

## 2016 NEWSLETTER

### Spring Has Sprung

Spring has sprung, the grass has ris';  
I wonder where the birdie is?  
There he is up in the sky.  
He dropped some whitewash in my eye!  
I'm alright, I won't cry,  
I'm just glad that cows can't fly!



Ahh, springtime. We start getting out, fix fences, dig gardens, maintain lawns, do spring cleaning and realize the noises that we keep hearing is just our bodies reminding us that winter weight does NOT come off in a day!



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#### DATES OF INTEREST

- Mother's Day—8 May
- Memorial Day—30 May
- Father's Day—19 June
- Summer Begins—20 June

# **NON-VA CARE GUIDELINES**

The following pages of information cover what the VA puts out to guide the veteran concerning emergency medical treatment outside of a VA facility. Don't be surprised if this becomes confusing. Currently, the County Committee I confer with has worked out a resolution to illuminate issues veterans confront during an emergency crisis concerning VA payment authorizations. Please be careful, VA guidance is shaky.

## NON VA CARE

Per code of the Federal Regulation (CFR) 17.1004c, a veteran must have **NO** coverage under a health plan contract that would pay in whole or in part for Emergency/ inpatient treatment. The episode of care and treatment must meet one of the following:

- ◆ Must be for a service connected condition
- ◆ You were physically seen and sent from a VA physician or facility
- ◆ You have no other recourse for payment as stated above

Note—The VA is prohibited by law to pay any insurance balances.

1) The Veteran always has the right to an appeal of the decision by sending in an appeal to:

NON VA Care

PO BOX 14830

Albany, NY 12212

2) If the appeal is denied you can request a COS (Chief of Staff review)

3) If denied and you still disagree with the decision, you can request a statement of case with a VA form 9, an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals, for you to complete so your file can be forwarded to the Appeals Office in Washington, DC for review. Please note this can take several months/years to be reviewed.



Please understand, this is just the beginning of what is considered literature to “help” the veteran understand what to do during an emergency situation. Read on for more letters to that may cover what may have happened to you.

# NON-VA CARE GUIDELINES **continued**

From Department of Veterans Affairs, Chief Business Office, Purchased Care, Denver, Co (1 Mar 2013)

As a Veteran enrolled in the VA health care system, you're probably familiar with many of the medical benefits VA can offer you. I'd like to make sure you know your options for care outside the VA in the event of an emergency.

First, the most important thing is for you to get the care you need if you're having a medical emergency. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. You do not need pre-authorization from VA to seek emergency non-VA treatment.

VA defines an emergency as a condition that needs immediate medical attention or it could become hazardous to life or health.

If you do seek emergency treatment at a non-VA facility, it's important to contact the closest VA medical center within 72 hours. You, a family member, a friend or the non-VA hospital can make that contact. The VA facility will verify your eligibility for VA to pay for the care and advise you of claims filing procedures or deadlines. Please note, VA is not authorized to pay for all emergency care for Veterans; your individual eligibility will determine what VA is able to pay for.

Enclosed is a fact sheet that gives you more details on non-VA emergency care. Please take the time to review it so you better understand your options should an emergency arise.



Hmmm, as you read this do you feel like someone who needs to go into a car park but you're unsure if you can actually enter...you are not alone. In the previous guidance it was relatively clear who can get non-VA care...or so we thought. Now it states that pre-authorization is not required and if you feel you're experiencing a medical emergency to seek help. Then the caveat is added that VA is not authorized to pay for all emergency care for veterans and your individual eligibility determines what's covered. Okay, so how would I know that? On the next page is their fact sheet that is supposed to answer common questions.

# NON-VA CARE GUIDELINES **continued**



**VA** HEALTH CARE | Defining **EXCELLENCE** in the 21st Century

## Non-VA Emergency Care Fact Sheet

At some time in your life, you may need emergency care. This document explains what VA might be able to do for you. When it is not possible for you to go to a VA Medical Center, you should go to the nearest hospital that has an emergency room. If you are in an ambulance, the paramedics will usually take you to the closest emergency room.

### What is an emergency?

A medical emergency is an injury or illness that is so severe that without immediate treatment, it threatens your life or health.

### How do I know my situation is an emergency?

Your situation is an emergency if you believe your life or health is in danger.

### If I believe my life or health is in danger, do I need to call the VA before I call for an ambulance or go to an emergency room?

**No.** Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

### When should I contact the VA regarding an emergency room visit?

You, your family, friends or hospital staff should contact the nearest VA medical center as soon as possible, preferably within 72 hours of your emergency, so you are better aware of what services VA may or may not cover. Provide VA with information about your emergency and what services are being provided to you. Ask VA for guidance on what emergency charges may or may not be covered so you can plan accordingly.

### If the doctor then wants to admit me to the hospital, must I obtain advance approval from the VA?

- If the admission is an emergency—**NO**, although prompt notification of the VA is necessary.
- If the admission is not an emergency—**YES**

### If a VA bed is available and I can be safely transferred, do I have to move to the VA hospital?

**YES.** If you want VA to continue to pay for your care. If you refuse to be transferred, VA will not pay for any further care.

