

*Olmsted County
Veteran Services
Veterans Advocate Newsletter
September 2020*

Changes in Olmsted County Veteran Services!

The Veteran Services Office will only meet face-to-face with veterans if they have a scheduled appointment. We are currently not accepting walk-ins with clients until further notice. Our objective is to offer as many services as possible without face-to-face contact. We will do our best to schedule phone appointments as needed or to address needs through the mail, via email, or fax. Many of the stakeholders we are working with are also in the process of implementing similar practices. We are working together to find the best possible solutions that effectively comply with efforts while also minimizing the impact on our veterans and their families.

Public: All visitors in Olmsted County government buildings will need to wear masks in public spaces even if six feet of distance can be maintained. When our veterans come into the building the expectation is, they are wearing a mask (most veterans are wearing a mask to include the younger population). However, there is an exception on this:

**The face mask requirement in Olmsted County buildings does not apply to:
Individuals unable to wear a face covering due to medical, disability, or developmental reasons.
Individuals speaking to someone who is deaf or hard of hearing and requires the mouth to be visible to communicate.**

Office Phone: 507-328-6355, Office Fax: 507-328-7950

Emails:

Admin: Karen Applen, applen.karen@co.olmsted.mn.us

Supervisor and Service Officer: Nathan Pike, pike.nathan@co.olmsted.mn.us

Service Officer: Jennifer Shumaker, shumaker.jennifer@co.olmsted.mn.us

Service Officer: Ashley Laganieri, laganieri.ashley@co.olmsted.mn.us

LAOC / IMAA FREE LEGAL CLINIC

MONTHLY ON THE 2ND AND 4TH WEDNESDAY

12:00 TO 3:00 PM

2500 VALLEYHIGH DR. NW

ROCHESTER, MN 55901

This legal clinic is an opportunity to meet **one-on-one virtually** with an attorney from Legal Assistance of Olmsted County to ask questions, discuss your legal options, and get brief legal advice on your legal matter. The attorney at the clinic does not become the attorney representing the case.

Clinics are offered twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays between 12:00 and 3:00 p.m. via phone. Pre-registration is encouraged as the meetings are via phone.

To register for the next available clinic, please call or email Nisha Kurup, 507-289-5960, ext. 110 or Nisha.kurup@imaa.net. Interpretive services are available.

Next Available Clinics:

September 9th

September 23rd



Areas of Advice Offered:

- Divorce
- Custody
- Child Support
- Parenting Time/Visitation
- Landlord Tenant Disputes
- Eviction
- Harassment
- Domestic Abuse
- Immigration
- Financial

Advice will not be offered on any CHIPS cases or if you already have an attorney retained.

Clinics are intended for people below the area median income without access to an attorney.

For More Information:

Legal Assistance of Olmsted County

1700 North Broadway Avenue
Suite 124, Entrance A
Rochester, MN 55906

(507) 287-2036

Info@laocmn.org

Visit us on the web: www.laocmn.org



Intercultural Mutual Assistance
Association Presents

THE PEARL GALA VIRTUAL FUNDRAISER

5:30 PM THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

Free Live Streamed Gala with After Party
Entertainment!

Tickets include...

After Event Concert by
FERNANDO UFRET

Cooking Demonstration for
TAPAS

Drink recipe for a
SPICY CILANTRO MARGARITA

TICKETS
\$35



Order tickets online at www.imaa.net

PTSD and Suicide Prevention

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. All month, mental health advocates, prevention organizations, survivors, allies, and community members unite to promote suicide prevention awareness. Going through trauma may increase a person's risk for suicide. Studies show that suicide risk may be higher in people who have PTSD. This update focuses on what we know about the relationships between suicide, trauma and PTSD, and on ways to help prevent suicide.

About PTSD and Suicide

- Read about the relationship between trauma: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/related/suicide_ptsd.asp
- Find out about: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/isitptsd/common_reactions.asp, that may include suicidal thoughts and behavior.
- Learn to recognize the red flags of emotional crisis

The following can all be warning signs:

- Appearing sad or depressed most of the time
- Hopelessness; feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling as if there is no reason to live
- Feeling excessive guilt, shame, or sense of failure
- Rage or anger, Showing violent behavior, like punching a hole in the wall or getting into fights
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Losing interest in hobbies, work, or school
- Increasing alcohol or drug misuse
- Neglecting personal welfare; a deteriorating physical appearance
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Giving away prized possessions
- Getting affairs in order, tying up loose ends, or writing a will

The following signs require immediate attention:

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.

