



Anne Arundel Veterans Voice

ISSUE #1

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Welcome to our Inaugural Issue!

A Message from Program Director Akosua Osei

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Anne Arundel Veterans Voice. As the Program Director of Veterans Services at the Anne Arundel County Veteran Services Coordination Center (VSCC), I am dedicated to serving the heroes of our community here in Anne Arundel County. The aim of this first edition is to bring you the most relevant and helpful information, resources, and services that you deserve.

Commitment to the Community

Our mission extends beyond individual services; we strive to build a strong, interconnected community of Veterans in Anne Arundel County. This newsletter is part of our commitment to keep you informed and engaged with local events, updates, and stories that celebrate and support our community.

The Anne Arundel County Veterans Services Coordination Center

The VSCC serves as a central point for accessing a wide range of services and resources available to Veterans and their families. The VSCC provides one-on-one assistance, helping Veterans understand and access benefits which include housing stabilization, food security, mental health resources, substance misuse recovery, transportation for appointments, employment readiness, career placement, burial assistance, and legal assistance referrals. The center collaborates with the Veterans Affairs Commission to ensure comprehensive support for Veterans and their families.

For more detailed information about the specific programs and resources the VSCC offers, you can visit the website [here](#).

In this newsletter you can expect:

Community Updates

Community Calendar

VA Benefit Spotlight

Health & Wellness Tips

Resource Guide

Community Calender

Anne Arundel County Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting

Date & Time: Monthly on the 2nd Wednesday

- June 12, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (Virtual)
- July 10, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (Virtual)
- August 14, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (Virtual)
- **Details:** Be a part of the conversation and engage with local officials focused on improving resources and services. Learn more about their work here. Don't miss this opportunity to connect and contribute!

[Learn more about the commission here.](#)

AUSA Francis Scott Key Army Birthday BBQ Picnic

Location: Burba Park, 4424 McKay Street, Fort Meade, MD 20755

Date & Time: June 15, 2024, 11:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Details: Celebrate the Army's birthday with a BBQ picnic hosted by AUSA FSK. Enjoy food, fun, and camaraderie. [Learn more here.](#)



Veterans Voices Flag Day & Army Birthday Celebration at Severn Senior Activity Center

Location: Severn Senior Activity Center

Address: 1160 Reece Rd., Severn, MD 21144

Date & Time: June 13, 2024, 11 AM - 12 PM

Details: Join Akosua Osei and David Kamioner from Anne Arundel Lodge for a Flag Day and Army Birthday celebration! Enjoy games, prizes, and treats while connecting with fellow Veterans and learning about available resources. Don't miss out on the fun! Learn more about the center [here.](#)

Womens Veterans Day Conference

Location: Morgan State University, 1700 E Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, MD 21251

Date & Time: June 12, 2024, 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Details: Join us for the Women Veterans Day Conference to honor and support women Veterans. This event features guest speakers, workshops, and resources tailored to the needs of women veterans. [Learn more here.](#)



Dates to Remember

June 6th: D-Day Anniversary

Commemorates the 1944 Allied invasion of Normandy during WWII, a pivotal event in the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi control.

June 14th: Flag Day

While not exclusively a military celebration, it is a day when Americans reflect on the history of the United States flag and its association with the sacrifices made by the military.

June 25th: Anniversary of the Start of the Korean War

This marks the date in 1950 when North Korean forces invaded South Korea, beginning a conflict where the United States and other UN forces fought for three years.

June 27th: National PTSD Awareness Day

Dedicated to raising awareness about post-traumatic stress disorder, which significantly impacts Veterans and their families. <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

Community Calender

VA Claims Clinic and Resource Fair

Location: Reveille Grounds
Address: 1401 Severn Street, Baltimore, MD 21230
Date & Time: June 21, 2024, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Details: File a VA claim, follow up on a VA claim, learn about VA healthcare, and obtain a DD214. [Learn more here.](#)

Yoga for Veterans Workshop

Location: Yogamour - Yoga & Healing Arts Center, 1 W Church St, Frederick, MD 21701
Date & Time: June 24, 2024, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Details: Join the Yoga for Veterans Workshop to experience the healing benefits of yoga. This event is designed to support veterans' mental and physical well-being through guided yoga practices. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Frederick County Veterans Appreciation Day

Location: Carroll Creek Linear Park, 44 S Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701
Date & Time: June 29, 2024, 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Details: Celebrate and honor veterans at the Frederick County Veterans Appreciation Day. Enjoy a day of activities, live music, food, and opportunities to connect with fellow Veterans and community members. [Learn more here.](#)

Do you have an upcoming event for Anne Arundel County Veterans that you want to see promoted here? **Submit it Here!**

If you're hosting an event that could benefit local Veterans, we want to hear about it! Please submit your event details to us at veterans-assistance@aacounty.org

Let's keep the community informed and engaged!



Dates to Remember

July 27th: Korean War Armistice Day

Marks the signing of the Armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953. Honors the service and sacrifice of those who fought, reflecting on their bravery and perseverance.

