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Misawa AB Retiree Activities Office Newsletter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Articles appearing in this newsletter are compiled from local sources, newsletters received by the RAO, and from other military sources. Information has been edited and reprinted for the benefit of our retiree population. Absolutely no commercial gain is derived from this publication. Our appreciation is extended to those agencies and newsletter sources. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of any agency of the U.S. Government.

Veterans Set to see Cost-of—Living Increase to their benefits

Law guarantees veterans receive a compensation adjustment next year.

On June 14 2023, President Joe Biden signed into law the Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living (COLA) Act of 2023, which directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide a cost-of-living adjustment for Veterans benefits in 2024 equal to the COLA applied to Social Security benefits., as determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA).

The legislation, passed with bi-partisan support in the House and Senate is an annual procedure for Congress but an important one, as it must be accomplished to ensure veterans receive a COLA and that it keeps pace with inflationary costs.

Which VA benefits will increase?

The COLA will affect certain VA benefits including but not limited to disability compensation, clothing allowance and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for spouses and children.

While the exact amount of next year's adjustment has not been determined, it is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI measures the average

change in prices of goods and services to preceding years and is used by SSA to determine the annual COLA, which, by law, now applies to VA benefits as well.

The last adjustment in January 2023, which veterans are currently receiving, saw an 8.7% increase following a second year of high inflation.

When can veterans expect to see the adjustment?

Based on the timeline of previous years, SSA is expected to announce its 2024 COLA early in the next fiscal year, which begins on October 1. VA will then set its compensation payment rates to match and veterans can expect to see the new amounts starting with their January 2024 payment.

To stay informed of when the COLA is announced and what it will mean for your VA benefits, subscribe to the #VetResource newsletter and #theSITREP, a podcast, where that topic and many more of interest to veterans are discussed.

To access the above mentioned #VetResources newsletter go to <https://news.va.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/05/VETRESOURCES>

By Erik Dahlgren, Communications Specialist, Veterans Experience Office

Courtesy of news.va.gov



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Inside this issue:

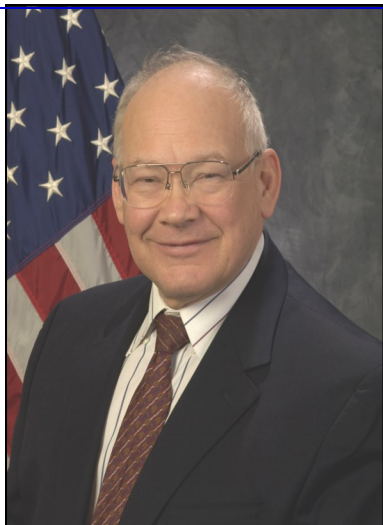
VA COLA Increase	1
Staff / VA	2
Veterans' Affairs	3
Veterans' Affairs	4
Benefits	5
Miscellaneous	6
Health	7
Health	8
Recurring Information	9
アメリカ年金局から 重要な知らせ	10
Still Serving	11
RAO & MMRA Info	12



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New Web Presence

Please be aware that the Misawa Military Retiree Association's web site has changed its URL and the old URL of www.misawarao.org has been replaced by www.misawarao.com.

After an extended period of unsuccessfully trying to transfer responsibility and access from the original webmaster to our current webmaster, we decided that the best thing to do is to just have the web host move our data over to the new misawarao.com home.

By Lee Martin

File a Supplemental Disability Claim for Denied Benefits.

If the VA denied your disability claim in the past, but now considers your condition presumptive, you are encouraged to file a Supplemental Claim. This will allow VA to re-adjudicate your claim when presented with new evidence, or policy.

If you disagree with the VA's decision on a previous claim, a Supplemental Claim may be an option for you. Learn when and how to file a supplemental claim and what to expect after you file.

For more information on how to do this, go to www.va.gov/decision-reviews/supplemental-claim/

Courtesy of va.gov



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Veterans Affairs

Eligibility for Veterans Pension

There is a pension available for certain veterans that could be over and above any other compensation you are receiving from the government for your service.

The Veterans Pension program provides monthly payments to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or disability requirements, and who have income and net worth within certain limits. Find out if you're eligible for this benefit.

You may be eligible for the Veterans Pension program if you meet these requirements.

Both of these must be true:

- You didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **and**
- Your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your new worth includes all personal property you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe. Your net worth includes the net worth of your spouse

You can get details about pension rates at <https://www.va.gov/pension/veterans-pension-rates/>

In addition, at least one of these must be true about your service:

- You started on active duty before September 8, 1980 and you served at least 90 days on active duty with at least 1 day during wartime, **or**
- You started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980 and served at least 24 months or the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions) with at least 1 day during wartime: **or**
- You were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and you hadn't previous-

ly served on active duty for at least 24 months.

And, at least one of these must be true:

- You are at least 65 years old, **or**
- You have a permanent and total disability, **or**
- You're a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of disability, **or**
- You're getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income.

How do you know if you served under an eligible wartime period?

- Under current law, they recognize the following wartime periods to decide eligibility for VA pension benefits:
- World War I (April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918)
- World War II (December 7, 1941 to December 31 1946).
- Korean Conflict (June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955).
- Vietnam War era (November 1, 1955 to May 7, 1975 for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975, for veterans who served outside the Republic of Vietnam.)
- Gulf War (August 2 1990, through a future date to be set by laws or presidential proclamation).

