

*Olmsted County
Veteran Services
Veterans Advocate Newsletter
December 2020*

Changes in Olmsted County Veteran Services!

The Veteran Services Office 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.

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

Nathan will be out of the office until around the end of January. Please contact Karen, Ashley, or Jennifer

Emails:

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

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

Service Officer: Ashley Laganriere, laganriere.ashley@co.olmsted.mn.us

Beat the Holiday Stress

The holiday season is a time of joy and celebration. But it can also be a source of stress for some people, especially those battling depression.

As you gear up for the holidays, do what you can to reduce stress. Here are some tips:

- Limit alcohol. Drinking more than usual can cause additional stress.
- Get plenty of sleep. Getting enough sleep helps you adapt to stress.
- Learn to say “No.” Doing too much can lead to emotional distress.
- Make some new traditions. Let someone else cook dinner, find a volunteer activity, or donate to a special cause in memory of a lost loved one.
- Get support when mourning a loved one. Talking to your friends and family about how you feel can be helpful.
- Exercise regularly. A quick, 10-minute walk increases heart rate and releases mood-boosting endorphins.
- Avoid overeating. Choose a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables.
- Postpone important life decisions until you feel better. If possible, discuss decisions with others who know you well.

Act Now: TRICARE Open Season Closes Dec. 14

TRICARE Open Season does not apply to TRICARE For Life (TFL). TFL coverage is automatic if you have Medicare Part A and Part B. It also does not apply to premium-based plans.

You can purchase these premium-based plans at any time:

TRICARE Reserve Select
TRICARE Retired Reserve
TRICARE Young Adult

Learn more about TRICARE Open Season at www.tricare.mil/openseason. Outside of open season, you may still be able to enroll in a new health plan if you experience a QLE. Learn more about QLEs at www.tricare.mil/lifeevents. «

Open season is here. If you choose to do so, you may make changes to your current health coverage. During TRICARE Open Season, you may enroll in a new plan or make changes to your current one **until Dec. 14. Enrollment choices will take effect on Jan. 1, 2021.**

TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for TRICARE Prime, including the US Family Health Plan, or TRICARE Select. TRICARE Open Season doesn't apply to active duty service members.

"Open season is an opportunity to review your plan and, if you choose to, make changes for the upcoming year," said Mark Ellis, chief of the Policy and Programs Section of the TRICARE Health Plan with the Defense Health Agency. "This opportunity is only available during open season or after a Qualifying Life Event."

If you're eligible to take part in open season, you have three choices:

Stay in your plan. If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health plan in 2021, you don't have to take any action. You'll continue in your current health plan as long as you're eligible. (**Note:** You have to take action if you're a Group A retiree enrolled in TRICARE Select to continue your current coverage. See "Don't Delay! Set Up Your TRICARE Select Enrollment Fees" on page 3.)

Enroll in a plan. If you're eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a health plan.

Change plans. If you're already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select, you can switch health plans and switch between individual and family enrollment. You can download the *TRICARE Plans Overview* at www.tricare.mil/publications to learn more about your choices in health plans.

If you choose to enroll in or change a health plan, you have three options:

By phone: Call Humana Military at **1-800-444-5445**.

By mail: Submit your enrollment form to your regional contractor. Find forms and mailing addresses online at www.tricare.mil/forms.

Online: Log in to milConnect at <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil> and click on "Benefits." Then click on "Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE)" from the menu. **Note:** If you only need to pay fees, don't use the BWE option.

Center for Grief Education and Support



ONGOING PROGRAMS

Please note that our groups have two different formats (Virtual = V or In-Person= IP).

NEWLY BEREAVED GROUP

A group for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one within the last year.

PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS

A group for those who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, at the time of birth or within the first month after birth.

DROP-IN TEEN DAYS

A group for teens grades 7-12 in a safe, creative space where they can share their story of loss.

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE GROUP

A group for those who have lost someone close to them through suicide.

COMMUNITY COVID GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

A virtual group for those who are grieving due to numerous losses experienced during the pandemic including, but not limited to, loss of job, housing, finances and social connection.

STEPPING STONES

A group for ages 65 and younger who have lost a spouse or significant other.

VETERANS LOSS & TRANSITION DISCUSSION GROUP

A discussion group led by veterans and CGES staff focusing on the challenges and transitions experienced by veterans.

PET LOSS GROUP

A group for those who have lost a pet through death.

YOUNG ADULT LOSS

A group for young adults who have experienced a recent death.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

ADULT GRIEF GROUP/YOUNG LOSS GRIEF GROUP

These ten-week groups provide a safe, confidential place to learn about the process of grieving and teaches practical coping strategies to manage the experience of accepting the reality of the loss. Offered in Spring, Fall and Winter.

NOTE: To register for our 10-week Winter Grief Group starting January 12th, please contact cges@seasonshospice.org or call 507-285-1930 by Friday, January 8th.

MOVING AHEAD: REBUILDING YOUR LIFE

When we lose a loved one, we find ways to accept the reality and gradually discover the extent of our losses. As our journeys continue, we begin to look at what we can rebuild for ourselves; what life holds for us. Registration is required.

MANAGING HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS

A virtual workshop providing an opportunity to explore the difficulties associated with mourning during special days and steps to manage those experiences. This workshop will be pre-recorded and available November 19 through December 31, 2020. Three separate discussion groups will be available on-line. For more information please contact cges@seasonshospice.org.

MEMORIES OF THE HEART

A virtual memorial service including candle lighting, music, reflections and a reading of the names being remembered. This event will be pre-recorded and will be available through the month of December. For more details call CGES at 507-285-1930 or e-mail cges@seasonshospice.org.

TREE OF MEMORIES

Located on the Seasons Hospice Administrative Office grounds. The tree will remain illuminated throughout the holiday season.

All grief group participants must be registered 24 hours in advance. To register or for more information please email cges@seasonshospice.org. Virtual (V) groups will be using Zoom and participants will receive a link or phone number after registering. In-person (IP) group participants must register, wear a mask, have temperature taken upon arrival and complete a questionnaire prior to each group. Individual counseling is available via phone or in-person by appointment.

We offer individual counseling by appointment. All sessions and groups are held at the Center for Grief Education and Support.

Center for Grief Education and Support

SEASONS HOSPICE

December 2020



Please note that our groups have two different formats (Virtual = V or In Person= IP). See below for details.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Newly Bereaved Group 6:30-8:30 p.m. (V) Newly Bereaved Group 6:30-8:30 p.m. (IP)	4	5
6	7 Veteran Loss & Transition Discussion Group 6:00-7:30 p.m. (IP)	8	9 Pet Loss Group 5:00-6:00 p.m. (V) Managing the Holidays Follow-up Discussion Group 3:00-4:30 p.m. (V)	10 Pregnancy & Infant Loss 6:30-8:00 p.m. (IP)	11	12
13	14 Stepping Stones 6:30-8:00 p.m. (V) Managing the Holidays Follow-up Discussion Group 7:00-8:30 p.m. (V)	15	16 Teen Drop-in 4:30-5:30 p.m. (IP) Survivors of Suicide 6:00-7:30 p.m. (IP)	17 Newly Bereaved Group 12:00-2:00 p.m. (IP)	18	19
20	21 Community COVID Grief Support Group 5:30-7:00 p.m. (V) Veteran Loss & Transition Discussion Group 6:00-7:30 p.m. (IP)	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



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.

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CANCELLED

Thursday, December 17

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

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) 289-6818
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