### If I am admitted to the hospital as a result of an emergency, how much will VA pay?

This depends on your VA eligibility. VA may pay all, some, or none of the charges. Some highlights are listed in the next column.

### For service-connected conditions, here are some of the criteria that must be met:

1. Care or services were provided in a medical emergency, and
2. VA or another federal facility were not feasibly available, and
3. VA was notified within 72 hours of the admission.
4. Ask your local VA Medical Center's Non-VA (Fee) Care Office for further eligibility guidance.

### For non-service-connected conditions, here are some of the criteria that must be met:

1. Veteran is enrolled in the VA Health Care System, and
2. Veteran has received health care services from VA within the previous 24 months, and
3. Veteran has no other health insurance coverage.
4. Ask your local VA Medical Center's Non-VA (Fee) Care Office for further eligibility guidance.

### How do I know if I have a service-connected condition?

A service-connected condition refers to an illness or injury that was incurred in or aggravated by military service and has a rating assigned by the Veterans Benefits Administration.

### How long do I have to file a claim for reimbursement for emergency medical care?

File your claim with the nearest VA Medical Center quickly because time limits usually apply. For non-service-connected care, the time limit is 90 days. Again, consult your local VA Medical Center for more information.

### Will VA pay for emergency care received outside the United States?

VA will only pay for emergency care outside the U.S. if your emergency is related to a service-connected condition. For more information about care provided outside the U.S., contact the Foreign Medical Program (FMP) at (877) 345-8179, or go to the FMP website at: <http://www.va.gov/hac/forbeneficiaries/fmp>

# NON-VA CARE GUIDELINES continued

## Telephone advice for a Veteran to go to nearest Emergency Department

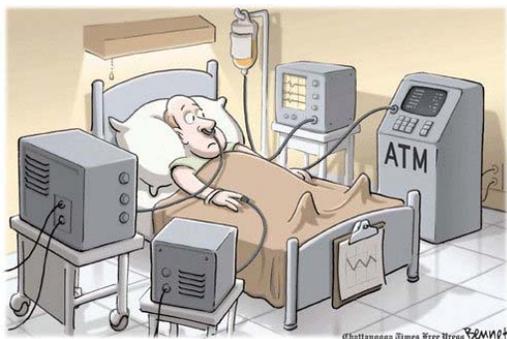
Chief Business Office Purchased Care has received a number of questions in the CBO Q&A database regarding telephone advice for Veterans to go to the nearest emergency department, and whether or not that advice constitutes an authorization for the Veteran to seek non-VA care in the community.

A VA provider's telephonic medical advice to a Veteran to seek immediate emergency treatment at the nearest emergency department is **not** considered an authorization to seek non-VA medical care at VA expense. A mere phone call does not constitute an encounter unless it meets the criteria in VHA Handbook 1101.10 Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT). According to the PACT policy, a telephone encounter is a professional contact between a Veteran patient and a VA health care professional for the purpose of assessing, evaluating, counseling, diagnosing and/or treating the patient's condition or providing Veteran education.

*PIPER POINT– This goes on further and states it's the same criteria as a face-to-face encounter.*

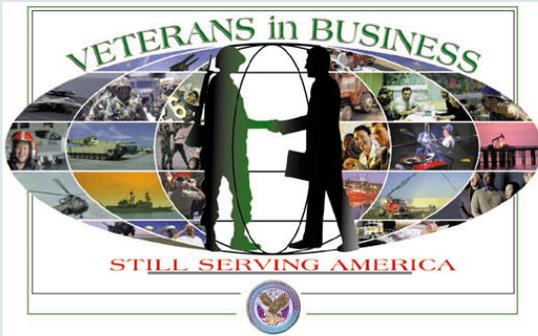
Example phone contacts include situations such as when a Veteran's laboratory result is considered medically critical and requires the Veteran to seek immediate emergency care, or when a Veteran calls VA and communicates a symptom, such as chest pain, that may indicate a potential medical emergency. In these cases, when a VA provider, Telephone Advice Nurse, or any other VA clinician speaks to a Veteran on the phone, **they are not authorizing VA emergency care in the community, but rather advising the Veteran that the information provided suggests that seeking emergency treatment (regardless of where it is sought) is in that Veteran's best medical interest.**

In such situations, if possible, the VA provider should advise the Veteran that their advice does not constitute an authorization for care, and their eligibility status for emergency care will be determined after necessary medical documentation has been received.



*This is saying that it's up to you, the non-medical person, to decide if you need to go to the emergency room and that the VA medical experts will decide if it was needed after you've already been seen. Then you might get billed because you decided to get emergency assistance. Hmm, VA uses the term NOT so that it's understood they won't pay, but use suggest for seeking care so they're not held responsible.*

## VETERANS OWNED BUSINESSES



To get your Veteran Owned business publicized, call Delaware County Veterans Services at 607-832-5345, or email [vet@co.delaware.ny.us](mailto:vet@co.delaware.ny.us).



