

**NEWSLETTER**  
**March - April 2008**  
**Disabled American Veterans**  
**Blind Veterans National Chapter**  
**40 Seward Avenue, Toms River NJ 08753-6626**  
**732 244 7057   [Jim2447057@comcast.net](mailto:Jim2447057@comcast.net)[www.davbvnc.com](http://www.davbvnc.com)**

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**TAPS**

**Santiago Casillas of Oklahoma**  
**George E Gadbois of Massachusetts**  
**Paul D Jazwiecki of New York William**  
**J Nojunas of Pennsylvania**  
**May they Rest in Peace**

**CHAPLAIN SECTION**

Please let the Blind Chapter Chaplain know if you are sick, hospitalized or you know of one of our members who is. Contact Reverend Anthony Martino 25016 87th Street, Unit 2 Salem Wisconsin 53168. 847 736 2111  
[Deaconmart@wi.rr.com](mailto:Deaconmart@wi.rr.com) .

**CALL FOR DELEGATES**

The DAV 87th National Convention will be held in Bally's Hotel Las Vegas from August 9th through August 12th, 2008. The election of the delegates and alternates need to be conducted by mail therefore the "Call for Delegates" form will soon be sent out. If you have not received your "Call for Delegates" form by March 15th please let Adjutant Fox know.

**Independent Living Services** --

<http://www.vetsuccess.gov/fivetacks/#ind>

Independent living services are targeted to individuals who may not be able to work right now and need rehabilitation services to live more independently. What are some of the features of this track? A Rehabilitation Plan with the goal of independent living may include assistive technology, independent living skills training, connection to community-based support services, etc.

## **What Other Benefits May Be Provided?**

After a plan is developed, the counselor will assist the veteran to implement the plans to achieve gainful suitable employment or independent living. The counselor or case manager may provide medical and dental referrals, coordination of training allowance, tutorial assistance, adjustment counseling, or other services necessary to achieve rehabilitation

**Summary:** In summary, a veteran who is found eligible for the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program and who has an employment handicap is entitled to vocational rehabilitation services. Following the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor's determination that a veteran has met the entitlement criteria, the counselor and veteran will jointly develop a plan for a rehabilitation program with a goal typically leading toward employment. In some cases, the plan goal may be related to an independent living need. This plan will provide all of the needed services and assistance identified through the initial evaluation.

In those cases when a veteran is not found to be entitled, the VA Counselor will assist him or her to use the information gathered in the initial evaluation to identify other options, goals, and programs that should contribute to sound vocational adjustment, for example, referral to the State Vocational Rehabilitation program, information about financial aid, and referral to the Department of Labor's DVOP program.

## **Definitions -- Employment Handicap**

An impairment of the individual veteran's ability to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment consistent with his or her abilities, aptitudes, and interests. The impairment results in substantial part from a service-connected disability. For veterans rated at 20 percent or more, a finding of employment handicap results in a finding of "entitled."

## **Serious Employment Handicap (SEH)**

A significant impairment of a veteran's ability to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment consistent with his or her abilities, aptitudes, and interests. The SEH results in substantial part from a service-connected disability. For veterans rated at 10 percent and for veterans whose 12-year period of basic eligibility has passed, the finding of an SEH is necessary to establish "entitlement."

## **Suitable Employment**

Work that is within a veteran's physical and emotional capabilities and consistent with his or her pattern of abilities, aptitudes, and interests.

**Transferable Skills:** Reasonably developed skills, knowledge, and abilities attained through both training and experience (civilian and military) that relate to current employment opportunities in the labor market.

## **How To Apply - Applying Online**

You can apply through the Internet for VR&E benefits by going to the VONAPP web site at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp> The VONAPP (Veterans On Line Applications) website is an official U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) website, which enables veterans to apply for benefits using the Internet. U.S. military veterans and some service members within six months of separation or retirement can apply for compensation, pension, and vocational rehabilitation benefits.

When you use this site to complete and send an application to VA, your application will be sent directly to the VA office with jurisdiction over your application. Processing will begin and you will receive an automated e-mail response from the VA office letting you know that it received your application.

## **Applying by Mail**

To print an official blank VA Form 28-1900, Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation, Benefits Administration website using this link: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>. Fill out the form and mail to the nearest VA Regional Office. To find out the address of the VA Regional Office nearest you, go to <http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>. You may also call the VA at 1-800-827-1000 and request that a VA form 1900 be mailed to you.

## **Vocational Educational Counseling**

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service provides vocational-educational counseling to veterans and certain dependents. Eligibility for this service is based on having eligibility for a VA Education program such as:

Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill); Chapter 32 (Veterans Education Assistance Program - VEAP); Chapter 35 (Dependents Education Assistance Program) for certain spouses and dependent children; Chapter 18 (Spina Bifida Program) for certain dependent children; Chapter 1606 (Reservists Education Program); Public Law 102-16 (for Transitioning Service members).

