

**DOOR COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**

AGENDA

Tues, 5 Apr 16

1100

Veterans Service Office - Room C203

- I. Call meeting to order 1100.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. Approval of minutes from 12 Jan 16.
- IV. CVSO Report.
- V. Commission Aid.
 - A. Disbursement of funds to date.
 - B. Needy veteran aid requests.
- VI. Open Forum/Discussion.
 - A. Green Bay Clinic/VA health care update.
 - B. Armed Forces Day Breakfast.
 - C. Memorial Day.
 - D. Misc. items.
- VII. Next meeting date, time, and location.
- VIII. Adjournment.



County of Door VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

County Government Center
421 Nebraska Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

Scott McFarlane

County Veterans Service Officer
(920) 746-2225
smcfarlane@co.door.wi.us

NOTE: These minutes have not been approved by the oversight committee and are subject to approval at the next meeting.

13 Jan 16

SUBJECT: Meeting minutes for the Veterans Service Commission, 12 Jan 16.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Kenneth Wendt, John Schlise, Bill Becker.

1. OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS.

The meeting was called to order at 1100. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Minutes of the 6 Oct 15 meeting were unanimously approved.

3. CVSO REPORT.

The CVSO passed out information on VA letters and the IRS Form 1095-B form being sent to veterans for 2016 taxes (Affordable Care Act) letting everyone know if they have VA health care as creditable coverage, an updated flyer on the VA Choice Card (most enrolled veterans are now eligible to try and use the Choice Card – not just those that were enrolled before 1 Aug 14), and an article about legislation giving Reserve and Guard servicemembers veteran status – but in name only – no benefits (this applies only to those who have not served on active duty).

4. COMMISSION AID.

Balance as of the 12 Jan 16 meeting: \$4000.00. Balance as of the end of 2015: \$0.00 (balance as of 6 Oct 15 meeting was \$1683.44). On 23 Oct 15, commission aid was provided to a needy veteran for vision care in the amount of \$214.00. On 6 Nov 15, commission aid was provided to a needy veteran for vision care in the amount of \$348.00. On 13 Nov 15, aid was provided to the same veteran for transportation to check on his vehicle/residence (recently released from prison and unable to drive). On 24 Nov 15, aid was provided to a needy veteran for WPS (\$62.12/143.70) and SBU (\$316.12). On 5 Jan 16, aid was provided to SBU in the amount of \$363.34 and WPS for \$115.18 - both were debited against 2015 funds.

No requests are currently pending.

5. OPEN FORUM/DISCUSSION.

Green Bay Veterans Affairs Clinic Update. The VA is continuing to hire staff and is currently serving over 8500+ veterans (the last meeting # was 8300+). Current capacity is over 10500 veterans (when fully staffed, will be able to care for 20000 veterans). Surgery (ambulatory only) started 1 Jun 15. There are two full time general surgeons, one of whom is the Chief of Surgery. More surgeries will be done as the referral process expands. The operating suite has been doing general surgery, urology, ophthalmology, orthopedic, and dental cases. Colonoscopies are continually being done on site and another GI provider is being recruited. The clinic is continuing to actively recruit additional MDs in the cardiology and oncology specialties. A part-time GYN provider started this week and she will be seeing patients in about two weeks. Dental has a total of three residents rotating between Green Bay and Milwaukee.

Veterans Day AAR (Wed, 11 Nov 15 at Southern Door High School). The Commissioners noted that the ceremony went very well and that the speaker was outstanding (Tom Van Lieshout, former SDHS principal). The CVSO mentioned that Assistant CVSO Beth Wartella had taken a phone call from the Southern Door Superintendent – she wanted to straighten out that the veterans were not to be billed for the luncheon after the ceremony – that it was an error. Commission Becker said that he had talked with the new Gibraltar High School principal and laid some groundwork for this year's ceremony.

Misc. Items. Chairman Wendt talked with Nancy Hutchison of Adopt-A-Soldier and she said that they now have two well stocked storage tubs full of supplies available to new Coastguardsmen that arrive in the area without their Household Goods (HHG) and are in need of everything. The items will be issued on a temporary basis and then reassembled and passed on to the next servicemember that arrives in the same status.