If you received an Other Than Honorable, Bad Conduct or Dishonorable Discharge, you may not be eligible for VA pension benefits.

There are two ways you can try to qualify:

Find out how to apply for a discharge upgrade. You can check this out at <https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/>

Or you can go to <https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/#other-options> to learn about the VA Character of Dis-

charge review process.

How do you apply for this benefit?

You can start your application right now if you meet the criteria stated above. Go to <https://www.va.gov/pension/application/527EZ/introduction> to start the process.

VA Survivors Pension

There is also a pension for qualifying survivors which offer monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by congress. Find out if you qualify and how to apply.

You may be eligible for this benefit if you haven't remarried after the veteran's death, and if the deceased veteran didn't receive a dishonorable discharge and their service meets at least one of these requirements.

- The veteran entered active duty on or before September 7 1980 and served at least 90 days on active military service, with at least one day during a covered wartime period. **or**
- The veteran entered active duty after September 7, 1980 and served at least 24 months or the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least 1 day during a covered wartime period: **or**
- The veteran was an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981 and hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months.

Get more info at <https://www.va.gov/pension/survivors-pension/>
Courtesy of www.va.gov



Veterans Affairs

More Survivors of Veterans Eligible for PACT Act benefits

The PACT Act, passed in August of 2022 expands veterans' eligibility to benefits based on the addition of new presumptive conditions and toxic exposure locations. Presumptive conditions are ones VA assumes are related to military service, therefore making it easier for veterans to connect certain conditions to their military service. As a result, more survivors are eligible for benefits than ever before.

Monthly Survivor Benefits

Qualifying family members may be eligible to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). DIC is a monthly payment provided to the surviving spouse, dependent child or parent of a veteran who died from a service-connected disability.

To be eligible as a surviving spouse, the survivor must have lived with the veteran without a break until the veteran's death, or if they were separated, the survivor was not at fault for the separation. Additionally, the survivor must have been married to the veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service during which the qualifying illness or injury started or worsened; or were married to the veteran for at least one year; or had a child with the veteran. Surviving spouses who have remarried may also be eligible.

A surviving child is eligible if they are not married, are not included on the surviving spouse's compensation and are under the age of 18 (under 23 if attending school). Children adopted out of the veteran's family may also be eligible.

A surviving parent(s) is eligible if they are the biological, adoptive or foster parent of the veteran and have income below a certain amount.

How to apply, re-apply, or request re-evaluation.

Surviving spouses and children applying for the first time must submit an "Application for DIC, Survivors Pension,

and/or Accrued Benefits, VA Form 21P-534EZ. Go to www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21P-534EZ-ARE.pdf

Surviving spouses and children requesting re-evaluation of a previously denied claim must select the option under question 7A which states: "DIC due to claimant election of a re-evaluation of a previously denied claim based on expanded eligibility under PL 117-168 (PACT Act)".

Surviving parents requesting re-evaluation of a previously denied claim must select "Yes" under question 15 which asks; "Are you claiming DIC based on the election of a re-evaluation of a previously denied claim due to expanded eligibility under Public Law 117-168 (PACT Act)".

Survivors may also request re-evaluation of a previously denied PACT Act DIC claim by submitting a "Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim, VA Form 21-0995." If a survivor is claiming DIC based on the PACT Act, it must be clearly stated on the application.

How to submit an application.

Documents may be submitted by mail, in person at a VA regional office or electronically. Electronic submission is recommended via Quick Submit (eauth.va.gov/accessva/?cspSelectFor=quicksubmit) as this is the fastest method of receipt.

Courtesy of news.va.gov

Changes to Electronic Funds Transfer Rules

Some VA payments of benefits to veterans and beneficiaries will be changing for those receiving paper checks. According to the Notice of Proposed Rule Making, is about agencies getting waivers for certain types of payments they certify/distribute and tightening those rules. The use of Electronic Fund Transfer for federal payments has been a mandate since 1996. The rules for individuals wanting a waiver from EFT are not changing. An individual can only request a waiver from DFT in one of the following conditions:

- Those to whom electronic payment would impose a hardship due to mental impairment.
- The check recipient lives in a remote geographic location lacking the infrastructure to support electronic financial transactions, or
- The check recipient was born on or before May 1, 1921.

Waivers are only granted by the Department of Treasury. VA cannot grant a waiver from the EFT use.

Courtesy of You Tube

Veterans Save on Access to Parks and Campgrounds.

Getting outside and connecting with nature has demonstrable health benefits beyond just getting away from the office. In fact, a 2015 study found that outdoor recreation can help people with social reconnection, life-improving change, inner peace and psychological healing. Whether you opt for a peaceful tent-stay under the stars or an extended scenic adventure, as a veteran you and your family have many options to save when planning your next expedition.

