

Legion Veterans Service Network

The American Legion's department service office processes and reviews thousands of claims ever year, winning hundreds of thousands of dollars in benefits for veterans that they would likely not have received without American Legion representation.

Although the service office would like to take full credit for these achievements, we can't. We would not have near the success for veterans without help from our service network partners. This service network also includes post, district, county and state service officers as well as our national appeals representatives.

Post Level

Veterans' services start at the post level. Our post service officers learn about all the various veterans benefit programs. They provide that information to their post members and other veterans within their local communities. They do this when talking with individual veterans at their posts, making benefits presentations at post meetings, posting benefits information on the post website, and writing short articles in their post newsletters.

District Level

American Legion district service officers help make sure each American Legion post appoints a service officer, makes sure post service offices know when and where post service officer training sessions are held, makes short veterans' benefits presentations at district meetings, and arranges veterans' benefit seminars within their districts.

County Level

Many county veterans' service officers have received American Legion accreditation. We rely on the CVSOs to make sure individual veterans apply for everything they are entitled to. They help the veteran know what evidence is necessary to support their claims, assist the veteran with completing benefit applications, and assign a service organization as the veteran's representative. These CVSOs, however, often have other duties and responsibilities assigned to them by their employers, the county governments.

Department Level

American Legion department service officers are full-time employees of the American Legion. They are trained in the intricate details of veterans' law and regulations. After veterans appoint The American Legion as their representatives, DSOs help make sure VA processes their claims properly and issues correct decisions.

The DSOs also assist with appeals by representing veterans at hearings and providing written appeals briefs when necessary. They often win veterans substantially more benefits than those veterans who have not appointed themselves professional representation.

The DSOs also answer veterans' service related questions from post, district and county veterans' service officers, and veterans. The department service office also conducts veterans' benefits seminars, distributes veterans' benefits information, and helps train post, district, and county veterans' service officers.

Legion Rapport with VA

The American Legion also partners with the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs. The State of Indiana has purchased an electronic veterans' claims management system that DSOs use to receive claims and evidence from county veterans service officers. The IDVA is also responsible for the training of county veterans' service officers.

Our American Legion appeals representatives in Washington D.C. provide informal presentations to the Board of Veterans Appeals, and assist veterans when at their BVA

hearings in Washington D.C. The national organization of The American Legion also provides training seminars for department service officers.

Legion Service Network Synergy

Veterans win big when every part of the service network works together. Our veterans service network, however, starts at the post level making the post service officer the most important service network link.

The Department Service Office can often win additional benefits after veterans file their claims. However, the DSO would never have an opportunity to work the claims if not for the post service officers in the field, informing veterans of their benefits and referring them to the department service office for claims assistance.

Legion members should get to know their post service officers. If your post has not appointed an active post service officer, ask your post commander about making that appointment. None of us want our veterans' services network to end for any veteran, before it begins.

Learn more about the Department of Indiana's Veterans Service Office online at www.indianalegion.org/department-service-office.