



Olmsted County

Veteran Services

Olmsted County Veteran Services
2100 Campus Drive SE, STE 200
Rochester, MN 55904



VETERANS ADVOCATE

August 2016

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it has eliminated paper signature requirements for Veterans wishing to enroll in VA health care. Effective immediately, VA has amended its enrollment regulations to allow Veterans to complete enrollment applications for enrollment in VA health care by telephone without the need for a paper signature. This action also accelerates VA's effort to enroll all Combat Veterans with pending enrollments as part of its ongoing Veterans Enrollment Rework Project (VERP).

The VA added this telephone application option to VA's regulations with this amendment, VA will now offer **three** ways to enroll under 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 17.36(d) (1). This option provides Veterans a convenient enrollment option in addition to the paper VA Form 10-10 EZ <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/1010EZ-fillable.pdf> and the online health care application <https://www.vets.gov/healthcare/apply/> To apply, via phone, call 1-877-222-8387, Mon-Fri between 8 am and 8 pm, Eastern Standard Time (EST).

You may also stop into your county veterans service office, with a copy of your DD214 to enroll in VA healthcare. Olmsted County Veterans Service Office: 2100 Campus Drive SE, second floor, Rochester. Phone: (507) 328-6355

STAND★DOWN FOR VETERANS

AUGUST 2-3

TUESDAY: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

WEDNESDAY: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

(WELCOME CEREMONY TUESDAY AT 11:00 AM)

BOY SCOUT BASE CAMP

201 BLOOMINGTON ROAD, FORT SNELLING

FREE SERVICES AVAILABLE INCLUDE:

- MEALS
- VA BENEFITS
- CLOTHING
- HOUSING
- PUBLIC BENEFITS
- HAIRCUTS
- STATE DMV
- CHAPLAINCY
- EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
- MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

- STANDDOWN COURT & LEGAL CLINIC BOTH DAYS -

MILITARY SURPLUS ONLY FOR HOMELESS VETERANS IN SHELTER OR UNSHELTERED. BRING SHELTER OR OTHER VERIFICATION OF HOMELESS STATUS FOR FASTER REGISTRATION. PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR DD214 FOR FASTER REGISTRATION.

ALL VETERANS WELCOME!
CONTACT MACV FOR INFO
(612) 726-1327
(651) 330-4926



Olmsted County Veterans Services will be offering a van ride to and from this event, from Rochester, for those individuals interested.

Tuesday, August 2, and Wednesday August 3, 8am-4pm, The van can only take 6 veteran riders each day, this will be on a first come first served basis.

If you are interested, please call **507-328-6355** and ask to be put on the van list, for the stand down, on one of the listed dates.

Veterans Can Make Own Appointments for Routine Eye and Hearing Exams

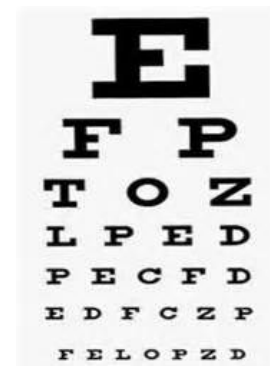
In an effort to improve access and reduce wait times, the Minneapolis VA Health Care System (Minneapolis VA) now offers “direct scheduling” for patients who need routine eye and ear exams. Veterans can now schedule an appointment two ways:

- After completing an appointment a Veteran can simply stop by and speak with a clerk at the clinic's front desk and request a routine eye or hearing exam.
- Veterans may also schedule an appointment by contacting the VA Call Center at: (612) 467-1100.

Routine eye exams include a Veteran who: has not been seen in the last two years for an eye exam; needs new glasses; has a family history of eye disease; needs a baseline exam due to a new medication; or needs a yearly exams for those with a history of diabetes.

Routine hearing exams include a Veteran who: has never had a hearing exam; may need new hearing aids; feels that his/her hearing may be slowly worsening; or needs a baseline exam due to a new medication.

In the past, Veterans required a referral from their primary care provider for routine eye or hearing exams.