6. NEXT MEETING TIME AND PLACE.

Tues, 5 Apr 16 at 1100 in the CVSO office.

7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT.

Meeting adjourned at 1200.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN:

Scott McFarlane
Door County Veterans Service Officer



CAMP LEJEUNE: PAST WATER CONTAMINATION

From the 1950s through the 1980s, people serving or living at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene, and other chemicals. This chemical exposure may have led to adverse health conditions.

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR VA HEALTH BENEFITS IF YOU SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY (VETERANS) OR RESIDED (FAMILY MEMBERS) AT CAMP LEJEUNE FOR 30 DAYS OR MORE BETWEEN AUGUST 1, 1953 AND DECEMBER 31, 1987:

- Veterans who are determined to be eligible will be able to receive VA health care. In addition, care for qualifying health conditions is provided at no cost to the Veteran (including copayments).
- Eligible family members receive reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred from the treatment of qualifying health conditions after all other health insurance is applied.

QUALIFYING HEALTH CONDITIONS INCLUDE:

- Bladder cancer
- Breast cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Leukemia
- Lung cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Female infertility
- Hepatic steatosis
- Miscarriage
- Neurobehavioral effects
- Renal toxicity
- Scleroderma

VETERAN ELIGIBILITY:

- A Camp Lejeune Veteran does not need to have one of the 15 health conditions to be eligible to receive VA health care, nor do they need a service connected disability to be eligible as a Camp Lejeune Veteran for VA health care.

VETERANS

ENROLL IN VA HEALTH CARE

- Inform VA that you served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days during the covered time period.
- Already enrolled? Contact your local VA health care facility at <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/> to sign up for the Camp Lejeune Program and receive VA care.
- Not yet enrolled? Apply online at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/> or call toll-free 1-877-222-8387.

FAMILY MEMBERS

GATHER DOCUMENTS

- Show your relationship to a Veteran, such as a marriage license or birth certificate.
- VA will assist you with verifying residency on Camp Lejeune during the covered timeframe.

GATHER QUALIFYING EXPENSE RECEIPTS

- By law, VA may only compensate for eligible out-of-pocket expenses after family members have received payment from all other health plans.

APPLY FOR REIMBURSEMENT

- Apply online at <https://www.cfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov> or call toll-free 1-866-372-1144.

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.govFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 17, 2015

VA Plans to Propose Expanded Disability Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Exposed to Contaminated Water at Camp Lejeune

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today that it plans to propose expanded disability compensation eligibility for Veterans exposed to contaminated drinking water while assigned to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

From 1953 to 1987, water sources at the base were contaminated with industrial solvents that are correlated with certain health conditions. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald decided to propose presumptions of service connection for certain conditions associated with these chemical solvents following discussions between environmental health experts at the Veterans Health Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

“The water at Camp Lejeune was a hidden hazard, and it is only years later that we know how dangerous it was,” said Secretary McDonald. “We thank ATSDR for the thorough review that provided much of the evidence we needed to fully compensate Veterans who develop one of the conditions known to be related to exposure to the compounds in the drinking water.”

ATSDR determined that the drinking water at Camp Lejeune was contaminated with perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene, vinyl chloride, benzene and other petroleum contaminants from leaking storage tanks from 1953 to 1987. ATSDR also determined that prolonged exposure to these chemicals increases the risk of certain health conditions.

Based upon VA’s review of current medical science and ATSDR’s findings, Secretary McDonald intends to propose creation of a presumption of service connection for the following conditions:

- Kidney Cancer
- Liver Cancer
- Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma
- Leukemia
- Multiple Myeloma
- Scleroderma
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Aplastic Anemia / Myelodysplastic Syndromes

The Secretary’s proposal would also expand benefits eligibility to Reserve and National Guard personnel who served at Camp Lejeune for any length of time from August 1, 1953, through December 31, 1987. These personnel would be presumed to have been exposed to the contaminated water during their Reserve or National Guard service and, in appropriate circumstances, to have been disabled by such exposure during service, thus allowing them to qualify for VA benefits under the statutory definition of “Veteran.”

This would make them eligible for VA disability compensation and medical care for any of the presumptive conditions, and their surviving dependents would be eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation and burial benefits.