If you are a veteran or a service-disabled veteran, there are many opportunities for you and your small business. It is important that you certify your small business as **Veteran-Owned** or **Service Disabled Veteran-Owned** so you can take advantage of the resources designed especially for you.

### RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

Visit the <https://www.sba.gov/content/veteran-service-disabled-veteran-owned> page to learn about places to receive guidance for your business, financing your business and applying for government contracts.

In addition, visit the <https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ovbd/resources/362341> page. The SBA has 16 resource centers around the country that provide services such as mentoring, training, business preparation and more, exclusively for veterans.

### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

As a veteran, you may qualify for **government contracting**. Obtaining government contracts is an excellent way to grow a small business. Visit <https://www.sba.gov/content/register-government-contracting> to learn more about the registrations you will need and the steps to start bidding for contracts.

If you are a Service Disabled Veteran-owned business, you may be able to become a part of the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concern program. This procurement program was set aside for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concerns (SDVOSBC) and provides that federal contracting officers may restrict competition to SDVOSBCs and award a sole source or set-aside contract where certain criteria are met. The government-wide goal is not less than 3% of the total value of all prime contract and subcontract awards for participation by small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans.

### DELAWARE COUNTY VETERAN OWNED BUSINESSES:

FORNO ENTERPRISES, TROUT CREEK, ARCHITECTURAL ALUM/GLASS, 607-865-7860

TOMPKINS QUARRIES & LOGGING, 607-434-6713

DC WHATEVER IT TAKES INC., REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT, WALTON, 607-865-4336

VETERAN OUTREACH, SERVICE DOGS, VETS HELPING VETS, 607-437-6451

HODGES OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT, WALTON, 607-865-7890



# MEMORIAL DAY



Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day.

Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#). “The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn't the anniversary of any particular battle.

On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, and 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war).

It is now observed in almost every state on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 – 363).

## RED POPPIES

In 1915, inspired by the poem “In Flanders Fields,” Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

We cherish too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led,  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That blood of heroes never dies.

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael. When she returned to France she made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help.

Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their “Buddy” Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms. Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing a red 3 cent postage stamp with her likeness on it.

## NATIONAL MOMENT OF REMEMBRANCE

The “[National Moment of Remembrance](#)” resolution was passed on Dec 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m. local time, for all Americans “To voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a Moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to “[Taps](#).”



# MOTHERS DAY/FATHERS DAY TRIVIA



1. What is the highest officially recorded number of children born to 1 mother?

Ans: 67



2. What is the one gift Moms love on Mothers Day?

Ans: Time alone.



3. When was Mothers Day officially declared?

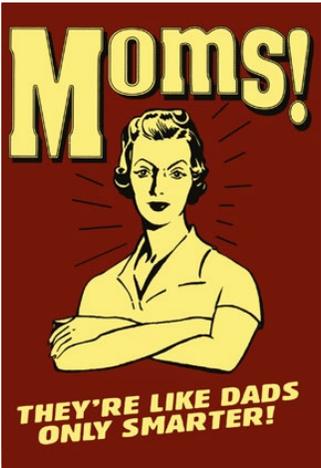
Ans: 8 May 1914

4. American actor Robert Young starred in what 1950's tv show dedicated to Fathers?

Ans: Father Knows Best



5. Amount spent on Fathers Day is still less than what Americans spend on Mothers Day—\$21 Billion



## HELPFUL HINTS FROM DONNA

*A tip for Veterans/Dependents:*

*Set up a file of your important documents such as your DD Form 214 (Report of Separation) and all kinship documents, i.e., birth certificates, marriage certificate(s), divorce decrees, etc. These documents are required when filing a claim for benefits with the VA. If you cannot locate your discharge we will assist you in obtaining it. Also, be sure that all information on your discharge is correct (date of birth, social security number, dates of service). If you discover an error we can submit a request for a correction.*

*If you are having difficulties in locating marriage certificates, birth certificates, etc. you will need to contact the Registrar of Vital Records of the Town where the event occurred.*

*Making sure all of your important documents are correct and in order now can alleviate stress when you are trying to gather this information for a claim.*

**“Patriotism consists not in waving the flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous as well as strong. “ James Bryce**

### **DELAWARE COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES**

1 Gallant Avenue, Suite A  
Delhi, NY 13753

Phone: 607-832-5345

Fax: 607-832-6079

E-mail:

vet@co.delaware.ny.us



Charlie Piper, Director



### **Worse Punishment?**

An Air Force cargo plane was preparing for departure from Thule Air Base in Greenland. They were waiting for the truck to arrive to pump out the aircraft's sewage holding tank.

The Aircraft Commander was in a hurry, the truck was late in arriving, and the Airman performing the job was extremely slow in getting the tank pumped out.

When the commander berated the Airman for his slowness and promised punishment, the Airman responded: "Sir, I have no stripes, it is 20 below zero, I'm stationed in Greenland, and I am pumping sewage out of airplanes. Just what are you going to do to punish me?"



Donna Elderkin, Assistant Director

Drivers:

- ◆ John Tromblee
- ◆ Jerry Phoenix
- ◆ Kevin Lee