The VA Benefits National Work Queue

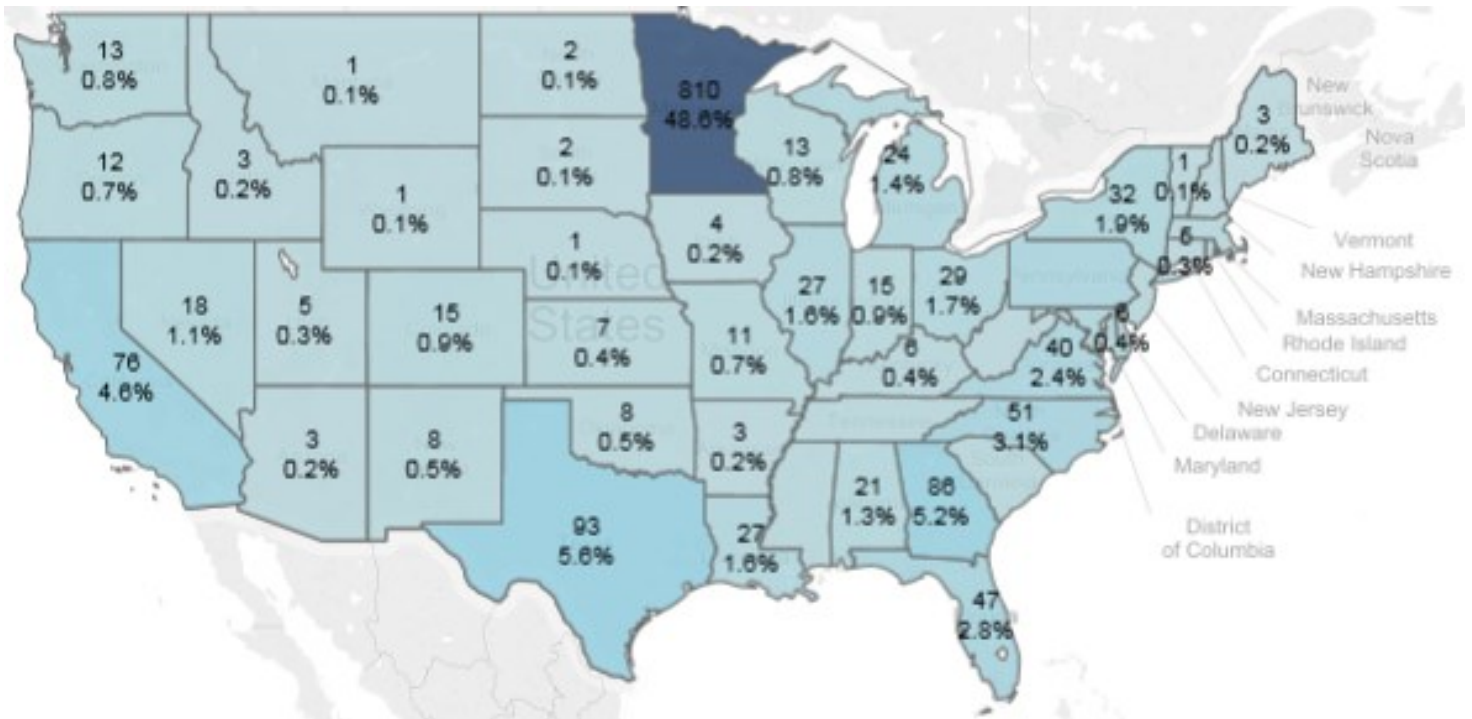
Geographic Distribution of Veterans' Claims

This contains information about the typical assignment of claims pending for Veterans who reside in Minnesota, under the National Work Queue (NWQ).

The following data presents a point-in-time view of the distribution of work.

NWQ distributes actionable work based on a series of criteria and priorities, factoring in each Regional Office's (RO's) capacity. Work is distributed across multiple phases of the adjudication process: initial development, supplemental development, rating, award, and authorization. Credit for completed work is given to the RO which authorizes the claim. In many cases, the RO that rates the claim will also complete the award and authorization phase. Work that is not completed is pulled back from the RO for redistribution.

Image 1 shows all rating claims pending with the St. Paul VSC as of July 6th, based the state of residence.



This graph shows which offices have jurisdiction of Minnesota rating claims as of July 6th, 2016. The stations which normally work Minnesota claims are the Fargo VSC, Milwaukee VSC, and special missions. Note that, while 1,331 claims were distributed on this date, the total number of claims pending for Minnesota Veterans was 5,093. The 3,762 additional claims which were not distributed were either not actionable, or did not meet the prioritization rules for this particular day.

Station	Total #	Total %	DEV #	DEV %	EVD #	EVD %	DEC #	DEC %	AWD #	AWD %	AUT #	AUT %
St. Paul VSC	810	60.8	96	48.2	479	61.9	205	71.4	23	38.3	7	63.6
Stations which normally work Minnesota Claims	255	19.2	42	21.1	141	18.2	53	18.5	16	26.7	3	27.3
Stations which do not normally work Minnesota Claims	266	20	61	30.7	154	19.9	29	10.1	21	35	1	9.1
Total Distributed	1,331	100	199	100	774	100	287	100	60	100	11	100

Image 2

DEV = pending initial development	AWD = ready for award processing
EVD = development letter sent	AUT = awaiting final authorization
DEC = ready for rating decision	

This graph shows where Minnesota rating claims were completed through July 6th, 2016. While there has been a slight increase in the percentage of cases worked by stations which normally do not work Minnesota claims, the amount is still small. Other Rating Offices may have completed individual phases of the claim.

