcare Division.

According to medical literature, Hrnrcir said, "Anywhere from 90 to 99 percent of people now over the age of 40 had chickenpox, before there was a

chickenpox vaccine. About one-third will get shingles at some point in their lives, if they're not protected."

Some people under age 50 get shingles, Hrnrcir said. But the risk of contracting the illness increases continually after age 50. Immunization before age 50 results in decreased protection during ages when the risk of contracting shingles is the highest, he said. That's why early immunization generally is not recommended.

An earlier shingles vaccine was introduced in 2006. That vaccine was



*A pharmacist prepares a dose of the shingles vaccine to be administered at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital's Town Center Pharmacy, Fort Campbell, Kentucky. (U.S. Army photo by Maria Yager)*

for people 60 and older when it first came out. Further, it was only about 70 percent effective in offering full protection against the virus, he said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers recommendations about people who should not get the new vaccine.

"Those who had the old vaccine will benefit from getting the new one," Hrnrcir said. "Also, shingles can recur. So even if you've already had shingles, get the new vaccine."

Retired Air Force Col. Scott Coale said he plans on getting the Shingrix vaccine. He came down with shingles

in the fall of 2015, when he was in his mid-50s. His lower back started hurting before any rash appeared. Very quickly, he said, it became "the most excruciating pain I had ever experienced."

Shingles usually develops as a stripe across one side of the body or face, according to the CDC. People may feel pain, itching, or tingling in the area where the rash occurs a few days before it actually appears, the CDC said. Other symptoms may include fever, headaches, and chills.

A few days after the rash appears, it turns into fluid-filled blisters. They usually scab over after a week or 10 days, and then the scabs clear up a couple of weeks after that, Hrnrcir said.

Coale said his symptoms lasted for a few weeks but luckily, he's had no lingering issues. For some shingles patients, however, the pain may persist even after the rash clears.

"The older you are when you get shingles, the more likely it is you'll develop post-herpetic neuralgia, or PHN, and have longer-lasting and severe pain," Hrnrcir said. "The pain is not easily treated. So you're left with constant pain that can significantly affect quality of life."

The new vaccine is a two-dose series, with the second dose administered anywhere from two to six months after the first. A majority of patients have reported side effects for two or three days after vaccination, Hrnrcir said. They include headaches, fatigue, and nausea. The CDC recommends patients talk with their providers about possible side effects.



# ARMY ECHOES

## VA MISSION ACT: Answers to the top five questions about urgent care

**WASHINGTON** — Urgent care is one of the new benefits offered as part of the VA MISSION Act that gives veterans greater choice in their health care. The benefit is offered in addition to the opportunity to receive care from a VA provider, as VA also offers same-day services. The VA is working to ensure veterans understand how to use the new urgent care benefit as part of VA's comprehensive benefits package. In this article, we answer some common questions about the new urgent care benefit.

**1. What is urgent care?** Urgent care is a type of walk-in health care for situations where you need help but don't have an emergency, such as colds, ear infections, minor injuries, pink eye, skin infections, and strep throat.

**2. Why are there different urgent care locations?** There are two types of urgent care network locations: retail and urgent.

- Retail locations such as CVS or Walgreens are places where you can get care for minor ailments like a sore throat or earache.
- Urgent locations provide more comprehensive walk-in care for illnesses or injuries that are not life-threatening, like splinting, casting, lacerations, or wound treatment. Both retail and urgent locations are staffed with healthcare professionals who are licensed and credentialed.

**3. Are there urgent care providers near me?** VA launched the urgent care benefit on June 6, 2019, and we are working to expand our network of urgent care providers, adding more every week. Urgent care providers are vetted and must meet strict standards of care and other requirements before they are added to VA's network. To find a location, use the VA facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>. Select the link entitled "Find VA approved urgent care locations and pharmacies near you". If you arrive at an urgent care network location and have difficulty receiving care, call (866)620-2071 for assistance.

