


TDVS Benefits Bulletin
24-6

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This month's bulletin is 1,272 words and will take just over 5 minutes of your time.

1 big thing: Tennessee Veteran Ready Business Recognition Program

Recognizing businesses in Tennessee that go above and beyond to 'Recruit', 'Hire', and 'Retain' service members, Veterans, and their families. Together, we can assist 'Veteran Friendly' businesses to becoming 'Veteran Ready'!

 **State-wide opening on July 1, 2024.** Join the TDVS Lunch & Learn Wednesday, June 12th for more information.

TDVS Updates

Claims Management System – Request for Proposals

On May 28th, TDVS released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit a potential replacement for VetraSpec, the current claims management system.

Why it matters: The decision to replace VetraSpec follows a review process started in April 2022, led by a working group of State and County Veteran Service Officers. Their recommendations have shaped the criteria for the RFP.

I need more:

- [Benefits Bulletin 23-7](#) contained an update of the group's work.
- [Commissioner Baker's Letter](#) to County Mayors and Executives
- [Stakeholder Engagement Portal](#)
 - FAQs
 - Got a Question – [Ask It Here](#)

Complimentary Camping and Golf at Tennessee State Parks

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

All veterans receive complimentary camping and golf on all service branch anniversaries and Veterans Day dates listed below. *We appreciate your service!*

Sunday, Aug 4, 2024 [Coast Guard]	Monday, Aug 4, 2025 [Coast Guard]
Wednesday, Sept 18, 2024 [Air Force]	Thursday, Sept 18, 2025 [Air Force]
Sunday, Oct 13, 2024 [Navy]	Monday, Oct 13, 2025 [Navy]
Sunday, Nov 10, 2024 [Marines]	Monday, Nov 10, 2025 [Marines]
Monday, Nov 11, 2024 [Veterans Day]	Tuesday, Nov 11, 2025 [Veterans Day]
Friday, Dec 13, 2024 [National Guard]	Saturday, Dec 13, 2025 [National Guard]
Friday, Dec 20, 2024 [Space Force]	Saturday, Dec 20, 2025 [Space Force]
Saturday, June 14, 2025 [Army]	Sunday, June 14, 2026 [Army]

Veterans are encouraged to call our reservation line at 1-888-867-2757 to book campsites or call their favorite golf course to take advantage of this special offer. Premium campsites excluded.

Official ID and proof of veteran status required upon check-in:
 1. Driver's license, voter registration, or other valid identification with address.
 2. Certificate of Discharge [DD214], Veterans Benefits Administration benefit card, retired military card, or similar.

Annual Conference 2024
"Leading the Nation – Tennessee Veteran Advocacy"


Registration is open for TDVS's Annual Conference 2024. It will be held September 30th – October 2nd, 2024 at the Chattanooga Convention Center & Chattanooga Marriott Downtown, 1 Carter Street, Chattanooga, TN.

What's new: Tickets are now available for the [Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center](#). The Center will be providing a unique opportunity for conference attendees to visit on Monday, September 30, 2024 from 5 – 8 p.m. EST.

Get your [tickets](#) now. *This is an optional opportunity and not a required portion of the TDVS training conference.*

Here's your [one-stop shop](#) for all things Annual Conference. Check out --

- Information on Parking & Venue
- Things To Do in Chattanooga
- And More Coming Soon

 **Save the Date** – [TDVS Lunch & Learn](#) September 11th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CST – 2024 Annual Training Conference Update

[TDVS' Knowledge Library](#)

- Added [ITF Outreach Campaign](#) in PACT Act Toolbox - Outreach
- Added [May 2024 Lunch & Learn: BVA Appeals – Evidence Informed Advocacy – Recording](#)

Training Updates

What's next: Here's the training schedule for the next few months:

- June – [Lunch & Learn](#), Wednesday, June 12th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CST – TN Veteran-Ready Business Recognition Program
- July Quarterly Accreditation Training – Available 24/7, Monday, July 8 – Friday, July 12 – Virtual
- July Initial Accreditation Training, Monday, July 22 – Friday, July 26
- August – [Lunch & Learn](#), Wednesday, August 14th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CST – TBD
- September – [Lunch & Learn](#), Wednesday, September 11th, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. CST – 2024 Annual Training Conference Update
- [2024 Training Schedule](#)

VA and Veteran Benefit Updates

VA Publishes Fiscal Year 2023 GDX Report

VA has published the [Fiscal Year 2023 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures \(GDX\) Report](#). The GDX report provides a breakdown of VA expenditures for each major VA program at the state, county, and Congressional District levels.

