

# NEWS AND NOTES FOR FLORIDA VETERANS

Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office  
St. Petersburg, FL

August 2008



The "News and Notes for Florida Veterans" is published monthly by the Veterans Service Center, VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg, Florida, to provide information on VA benefit programs to veterans and dependents in Florida. The material presented does not have the effect of laws or regulations. Please send questions or comments on this newsletter to Veterans Service Center, ATTN: "News and Notes," PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731. We do not have the resources to maintain a mailing list for distribution to individuals; however this newsletter is available on the St. Petersburg VA Regional Office web site at [www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete](http://www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete).

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE POST-9/11 GI BILL** Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits are payable for training pursued on or after August 1, 2009. No payments can be made under this program for training pursued before that date. At this time VA is *not* accepting applications for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Information will be posted on the VA website ([www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)) as it becomes available.

Veterans who have served at least 90 days of active duty service after September 10, 2001 and received an honorable discharge will qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. To qualify for the full benefit a veteran must have served at least 3 years of active duty after September 10, 2001. Veterans who served at least 30 days of active duty service and were discharged due to a service connected disability qualify for the full 100% of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Reservists who have served at least 90 days of active duty service after September 10, 2001 will qualify for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill. Also Reserve and National Guard members with 3 years of active duty service after September 10, 2001 can now qualify for full GI Bill benefits. Generally only federal activations count toward total active duty service; training and state call ups do not qualify.

Under the Post-9/11 GI Bill the veteran or school will receive a percentage, as determined by length of active duty service, of the following: amount of tuition and fees charged, not to exceed the most expensive in-State public institution of higher education; a monthly housing allowance; yearly books and supplies stipend of up to \$1000 (a one time payment of \$500 may be payable to certain individuals relocating from highly rural areas). Housing allowance and books and supplies stipend are not payable to individuals on active duty. Housing allowance is not payable for those pursuing training at half-time or less. The Post-9/11 GI Bill on can be used on active duty provided at least 90 days of service has been completed.

Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, and vocational or technical training.

Additionally, tutorial assistance, and licensing and certification test reimbursement are approved under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

For members of the Armed Forces on August 1, 2009, the Department of Defense (DoD) may offer the opportunity to transfer benefits to spouses or dependent children. DoD and the military services will issue policy on use of transferability in the coming months.

During the upcoming months, VA will be finalizing plans, policies, payment procedures, rules and regulations, and training and outreach materials. VA will update the website ([www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)) as more information becomes available.

## **ANNUAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS**

Clothing allowance may be paid to a veteran who has a service connected disability or a disability that requires he or she wear or use a prosthetic or orthopedic device that wears out or tears clothing. The clothing allowance may also be paid if the veteran uses, for a service-connected skin condition, medication prescribed by a physician which causes irreparable damage to the veteran's outer garments.

The application form for the clothing allowance is *VA Form 10-8678 Application for Annual Clothing Allowance*. Annual clothing allowance claims should be sent to the VA Medical Center or Outpatient Clinic of jurisdiction, for the attention of the Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service.

To be eligible for the 2008 clothing allowance, the veteran must be found to meet the eligibility requirements on August 1, 2008. At the end of July 2008 computer-generated letter/applications are issued to veterans whose records are set to require annual redetermination of clothing allowance eligibility.

The 2008 clothing allowance payments for veterans who have been authorized recurring payments and for others whose awards are input on or before August 20, 2008,

will be issued on September 1. Payments for clothing allowance awards input after that will be issued in about seven to ten days after the award is authorized.

The 2008 clothing allowance is \$677.00. Veterans who are receiving their compensation payments by direct deposit will receive the clothing allowance payment by direct deposit. Veterans without direct deposit will receive their clothing allowance payments by check to the same address as their compensation checks. A veteran receiving retired pay is not required to waive any portion of his/her retired pay to receive the clothing allowance.

**VA, MONSTER PARTNER FOR VETERAN JOB SEEKERS** (VA News Release) WASHINGTON – In a new plan to help veterans find jobs, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has partnered with Monster Government Solutions, a division of Monster Worldwide, Inc., a company that markets online employment services to employers and job seekers.