### **Available Services**

VR&E can provide a wide range of vocational and educational counseling services to service members still on active duty, as well as veterans and dependents who are eligible for one of VA's educational benefit programs. These services are designed to help an individual choose a vocational direction and determine the course needed to achieve the chosen goal.

Assistance may include interest and aptitude testing; occupational exploration; setting occupational goals; locating the right type of training program and exploring educational or training facilities which might be utilized to achieve an occupational goal.

### **Costs**

Counseling services are provided to eligible persons at no charge. However, VA does not pay for transportation to the place of the counseling. To provide a full service, the counseling may take more than one session. Call the nationwide toll free number, 1-800-827-1000 to request VA Form 28-8832, Application for Vocational Educational Counseling.

### **Prosthetics Internet Website**

The new Web site at <http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/index.asp> provides information and access to veterans, their family members, VSOs, VA staff and

the general public on the prosthetics and sensory aids programs VA delivers. The site offers prosthetics handbooks, staff directories, various articles and news about prosthetics care within VA. Veterans can download brochures, patient satisfaction information and applications for benefits. It also links to VA's IRIS system which patients can use to ask questions, send comments/suggestions/complaints and even compliments; all answered directly by VACO Prosthetics staff.

### **IRS Rules some Payments to Disabled Vets Tax-Free**

Payments under the Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy program are no longer taxable, the Internal Revenue Service said in a Dec. 12 news release (IR-2007-198).

Disabled veterans who paid tax on these benefits in the past three years can now claim refunds by filing an amended return, IRS said. They will no longer receive a Form 1099 from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The IRS agreed with a U.S. Tax Court decision issued earlier this year, which held that such payments are tax-free veterans' benefits. IRS in November issued Revenue Ruling 2007-29 that addresses the payments.

Text of IR-2007-198 is available at  
<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=176442,00.html>

### **VA Announces Insurance Dividends**

More than a million veterans are in line to share \$349 million in annual insurance dividends during 2008, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

### **NEW VIST AND BROS POSITIONS**

Location of new VIST and BROS positions.

New VIST positions were placed at sites where there are currently part-time VIST in:

1. MOUNTAIN HOME, Tennessee
2. ASHEVILLE, North Carolina
3. SALEM, Virginia
4. DAYTONA BEACH, Florida
5. RENO, Nevada
6. COLUMBIA, Missouri
7. YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio

Additional positions were placed in:

8. HONOLULU, Hawaii
9. PENSACOLA, Florida
10. PONCE, Puerto Rico
11. TULSA, Oklahoma

New BROS positions were placed at sites where no BROS exist and were

needed.

1. Providence VAMC
2. Manhattan Campus of the VA New York Harbor HCS
3. Northport VAMC
4. Lebanon VAMC
5. Winston-Salem Satellite Outpatient Clinic
6. Ralph H. Johnson VAMC
7. Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC
8. Birmingham VAMC
9. Atlanta VAMC
10. Jacksonville OPC
11. Fort Myers OPC
12. Louisville VAMC
13. G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VAMC
14. Oklahoma City VAMC
15. Jack C. Montgomery VAMC
16. Southern Arizona VA HCS
17. VA Eastern Colorado HCS
18. VA Puget Sound HCS American Lake Division
19. VA Pacific Islands HCS
20. VA Loma Linda HCS

### **Letter From IRS Warns of Possible Scams Regarding**

Economic Stimulus Payments      BY BRENT CARNEY, BRISTOL  
HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Va. – The Internal Revenue Service is spreading the word about the

2008 economic-stimulus payment in hopes of maximizing the number of people who will receive money while cutting down on the number of people who will fall victim to scams.

A letter reminding people to file a tax return will arrive at 130 million American households beginning this week.

The letter will be sent to everyone who filed a tax return last year and is a reminder that filing a return this year is the only step required in order to become eligible to receive a payment from the stimulus package.

Aimed at giving the struggling economy a boost, the one-time payment will send a check of up to \$600 to qualified taxpayers. Married couples are eligible for a \$1,200 check if filing jointly, and a \$300 per-child payment for qualifying children under 17 is also available. The letter aims to iron out the details of the new process.

Titled "Economic Stimulus Payment Notice," it states, "to receive a payment in 2008, individuals who qualify will not have to do anything more than file a 2007 tax return. The IRS will determine eligibility, figure the amount, and send the payment."

The IRS also will send a letter in late March to people who qualify for a stimulus check but who are not typically required to file a return.

Such recipients are people who get non-taxable aid like Social Security and Veterans Affairs benefits. Those who have at least \$3,000 in benefits and income are eligible for a stimulus payment of at least \$300.

Yet, to receive the money, they'll need to file a return, even if their benefits don't require it.

Stimulus checks will be issued by the government beginning in May. The check is separate from a federal tax refund payment.

IRS offices are available throughout the area to answer questions about the economic-stimulus package or to help with tax returns. For telephone assistance, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. [VIVN]