In 2022, the U.S. National Park Service unveiled a lifetime pass for veterans and Gold Star Families that provides free access to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas. The pass also provides discounts on expanded amenities such as camping and guided tours. Learn more and get your lifetime pass at www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/veterans-and-gold-star-families-free-access

State operated parks also offer free passes and discounts for veterans and their families, though the military service and state residence requirements vary state to state. The website U.S. veteran camper has compiled a detailed list of programs offered for each state. Check it out at: www.usvetcamper.com/veterans/state-park-passes/

Courtesy of news.va.gov



BENEFITS

SBP Open Season Continues

DFAS, CLEVELAND - Congress provided for a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Open Season in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The SBP Open Season began on December 23, 2022 and ends on January 1, 2024.

The SBP Open Season allows for retirees receiving retired pay, eligible members, or former members awaiting retired pay who were NOT participating in SBP or RCSBP (Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan) on or before December 22, 2022 to enroll. For a member who enrolls during the SBP Open Season, the law requires that the member will be responsible to pay retroactive SBP premium costs that would have been paid if the member had enrolled at retirement (or enrolled at another earlier date, depending on the member's family circumstances).

The SBP Open Season also allows eligible members and former members who were enrolled in SBP or RCSBP as of December 22, 2022 to permanently discontinue their SBP coverage. The law generally requires the covered beneficiaries to concur in writing with the election to discontinue. Previously paid premiums will not be refunded.

Enrolling in SBP Coverage - Enrollment during the SBP Open Season is a four-step process.

STEP 1. Submit the Letter of Intent to Enroll including all required information and the type of enrollment. Download the "Letter

of Intent to Enroll" at this link.

STEP 2. DFAS will send you an estimate of your monthly premium costs going forward, as well as the one-time "buy-in premium," based on the information provided. Your final enrollment costs, both monthly premium and buy-in premium may change if there is a time gap between when you receive the estimate and the time you submit your final enrollment form. Costs may also change if there are changes to the information submitted.

STEP 3. After considering the costs, if you want to officially enroll, submit the enrollment form. Pay close attention to how you will pay for the buy-in premium. Payments can be made in a lump sum or through 12 equal monthly installments or a combination of the two.

STEP 4. DFAS will confirm your enrollment, to include final cost, and provide instructions on how to submit payment. You are allowed 30 days from the date you sign your enrollment form to cancel enrollment.

Currently serving Reserve/Guard should contact their Branch of Service for information on the SBP Open Season and the process to submit the form.

Gray Area Retirees (not yet receiving retired pay) of the Navy, Marines and Air Force should contact their Branch of Service for information on the SBP Open Season and the process to submit their form.

Discontinuing SBP Coverage.

As part of the SBP Open Season, retirees, Reserve/Guard, and Gray Area Retirees are allowed to stop (discontinue) their SBP coverage.

The member (1) must get concurrence from their spouse plus any beneficiary covered by SBP that is 18 or over and (2) no premiums are refunded.

The following information applies to former active duty and reserve retirees receiving pay ONLY – follow the instructions below to submit the new discontinuance form directly to DFAS.

Download the "SBP Open Season 2023 Discontinuance Form – Provisional" – PLEASE NOTE: To be valid, the form must be properly signed and dated by all parties, including the current spouse, and any currently covered former spouse, child aged 18-22 or natural interest person (NIP). In addition, the covered party's signature must either be notarized or witnessed by an SBP counselor.

Please remember to sign and date the form, have all beneficiaries concur, and have the notary or SBP counselor witness sign. Once all the information is filled in and all signatures received, the form can be submitted.

PLEASE NOTE: To be valid, the form must be properly signed and dated. Once complete, signed, and dated, the form can be submitted directly through our askDFAS online upload tool or via fax or mail. Fax: 800-469-6559 Mail: Defense Finance and Accounting Service U.S. Military Retired Pay 8899 E 56th Street Indianapolis IN 46249-1200 There is also a list of Frequently Asked Questions about enrolling in SBP during the Open Season.

For more info:

<https://www.retirees.af.mil/Library/Afterburner/>

Courtesy of Retirees.af.mil



Miscellaneous

Request Your Military Service Records (including DD214)

Air Force veterans who separated or retired on or after Oct. 1, 2004, may request their records in two ways:

1. Submit a military records request to get your DD214 or other military service records through the milConnect website (<https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>).

You can sign in to milConnect, register and upgrade your DS Logon account to Premium to get your military service records ('Premium' refers to a certain amount of confidence or 'level of assurance' that you are who you say you are. The account is free.). For additional information, please visit the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website at <https://www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/>

2. E-mail or mail a signed SF-180 to AFPC's military personnel records section. The form can be emailed to AFPC/ DPSOR Military Records, dpsomp.incoming@us.af.mil or mailed to AFPC/ DPSOR, 550 C ST. W, JBSA Randolph AFB TX 78150.

Veterans who separated or retired before Oct. 1, 2004, should contact the National Personnel Records Center by mail using a Standard Form 180. The NPRC mailing address is National Personnel Records Center, 1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, MO 63138. The NPRC holds the historical military personnel records

of nearly 100 million veterans. The vast majority of these records are paper-based and not available on-line. Requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the 1973 Fire, or older records that require extensive research efforts, may take six months or more to complete.

You can access the Standard Form 180 by using this National Archives link: <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>.

Serving America's Vietnam Veterans

Did you know that Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) advocates exclusively for Vietnam-era veterans and their families? With nearly 90,000 members, VVA provides a community of fellowship for people with shared experiences, needs and hopes for the future. Visit one of the 667 chapters across the country and abroad, VVA Service officers are available to provide VA claims support, financial advising and job placement, while advocating of behalf of veterans through legislative initiatives.

See more about this organization at vva.org.

What is Benefits.gov?

One of the longest-serving government initiatives, Benefits.gov was launched by the U.S. Department of Labor in April 2002, creating the U.S. government's official benefits website. Their mission is to increase citizen access to benefit information while reducing the difficulty of interacting

with the government. On Benefits.gov, you can find information on over 1,000 government assistance programs, check your eligibility, and learn how to apply.

If you are looking for specific benefit programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (<https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/361>) or Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), (<https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1504>) you can search for these programs directly on Benefits.gov, where you can also find application and contact information and use the eligibility checker for each program at the bottom of the page. On Benefits.gov, you can also Browse by Category to browse a list of similar benefits, such as Employment and Career Development or Food and Nutrition and filter by state to find programs specific to your state.

Visit their Get Involved page (<https://www.benefits.gov/get-involved>) to access fact sheets, including a Guide to Benefits.gov and guides to finding benefit programs for families, people with disabilities, unemployment resources, senior citizens, students, veterans, and Native Americans.

Courtesy of benefits.gov



Access to retiree publications of each service:

Army Echoes: www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp **Navy Shift Colors:** www.shiftcolors.navy.mil

Air Force Afterburner: www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis: www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MM/SR/RET_ACT/SemperFidelis **Coast Guard Evening Colors:** <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>



Health

Announcing the Physical Activity Guidelines Midcourse Report on Older Adults!

Recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report: Implementation Strategies for Older Adults (Midcourse Report). The Midcourse Report is a guide to help policy makers; exercise and health professionals; health care providers; gerontologists; built environment professionals; local, state, territorial, and tribal leaders; and others working with older adults implement strategies to support physical activity among adults ages 65 years and older

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (<https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/physical-activity-guidelines/current-guidelines/midcourse-report>) serve as the primary, authoritative voice of the federal government for evidence-based guidance on physical activity, fitness, and health for Americans. Less than 15 percent of older adults meet the recommendations outlined in the Guidelines. The Midcourse Report aims to change this by highlighting effective strategies and interventions to increase physical activity levels among older Americans while reinforcing the message that physical activity can begin or restart at any age.

Support the activities in the Midcourse Report by using resources from Move Your Way® - the promotional campaign for the Guidelines. Materials are available for older adults ([https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-](https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/move-your-way-community-resources/campaign-materials/materials-older-adults)

[activity/move-your-way-community-resources/campaign-materials/materials-older-adults](https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/move-your-way-community-resources/campaign-materials/materials-older-adults)) and health care providers, including videos, social media messages, fact sheets, posters, and the newly updated Activity Planner (<https://health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner>) in English and Spanish.

For more information or to download the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans pamphlet, go to (<https://health.gov/moveyourway/activity-planner>).

Courtesy of <https://health.gov>

Heart Health

The following is an excerpt from the Health and Well-Being Matter blog. The blog is hosted by Rear Admiral Paul Reed, MD, Director of the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

“Heart disease has the potential to affect all people. The persistent myth that it is primarily a “men’s disease” simply isn’t true. In fact, heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States Yet only about half of women recognize this”.

“Heart disease accounts for about 1 in 5 deaths among women every year as compared to 1 in 4 deaths in men. About 1 in 16 women age 20 years and older have coronary artery disease the most common type of heart disease”.

“About half of all Americans have at least 1 of the 3 predominant risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, or current smoking”.

“In addition, multiple other increas-

ingly common factors increase heart disease risk. These include having diabetes, overweight or obesity, eating an unhealthy diet, being less physically active, and drinking too much alcohol”.

For more information visit the blog site at <https://health.gov/news/202302/heart-health> <https://health.gov/news/202302/heart-health>

MHS Genesis

MHS Genesis is the new electronic health record for the Military Health System (MHS). It is the single, continuous record of care that will support the provision and coordination of care for 9.5 million TRICARE beneficiaries worldwide. Full deployment of MHS Genesis at Misawa AB will occur on October 28, 2023.

Before 28 October, 2023, you must update your DEERS information via MilConnect (<https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>)

Then create a DS Logon account by going to <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/app/login>

The Med Group anticipates a short-term (around 30 days) delay in services as some of their clinics while this new system is implemented and they recommend that any routine appointments, pharmacy needs, etc. be taken care of before 28 October.

With this new system you can:

- review your health record
- Send secure messages to your providers
- Request prescription refills
- Book an appointment

After you have created a DS Logon, you can access MHS Genesis at <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/app/login>

To access your medical information log on to [patientportal.hmsgenesis/health.mil](https://patientportal.hmsgenesis.health.mil)



Health

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of Health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

SDOH can be grouped into 5 domains:

- Economic Stability
- Education Access and Quality
- Health Care Access and Quality
- Neighborhood
- Social and Community Context.

Economic Stability

In the United States, 1 in 10 people live in poverty,¹ and many people can't afford things like healthy foods, health care, and housing. Healthy People 2030 focuses on helping more people achieve economic stability.

