



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
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KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive  
Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Emergency Payments for Veterans & Beneficiaries Awaiting

### VA Educational Benefits

#### Van Transportation...

- \* **Don't drive** and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for *most morning* medical appointments.
- \* For more details call 270-2760.

#### \* NOTE:

IN ORDER TO ALLOW FOR ROUTINE MAINTENANCE OUR VANS WILL BE OFF-ROAD FROM DECEMBER 21ST THROUGH DECEMBER 25TH SERVICE WILL RESUME ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2009.

PEARL HARBOR  
REMEMBRANCE DAY

DECEMBER 7, 1941

-

DECEMBER 7, 2009

***ALWAYS REMEMBERED***

#### Background Information

##### **I have heard about education advanced payments. What are they?**

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has authorized advanced education payments up to \$3,000 for veterans who have applied for VA educational benefits and who have not yet received their monthly education payment as of October 2, 2009. **This is an advance payment of the veteran's housing and book allowance only, as the tuition payment will be paid to the school.**

#### Obtaining Payment

##### **How do I obtain an advance payment and what do I need to provide?**

Starting October 2<sup>nd</sup>, you may go to one of VA's 57 regional offices with a government issued photo ID (Driver's License, Military ID, etc.) and proof you are enrolled in school (class schedule, admission letter, enrollment verification letter, etc.) You will be required to sign for the payment upon receipt.

##### **What if I cannot make it to a Regional Office?**

Currently VA is only offering advance payments at one of our 57 offices, however we are looking at other alternatives.

##### **Can I receive more than one advance payment?**

This is a one-time advance payment, which will be recouped from future education payments. Only one payment is authorized per veteran, up to \$3000.

#### Payment Details

##### **I am a veteran, am I eligible for an advance payment?**

Yes, if you are currently enrolled in school under a VA education program.

List of VA Education Programs:

- Ch.33 - Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Ch.30 - Montgomery GI Bill
- Ch.1606 - Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve
- Ch.1607 - Reserve Education Assistance Program

##### **I am a dependent, am I eligible for an advance payment?**

No, payments are only available to veterans.

##### **If I received my education payment on October 1<sup>st</sup>, am I still eligible for a \$3000 advance payment?**

(Continued Page 2)

## VA Educations Benefits..... continued from page 1

No, advance payments are only authorized for veterans who did not receive a payment on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Will I have to pay this advance payment back to VA?

This payment will be recouped from future VA payments. However, if you stop attending school during the semester, recoupment by VA will not be possible and you will have to repay the advance payment.

### What if I want less than \$3000?

Veterans may chose to receive a payment less than \$3000, however, only one advance payment is authorized regardless of amount.

### Future Payments

#### When can I expect future payments?

After the advance payment is recouped, you can expect future payments at the beginning of each month, which will likely start in November.

#### How does this emergency payment affect my future education payments?

This payment will be recouped from future VA payments, however, if you stop attending school during the semester, recoupment by VA will not be possible and you will have to repay the advance payment. The exact recoupment amount will be determined once your education claim is processed.

### Additional Information

This is the latest information concerning the education advance payments. At this time, there is no additional information that can be provided or number to refer the claimant to for additional information. If a claimant needs more information, they should contact the National Call Center for updated information or visit the education website at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

Veterans may be eligible for [disability compensation](#) and [health care benefits](#) for diseases that VA has recognized as associated with exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides:

### **Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy**

### **AL Amyloidosis**

### **B Cell Leukemias\***

### **Chloracne**

### **Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia**

### **Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2)**

### **Hodgkin's Disease**

### **Ischemic Heart Disease\***

### **Multiple Myeloma**

### **Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma**

### **Parkinson's Disease\***

### **Porphyria Cutanea Tarda**

### **Prostate Cancer**

### **Respiratory Cancers**

### **Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or Mesothelioma)**

**\* New conditions added \***

## SOCIAL SECURITY SERVES THOSE WHO SERVE AMERICA

By Everett M. Lo

Social Security Administration's Regional Public Affairs Office in the New York Region

Each and every day of the year, Americans in the armed forces serve our nation. At Social Security, we honor our nation's military personnel and all of America's veterans not only on Veterans Day, but every day of the year.