VA is working on regulations that would establish these presumptions, making it easier for affected Veterans to receive VA disability compensation for these conditions. While VA cannot grant any benefit claims based on the proposed presumption of service connection for these conditions until it issues its final regulations, it encourages Veterans who have a record of service at Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987, and develop a condition that they believe is related to exposure to the drinking water at the base, to file a disability compensation claim with VA.

VA will continue to grant claims for disabilities claimed to be associated with exposure to the contaminants that can be granted under current regulations and review of the evidence in each case. If a claim for service connection for one of the proposed presumptive conditions would be denied under current regulations, the denial will be stayed until VA issues its final regulations. VA will announce when the regulations are final and presumptive benefits can begin to be awarded. For more information on applying for these benefits, visit: http://benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-postservice-exposures-camp_lejeune_water.asp.

Veterans who served at Camp Lejeune for 30 days or more between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987, are already eligible to receive VA healthcare for up to 15 health conditions. More information, including a full list of covered conditions, can be found online at: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/PUBLICHEALTH/exposures/camp-lejeune/index.asp>.

Veterans can establish eligibility for healthcare benefits by submitting VA Form 10-10EZ online at www.1010ez.med.va.gov/, downloading it at www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/1010EZ-fillable.pdf and returning it to any VA Medical Center or Clinic, or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM (Eastern Time).

VA is reimbursing certain veterans' family members for eligible out-of-pocket medical expenses related to the 15 covered conditions. More information can be found at: <https://www.cfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov>

###

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.govFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 14, 2016

VA Announces Community Care Call Center to Help Veterans with Choice Program Billing Issues

WASHINGTON – Veterans can now work directly with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to resolve debt collection issues resulting from inappropriate or delayed Choice Program billing. In step with MyVA's efforts to modernize VA's customer-focused, Veteran-centered services capabilities, a Community Care Call Center has been set up for Veterans experiencing adverse credit reporting or debt collection resulting from inappropriately billed Choice Program claims. Veterans experiencing these problems can call 1-877-881-7618 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time) for assistance.

"As a result of the Veterans Choice Program, community providers have seen thousands of Veterans. We continue to work to make the program more Veteran-friendly," said Dr. David Shulkin, Under Secretary for Health. "There should be no bureaucratic burden that stands in the way of Veterans getting care."

The new call center will work to resolve instances of improper Veteran billing and assist community care medical providers with delayed payments. VA staff are also trained and ready to work with the medical providers to expunge adverse credit reporting on Veterans resulting from delayed payments to providers. VA is urging Veterans to continue working with their VA primary care team to obtain necessary health care services regardless of adverse credit reporting or debt collection activity.

VA acknowledges that delayed payments and inappropriately billed claims are unacceptable and have caused stress for Veterans and providers alike. The new call center is the first step in addressing these issues. VA presented *The Plan to Consolidate Community Care* in October of 2015 that outlines additional solutions to streamline processes and improve timely provider payment.

For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA's progress, visit: www.va.gov/opa/choiceact. Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program can call 1-866-606-8198 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time) to find out more about the program, confirm their eligibility and schedule an appointment.

###



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Fact Sheet

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

December 1, 2015

VA Makes Enhancements to the Veterans Choice Program

Background:





On August 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACAA). In July 2015, Congress passed the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Act (also known as the VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act) which directed VA to make a number of changes to the Veterans Choice Program. On December 1, 2015, VA published an Interim Final Rule detailing the implementation of each change.

Updated Veterans Choice Program Eligibility Requirements:

Under the updated eligibility requirements, a Veteran is eligible for the Veterans Choice Program if he/she is enrolled in the VA health care system and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- A Veteran is told by his/her local VA medical facility that they will not be able to schedule an appointment for care:
 - Within 30 days of the date the Veteran's physician determines he/she needs to be seen; or
 - Within 30 days of the date the Veteran wishes to be seen if there is no specific date from his/her physician.
- The Veteran lives more than 40 miles driving distance from a VA medical facility *with a full-time primary care physician*.
- The Veteran needs to travel by air, boat, or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to his/her home.
- The Veteran faces an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to a VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, a medical condition, the nature or frequency of the care needed, and whether an attendant is needed. Staff at the Veteran's local VA medical facility will work with him/her to determine if he/she is eligible for any of these reasons.
- The Veteran lives in a State or Territory without a full-service VA medical facility which includes: Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire (Note that Veterans are not eligible under this criterion if they live in New Hampshire and live within 20 miles of the White River Junction VAMC), and the United States Territories (excluding Puerto Rico which has a full service VA medical facility).