People with steady employment are less likely to live in poverty and more likely to be healthy, but many people have trouble finding and keeping a job. People with disabilities, injuries, or conditions like arthritis may be especially limited in their ability to work. In addition, many people with steady work still don't earn enough to afford the things they need to stay healthy.

Employment programs, career counseling, and high-quality child care opportunities can help more people find and keep jobs. In addition, policies to help people pay for food, housing, health care, and education can reduce poverty and improve health and well-being.

Education Access and Quality

People with higher levels of education are more likely to be healthier and live longer. Healthy People 2030 focuses on providing high-quality educational opportunities for children and adolescents — and on helping them do well in school.

Children from low-income families, children with disabilities, and children

who routinely experience forms of social discrimination — like bullying — are more likely to struggle with math and reading. They're also less likely to graduate from high school or go to college. This means they're less likely to get safe, high-paying jobs and more likely to have health problems like heart disease, diabetes, and depression.

In addition, some children live in places with poorly performing schools, and many families can't afford to send their children to college. The stress of living in poverty can also affect children's brain development, making it harder for them to do well in school. Interventions to help children and adolescents do well in school and help families pay for college can have long-term health benefits.

Health Care Access and Quality

Many people in the United States don't get the health care services they need. Healthy People 2030 focuses on improving health by helping people get timely, high-quality health care services.

About 1 in 10 people in the United States don't have health insurance.¹ People without insurance are less likely to have a primary care provider, and they may not be able to afford the health care services and medications they need. Strategies to increase insurance coverage rates are critical for making sure more people get important health care services, like preventive care and treatment for chronic illnesses.

Sometimes people don't get recommended health care services, like cancer screenings, because they don't have a primary care provider. Other times, it's because they live too far away from health care providers who offer them. Interventions to increase access to health care professionals and improve communication — in person or remotely — can help more people get the care they need.

Neighborhood

The neighborhoods people live in have a major impact on their health and well-being.¹ Healthy People 2030 focuses on improving health and safety in the places where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.

Many people in the United States live in neighborhoods with high rates of violence, unsafe air or water, and other health and safety risks. Racial/ethnic minorities and people with low incomes are more likely to live in places with these risks. In addition, some people are exposed to things at work that can harm their health, like secondhand smoke or loud noises.

Interventions and policy changes at the local, state, and federal level can help reduce these health and safety risks and promote health. For example, providing opportunities for people to walk and bike in their communities — like by adding sidewalks and bike lanes — can increase safety and help improve health and quality of life.

Social and Community Context

People's relationships and interactions with family, friends, co-workers, and community members can have a major impact on their health and well-being. Healthy People 2030 focuses on helping people get the social support they need in the places where they are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.

Many people face challenges and dangers they can't control — like unsafe neighborhoods, discrimination, or trouble affording the things they need. This can have a negative impact on health and safety throughout life.

Positive relationships at home, at work, and in the community can help reduce these negative impacts. But some people — like children whose parents are in jail and adolescents who are bullied — often don't get support from loved ones or others. Interventions to help people get the social and community support they need are critical for improving health and well-being.

Courtesy of health.gov/healthypeople



RECURRING INFORMATION

Retiree Survivor's Guide

A Retiree Survivor's Guide to Benefits is available on the Library page of the Air Force Retiree Services website.

This guide provides general information about most federal benefits and entitlements available to eligible family members of deceased retired airmen, and it explains various application processes. People can direct specific questions to the government agency administering the benefits or discuss these matters with an Air Force casualty assistance representative.

Government agencies outside the Air Force administer most of the benefits discussed in this guide.

This guide is designed to provide general information on most federal benefits and privileges people may be entitled to as survivors of a deceased Air Force retiree. In addition, it contains a list of important necessary documents (see Section H), and a Benefits/Entitlements Checklist (see Section I).

myPay on YouTube

There is an excellent tutorial on YouTube on how to open and use your myPay account. Go to

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhx_8nsfXqVjnv_WuYeXc84lmlHBMYe6a

Courtesy of myPay.dfas.mil

myPay Support on DFAS

For problems using myPay, or with your myPay password, contact the DFAS Centralized Customer Support Unit toll-free at 1-888-332-7411 or commercial at (216)552-5096. You can also call DSN to 580-5096. This support line is available Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm, Eastern Time.

The Centralized Customer Support Unit can provide assistance on how to use the options available to you in myPay. The support unit will also provide support for establishing and changing your password.

For all other payroll information, please contact your servicing pay office or your customer service representative.

Questions concerning specific pay account information should contact the

servicing payroll office or the appropriate Customer Service rep as follows:

Military Retirees:

1-800-321-1080

Annuitants: 1-800-321-1080

Former Military Spouses:

1-888-332-7411

Military retirees who are in a non-pay status due to a VA Waiver or Combat Pay can still access myPay but will have limited options available. Questions should be referred to the customer service section listed above.

You can also access your pay statement from the Main Menu of the myPay website by clicking on the Payment Information option.