Show Support

For a Veteran facing hard times, your support can provide hope when it's needed most—and you already have what it takes to show you care. Take a few minutes to check in today.

Get Help

Whether you're a Veteran or a friend or family member concerned about one, confidential assistance is only a call, click, or text away.

- Call the Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255, press 1
- You can also chat online: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/> or text 838255



VETERANS TREATMENT COURT



**MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL BRANCH**
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Please join us for the Commencement Ceremony
honoring:

Charles Smisek, Air Force (Dodge County)
Justin Slavin, Marine Corps (Winona County)
Judy Klimesh, Army (Freeborn County)
Paul Ayotte, Army (Winona County)



Friday, September 11, 2020, at 10:30 a.m.

Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial

Rochester, MN

*Per current Rochester Ordinance and Minnesota Executive Order, we ask every
attendee to wear a mask while at the event.



Aerial Photography by Charlie Hallstrom, Troop 231 Boy Scouts, Kasson MN

Field of Flags

September 12, 2020 Dedication at 2:30 p.m.

Do you know a past or present veteran, first responder or essential worker that you would like to honor at the Field of Flags this year?

If so, contact Cindy Nelson at 507-635-5519 or Dick Denny at 507-259-2081. Or go to <https://www.marigolddays.com> and click on the Field of Flags Memorial link for a form to fill out. Flags will be flying from Saturday at 2:30 until Tuesday afternoon – each one representing those who risk their lives every day and those who paid the ultimate price.

**8th Street & Highway 57
Mantorville, MN**

Three Rivers CARES Fund

ThreeRivers

COMMUNITY ACTION



People-focused, community-driven



Three Rivers Housing Assistance is available to individuals and families experiencing needs due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The program can assist with housing expenses (rent, security deposit, mortgage, etc.), transportation expenses (car repair, bus tokens, etc.), or utility expenses (heat, electric, water, internet, etc.).

HOW: Call Three Rivers at (507)316-0610 or (800)277-8418 to speak with an advocate to determine eligibility.

WHERE:

Funds are available to residents of **Goodhue, Olmsted, Rice** and **Wabasha** counties only.

WHEN:

Funds are available now, and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. These are temporary funds available only due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

ELIGIBILITY:

Individuals or families whose household income does not exceed 300% of the federal guideline, adjusted for family size.

AMOUNT:

Assistance varies by need. All funds are paid directly to the vendor (e.g. landlord, utility company, auto repair shop) who must be willing to provide information (W-9, ACH) to Three Rivers.

Family Size	Annual Income
1	\$38,280
2	\$51,720
3	\$65,160
4	\$78,600
5	\$92,040
6	\$105,480
7	\$118,920
8	\$132,360

Zumbrota Office:

1414 North Star Drive
Zumbrota, MN 55992

Faribault Office:

Faribo Town Square
201 South Lyndale Avenue
Faribault, MN 55021

Rochester Office:

300 11th Avenue NW #110
Rochester, MN 55901

Phone: 507-316-0610 **Toll free:** 800-277-8418 **Fax:** 507-933-4481

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm

www.threeriverscap.org

Message from VA Health Care

Attention Veterans: If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing, or if you are feeling sick or ill with other symptoms, your first step is to CALL the VA Health Care System at:

- **Minneapolis:** 612-467-1100
- **Fargo:** 701-239-3700 extension 2319
- **St. Cloud:** 320-252-1670, or 800-247-1739
- **Sioux Falls:** 605-336-3230 or 605-336-5001

The medical staff will advise you on next steps based on your symptoms. In a medical emergency, call 911.

As we face this challenging time together, we know that some of our Veterans have experienced interruptions in employment resulting in health care coverage. We want those Veterans to know, VA is here. Please contact us at [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov), or call us at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). If you are a Veteran in need, or know a Veteran, please share with them.

COMMUNITY CARE TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

We have received calls about receiving travel pay for Care in the Community approved local appointments. A couple things to remember....

1. **It is YOUR responsibility** as the veteran to prepare the travel claim, not the facility you visit.
2. **Request a “FAX Cover sheet”** or “Summary Sheet” with the care facilities information or letterhead.

PLEASE PRINT the following information onto it:

- a. Your name and the last four digits of your social security number
- b. Date and location of your appointment
- c. Type of doctor or specialty that was seen (*cardiology, acupuncture, etc.*)
- d. Your signature and date you signed the document. (*Finance will NOT release payment without your signature*)

3. **Ask the receptionist** at the facility to also sign the document verifying that you were at your appointment and then **FAX** the request for payment to **612-725-1300**.