**4. How do I get prescription medication with the urgent care benefit?** You can get up to a 14-day supply of prescription medication through VA, a VA-contracted pharmacy, or a non-contracted pharmacy. If you choose to fill an urgent care prescription at a non-contracted pharmacy, you will be required to pay for the prescription when you pick it up and then file a claim for reimbursement at your local VA medical facility. Prescription medication for longer than a 14-day supply must be filled by a VA pharmacy.

**5. Do I have to make copayments for urgent care?** Copayments for urgent care depend on your assigned priority group and the number of times you visit any urgent care provider in a calendar year. Urgent care copayments are not charged when you receive care from an urgent care provider, but are billed separately by VA.

For additional information about the VA MISSION Act, visit <https://missionact.va.gov/>

## Free flu shots for veterans at your local Walgreens

VA and Walgreens are national partners, providing no-cost quadrivalent flu shots to enrolled veterans of the VA health care system. Now through March 31, 2020, enrolled veteran patients nationwide have the option of getting their flu shot at any of Walgreens' 9,600 locations, in addition to their local VA health care facilities.

### How do I get my flu shot for free at Walgreens?

No appointment is required. Simply go to any Walgreens, tell the pharmacist you receive care at a VA facility, and show your Veterans Health Identification Card and another form of photo ID. (Patients will also be asked to complete a vaccine consent form at the time of service.)



Walgreens has the capability to electronically send vaccination information to the VA and your immunization record will be updated in your VA electronic health record.

The VA-Walgreens national partnership is part of VA's eHealth Exchange project. This national program ensures that many veterans get their no-cost flu shot at their local Walgreens, satisfying their wellness reminder because they either found it more convenient or did not have a scheduled appointment at a local VA health care facility.

### Can I get my flu shot at no cost at the VA?

Yes! If you are enrolled with VA, you may receive a no-cost flu shot during any scheduled VA appointment or at one of the convenient walk-in flu stations. For more information on locations and hours contact your local VA health care facility.

Need to apply for VA health care? Visit: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/>.

# Armed Forces Recreation Center Resorts

By U.S. Army Installation Management Command G9 Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Every year, more than 1.7 million service members, retirees and their families visit an Armed Forces Recreation Center Resort (AFRC) to make vacation memories. With a portfolio of over 2,000 rooms in Germany, Florida, Korea and Hawaii and an average occupancy over 80 percent, that level of use puts a strain on facilities over time. To ensure future generations of service members are able to experience the locations worldwide, AFRC Resorts are undergoing a strategic initiative to reinvest nonappropriated funds totaling over \$145 million in facility improvements.

“The enhancements made at AFRC Resorts helps us to stay relevant for our customers and maintain our position as the preeminent symbol of commitment to our service members and their well-being,” said Marc J. Janssen, chief, hospitality programs (AFRCs and Army Lodging), Installation Management Command.



Hale Koa Hotel

The iconic Hale Koa Hotel on Waikiki Beach, with its rich history, stunning location and unique culture, currently has more than 70 separate reinvestment projects.

Redesigned to evoke the spirit of the Hawaiian Islands, the new outdoor aquatics complex compliments views of Waikiki Beach and the Pacific Ocean. The redesigned pool is scheduled to open later this summer. It includes water slides, a wading pool, splash pads, baby slide, fountains, hot tub and water features for all ages. The new infinity pool overlooks colorful sunsets on the Pacific Ocean.

Many Hale Koa guests will be staying in one of 396 newly revitalized rooms in the Maile tower. The rejuvenation of the rooms with new furnishings, headboards, beds, carpeting and light fixtures will transform the guest vacation experience and reflect the islands’ culture and vibe. Renovated guest bathrooms feature walk-in, all-glass showers, over-sized mirrors and porcelain tile flooring.

Additionally, projects that the guests won’t see but which are vital to the operability and sustainment of the facility include roof replacements, new air-handling units, building systems such as electrical, plumbing and air conditioning, parking garage structure repairs and exterior lighting upgrades.