July 29th: Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary

Recognizes the vital role that military chaplains play in providing spiritual support and guidance to service members.

August 4th: US Coast Guard Day

This day celebrates the contributions of the Coast Guard to national security and maritime safety

August 7th: Purple Heart Day

Recognizes the sacrifices of those who have been wounded or killed in military service. It is a time to honor their bravery and dedication, and to remember the personal costs of defending the nation.



Successful Outreach: Veterans Resource Fair at the Annapolis Vet Center

On Tuesday, April 30th, the **Annapolis Vet Center** hosted its annual resource fair and open house, fostering significant community engagement. Akosua Osei, Program Director, along with English Harper, Information and Assistance Specialist from the Department of Aging and Disabilities, attended the event and staffed an outreach table providing information and resource materials to Veterans in attendance. This year's fair predominantly focused on mental health, alongside a diverse array of other crucial support services.

Their table offered information from various sectors including service dog organizations, homeless support services, and employment resource groups, all aimed at providing comprehensive support free of charge. Throughout the day, they engaged with over 100 Veterans, answering their questions and providing detailed insight into the services available through the Veterans Services Coordination Center. The event underscored the community's dedication to supporting Veterans in all facets of their well-being.



D-Day 80th Anniversary of a WWII Turning Point

June 6th marks the 79th anniversary of **D-Day**, when over 156,000 Allied troops stormed Normandy's beaches. This pivotal WWII operation led to the liberation of Western Europe, highlighting immense bravery and strategic expertise.



Invite us for Veteran Outreach!

We'd love to support your event! If you're organizing an event that could benefit our local community, our outreach team is eager to participate. Share your event details with us at veterans-assistance@aacounty.org Together, we can keep Veterans connected and supported!



Veterans Focus: PTSD Awareness Month

June is **PTSD Awareness Month**, dedicated to raising awareness about the mental health struggles many Veterans face. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a significant issue in the Veteran community, stemming from military service experiences. We honor those who battle this condition daily and emphasize the importance of mental health support and accessible treatment options. **June 27th is PTSD Awareness Day**, a key date for education and advocacy.

We encourage anyone dealing with PTSD symptoms to seek help. Numerous resources, including VA facilities, counseling services, and support groups, specialize in PTSD care. Reaching out for help is a sign of strength and a critical step toward recovery. Let's learn more about PTSD, spread awareness, and support our Veterans who may be suffering in silence.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 988 then press 1, or text 838255. Help is available 24/7.



Remember: Annual Health Check-Ups

Make the most of your VA health benefits by scheduling annual check-ups. These visits are key to early detection and management of potential health issues. Veterans must receive care from the VA within the past 24 months to be eligible for urgent care and ER benefits. Regular screenings can dramatically improve your health outcomes.



Veteran Health Tip: Stay Active and Engaged

Maintaining physical activity is crucial to your overall health and well-being. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week. If you have a disability or injury, try adaptive exercises like chair yoga, swimming, or gentle stretching. Staying active boosts your well-being and keeps you connected!



VA Compensation Benefits: What You Need to Know

Spotlight on VA Benefits

In every edition of our newsletter, we will focus on a specific VA benefit to help you understand the support available to you. This month, we are focusing on VA compensation benefits. These benefits provide financial assistance to Veterans who have disabilities resulting from their military service.

What is VA Compensation?

VA disability compensation is a tax-free monthly payment to Veterans who became sick or injured while serving in the military, or whose service made an existing condition worse. This benefit can cover a range of conditions, from physical injuries to mental health issues like PTSD.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for VA disability compensation, you must have a current illness or injury that affects your mind or body and meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The condition was caused or worsened by your military service.
- You had an illness or injury before you joined the military, and your service made it worse.
- You have a disability related to your active-duty service that appeared after your service ended.

Applying for VA Compensation

The application process for VA compensation involves several steps. The average processing time is around 160 days, but this can vary based on the type of claim and the complexity of the evidence required. Here is a brief overview of the process:

1. **Initial Claim Submission:** You file a claim with the VA.
2. **Initial Review:** The VA conducts a preliminary review of your claim.
3. **Evidence Gathering:** The VA requests and collects evidence from healthcare providers, service records, and other relevant sources.
4. **Review and Decision:** The VA reviews the gathered evidence and makes a decision on your claim.
5. **Preparation for Notification:** The VA prepares the decision notification.
6. **Claim Completion:** You receive the decision notification, and your claim is complete.

VA Compensation Benefits Cont.

VA Compensation Benefits: What You Need to Know

Who Can Help You?

Filing a VA claim can be complex, and it's crucial to get it right the first time. We strongly recommend seeking assistance from a knowledgeable Veteran Service Officer (VSO). These officers are trained to help Veterans navigate the claims process and ensure all necessary information is provided.