Part of VA's mission is to assist veterans to gain employment. Monster, in partnership with VA's Center for Veterans Enterprise, provides veteran-owned small businesses the opportunity to post job openings for veterans, including service-disabled veterans, at a large price discount. Monster will post the job openings for 60 days, twice as long as for other employers. To participate in Monster job listings, veteran business owners must be listed in VA's online Vendor Information Pages (VIP) maintained by the Department's Center for Veterans Enterprise at <http://www.VetBiz.gov>.

In addition to helping veteran owners get business from other companies and prospective veteran employees find jobs, VA's VIP pages will give Monster a source for purchasing services itself and VA will refer appropriate, listed suppliers to Monster. The VA-Monster agreement is initially for two years and provides for extensions.

**VA VET CENTERS COMING TO 39 COMMUNITIES** (VA News Release) WASHINGTON – Combat veterans will receive readjustment counseling and other assistance in 39 additional communities across the country where the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will develop Vet Centers by fall 2009. Vet Center services are available at no cost to veterans who experienced combat during any war era. The new VA Vet Centers in Florida will be in located in Broward, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Volusia counties.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES IN AUGUST**

**August 1** payments for July due

**August 7** last day to input change of address or establish direct deposit on compensation and pension awards in time for the 08-29-2008 payments.

**August 20** last day to change or cancel direct deposit on compensation and pension payments in time for the 08-29-2008 payments

**August 29** payments for August due

#### **VA FACILITIES ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

**VA Regional Office, St. Petersburg** - PO Box 1437, St. Petersburg, FL 33731 1-800-827-1000

**Regional Processing Office, Atlanta, GA** (education claims) - PO Box 100022, Decatur, GA 30031-7022 1-888-GIBILL1 (442-4551)  
Telephone number for Chapter 30 self-verifications 1-877-823-2378

**VA EFT Information Hotline** (electronic funds transfer - direct deposit) 1-877-838-2778

**Veterans Health Administration Toll-Free Hotline** (medical care) - 1-877-222-8387

**VA Health Revenue Service** (information on amounts owed to VA Medical Centers) 1-866-793-4591

**VA Insurance Center, Philadelphia** (VA Insurance) - PO Box 42954, Philadelphia, PA 19101 1-800-669-8477

**VA Health Administration Center** (CHAMPVA and Spina Bifida health care) -  
CHAMPVA inquiries: PO Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206-5023  
CHAMPVA claims: PO Box 65024, Denver, CO 80206-5024  
Spina Bifida inquiries and claims: PO Box 65025, Denver, CO 80206-5025 1-800-733-8387

**Foreign Medical Program Office** (medical treatment abroad) -  
PO Box 65021, Denver, CO 80206-5021 303-331-7590

#### **National Cemeteries**

10,000 Bay Pines Blvd N, Bay Pines FL 727-398-9426  
6502 SW 102nd Ave, Bushnell FL 33513 352-793-7740  
6501 S State Rd 7, Lake Worth, FL 33467 561-649-6489  
4083 Lannie Rd, Jacksonville FL 32218 904-358-3510  
Naval Air Station, Pensacola FL 850-453-4108/4846  
9810 State Hwy 72, Sarasota FL 877-861-9840

**National Cemetery Administration Office of Memorial Programs** (headstones and markers) - 5109 Russell Rd Quantico VA 22134-3903 1-800-697-6947

**Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center** (certificates of eligibility) PO Box 20729, Winston-Salem, NC 27120 1-888-244-6711

**Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) Unit** - Chicago VA Regional Office 1-800-829-4833

#### **INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST:**

**VA Web Site:** [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

**VA Web Automated Reference Materials System (WARMS)** [www.warms.vba.va.gov](http://www.warms.vba.va.gov)

**St. Petersburg VA Regional Office:** [www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete](http://www.vba.va.gov/ro/south/spete)

**Property Management (sale of VA-repossessed homes):** [www.ocwen.com](http://www.ocwen.com)

**Florida Dept of Veterans Affairs:** [www.floridavets.org](http://www.floridavets.org)  
"Florida Vets First:" [www.FloridaVetsFirst.com](http://www.FloridaVetsFirst.com)

**Library of Congress (information on pending legislation)** [thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)