Station	FYTD Pre-NWQ	FYTD Post-NWQ
St. Paul VSC	87%	85%
Stations which normally work Minnesota Claims	10.25%	10.5%
Stations which do not normally work Minnesota Claims	2.75%	4.5%

Finally, the Average Days to Complete from January to May of 2016 for rating claims with a Minnesota address was 98.2 days. This is the fifth lowest of any state, and much lower than the national average of 120.7 days. In addition, the Average Days Pending as of June 1, 2016 for rating claims with a Minnesota address was 76.1 days, which is significantly lower than the national average of 90.1 days.

This data demonstrates that, even though some Minnesota Veterans' cases are having some work completed at other stations, Minnesota Veterans are still receiving timely service.

**FREE
TO THE
PUBLIC**



**RAIN
OR
SHINE**

Support Our Disabled American Veterans
Mayo Southeast Minnesota Chapter 28

Cars/Trucks, Motorcycles, Big Rigs Show
– All Makes + Models Welcome! –

Sponsored by:
HILLER'S FLOORING AMERICA + ALLSTATE PETERBUILT

Olmsted County Fairgrounds - Rochester

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016 • 8 AM - 4 PM

Registration: \$10 • 8 am - 12 pm

LIVE Rock & Roll Music • Reunion Band - 12:00-2:30
Food Vendors • Job Fair on site: 10:00-2:00
Bring a chair and make a day of it!

21-GUN SALUTE RAFFLE AT 4 PM

••• Bucket Raffle Tickets sold day of show •••

– 23 Chances to WIN! –

1st: \$1,000 CASH

2nd: Diamond Pendant Necklace

3rd - 23rd: 21 guns (1 each)

ONLY
2500
TICKETS
SOLD

Other Prizes:

First 20 Participants: Gift bag - Andy's Liquor

First 100 Participants: Dash Plaques

Trophy's for top 3 in each class:
Cars/Trucks • Motorcycles • Big Rigs

(DAV not responsible for any loss or damage. All proceeds go to MN Disabled Vets)

FOR INFORMATION: Contact RICHDALYX5@GMAIL.COM

Echoes of War



Date: Monday, August 1-Friday, August 5, 2016

Location: Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Ave E, St. Paul, MN 55106

Echoes of War asks Veterans and members of the general public to consider how Americans *memorialize* war and military service in public, and how that relates to the way war gets *remembered* through the personal stories and life experiences of Veterans. As part of this project, the Humanities Center will host an immersive training retreat for ten Discussion Leaders who will be equipped to host rich conversations in their own communities and lead two public discussion series in Fall 2016.

Guided by outstanding scholars and leading voices from Minnesota's Veteran communities, the *Echoes of War* retreat will be an intensive, residential training program held at the Humanities Center. Over the course of five days, Discussion Leaders will spend time learning together, engaging with scholars and experienced trainers, and studying literary and theoretical texts about war. The workshop will prepare individuals to effectively engage adult audiences of Veterans and non-Veterans in public discourses on war, memory, and military experiences.

This Veterans' Voices programming is generously supported through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Legacy Amendment - Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Date: Tuesday, August 2

Time: 7-9 p.m.

Location: Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Ave E, St. Paul, MN 55106

Cost: Free and open to the public

Register here: <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ecvallg2f88a1ca3&oseq=&c=&ch=>

Communities across the United States remember the Vietnam War with tributes and memorials, but the stories they tell and the visitors they attract vary greatly. How does place influence the act of memorializing? And how do sites of collective memory align with the lived experiences of Veterans? More than 40 years later, memories of the Vietnam War are still visceral and the desire to pay tribute to them still immediate. Join the *Veterans' Voices* program for a lecture and facilitated discussion with Prof. Meredith Lair of George Mason University. Together, we will examine the legacies of the Vietnam War as they are memorialized in sites both prominent and overlooked.



August 23 & 24, 2016

Events at Kahler Apache
1517 16th St. SW,
Rochester MN

Kick-off Dinner Tuesday, August 23, 2016

Social at 5, Dinner at 6, presentation at 6:30

“The Music of Our Life”



Join us for dinner and an inspiring presentation by **Jeanie Brindley-Barnett**. Jeanie is a leading teaching artist in the field of Arts and Aging. Through singing and socialization, people find purpose, joy and a sense of belonging. Jeanie is the Music Director Giving Voice, a new chorus for those with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. In 2005, she created MacPhail Music for Life™ (MMFL), a pioneering music education program for older adults. As Co-Founder of MMFL with MacPhail Center for Music, she is the senior creative teaching artist.