Courtesy of myPay.dfas.mil

Where to Send Your TRICARE Claim

Non-active duty, TRICARE Pacific; send to TRICARE Overseas Program, P.O. Box 7985, Madison, WI 53707-7985 USA

TRICARE For Life (TFL) claims in the United States and U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) send to WPS TFL, P.O. Box 7890 Madison, WI 53707-7890 USA.

Source: *The 2011 Publication for TRICARE Standard Overseas Beneficiaries*

For TRICARE Overseas Program information, forms and assistance you can contact the Misawa Air Base TRICARE Office at 226-6000 (from off base 0176-77-6000) or visit the office at the base hospital.

Courtesy of www.TRICARE-overseas.com

International Direct Deposit

International Direct Deposit (IDD) is available to U.S. military retirees and survivors living in eligible locations overseas. IDD electronically deposits funds on the first business day of the month to your foreign bank in the currency of the country of the receiving

bank.

See previous editions of the Misawa RAO Newsletter (go to misawrao.com and search archived newsletters (April-June 2016 is most recent) for specific details and instructions to use the new DD1199-I for international direct deposit. *JJR*

ID Card Appointments

For ID card appointments, go to: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/#>

Click "Make an Appointment"

Lee Martin

Call My VA

You have questions for the VA? Dial 1-800-MyVA411. This is the number to call when you don't know who to call.

A Reminder!

If you want to retain your TRICARE benefit, when you turn age 65, you must join and pay for Medicare Part B.. If you live overseas, while you will not have access to Medicare unless you go stateside, without Medicare Part B coverage you will not be able to submit a TRICARE claim. You will still have access to the Military Treatment Facility, space available.

About six months before you turn 65, you will receive a notice from the SSA giving you the option to decline. If you decline Part B, you will need other insurance and cannot claim any out-of-pocket expenses.

Joe Roginski

Birthdates of our Military Services

US Army—June 14, 1775
US Navy – October 13, 1775
US Marines—November 10, 1775
US Coast Guard—August 4, 1790
US Air Force—Sept 18, 1947



アメリカの社会保障年金、(ソーシャルセ キュリティー)を受けてる方々へ

アメリカの国民年金の社会保障局(ソーシャルセキュリティー)が毎年か2年ごとに年金を受取人の存在を確認のためこの用紙を送られます。60日以内に提出されないと社会保障金の送付が停止されることがあります。

By Joe Raginski

社会保障局(SSA) (ソーシャルセキュリティー局) の確認用紙 (見本)

前面

7162
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION JUN. 15, 2011 FORM APPROVED OMB NO. 0980-0040

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
IMPORTANT: Failure to complete and return this form within 60 days will result in suspension of benefits. SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. SEE INSTRUCTIONS ENCLOSED.

1. Print your address here only if it is different from the one shown below.
000158717 JA 7162-D JAPAN
KIMIKO A FISK
2-13-5 KOYOMADO TOWADA-MACH
CHI MO GUN
IWATE KEN 0220050
JAPAN

2. Telephone number at which you may be contacted during the day.
361.386.367133875338672934

3. If you answered "Yes" to any of the questions below, please turn this form over and continue on the back. You must sign your name in item 7 on the back of this form.

3. Has there been a change in your citizenship or your country of residence that you have not yet reported to SSA? YES ☐ NO ☒

4. Have you married or had a divorce or annulment since you last reported your marital status to SSA? YES ☐ NO ☒

5. Did you work for someone else or were you self-employed (i.e. did you own a business or farm) since your last report of work to SSA? YES ☐ NO ☒

Answer Question 6 only if you are the parent of a child under age 16 or disabled and you receive Social Security benefits because you have this child in your care.

6. Did you and the child live apart since you last reported the child's living arrangements to SSA? YES ☐ NO ☐

OTHER REPORTABLE EVENTS
In addition to the events listed on this form, you are responsible for reporting any other event that may affect benefit payments.

Privacy Act Statement/Collection and Use of Personal Information
The United States Code of Federal regulations (42 U.S.C. § 405(c), 405(d), 405(e) and 405(f)) authorize us to collect the information on this form. The information you provide will be used to determine if we can continue to pay you Social Security benefits. Your response is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information may prevent us from making an accurate and timely decision on your claim, or could result in the loss of benefits.

We rarely use the information provided on this form for any purpose other than for determining the continued entitlement to benefit payments. However, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552a(b) of the Privacy Act, we may disclose the information provided on this form (1) to enable a third party or an agency to assist Social Security in establishing rights to Social Security benefits and/or coverage; (2) to make determinations for eligibility in similar health and income maintenance programs at the Federal, State and local level; (3) to comply with Federal laws requiring the disclosure of the information from our records; and (4) to facilitate statistical research, audit or investigative activities necessary to assure the integrity of SSA programs.

We may also use the information you provide when we match records by computer. Computer matching programs compare our records with those of other Federal, State or local government agencies. Information from these matching programs can be used to establish or verify a person's eligibility for federally-funded or administered benefit programs and for payment of payments or delinquent debts under these programs.