Director of Engineering Derek Bacigal, tasked to manage the 75 renovation projects, recently was selected by the

Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association as their Manager of the Year.

“All of the projects we are working hard to complete are focused on ensuring our guest experience is commensurate with their service to their nation,” Bacigal said.



Shades of Green

Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida, often called the “most magical place on Earth,” is home to the Shades of Green Resort. The AFRC resort is also investing substantially in sustainment projects.

Workers recently finished renovating 284 guest rooms in the Magnolia Wing, including refurbished guest rooms, corridors and common areas. All the furniture in the main lobby has been redesigned. The attraction ticket sales area has been renovated, and the entire exterior of the sprawling resort is now being painted. Additional projects are being reviewed and planned.

The Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, is working through a preventive maintenance and sustainment program to keep the building looking new. A new authorization this month allows active-duty military service members, retirees and civilian/military ID cardholders stationed or living outside Europe to visit the Bavarian resort on a limited, space-



Edelweiss Lodge and Resort

available basis.



Dragon Hill Lodge

The Dragon Hill Lodge in Seoul, South Korea, went through extensive remodeling four years ago.

Aligned with two of the major IMCOM priorities of investing in infrastructure and family resiliency programs, AFRC Resorts are committed to helping to create unforgettable vacation experiences for future generations of service members, retirees and their families. For more information, visit <https://www.armymwr.com/travel/armed-forces-hotels-resorts>.



## Acting Secretary of the Army announces proposed changes to eligibility criteria for burial at Arlington National Cemetery

**Arlington, Va.** — The Acting Secretary of the Army recently announced proposed changes to eligibility criteria at Arlington National Cemetery. This begins the process for the federal government to prepare for the public rulemaking process which includes public feedback to the proposed changes.

The nation's premiere military cemetery is at a critical crossroads in its history. Nearly all of the 22 million living armed forces members and veterans are eligible for less than 95,000 remaining burial spaces within these hallowed grounds.

A planned Southern Expansion project will add 37 acres of additional burial space for the nation's veterans. Southern Expansion includes the area nearest the Air Force Memorial and a part of the former grounds of the Navy Annex. However, expansion alone will not keep Arlington National Cemetery open to new interments well into the future. Without changes to eligibility, Arlington National Cemetery will be full for first burials by the mid-2050s.

"The hard reality is we are running out of space. To keep Arlington National Cemetery open and active well into the future means we have to make some tough decisions that restrict the eligibility," said Executive Director of Army National Military Cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery Karen Durham-Aguilera.

The Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act directed the Secretary of the Army to establish revised eligibility criteria to keep the cemetery functioning as an active burial ground well into the future, defined as 150 years.

The Secretary established imperatives to recognize the individual's sacrifice, service and impact to the nation's security. The proposed eligibility criteria honors commitment to military service and is equitable across branches and eras of service. Additionally, any change should be easily understood, fair and consistent with Arlington National Cemetery's mission.

Years of outreach have guided the decision-making process. Arlington National Cemetery and its stakeholders – military and veteran service organizations, military, government leaders, Congress, veterans, military service members and their family members – have been working this issue very closely.

"This has been a very lengthy and deliberate process that has been done in the public domain," said former Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery Katharine Kelley. "We have a Federal Advisory Committee at Arlington National Cemetery, an independent body mandated by Congress to look at very substantive issues related to the cemetery, and they have looked at the question of eligibility for many years," said Kelley.

The cemetery has maintained an active and ongoing dialogue with military and veteran service organizations over two and a half years of thoughtful deliberation and public outreach. Additionally, the cemetery has conducted public surveys that garnered input and feedback from these important stakeholders, as well the active duty component who serves today.

The cemetery received more than 250,000 responses to these national surveys, and the results offered a compelling look at the opinions and attitudes of veterans, family members and active duty populations. Ninety-five percent of respondents want Arlington to not only remain open, but remain open and active well into the future.