In fact, military service members receive expedited processing of their disability applications from Social Security. Under an agreement initiated by Social Security, the Department of Defense transmits information that allows us to quickly identify military personnel injured in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

The expedited process is available for any military service member who becomes disabled during active duty on or after October 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs. Depending on the situation, some family members of military personnel also may be able to receive benefits, including dependent children and spouses.

If you, or someone you know, were wounded while on active duty in the military, find out more about what Social Security can do for you by visiting our website designed specifically for our wounded veterans: [www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors). There, you will find answers to a number of commonly asked questions, as well as other useful information about disability benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Please pay special attention to the fact sheets available on that website, *Disability Benefits for Wounded Warriors* and *Expediting Disability Applications for Wounded Warriors*.

You'll also find links to useful Veterans Affairs websites. There are links to information about the "Operation Enduring Freedom / Operation Iraqi Freedom Home," information on Survivors Benefits, the Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes, a fact sheet on Veterans benefits, and the Veterans On-Line Application, known as VONAPP.

Although the expedited service is relatively new, military personnel have been covered under Social Security since 1957. Even people in the service before 1957 may receive special credit for some of their service. People in the military are covered for the same Social Security survivors, disability and retirement benefits as everyone else.

A person's Social Security benefit depends on earnings, averaged over a lifetime. Generally, the higher your earnings, the higher your Social Security benefit. Under certain circumstances, special earnings can be credited from your military pay record for Social Security purposes. The extra earnings are for periods of active duty or active duty for training. These extra earnings may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit and are added to your earnings record when you apply for Social Security benefits.

To learn more about Social Security for people who have served in the military, read a copy of our publication, *Military Service and Social Security*. You can find it online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10017.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10017.html), or call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) to ask us to mail a free copy to you.

Each and every day, the brave men and women of our nation's armed forces serve us. Social Security salutes everyone who serves.

## A message from our County Executive

Happy Holidays and I am hopeful you have a healthy as well as happy holiday season! I would also ask that as we find ourselves celebrating the holidays in our homes we keep in mind those serving in our armed forces who will be unable to enjoy the comforts of home and the company of their friends and families this holiday season as they serve to protect our nation, and the freedoms we hold so dear. Let us keep them and their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers during this special season.

Sincerely,

Kathy Jimino

### RENSSELAER COUNTY HONOR-A-DECEASED VETERAN COMMITTEE

- HAVE A DECEASED LOVED ONE OR FRIEND WHO WAS A VETERAN ?
- WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE THEM HONORED IN A CEREMONY ?
- IF SO, PLEASE INQUIRE HERE OR CALL 270-2760.

#### REQUIREMENTS:

- MUST BE DISCHARGED UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE;
- MUST HAVE RESIDED IN RENSSELAER COUNTY AT SOME POINT DURING THEIR LIFETIME;
- MAY ONLY BE HONORED ONCE.

## A Message from our Director:

### *The Final Inspection*

*The soldier stood and faced God, which must always come to pass. He hoped his shoes were shining, just as brightly as his brass.*

*'Step forward now, you soldier, how shall I deal with you? Have you always turned the other cheek? To my church have you been true?'*

*The soldier squared his shoulders and said, 'No, Lord, I guess I ain't. Because those of us who carry guns, can't always be a saint.*

*I've had to work most Sundays, and at times my talk was tough. And sometimes*

*I've been violent, because the world is awful rough.*

*But, I never took a penny, that wasn't mine to keep...Though I worked a lot of overtime, when the bills got just too steep.*

*And I never passed a cry for help, though at times I shook with fear. And sometimes, God, forgive me, I've wept unmanly tears.*

*I know I don't deserve a place, among the people here. They never wanted me around, except to calm their fears.*

*If you've a place for me here, Lord, it*

*Needn't be so grand. I never expected or had too much, but if you don't, I'll understand.*

*There was a silence all around the throne, where the saints had often trod. As the soldier waited quietly, for the judgment of his God.*

*'Step forward now, you soldier, you've borne your burdens well. Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets, you've done your time in Hell.'*

*~Author unknown~*

*Happy Holidays to all....Bob*

## Upcoming Events:

December 7...Pearl Harbor remembered

December 14...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Alfred Curley, Army, WWII**

December 25...Christmas—**Office Closed**

December 21 – December 25...**no van transportation** (see front page)

January 1...Happy New Year— **Office Closed**

January 4... Van schedule resumes

January 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Ken Tremont, Navy, WWII**

January 18...Martin Luther King Jr. Day—**Office Closed**



Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .