

April 2017

Veterans Service Update

Department Veterans Service Office May

Business Hours: The department service office will be closed for Memorial Day on, Monday, May 29th. The office is otherwise open each Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 4:00 PM during the month of May. Appointments are necessary for client visits. You may contact the department service office by calling our direct number of 317-916-3605; calling a long distance toll free number of 1-888-723-7999, extension 1; faxing us at 317-916-3406; or by using the following e-mail address: al.vbaind@va.gov.

Local Veterans Service Issues:

IVY Tech Veterans Resource Fair: On Wednesday, April 26, 2017 between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM Easterseals Crossroads and IVY TECH Community College will conduct a Veterans Resource Fair at its Indianapolis North Illinois Street and Fall Creek Boulevard location. The event will provide easy access to information including, but not limited to, employment, housing, family services, health, VA claims assistance, education, and various mentoring and counseling opportunities. American Legion Department Service Officer Tony Cross will provide veterans benefits information.

Terre Haute Job Fair: WorkOne Western Indiana, the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, and the Indiana State University will conduct a Job Fair on Wednesday, May 10, 2017. It will take place at the Hulman Center on campus of the Indiana State University, 200 North Eighth Street, Terre Haute, Indiana from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM for veterans only and then from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM for the General Public. Hundreds of employers have been invited, and the event is free to the public.

Post Service Officer Award Nominations:

Each year, the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission (VA&R) and The American Legion Department of Indiana acknowledges the contributions of exceptional post service officers with a national Meritorious Service Citation and a department post service officer award certificate. Posts may nominate their post service officers by completing an "American Legion Department of Indiana Post Service Officer Award Nomination" form and returning it to the department's veterans service office address noted on the form. You may obtain award nomination forms by calling The American Legion, Department of Indiana, Veterans Service Office at 317-916-3605.

Post Service Officers Attend Service Officer Training Seminar:

American Legion department service officers conducted a training seminar for post service officers at the Mid-Winter Conference on Saturday, January 14, 2017. Those present received information to help post members and other veterans within their local communities better understand veterans benefits as well as where, when and how to apply for those benefits. These dedicated volunteers help further the goals of The American Legion by selflessly giving their time in service to other veterans, their dependents and survivors. Their efforts will allow many more veterans to learn about life changing benefits. Hats off to the following post service officers and representatives for attending the seminar: Bill Pease, Post 70; Ross Glick, Post 381; Robert L Harris, Post 42; Jeff Enright, Post 73; Ineligible Signature, Post 73; J. Coomer, Post 73; Jeff Harthman; Post 324 and Spencer County Veterans Service Officer; Bob Rettig, Post 57; Ann Adcook, Post 510; Kevin Hinton, Post 197; Harold Hensley, Post 73; and Chris Brenneman, Post 408.

Veterans Pain Clinic: Veteran Health Education Coordinator, Laurie Webb RN CDE, from the

Indianapolis VAMC posted this on VA's "MyHealthyvet." *Veteran - are you living with a chronic pain? Learn to manage life with chronic pain at our Healthier Living with Chronic Pain Support series. This 6-week program will help you deal with pain and fatigue, manage fear and frustration, set realistic goals, discover ways to make your daily tasks easier... and much more. This is a support program –no medical care is provided during this program.*

Registration in VA health care is a prerequisite. The workshop begins on Tuesday, April 18 and meets from 9:00 am to 11:30 am for 6 weeks (ending on May 23rd).

To find out more information or enroll – call the Veteran Health Education Coordinator, at (317) 988-4009.

You may receive more helpful messages like these and additional health information by contacting your nearest VA Medical Center and signing up for a "Myhealthyvet" account. (**Laurie Webb RN CDE Veteran Health Education Coordinator**)

National Veterans Service Issues:

Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016: Signed into law on December 16, 2016, the Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act directs the Department of Defense (DOD) to identify veterans who have been separated from service for combat-related injuries and received a severance payment that was improperly taxed by the federal government. The Act further directs DOD to determine how much the combat-veterans are owed and allow veterans who have been improperly taxed to recover the withheld amounts. The National Veterans Legal Service Program estimates that over 13,800 veterans may have been denied full severance pay as a result of wrongful taxation. Under the law, veterans who suffer combat-related injuries and who are separated from the military are not supposed to be taxed on the one-time lump sum severance payment they receive from DOD. Unfortunately, taxes on combat-related disability severance payments were withheld from qualifying

veterans for a number of years and veterans were not aware of the improper reduction of benefits.

Camp Lejeune Contaminated Water Compensation:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is amending its adjudication regulations regarding presumptive service connection, and adding certain diseases associated with contaminants present in the base water supply at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune (Camp Lejeune), North Carolina, from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987. This final rule establishes that veterans, former reservists, and former National Guard members, who served at Camp Lejeune for no less than 30 days (consecutive or nonconsecutive) during this period, and who have been diagnosed with any of eight associated diseases, are presumed to have incurred or aggravated the disease in service for purposes of entitlement to VA benefits. In addition, this final rule establishes a presumption that these individuals were disabled during the relevant period of service for purposes of establishing active military service for benefits purposes. Under this presumption, affected former reservists and National Guard members have veteran status for purposes of entitlement to some VA benefits. This amendment implements a decision by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs that service connection on a presumptive basis is warranted for claimants who served at Camp Lejeune during the relevant period and for the requisite amount of time and later develop certain diseases. The effective date of the final rule was March 14, 2017. The diseases include:

1. Adult Leukemia,
2. Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes,
3. Bladder cancer,
4. Kidney cancer,
5. Liver cancer,
6. Multiple myeloma,
7. Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and
8. Parkinson's disease.