A complete list of routine uses for this information is contained in our System of Records Notice 60-0089 (Name Folders System). Additional information regarding this form and our other system of records notices and Social Security programs are available from our internet website at www.socialsecurity.gov or at any U.S. Embassy, consulate, VAO or U.S. Social Security office.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement
This information collection meets the requirements of 44 U.S.C. § 3507, as amended by section 2 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. You do not need to answer these questions unless we display a valid Office of Management and Budget control number. We estimate that it will take about 5 minutes to read the instructions, gather the facts and answer the questions. You may send comments on our time estimate above to: SSA 6401 Social Security Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21235-6401 USA. Send only comments relating to your time estimate to this address, not the completed form.

Form SSA-7162-OCR-5M (4-2011) Destroy Prior Editions

裏面

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED "YES" TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS FORM, YOU MUST COMPLETE THE CORRESPONDING BLOCK(S) BELOW. IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO ALL OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FORM, YOU SHOULD GO TO ITEM 7, SIGN, DATE, AND RETURN THE FORM.

3. If you answered "Yes" to question 3 on the reverse, complete the information below.

(a) Country of new citizenship Date acquired (Month-Day-Year)

(b) Current country of residence Date of change (Month-Day-Year)

4. If you answered "Yes" to question 4 on the reverse, complete the information below.

(a) ☐ Marriage (b) ☐ Divorce (c) ☐ Annulment (d) Enter date event occurred (Month-Day-Year)

5. If you answered "Yes" to question 5 on the reverse, complete the information below.

(a) Check one ☐ Employee ☐ Self-Employed (b) Date work began (Month-Day-Year) (c) If ended, enter date work stopped (Month-Day-Year)

(d) List each month that you worked 45 hours or less (Explain in "Remarks")

(e) Was this work done in the United States or did you pay United States Social Security taxes on earnings from this work? YES ☐ NO ☐

(f) If you answered "Yes" to (e) above, enter your total earnings for:

the year before last \$

and \$

last year \$

also give \$

your estimate of earnings for this year \$

6. If you answered "Yes" to question 6 on the reverse, complete the information below.

(a) Date child left (Month-Day-Year) (b) Date child returned (Month-Day-Year) (c) Name of child

(d) Reason for absence

(e) If the child has not returned, print the address of the child here.

REMARKS

IMPORTANT: I declare under penalty of perjury that I have examined all of the information on this form, and on any accompanying statements or forms, and it is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that anyone who knowingly gives a false or misleading statement about a material fact in this information, or causes someone else to do so, constitutes a crime and may be sent to prison, or face other penalties, or both.

7. Signature of principal beneficiary (Note: If this form is signed with a mark, a witness must sign below.) (例: Kimiko Fisk)

8. Signature of witness

Date (例: 9/25/2023)

Form SSA-7162-OCR-5M (4-2011)

前面: 国籍変わらない場合(3)離婚、再婚していない場合(4)勤めなかった場合(5)は図の通りに3ヶ所だけばってん(X)「NOの列」を記入してください。住所が変わった場合はロマ字で住所の上の(1)の枠に新しい住所を記入して下さい。(2)の枠に電話番号が変わった場合に記入すること。

お名前とご住所をここに書いてください。それは、確認書に書かれたアドレスと同じように。

(7)の枠の中に名前をサイン(署名)して、そのとなりの枠の中に現在の年月日を記入す

返信用封筒

FROM (YOUR)

ADDRESS

CITY (OPTIONAL CODE) (COUNTRY)

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
PO BOX 7162
WILKES BARRE PA 18767-7162
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PLACE STAMP HERE

東京のアメリカ大使館に年金の局があります。アメリカの年金の相談は直接大使館の年金局にお電話して下さい。

Federal Benefits Unit フェデラル ベネフィット ユニット
(アメリカ大使館連邦年金部): 03-3224-5055



Still Serving!



Hello fellow retirees and fellow RAOs staff. Here is the first quarter 2023 edition of the Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office Newsletter.

We at the RAO are charged with getting information to you, our retired military community. Compiling a newsletter is one of the best ways to keep you informed but, it's a lot of work. Lee Martin and I ask for your help. We serve the retired community of northern Japan, which includes Misawa, and the six prefectures of Tohoku and prefecture of Hokkaido, representing all services and all the wars since WWII. You are a treasure of information and history. Don't let it all pass with you without sharing. Anyone can provide information, opinion, history, or even a good story. We also solicit your feedback. What do you want to see covered in these newsletters? How can we improve? We will gladly consider your feedback and include your contributions in your newsletter.

Send your contribution to:

misawa.rao@us.af.mil

Managing Editor: CMSgt (Ret) Dave Barton

MMRA Notes:

1. Membership dues are \$20 a year. If you have not paid your dues for 2022, please call the RAO or e-mail the RAO and talk to Dave Barton, the MMRA Treasurer. He will arrange to collect your dues and record it in the financial report.
2. Donations to the Misawa Military Retirees' Association are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible with the IRS. Dues and donations are used for the operations of the organization, charitable activities, community activities, assistance grants, and assistance in the case of death in the family. All funds go to the community except for the snacks served at the bi-monthly meeting.