"We've made extensive efforts to listen and gather input as part of this process, and that feedback we have received has been part of the Secretary's deliberations and part of our discussions going forward," said Kelley.

Now that the Secretary has established the proposed criteria, once cleared, the Department of the Army will publish a draft rule in the Federal Register for public comment, adjudicate public comments and publish the final rule. Federal rulemaking is a deliberative process and is expected to take a minimum of nine months.

*(Continued on page 21)*

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“This is a lengthy process, but it’s another opportunity to have a say in what the future of Arlington National Cemetery should be for our nation,” said Durham-Aguilera.

In addition to preserving 1,000 gravesites for current and future Medal of Honor recipients, the proposed revised eligibility criteria for those who honorably serve the nation are as follows:

For below-ground interment:

- Killed in Action, to include repatriated remains of service members
- Award recipients of the Silver Star and above
- Recipients of the Purple Heart
- Combat-related service deaths while conducting uniquely military activities
- Former Prisoners of War
- Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States
- Veterans with combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation's security at the highest levels of public service.

For above-ground inurnment:

- World War II-era veterans, to include legislated active duty designees
- Retirees from the armed forces who are eligible to receive retired pay but are not otherwise eligible for interment
- Veterans who have served a minimum of two years on active duty and who have served in combat
- Veterans without combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation’s security at the highest levels of public service.

Eventual implementation of revised eligibility will not affect previously scheduled services at Arlington National Cemetery. Additionally, the proposed revisions will not affect veterans’ burial benefits or veteran eligibility at Department of Veterans Affairs 137 national cemeteries and 115 state veterans cemeteries.

Arlington National Cemetery will continue to actively engage stakeholders in the important decisions impacting the future of the cemetery.

More information at [www.arlingtoncemetery.mil](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil).



*3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) Caisson Platoon conducts military funeral honors with funeral escorts at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va., Sept. 22, 2017.*

*(Photo Credit: Elizabeth Fraser, Arlington National Cemetery)*

# DIRECTORY

**Arlington National Cemetery:** (877) 907-8585  
<https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/#/>

**Armed Forces Retirement Home:** (800) 422-9988; <https://www.afrh.gov/>

**Army & Air Force Exchange Service:** [www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com)

**Army Echoes:** <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/army-echoes>  
 Editor's e-mail address: [ArmyEchoes@mail.mil](mailto:ArmyEchoes@mail.mil)

**Army Echoes Blog:** <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/blog>

**Army Emergency Relief:** (866) 878-6378; <http://www.aerhq.org>

**Army Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/USArmy>

**Army Flickr:** <https://www.flickr.com/photos/soldiersmediacenter/>

**Army Homepage:** <http://www.army.mil>

**Army mobile phone apps:** <https://www.army.mil/mobile/>

**Army Retirement Services:**  
<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/home>

**Army Stand To!:** <http://www.army.mil/standto/>

**Army Lodging Program:** (877) 711-8326; <http://www.pal.army.mil>  
 Reservations: <http://www.ihgarmyhotels.com>

**Army Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/USArmy/>

**Army YouTube:** <http://www.youtube.com/usarmy>

**Casualty Assistance Checklist for Retired Soldiers:** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/docs/Post/CasualtyAssistanceChecklist.pdf>

**Chief of Staff, Army Retired Soldier Council:**  
<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/csa-retired-soldier-council>

**Combat-Related Special Compensation:** (866) 281-3254  
[https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/CRSC%20\(Combat-Related%20Special%20Compensation\)](https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/CRSC%20(Combat-Related%20Special%20Compensation))

**Commissary:** <http://www.commissaries.com>

**Concurrent Retired & Disability Pay:** (800) 321-1080,  
<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/crdp.html>

**Consumer Financial Protection Bureau:** (855) 411-2372  
<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/>

**Death — Report a Retired Soldier's Death:** Call HQDA Casualty Operations Center, (800) 626-3317; from overseas, call (502) 613-3317 collect. <https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Reporting%20A%20Death>