PACT Act Updates

VA has granted more than one million PACT Act-related disability compensation claims since the bill was signed into law on August 10, 2022.

In case you missed it:

- **VA has begun an aggressive targeted outreach campaign** – using e-mail, text messages, and phone calls -- to reach approximately 300,000 Veterans and survivors who submitted Intent to File (ITF) claims between June 1 and Aug 14, 2023.

Why it matters: Any PACT Act related ITF received on or before August 14, 2023, is potentially eligible for the August 10, 2022, effective date, as long as a claim is received within a year of the ITF.

[Here's the language](#) VA will be sending to Veterans throughout this campaign.

- VA has enhanced its PACT Act performance webpage by adding an [interactive dashboard](#).
- [VA will host PACT Act events](#) in all 50 states this summer to encourage Veterans and survivors to apply for health care and benefits.

Expansion of VA Hospital Care, Medical Services, and Nursing Home Care to World War II Veterans

VA has published a [final rule](#) that amended its medical regulations and its regulations on per diem for nursing home care of veterans in State homes to conform with section 101 of the *Joseph Maxwell Cleland and Robert Joseph Dole Memorial Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement (Cleland-Dole) Act of 2022*, which expanded the provision of hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care to World War II (WWII) veterans.

Why it matters: In November of 2023, VA announced all WWII Veterans who served between Dec. 7, 1941, and Dec. 31, 1946, were eligible for VA health care, regardless of their length of service or financial status. These Veterans do not have to pay inpatient or outpatient copays, enrollment fees, or monthly premiums.

I need more:

- [Federal Register](#)
- [Final Rule](#)
- [VA Press Release](#)

Commemorative Plaques and Urns

VA has published a [final rule](#) to furnish commemorative plaques and urns for certain Veterans whose cremated remains are not interred. Beginning on June 10, families of deceased and cremated Veterans can apply to receive commemorative plaques or urns from

VA if they who do not want to inter their loved ones in a VA National Cemetery or receive a government-furnished headstone, marker, or medallion for placement in any cemetery.

Background: The *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020* requires VA to provide commemorative plaques and urns to families who do not wish to inter their loved ones.

Yes, but: Under this law, for Veterans who receive a commemorative plaque or urn, VA is prohibited from interring them in a VA national cemetery or providing a government headstone, marker, or medallion for that Veteran in any cemetery.

I need more:

- [Federal Register](#)
- [Final Rule](#)
- [VA Press Release](#)
- More information about NCA memorial options, can be found [here](#).

Practice Like a Pro

VetraSpec Update 24-1 - New Functionality

 **Tennessee VetraSpec Users received the VetraSpec 24.1 update** Saturday, May 11th.

What do I need to do:

1 – If you haven’t already, clear your browser cache. *This is a very important step; many of the post-update issues that users experience result from failure to clear the cache.*

- [Instructions for Firefox users](#) (Check "Cached Web Content")
- [Instructions for Chrome users](#) (Choose "All Time" and check "Cached images and files")

2 – If you haven’t already, please use the control panel to set up multi-factor authentication for your account.

- Select “Control Panel” from the left-hand side of the VetraSpec Home screen.
- Select “Multi Factor Authentication” from the top VetraSpec menu.
- Set up multi-factor authentication using either email or authenticator app.

3 – Establish a VA authentication method to prepare to take advantage of the new Benefits Claims functionality.

- Instructions for [ID.me](#)
- Instructions for [Login.gov](#) (Validates with PIV)

4 – Keep an eye out for the July bulletin that will provide details on using the Benefits Claim filing capability.

I need more: Here's your [one-stop shop](#) for all things VetraSpec Release 24-1. Check out --

- Release Notes Detailing Changes and New Features
- VA's Official communication Regarding the Move from D2D to Benefits Claims
- User Guide for Benefits Claims - Available to Users Who Currently Have D2D Access
- Instructions for Clearing Browser Cache

Advocate Spotlight

Congratulations TDVS Customer Service Academy Graduates

🎉 **Congratulations to the second cohort** of TDVS staff on their graduation from the TDVS Customer Service Academy. This learning opportunity provides team members with foundational customer service principles along with hands-on application through a variety of vignettes over the course of two-days.



Do you have an advocacy success story or something you'd like to see included in an upcoming bulletin? If so, [share](#) for a future bulletin.

TDVS Benefits Bulletins Can Be Found on the [VSO Tools](#) Portion of TDVS's Website

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