4. Ask for the document back as proof of your claim and retain it until you receive payment, usually within one week.

5. If you have any questions or it is over a week since submitting for travel pay call the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center (VAMC) at **605-373-4196**

**IMPORTANT: YOU HAVE 30 DAYS
FROM THE DATE OF YOUR APPOINTMENT
TO SUBMIT YOUR CLAIM FOR TRAVEL!**

VA education and training benefits

The Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) helps you pay for school or job training. If you've served on active duty after September 10, 2001, you may qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33). Find out if you can get this education benefit.

Also

- Your school must agree to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program
- Your school must have not offered Yellow Ribbon to more than the maximum number of individuals, as stated in their participation agreement
- Your school must certify your enrollment to VA and provide Yellow Ribbon Program information

You are not eligible if:

- You are an active duty Servicemembers or their spouse.

The VR&E Program (Chapter 31) If you have a service-connected disability that limits your ability to work or prevents you from working, Veteran Readiness and Employment (formerly called Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) can help. This program—also known as Chapter 31 or VR&E—helps you explore employment options and address training needs. In some cases, your family members may also qualify for certain benefits.

Learn about other VA education benefits if you don't qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. If you're a Guardsman, Reservist, or Veteran and you're not eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, you may be able to get other VA education benefits through these programs:

MDVA's Higher Education Veterans Programs

Helps connect you with educational benefits and resources to succeed in college. We support the success of Veterans, current military members and their families at Minnesota's colleges and universities by providing on-site comprehensive information about benefits and resources as well as creating institutional readiness in support of the unique needs of these students. This nation-leading program provides staff at colleges and universities throughout Minnesota to help identify and remove barriers to Veterans' enrollment and access to benefits, as well as to create and manage campus Veterans resource centers.

In 2006, the Minnesota Legislature passed a number of initiatives addressing the unique needs of students who are Veterans. In order to assist Minnesota's colleges and universities fulfill these requirements, the MDVA created the Higher Education Veterans Programs. The program consists of a director and regional coordinators located throughout the state.

Specifically, the Higher Education Veterans Program coordinators help schools establish Veteran friendly policies and procedures. They can also help with things like:

- Payment extensions while awaiting properly applied for educational benefits
- Military transfer credit
- Veteran resident status
- Options for withdrawal from classes due to deployment

On-campus Veterans Resource Centers are unique to Minnesota and provide an environment where Veterans, military members and their families feel welcome. They also provide space for interaction with other Veterans and family members of Veterans. This space is a way for Veterans to connect with each other and representatives from the Higher Education Program.

Minnesota GI Bill program provides assistance to eligible Minnesota Veterans, currently serving military, National Guard and Reserve members who served after September 11, 2001 and eligible spouse and children. The Program provides a maximum benefit of \$10,000, up to age 62. Eligible participants can use the benefit in Higher Education, On-the-job training (OJT)/Apprenticeship or License and Certification.

This program is different than the Federal GI Bill (Montgomery, Post 9-11, Veterans Education Assistance Program, Dependents Education Assistance Program, or Vocational rehabilitation).

For more information, contact the MDVA Southeast Regional Education Coordinator, Mark Larsen at: 507-779-9375 or mark.larsen@state.mn.us

Federal Bureau of Prisons

FCI Waseca, MN

NOW HIRING



Correctional Officers

\$45,408 to \$61,987



What FCI Waseca offers:

- Health, Dental, Vision – 25+ different options
- Life Insurance – Basic Insurance Government pays 1/3 of the cost
- Thrift Savings Plan – Government matches up to 5%
- Flexible Spending Accounts – Health Care and Dependent Care
- Annual Leave –
 - 4 hours a pay period for 3 years of federal service
 - 6 hours a pay period for 4 – 14 years of federal service
 - 8 hours a pay period for 15+ years of federal service
- Sick Leave – 4 hours a pay period
- 10 paid Federal Government holidays
- Shift Differential for Sunday and Night hours
- 5 Weeks of Paid Training
- \$600 per year Uniform Allowance
- Advancement Opportunities – 119 locations, including Hawaii and Puerto Rico
- Federal Law-Enforcement Retirement
- Military Buy Back – Active duty military service adds to your retirement

Thinking Ahead

You can be eligible to retire at age 50 with 20 or more years of BOP service or at any age with 25 years of BOP service.

Mandatory retirement at age of 57.



www.USAJOBS.gov

Bureau of Prisons is an Equal Opportunity Employer

STANDDOWN FOR VETERANS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH 2020
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**JOIN MACV FOR A DAY OF FUN
WITH YOUR FAMILIES AT THE BALLPARK.**

FREE SERVICES AVAILABLE INCLUDE:

Public benefits, employment assistance, VA benefits, legal assistance, clothing, housing assistance, and local resources

Franklin Rogers Park, 601 Reed St, Mankato, MN 56001

Games, meet &
greet with
Muttnick
and ballpark
fun!