**DS Logon:** <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/>

**Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program:**  
<https://www.benefeds.com/>

**Funeral Honors (Military):** Army Coordinator: (502) 613-8218  
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/entitlements.jsp>

**ID Card Facilities:** (800) 538-9552; Nearest facility: [www.dmdc.osd.mil/rls](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rls)

**Legal Assistance Locator (Military):** <https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Legal-Assistance-Services>

**Long Term Care Insurance:** (800) 582-3337 <http://www.ltcfed.com/>

**MyArmyBenefits:** <https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/>  
 Help Desk: (888) 721-2769 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST Monday - Friday);

**Survivor Outreach Services:** (855) 707-2769, <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/personal-assistance/survivor-outreach>

**Reserve Component Retirements** (888) 276-9472  
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Reserve%20Component%20Retirements>

**RC Application for Retired Pay:** Human Resources Command; ATTN: AHRC-PDR-RCR; 1600 Spearhead Division Ave.; Dept 482; Ft Knox, KY 40122-5402; (888) 276-9472; download the application from: [https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20\(GAR\)%20Branch](https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20(GAR)%20Branch)

**Space-Available Travel:** <http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site>

**Soldier for Life on Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/CSASoldierForLife](http://www.facebook.com/CSASoldierForLife)

**Soldier for Life on Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/csasoldier4life>

**Soldier for Life on Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/csaSoldier4Life](http://www.twitter.com/csaSoldier4Life)

**Soldier for Life on RallyPoint:** <https://www.rallypoint.com/organizations/soldier-for-life>

**Soldier for Life on Linked In:**  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/us-army-soldier-for-life/>

**Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program:** (800) 325-4715;  
<https://www.sfl-tap.army.mil/>

**Survivor Benefit Plan:** <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/survivor-benefit-plan>

**Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act:**  
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/usfspa>



**U. S. Army Retired Lapel Button and Badge:** Type "Soldier for Life" into the search box at <https://www.shopmyexchange.com>  
**Veterans Service Records** — Replace DD Form 214, awards: Retired 4/1/1996 or later: Visit <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/>, Click on "Army White Pages" at the bottom, then log in. Next click on "Click Here to Access Your Army Record."

Retired 3/31/1996 or earlier: Call Human Resources Command at (888) 276-9472 or visit <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records> National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records); 1 Archive Drive, St. Louis, MO 63138-1002

**DFAS** (800) 321-1080 (M-F, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST) <http://www.dfas.mil/>  
 myPay (888) 332-7411; <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>  
 Retiree/Annuitant web page <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html>

**Social Security** (800) 772-1213 <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>; If overseas, contact the American Embassy/consulate, or visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/foreign/phones.html>.

**Medicare** (800) 633-4227 <http://www.medicare.gov>

**TRICARE** <https://tricare.mil/>

**Health Beneficiary Counseling Assistance Coordinator:**  
<https://tricare.mil/bcacdcao>, or nearest military treatment facility

**TRICARE East:** (800) 444-5445; <https://www.humanamilitary.com/east/>; AL, AR, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IA (Rock Island area), IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MS, MO (St. Louis area), NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX (except El Paso area), VT, VA, WI, WV,

**TRICARE West:** (844) 866-9378; <https://www.tricare-west.com/>; AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except Rock Island, IL area) KS, MO (except the St. Louis area), MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OR, SD, TX (areas of Western Texas only), UT, WA, WY

**TRICARE Overseas:** (888) 678-1207; <http://www.tricare-overseas.com>

**TRICARE for Life:** (866) 773-0404; TDD (866) 773-0405  
<https://tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/TFL.aspx>

**TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery:** (877) 363-1296;  
<https://tricare.mil/homedelivery>

**TRICARE Network Pharmacy:** (877) 363-1303; <https://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/index.shtml>

