

Knox County



Veterans Service Office

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Our Mission

The mission of the Knox County Veterans Service Office is to provide eligible veterans and their families with those benefits to which they may be entitled under federal, state, and local law, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

The Knox County Veterans Service Office shall take those steps necessary to ensure a well trained and professional staff that is available to advise and assist veterans, their dependents, and the widows and orphans of those veterans who, by virtue of their service in the military of the United States of America. They may be entitled to benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs or any other benefit available under federal, state, or local law.

The Knox County Veterans Service shall provide temporary financial assistance to those veterans or their dependents who have demonstrated a financial need due to illness, injury, lack of employment, or an unexpected hardship. Determination of financial need shall be made by the Veterans Service Commission in accordance with the guidelines it alone shall establish and oversee, in accordance with Title 59 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Knox County Veterans Service Commission shall promulgate programs as required by Title 59 of the Ohio revised Code for services not listed above, such as outreach and the transportation of veterans to and from VA medical facilities.



2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 Radio Show 10A	6 Commissioners Meeting - 3 PM - Public Welcome	7	8	9
10 Daylight Saving Time Begins 	11	12	13	14 Vet Center on Location 9am—4pm. Call for an appointment	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day 	18	19	20 Commissioners Meeting - 3 PM - Public Welcome	21 JVC Meeting 7:00p	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Vet Center on Location 9am—4pm. Call for an appointment	29	30
31						



KNOX COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE



VOLUME 12, ISSUE 3

DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT

MARCH 2019

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK - KEVIN L. HENTHORN

Hello Knox County!

It's March and WOW what a wild winter we have had so far. Soon we will be experiencing the signs of spring and we will be enjoying the green grass and flowers that spring brings. Before long it will be Memorial Day and your Veterans Office will be hard at work out amongst you in the county at the many festivals and outreach opportunities. Stay tuned to the below recourses for details in the upcoming months.

Let's work together! Help us spread the word about all the ways Veterans can get involved with the office. Let folks know about;

- * Newsletter
- * Website
- * Facebook page
- * Radio Program
- * Community Events

It takes all of us working together.

IMPORTANT !!

Please continue to take advantage and spread the word to veterans in need of counseling services. Dr. Scott Johnson from the Columbus Vet Center is providing care to Knox County veterans here in the office. It is a fantastic opportunity to simply talk to someone that understands and can help. It is local, confidential, helpful and FREE. Call the office for an appointment to see Scott.

Remember...

It takes all of us working together...



Kevin Henthorn,
 Executive Director
 Thank You for all your support and God Bless.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- *Mar. 5th — Veteran's Office Radio Program, WMVO 1300, 10am*
- *Veterans Service Office Commissioners first & third Wed. at 3 p.m. Public Welcome*
- *Vet Center Counseling on location Mar. 14th & 28th, call for an appointment.*



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MELISSA SHANK

The Veterans Service Commission and office staff are proud to help our area veterans with their financial hardships and to help get them back on their feet. Each application for financial assistance is evaluated on a case by case basis. The Veterans Service Commissioners primary concern is to help the veteran and their dependents that are in need of immediate financial assistance. The financial assistance grants provided are not intended to be on a long term, on going basis. They are designed to provide assistance to those who encounter situations usually of emergent need that threatens their health or safety. An applicant for assistance must utilize all available income and resources. All applicants must provide proof on household income and proof of all bills paid and due for the past 30 days. There are no minimum or maximum levels established for financial assistance. All applicants who are physically capable of work must be actively seeking employment. The financial assistance is for temporary situations and not for month-to-month relief. If you are in need of financial assistance please call our office and set up an appointment. We are open Monday-Friday from 8a-4p

VA's Appeals Modernization Act has taken effect

New law streamlines department's current claims and appeals process for Veterans

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has implemented the [Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017](#), which was signed into law Aug. 23, 2017, and represents one of the most significant statutory changes to benefit Veterans in decades.

“This is a historic day for VA, its stakeholders and, most importantly, for Veterans and their families,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “The implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act comes as a direct result of collaboration among VA, Congress and Veteran Service Organizations to deliver on Veterans’ longstanding desire for reform of the legacy appeals system. Beginning today, Veterans will have greater choice in how VA reviews their disagreement with a VA claims decision and enjoy timely resolutions of disagreements through a streamlined process.”