MACV



Questions? Call 507-345-8258



PTSD Support Group

SEMCIL, and Olmsted County Veteran Services is offering a support group for Veterans that have been diagnosed with PTSD, or those who have signs and symptoms of PTSD, and their family members. Sometimes the most painful injuries aren't physical. Whether it's PTSD, TBI, combat stress, or any other mental health condition, we're here to help you get through it. The group will be facilitated by Jennifer Shumaker, Veteran and Olmsted County Veterans Service Officer.

Thursday, September 24

BY REGISTRATION ONLY

CALL or EMAIL to register

630pm-800pm

VFW

2775 43rd Street NW

Rochester, MN 55901

Jennifer Shumaker

(507) 328-6324

shumaker.jennifer@co.olmsted.mn.us



NAMIwalks

YOUR WAY

Southeast Minnesota

Saturday, September 26, 2020

Join the NAMI Southeast Minnesota mental health virtual walk to raise funds and awareness to help change perceptions about mental illness.



Register and Donate Today!
namiwalks.org/southeastminnesota

For more information contact:
Diana Evans, devans@namisemn.org, 507-287-1692
#notalone #mentalhealthforall #NAMISEMN

NATIONAL LEAD SPONSOR



NATIONAL PARTNERS



LOCAL MEETINGS

Some organizations have resumed meetings. Call each one respectively for more information.

Rochester American Legion Post 92

(507)282-1322
915 21st Ave SE
Rochester, MN 55904
3rd Tuesday of each month
7pm
Auxiliary Unit 92
3rd Tuesday of each month
5:30pm
Sons of the American Legion
2nd Thursday of each month
6PM
Legion Riders
3rd Thursday of each month
7pm

Rochester VFW Post Meeting

(507) 289-9818
2775 43rd St. NW
Rochester, MN 55901
2nd Tuesday of each Month VFW Post 1215
7pm
Marine Corps League
2nd Tuesday of each month
7pm

Byron American Legion Post 119

(507) 775-6871
505 Frontage Road NW, Byron, MN
3rd Monday of the month
6pm

Vietnam Veterans of America

(507) 990-1347
Meets 4th Monday each month
at 7:00pm,
Vietnam Veterans Spouse Support Group
Meets 4th Monday each month
At 7:00pm
Thor Detachment 606 Marine Corp League Meeting
4th Tuesday of the month, 7pm
MOPH
3rd Thursday of the month 6pm
VFW Post 1215
2775 43rd St NW, Rochester, MN 55901

Stewartville American Legion Post 164

(507) 533-9281
1100 2nd Ave NW, Stewartville
Meeting 3rd Monday each month, 7:30pm

Stewartville VFW Post 8980

(507) 533-9281
1100 2nd Ave NW, Stewartville
Meeting 1st Monday each month, 7pm

DAV Meeting

(507) 773-5055
1652 Hwy 52 N, Rochester, MN 55901
2nd Monday, of each Month Rochester's Elks Lodge
5:30pm dinner, meeting at 6:00pm

Korean Veterans

Every Monday at Grandmas Kitchen
1514 N Broadway, Rochester, MN 55906
(Silver lake plaza)
8 AM

Kasson American Legion Post 333

(507) 634-4353
212 West Main Street , Kasson, MN 55944
Third Thursday of the month, 8pm

Chatfield VFW Post 6913

(507) 867-3144
9- 2nd St SW, Chatfield, MN
2nd Monday of the month 7:00pm

Eyota American Legion Post 551

(507) 545-2688
2nd Monday each month 6:30pm
11 Madison Ave NW
Eyota, MN 55934
Legion Riders
4th Wednesday each month 7:30pm

Pine Island American Legion Post 184

(507)356-8991
108 1st Ave SE
Pine Island, MN
2nd Monday of the month 7PM

Oronoco VFW Post 9647

(507) 367-4635
5 MN Avenue S
Oronoco, MN 55960
First Tuesday of each month 7pm
Auxiliary meeting same time, separate meeting

Dodge Center American Legion Post 384

(507) 633-6420
401 Highway St W
Dodge Center, MN 55927
2nd Monday each month 7pm

“To promote the interests and welfare of veterans, their dependents and survivors and to enhance their quality of life through counseling, claims assistance, education, advocacy and special projects.”

Veteran Services
2100 Campus Drive
SE, Suite 200
Rochester, MN 55904