**US Family Health Plan:** <http://www.usfhp.com>

**Armed Forces Recreation Centers** <https://www.armymwr.com/>

**Hale Koa Hotel, Hawaii:** (800) 367-6027; <http://halekoa.com>

**Edelweiss Resort, Bavaria:** 011-49-8821-9440  
<https://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com/>

**Shades of Green, Florida:** (888) 593-2242  
<http://shadesofgreen.org/index.php>

**Dragon Hill, Korea:** 011-822-790-0016 <https://www.dragonhillodge.com/>

**Veterans Affairs (VA) Information** <http://www.va.gov>

**Burial & Memorial Benefits:** <https://www.cem.va.gov/> (877) 907-8199

**Benefits and Services:** (800) 827-1000 (Retired Soldiers overseas should contact the American Embassy/consulate); TDD (800) 829-4833  
<https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

**GI Bill:** (888) 442-4551; <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

**Health Care Benefits:** (877) 222-8387; <https://www.va.gov/health/>

**Insurance:** SGLI/VGLI: (800) 419-1473; All other insurance: (800) 669-8477

**Sister Service Publications for Retired Service Members**

**Air Force Afterburner:** <http://www.retirees.af.mil/Library/Afterburner/>

**Coast Guard Retiree Newsletter:** <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/retnews/>

**Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:** <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/>

**Navy Shift Colors:** <http://www.navy.mil/> then click Links/Shift Colors

# RETIREMENT SERVICES OFFICERS (RSOs)

Do you have questions about benefits, SBP, Retiree Appreciation Days, or anything else retirement-related? Then contact the RSO for your area or go to the Army Retirement Services website <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/contact-us>.

## INSTALLATION RSOs

(states/territories without Army installations list the RSO serving that area)

### ALABAMA

• Redstone Arsenal  
(256) 876-2022  
[usarmy.rsa.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.rsa.rso@mail.mil)  
• Ft. Rucker  
(334) 255-9124/9739  
[usarmy.rucker.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.rucker.rso@mail.mil)

### ALASKA

• JB Elmendorf-Richardson  
(800) 478-7384 (AK only)  
(907) 384-3500  
[rso@richardson.army.mil](mailto:rso@richardson.army.mil)  
• Ft. Wainwright  
(907) 353-2095  
[fwarso@wainwright.army.mil](mailto:fwarso@wainwright.army.mil)

### ARIZONA

• Ft. Huachuca  
(520) 533-5733/1120  
[army.huachucarso@mail.mil](mailto:army.huachucarso@mail.mil)

### ARKANSAS

See Ft. Sill, OK

### CALIFORNIA

• Presidio of Monterey  
(831) 242-4986  
[usarmy.pomrso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.pomrso@mail.mil)

### COLORADO

• Ft. Carson  
(719) 526-2840  
[usarmy.carson.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.carson.rso@mail.mil)

### CONNECTICUT

See West Point, N.Y.

### DELAWARE

See Ft. Meade, Md.

### D.C.

See JB Myer-Henderson Hall, Va.

### FLORIDA

• Central & West MacDill AFB  
(813) 828-0163  
[army.rso@us.af.mil](mailto:army.rso@us.af.mil)  
• Rest of FL, see Ft. Stewart, Ga.

### GEORGIA

• Ft. Benning  
(706) 545-1805/2715  
[usarmy.benning.imcom.mbx.g1hrdrso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.benning.imcom.mbx.g1hrdrso@mail.mil)  
• Ft. Gordon  
(706) 791-2654/4774  
[usarmy.gordon.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.gordon.rso@mail.mil)

### HAWAII

• Ft. Stewart  
(912) 767-5013/3326  
[usarmy.stewartrso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.stewartrso@mail.mil)

### HAWAII

• Schofield Barracks  
(808) 655-1514  
[armyschofieldrso@mail.mil](mailto:armyschofieldrso@mail.mil)

### IDAHO

Ft. Carson, Colo. or JB Lewis-McCord, Wash.