Tickets are \$25 for the Kick-off Dinner event. Limited seating is available and tickets must be purchased in advance. Contact Elder Network at 507-285-5272 for tickets

EXPO - Wed., August 24, 2016 from 9 am to 3 pm

Providing education, support, resources and advocacy to
empower caregivers and those in their care.



Expo includes:

- **Speakers from 9 am - 3 pm** (such topics as: What to do until help arrives; GLBTQ in caregiving; Grieving; Senior Scams; Ease into Caregiving; Caregiving Struggles and Strategies; Caregiving Realization and Realities; Dealing with Common Caregiving Challenges; Nursing home/Assisted Living vs. In home care; Palliative Care and others), CEU's available for professional caregivers
- **Community Resources including Vendor Exhibits from 11 am - 3:30 pm** (vendors include Homecare agencies, hospice care, transportation services, chore services, Dementia services, legal assistance, home delivered meals, Falls prevention, Physical therapy, PCA services, Medical equipment and many others)
- and lots of **Caregiver Networking**

Tickets are only \$20 (Light breakfast and lunch included) and available at



**DOING THE
MOST GOOD**

115 NE 1st Ave., Rochester MN
507-288-5191
www.RochesterSA.org



115 NE 1st Ave., Rochester MN
507-285-5272
www.elder-network.org



4600 18th Ave. NW Rochester, MN
507-287-2010
www.familyservicerochester.org



PTSD Support Group for Veterans, Friends, and Family

SEMCIL and Olmsted County Veteran Services, are 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. Maybe you need to talk or just be in the company of your extended Veteran family. The support group will be a place for Veterans to share, heal and talk about their experiences in dealing with PTSD. We will be there for each other.

We are our brothers and sisters keepers because the oath we took to never leave a fallen comrade has no expiration date. For many of us, combat veterans, there are daily reminders of combat stress. The group will be facilitated by Jennifer Shumaker, Veteran and Olmsted County Veterans Service Officer.

Thursday, August 25, 2016

Thursday, September 29, 2016

Thursday, October 27, 2016

**6:30pm-8:30 p.m.
American Legion Post 92**

315 1st Ave NW,
Rochester, MN, 55901
Jennifer at 507-328-6324 or shumaker.jennifer@co.olmsted.mn.us



Olmsted County Veteran's Services

Vietnam War Era Commemoration

WHERE: Hastings Veterans Home, 1200 East 18th Street, Hastings, MN

WHEN: September 2, 2016

TIME: 6:30 PM

This invitation is extended to all Vietnam Era Veterans and those who want to welcome those HEROES Home.

POW/MIA Memorial dedication, Music, Vietnam War Veterans as speakers, Video presentations, refreshments and comradery after.

Come and enjoy time with your comrades.



Minnesota Veterans Home
Hastings

Free Legal Clinics in VA Facilities for Veterans

Minnesota Minneapolis VA Healthcare System

One Veterans Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55417
David Holewinski
LCSW
David.Holewinski@va.gov
Minnesota Assistance Council for
Veterans (MACV)
(651) 224-0292
Volunteer attorneys Any case type, but limited assistance
available with out-of-state legal issues.
Walk-ins only 2nd Tuesday of every
month, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.;

Minnesota Minneapolis CRRC

1201 Harmon Place,
Minneapolis, MN 55403
David Holewinski
LCSW
David.Holewinski@va.gov
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
(MACV)
651-200-4750
SSVF grantee All types of cases
Walk-ins accepted,
Appointments also accepted
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
every 1st and 3rd
Thursdays of the month

Other Upcoming Local Events

American Legion

3rd Tuesday of each month

315 First Ave NW

Rochester, MN 55901

7pm

Legion Riders

2nd Thursday of each month

7pm

Forty et eight at the American Legion

2nd Tuesday of each month

7pm

Military Order of the Purple Heart

3rd Thursday of each month

6pm

Gulf War Veterans 1st Monday of each month

7pm

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter # 1110

American Legion, 315 1st Ave N W, in

Rochester, Minnesota

4th Monday of the month at 7PM. If the 4th

Monday is a holiday, we meet the 3rd Monday

VFW Post Meeting

2nd Tuesday of each Month VFW Post 1215

16 6th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

7pm

DAV Meeting

2nd Monday, of each Month Rochester's Elks Lodge

1652 Hwy 52 N, Rochester, MN 55901

5:30pm dinner, meeting at 6:00pm

Korean War Veterans

Every Monday at Grandmas Kitchen

1514 N Broadway, Rochester, MN 55906

(Silver lake plaza)

7am

Marine Corp League Meeting

4th Tuesday of the month, 7pm, VFW Post 1215 16

6th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

POW/MIA Riders Association, Member Meeting

2nd Saturday of the month 11am-1pm, VFW Post

1215 16 6th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

Byron American Legion

505 Frontage Road W

Byron, MN 55920

3rd Monday of 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.”



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Suite 200
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