The Misawa Military Retirees Association (MMRA) meets bi-monthly on the first Tuesday of even months, at 1700 hours, in the Tohoku Consolidated Club's Gray Room. All military retirees regardless of service affiliation are welcome as members. These meetings are your forum to voice your opinions, concerns, questions and suggestions, and get information about retiree and survivor issues and support on Misawa Air Base. We are your voice to the active duty community and help to support the many retiree programs on the base. We also provide assistance in emergencies to retirees and surviving spouses in times of need. Come out and join our group, share your experiences and skills, contribute to the community. The time you give to your fellow retirees and their families may someday come back as assistance to you or your survivors.



MMRA Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held the first Tuesday of even-numbered months at the Tohoku Consolidated Club, Gray Room at 1700 hours.

7 February 2023

4 April 2023

6 June 2023

1 August 2023

3 October 2023

5 December 2023

Next Meeting—Tuesday 3 October 2023

SERVING THE RETIRED MILITARY COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN JAPAN



USEFUL NUMBERS

Exchange: 0176-77-8255-7 plus last 4 digits (*)
 HRO: 7460 (*), Manager: 7401(*), Gas Station:
 7428 (*), Express (main base): 7433 (*),
 Express (North Area): 7435 (*)
 Base Operator: 226-1110 / (0176) 77-1110
 Chapel: 226-4630 / (0176) 77-4630
 Command Post: 226-9880/9881 / (0176) 77-9880
 Commissary Officer: 226-3482/ (0176) 77-3482
 Community Bank: 226-4070 / (0176) 77-4070
 Credit Union Navy Federal: 1-617-938-5097
 US HQ: 1-888-842-6328
 Emergency Room:
 Non-Urgent: 226-6647/ (0176) 77-6647
 Emergency- 911 / Off Base (0176) 53-1911
 Fitness Center: 226-3982 (*)
 Golf Course: 1-281-657-1563 (*)
 Law Enforcement: 226-3600/ (0176) 77-3600
 Library: 226-3068 / (0176) 77-3068
 Medical/Dental Appointments
 Medical: 226-6111 / (0176) 77-6111
 Dental: 226-6700 / (0176) 77-6700
 Misawa Clubs
 Admin: 1-281-675-1560 (*)
 Catering: 1-281-657-1560 (*)
 Misawa Inn (Air Force Lodging) (*)
 Front: 222-0282/ (0176) 66-0282
 Reservations: 222-0284/ (0176) 66-0284
 Navy Gateway Lodging: (*)
 Front Desk: 226-3131 / (0176) 77-3131
 Reservations: 226-4483/ (0176) 77-4483
 Navy HRO: 226-4674 / (0176) 77-4674
 Pass and Registration: 226-3995 / (0176) 77-3995
 Red Cross: 226-3016 / (0176) 77-3016
 FSS Auto Center "Pit Stop": 226-9486 /
 (0176) 77-9486
 FSS HRO: 226-3108/9275 (*)
 Taxi: Official: 226-3328 / (0176) 77-3328 (*)
 Base Commercial (Kichi Cab): 1-469-375-7479 (*)
 Fm Off Base—(0176) 53-6481 (*)
 Theater: 1-469-375-7450 (*)
 Veterinarian 226-4502 / (0176) 77-4502
 Weather Forecast: 226-3065 (*)
 Numbers that begin with "1" require special dialing.
 When dialing from a cell, 03-4580-0135, wait for
 voice, then dial the number. For 226-222 numbers
 dial 0176-66 (for 222) or 77 (for 226) then the last
 four. (*) means use the Phone Tree

RAO mailing address in Japan

〒033-0012 Aomori-ken, Misawa-shi, Hirahata 64,
 Misawa Beigun Kichi-nai,
 35FW/CVR—Retiree Activities Office

The Misawa Air Base **Retiree Activities Office** is an official activity organized in accordance with AFI 36-3106. The office is here to assist retirees from all military services in the Tohoku and Hokkaido regions of Japan. We can provide assistance in pay, taxes, social security, and personal/casualty affairs as well as other matters the retiree may need help with. We provide a focal point for retirees and/or their survivors



with questions/concerns and work closely with the active duty community. Through the office and the activities of the Misawa Military Retirees Association we are able to provide assistance to indigent widows in the area with fuel, food and living expenses. The office is supplied and equipped through organizational funding, while being staffed entirely by volunteers.

The RAO is open Monday through Friday from 0900 through 1500 hours however, volunteers sometimes have to be out of the office. We are located in Room 210, Bldg. 653. Please call or e-mail before visiting to make sure a staff member is available when you come to the office. If you are unable to contact the RAO in an emergency, you may contact the Casualty Assistance Representative in the Airman & Family Readiness Center, 226-4735 or from off base, 0176-77-4735. Japanese Nationals requiring assistance, and who have limited English language skills, may contact us and talk with MSgt (Ret) Joseph Roginski, who is bi-lingual. In an emergency, he may be reached at 090-4045-0149 after hours.



35th FW/CVR (RAO)

Unit 5009

APO AP 96319-5009

Phone: 011-81-176-77-4428/5675

DSN: (315) 226-4428/5675

Email: misawa.rao@us.af.mil

This publication is written, edited and published by the Misawa Air Base Retiree Activities Office for the retired community in northern Japan. The information or comments herein do not necessarily represent the position or opinion of the DOD, USAF or the 35 FW. While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information herein, no absolute guarantee of accuracy or currency can be given nor should be assumed.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://www.misawarao.com>