### ILLINOIS

Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo  
Ft. McCoy, Wisc., Ft. Knox, Ky.

### INDIANA

Ft. Knox, Ky.

### IOWA

Ft. McCoy, Wisc.

### KANSAS

• Ft. Leavenworth  
(913) 684-5583  
[usarmy.leavenworth.imcom.mbx.retirements@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.leavenworth.imcom.mbx.retirements@mail.mil)

• Ft. Riley  
(785) 239-3320  
[usarmy.riley.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.riley.rso@mail.mil)

### KENTUCKY

• Ft. Campbell  
(270) 798-5280  
[usarmy.campbell.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.campbell.rso@mail.mil)

### LOUISIANA

• Ft. Knox  
(502) 624-7236  
[usarmy.knox.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.knox.rso@mail.mil)

### LOUISIANA

• Ft. Polk  
(337) 531-0363  
[usarmy.polk.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.polk.rso@mail.mil)

### MAINE

See Ft. Drum, N.Y.

### MARYLAND

• Aberdeen Proving Grnd  
(410) 306-2322  
[usarmy.apgrso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.apgrso@mail.mil)

### MASSACHUSETTS

See West Point, N.Y.

### MICHIGAN

• UP: See Ft. McCoy, Wisc.  
• Lower Mich.  
Selfridge ANGB  
(586) 239-5580

### MINNESOTA

See Ft. McCoy, Wisc.

### MISSISSIPPI

See Ft. Rucker, Ala.

### MISSOURI

• Ft. Leonard Wood  
(573) 596-0947  
[flwrso@mail.mil](mailto:flwrso@mail.mil)

### MONTANA

See JB Lewis-McChord, Wash.

### NEBRASKA

See Ft. Riley, Kan.

### NEVADA

See Pres. of Monterey, Ca.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

See Ft. Drum, N.Y.

### NEW JERSEY

• JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst  
(609) 562-2666  
[usarmy.dix.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.dix.rso@mail.mil)

### NEW MEXICO

See Ft. Bliss, Tx.

### NEW YORK

• Ft. Drum  
(315) 772-6434  
[usarmy.drum.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.drum.rso@mail.mil)  
• Ft. Hamilton  
(718) 630-4552  
[usarmy.hamilton.imcom.mbx.rso-org-box@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.hamilton.imcom.mbx.rso-org-box@mail.mil)

### NEW YORK

• Watervliet Arsenal  
(Wed/Thurs 0800-1300)  
(518) 266-5810  
[vwarso@gmail.com](mailto:vwarso@gmail.com)

### NEW YORK

• West Point  
(845) 938-4217  
[rso@usma.army.mil](mailto:rso@usma.army.mil)

### NO. CAROLINA

• Ft. Bragg  
(910) 396-8591  
[bragrso@conus.mail.mil](mailto:bragrso@conus.mail.mil)

### NO. DAKOTA

See Ft. Riley, Kan.

### OHIO

See Ft. Knox, Ky.

### OKLAHOMA

• Ft. Sill  
(580) 442-2645  
[usarmy.sill.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.sill.rso@mail.mil)

### OREGON

See JB Lewis-McChord, Wash.

### PENNSYLVANIA

• Carlisle Barracks  
(717) 245-4501  
[usarmy.carlisle.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.carlisle.rso@mail.mil)

### PENNSYLVANIA

• Tobyhanna Army Depot (Tu/Wed/Thur)  
(570) 615-7019  
[army.tobyhanna.rso@mail.mil](mailto:army.tobyhanna.rso@mail.mil)

### RHODE ISLAND

See West Point, N.Y.

### SO. CAROLINA

• Ft. Jackson  
(803) 751-6715  
[armyrso.jackson@mail.mil](mailto:armyrso.jackson@mail.mil)

### SO. DAKOTA

See Ft. Riley, Kans.

### TENNESSEE

See Ft. Campbell, Ky.