Here are some organizations that offer free assistance:

- [Disabled American Veterans \(DAV\)](#)
- [American Legion](#)
- [Paralyzed Veterans of America \(PVA\)](#)
- [Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

These organizations provide expert guidance to help you successfully file your claim. It's important to use these resources because you only have one chance to submit your claim correctly. For more detailed information about eligibility and the application process, visit the [VA Disability Compensation](https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/) page <https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/>. If you need assistance or have questions about the process, don't hesitate to reach out to the organizations mentioned above. [Here](#) is a link to more organizations that can assist you with your claims process.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I know if I'm eligible for VA disability compensation?

A: You may be eligible if you have a current illness or injury that affects your mind or body and it was caused or worsened by your military service. You can find detailed eligibility criteria on the [VA Disability Compensation](#) page.

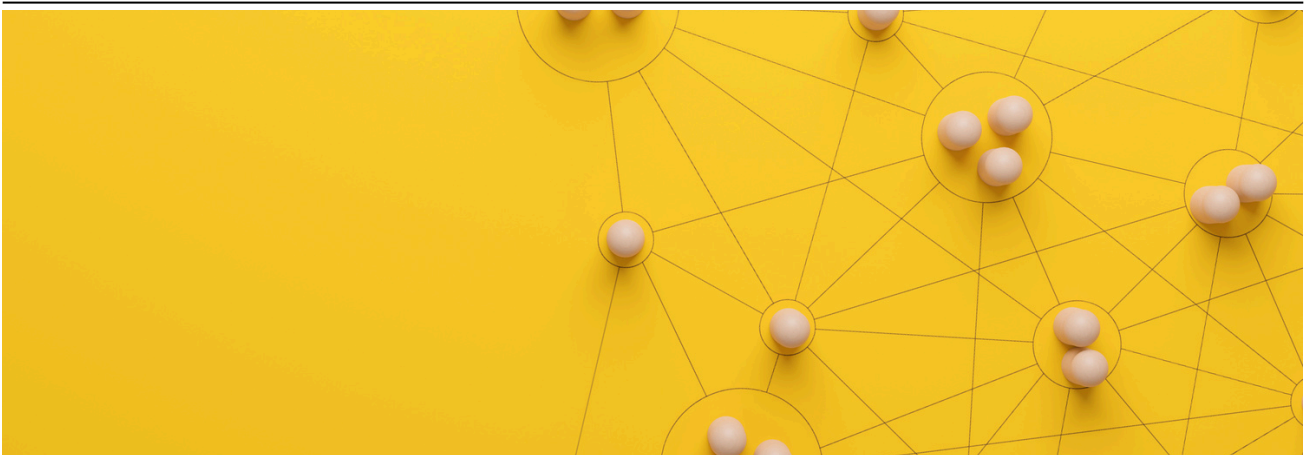
Q: What if I disagree with the VA's decision on my claim?

A: If you disagree with the VA's decision, you can request a decision review. There are several options available for decision reviews, and it's recommended to seek help from a VSO to navigate this process.

Q: What about when I'm getting out of the military?

A: If you're transitioning out of the military, you can file a Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) claim. This program allows you to submit a claim for disability compensation 90 to 180 days before your separation date. For more information on the BDD program, visit the [BDD Claims](https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-delivery-discharge-program.asp) page at <https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-delivery-discharge-program.asp>

For more FAQs and detailed information, visit the [VA Disability Compensation FAQ](#) page.



Veteran Resources Highlight

Here are the resources we are highlighting this month. For more resources, you can find them [here](#).

Department of Housing and Urban Development VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)

Provides rental assistance and long-term case management to help homeless and at-risk Veterans sustain permanent housing.

- **Website:** va.gov
- **Phone:** 1-877-4AID-VET
- **Cheat Sheet:** [HUD-VASH Eligibility](#)

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

Maryland's only Skilled Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility exclusively serving the needs of Maryland and their eligible spouses.

- **Address:** 29449 Charlotte Hall Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
- **Phone:** 301-884-8171 x 5119
- **Email:** admissions@charhall.org
- **Website:** charhall.org

AAWDC Veterans Employment Services

Offers career coaching, skills training, credentialing, and job connections to transitioning service members, spouses of active duty personnel, and Veterans.

- **Website:** [AAWDC](#)
- **Email:** military@aaawdc.org

Blue Star Families Baltimore & Chesapeake Region Chapter

Empowers military and veteran families by connecting them with civilian communities for support and resources.

- **Contact:** Yolanda Bradford
- **Email:** maryland@bluestarfam.org
- **Website:** [Blue Star Families Baltimore Chapter](#)



Closing Message

Thank you for reading this edition of the Anne Arundel Veterans Voice. We hope you find these resources helpful and informative. Our goal is to ensure that every Veteran and their family members have access to the support and services they need.

Stay Connected and Get Involved

Consider signing up for the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs newsletter for the most current news and information tailored to Maryland Veterans and their families. You can sign up [here](#). We also encourage you to participate in our community activities and volunteer opportunities. If you have any suggestions or would like to contribute to a future newsletter, please reach out to the VSCC. For additional resources and information, please visit [va.gov](#). Thank you for your service.

Best Regards,

Akosua Osei

Program Director, Anne Arundel County Veterans Services Coordination Center

Thank you for reading!

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