Side-by-Side Review of Changes

<u>Old Policy</u>		<u>New Policy</u>
Veteran must have been enrolled in VA health care by 8/1/14 or able to enroll as a combat Veteran to be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program.		Any Veteran enrolled in VA health care will meet basic eligibility for the program.
Unusual or Excessive Burden eligibility determined by geographical challenges, environmental factors, or a medical condition impacting the Veteran's ability to travel.		The nature of the hospital care or medical services, how frequently the care is needed, and the need for an attendant are now also considerations for eligibility under the unusual or excessive burden eligibility criterion for Veterans who reside less than 40 miles from the closest VA medical facility.
Veterans must call Third Party Administrators (TPAs) themselves to follow-up on authorization updates.		Contractors now have the ability to make outbound calls to Veterans directly once authorizations are received. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance-eligible should call Choice Program Call Center (866-606-8198) to make an appt. • Wait List-eligible Veterans will receive a phone call from the contractor to set up an appt.
If a Veteran's current residence is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility, they are eligible for the program.		If a Veteran is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility with a full-time primary care physician, they are eligible for the program.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Why is VA making these changes?

A: VA recognizes that there are opportunities to improve access to, and experience with, the Veterans Choice Program. Through collaboration with our partners in Congress, we were able to make a number of changes to the legislation. These changes align with our goal to expand Veteran access to timely, high-quality health care.

Q: How do Veterans make appointments for care through the Veterans Choice Program?

A: The way appointments are made have been improved based on Veteran feedback. To make an appointment:

- Distance- Eligible Veterans call 866-606-8198 to make sure they qualify for the program and to schedule an appointment. When they call, they will be asked for:
 - First and last name
 - Full address
 - The name of their preferred community physician

Wait List- Eligible Veterans will receive a phone call from one of VA's community health care partners (a non-VA phone number). When they receive this call, they will be asked for their:

- First and last name
- Full address
- Date of birth
- Last 4 digits of your social security number

Veterans should continue to call 866-606-8198 or visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact with general questions about the Choice Program.

Q: How is it determined if a VA medical facility has a full-time primary care physician?

A: A "full time primary care physician" means at least one individual physician whose workload, or multiple physicians whose combined workload, equates to a 0.9 full time equivalent employee that works at least 36 clinical work hours per week.

Q: What related to the specific nature and frequency of health care needs might qualify a Veteran for the Choice Program?

A: Examples of some health care needs that could qualify a Veteran for the Choice program include:

- The nature or simplicity of the hospital care or medical services the veteran requires, or
- how frequently the Veteran needs hospital care or medical services, or
- the need for an attendant who provides aid and/or physical assistance to the Veteran.

This will allow VA to determine, for example, if routine and simple procedures that do not necessarily require the expertise or best practices of VA physicians can be sought through the Veterans Choice Program. Similarly, if a Veteran needs repeated appointments for a course of treatment, the frequency of travel could become an excessive burden on the Veteran that could be alleviated or lessened by receiving care closer to home. If a Veteran requires an attendant to travel to a VA medical facility, coordination could become burdensome and may be alleviated by use of the Veterans Choice Program. These examples are demonstrative and not exhaustive. VA will make a determination on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Where can I get more information about the program?

A: Please review the VA Choice Program website at <http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/>



Veterans Choice Program: 101 For Veterans

The Veterans Choice Program (VCP) is a program to improve Veterans' access to health care by allowing eligible Veterans to use approved health care providers outside of VA. Section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACCA) required that VA establish the program.

Am I eligible for the program?