### TEXAS

• Ft. Bliss  
(915) 568-6233/5204  
[usarmy.bliss.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.bliss.rso@mail.mil)

### TEXAS

• Ft. Hood  
(254) 287-5210  
[army.hoodrso@mail.mil](mailto:army.hoodrso@mail.mil)

### UTAH

See Ft. Carson, Colo.

### VERMONT

See Ft. Drum, N.Y.

### VIRGINIA

• Ft. Belvoir  
(703) 806-4551  
[usarmy.belvoir.imcom.mbx.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.belvoir.imcom.mbx.rso@mail.mil)  
• JB Langley-Eustis  
(757) 878-2227  
[usarmy.eustis.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.eustis.rso@mail.mil)

### VIRGINIA

• Ft. Lee  
(804) 734-6555  
(804) 734-6973  
[usarmy.lee-rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.lee-rso@mail.mil)

• JB Myer-Henderson Hall  
(703) 696-5948/3689  
[usarmy.jbmyh.rso@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.jbmyh.rso@mail.mil)

### WASHINGTON

• JB Lewis-McChord  
(253) 966-5884  
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Mountain View, California  
(650) 526-9513/9512  
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**9th Mission Support Command**  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
(808) 438-1600 x3114  
Area: HI, AK, Guam, America Samoa, Japan, Korea, Saipan

**81st Readiness Division**  
Ft. Jackson, South Carolina  
(803) 751-9864/9698  
States: AL, FL, GA, KY, TN, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC

**88th Readiness Division**  
Ft. McCoy, Wisconsin  
(608) 388-7448/9321  
States: IA, ID, IL, IN, CO, KS, MI, MN, MO, MT, ND, NE, OH, OR, SD, UT, WA, WI, WY

**99th Readiness Division**  
JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey  
(609) 562-1696/7055  
States: CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV & 7th MSC (Europe)

## ARMY NATIONAL GUARD RSOs

To contact an Army National Guard RSO, visit the MyArmyBenefits Resource Locator at [http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit\\_Library/Resource\\_Locator.html](http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/Resource_Locator.html). Click on the state you're interested in for the National Guard points of contact there.

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

## National Museum of the U.S. Army to open in June 2020

**FORT BELVOIR, Va.** — The National Museum of the United States Army will open to the public on June 4, 2020. It will be the first and only museum to tell the 244-year history of the U.S. Army in its entirety. Now under construction on a publicly accessible area of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, admission to the museum will be free to the public.

The museum will tell the Army's story through Soldier stories. The narrative begins with the earliest militias and continues to present day.

"The Army has served American citizens for 244 years, protecting the freedoms that are precious to all of us. Millions of people have served in the Army, and this museum gives us the chance to tell their stories to the public, and show how they have served our nation and our people," said acting Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy.

In addition to the historic galleries, the museum's Army and Society Gallery will include stories of Army innovations and the symbiotic relationship between the Army, its civilian government and the people. The Experiential Learning Center will provide a unique and interactive learning space for visitors of all ages to participate in hands-on geography, science, technology, engineering and math (G-STEM) learning and team-building activities.

"This state-of-the-art museum will engage visitors in the Army's story – highlighting how the Army was at the birth of our nation over 240 years ago, and how it continues to influence our everyday lives," said Ms. Tammy E. Call, the museum's director. "The National Museum of the United States Army will be stunning, and we can't wait to welcome visitors from around the world to see it."

The museum is a joint effort between the U.S. Army and the Army Historical Foundation, a non-profit organization. The Army Historical Foundation is constructing the building through private funds. The U.S. Army is providing the infrastructure, roads, utilities and exhibit work that transform the building into a museum.

The Army will own and operate the museum 364 days a year (closed December 25). Museum officials expect 750,000 visitors in the first year of operation. A timed-entry ticket will be required. Free timed-entry tickets will assist in managing anticipated crowds and will provide the optimum visitor experience. More information on ticketing will be available in early 2020.

For more information, visit the museum's website at <http://www.theNMUSA.org>.