Effective today, Veterans who appeal a VA claims decision have three decision review options:

Higher-Level Review, Supplemental Claim and Appeal to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

- In the Higher-Level Review option, a more experienced adjudicator will conduct a new review of the previous decision.
- Veterans who select the Supplemental Claim option may submit new and relevant evidence, and VA will assist in developing new evidence under its duty to assist.

If Veterans appeal a decision to the Board, they can choose one of three dockets: direct review, evidence or hearing.

VA’s goal is to complete Supplemental Claims and Higher-Level Reviews in an average of 125 days, and decisions appealed to the Board for direct review in an average of 365 days. Under the legacy process, decisions averaged three to seven years.

VA remains committed to reducing significantly the inventory of legacy appeals. VA’s fiscal year 2019 budget included funding for 605 additional appeals employees, which VA used to establish two new Decision Review Operations Centers at the St. Petersburg, Florida, and Seattle, Washington, regional offices. The former Appeals Resource Center in Washington, D.C., was converted to a third Decision Review Operations Center.

For more than 18 months, VA has worked toward full implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act, but reform has been a goal for VA and its stakeholders for years. In March 2016, VA sponsored an “Appeals Summit” in which VA, Veterans Service Organizations, Veterans advocates and Congress worked together to design a new appeals system. The summit resulted in the drafting, passage and implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act.

For more information on Appeals Modernization, visit <http://www.va.gov/decision-reviews>.



Secretary Wilkie testifies that VA will accelerate disability benefits claims processing for Purple Heart Medal recipients

WASHINGTON — At a congressional hearing VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced that effective in April, it will provide priority disability benefits claims processing for the initial claims from discharged combat Veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Secretary Wilkie announced his decision at a hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies.

“Those who hold the Purple Heart, the recognition of wounds taken in battle, will now receive priority consideration when it comes to claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs,” said Secretary Wilkie.

The Veterans Benefits Administration will amend its priority processing categories to include initial claims received from Purple Heart recipients on or after April 1, 2019.

Purple Heart recipients are already treated on a priority basis at VA hospitals and are exempt from co-payments for their medical care.

The Purple Heart award is the oldest U.S. military decoration and is awarded to U.S. service members for wounds suffered at the hands of the enemy. General George Washington awarded the first purple-colored heart-shaped badges to soldiers who fought in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. In 1932, it was revived to commemorate Washington’s 200th birthday.

VA's 'Better Starts Today' campaign challenges Veterans to ditch smokeless tobacco

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it will mark the annual [Great American Spit Out](#) on Mar. 21, calling attention to the dangers of using smokeless tobacco, with its “Better Starts Today” campaign.

The VA campaign encourages Veterans who use tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, to stop dipping or chewing for at least one day, and take advantage of innovative VA tools to help them succeed, with the hope that they may choose to quit permanently.

“Quitting smokeless tobacco can be challenging, but with VA’s help it can be much easier,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “That’s why we are telling Veterans about several proven strategies and tools that can help them give up smokeless tobacco for good.”

Resources to help Veterans quit smokeless tobacco include:

- **Quit VET**, a toll-free national Quitline, at 855-QUIT-VET (855-784-8838) for Veterans to speak with a tobacco cessation counselor, make a quit plan and receive ongoing counseling after their quit date. Quitline counselors are available from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (EST) Monday through Friday.

SmokefreeVET, a text message program (text VET to 47848) offering Veterans three to five support texts a day with advice and encouragement to help them while they stop using tobacco. Veterans can also text the keywords URGE, STRESS and DIPPED any-time to receive an immediate tip for coping with an urge to use, a slip or stress.

A 2015 Centers for Disease Control survey estimated 29.2 percent of American Veterans use at least one tobacco product, with 5.2 percent using smokeless tobacco. Smokeless tobacco is associated with mouth and esophageal cancer, heart disease, stroke, tooth decay and receding gums.

VA providers offer individual counseling, group classes, phone and telehealth clinics and FDA-approved medications.

For more information and resources about tobacco cessation and how families and friends of Veterans can help, visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco.