You must be enrolled in the VA health care system and you must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- You are told by your local VA medical facility that they will not be able to schedule an appointment for care either:
 - Within 30 days of the date your provider determines you need to be seen; or
 - Within 30 days of the date you wish to be seen if there is no specific date from your provider.
- Your current residence is more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest VA medical facility (including Community- Based Outpatient Clinics) that has a full-time primary care physician.
- You need to travel by air, boat or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to your home.
- You face an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to the closest VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, or a medical condition. Staff at your local VA medical facility will work with you to determine if you are eligible for any of these reasons.
- Your specific health care needs, including the nature and frequency of the care needed, warrants participation in the program. Staff at your local VA medical facility will work with you to determine if you're eligible for any of these reasons.
- You reside in a State or a United States Territory without a full-service VA medical facility that provides hospital care, emergency services, and surgical care having a surgical complexity of standard, and reside more than 20 miles from such a VA medical facility. NOTE: This criterion applies to Veterans residing in Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Also note that some Veterans in New Hampshire reside within 20 miles of White River Junction VAMC.

What do I need to know about getting an appointment through the program?

You can call the Choice Program Call Center at 866-606-8198 to verify your eligibility. If you are distance- eligible, you can use this same phone number to make your Veterans Choice Program appointment. If you are wait list-eligible, you will receive a phone call from a VA partner to help set up your Veterans Choice Program appointment. Please note that:

- If you do not receive approval for care under the Veterans Choice Program, you may be responsible for some or all of the costs of the non-VA treatment you receive.
- Unfortunately not all providers will be covered by the Veterans Choice Program. If your preferred provider is not available, we will recommend other providers in your area.

What is the Veterans Choice Card?

VA mailed the Choice Card to Veterans. The Choice Card allows you to choose to receive care outside of VA if you qualify for the new program. The Choice Card doesn't replace the identification card you already use to access other VA benefits. If you are satisfied and wish to continue with your current VA care, there is nothing you need to do at this time. You should save your Choice Card in case you would like to use the program in the future. If you did not receive a Choice Card, you do not need your Choice Card to access the Choice Program. If you did not receive a Choice Card, call 866-606-8198 to find out if you are eligible and to make an appointment.

Where can I get more information?

You can call the Choice Program Call Center at 866-606-8198 or visit: www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

VISN 12 Choice Champions Listing

Facility	Facility Name	Location	Champion	Designation	Email	Phone Number
VISN	VA Great Lakes HCS	Westchester, IL	Katheryn Mansell	Primary	katheryn.mansell@va.gov	708-492-3915
			Sharla Parker	Alternate	sharla.parker@va.gov	708-492-3954
537	Jesse Brown VAMC	Chicago, IL	Michael Catanese	Primary	Michael.Catanese2@va.gov	906-774-3300 Ext. 32001
			Marilyn Muhammad	Alternate	Marilyn.Muhammad@va.gov	312-569-8188
556	Captain James A. Lovell	North Chicago, IL	Janet Geller-Lesko	Primary	Janet.Geller-Lesko@va.gov	224-610-8621
			Karen Suftko	Alternate	Karen.Suftko@va.gov	224-610-3738
578	Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital	Hines, IL	Ryan Landi	Primary	ryan.landi2@va.gov	708-202-8387 Ext. 27887
			Carolina Mosley	Alternate	carolina.mosley@va.gov	708-202-8387 Ext. 25356
585	Oscar G. Johnson VAMC	Iron Mountain, MI	Nicole Kleist	Primary	Nicole.kleist@va.gov	906-774-3300 Ext. 32050
			Bradley D. Nelson	Alternate	Bradley.Nelson@va.gov	906-774-3300 Ext. 32001
607	William S. Middleton Memorial VA Medical Center	Madison, WI	Anthony Dargiewicz	Primary	Anthony.Dargiewicz@va.gov	608-256-1901 Ext. 17078
			Kathy Benjamin	Alternate	Katheryn.Benjamin@va.gov	608-256-1901 Ext. 17078
676	Tomah VAMC	Tomah, WI	Nicole Senn	Primary	Nicole.Senn@va.gov	608-372-3971 Ext. 66940
			Gwendolyn Beeley	Alternate	Gwendolyn.Beeley@va.gov	608-372-3971 Ext. 63432
695	Clement J. Zablocki VAMC	Milwaukee, WI	Mindy Mingerink	Primary	mindy.mingerink@va.gov	414-384-2000 Ext. 46028
			Jessica MacWilliams	Alternate	jessica.macwilliams@va.gov	414-384-2000 Ext. 46028