



Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency

99 Troy Road  
East Greenbush, NY 12061

Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956  
www.rensco.com

# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Vol. 20, Issue 3  
May/June 2025

STEVEN F. McLAUGHLIN  
County Executive

CHRISTOPHER E. ALBERT  
Director

## WHAT IS VA PENSION

Pension is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime Veterans, who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible if:

- You were discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, **AND**
- You served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of wartime\*, **AND**
- Your countable income is below the maximum annual pension rate (MAPR), **AND**
- You meet the net worth limitations, **AND**
- You are age 65 or older, **OR**, you have a permanent and total non-service connected disability, **OR**, you are patient in a nursing home, **OR** you are receiving Social Security disability benefits.

\*Veterans who entered active duty after September 7, 1980, must also serve at least 24 months of active duty service. If the total length of service is less than 24 months, the Veteran must have completed their entire tour of active duty.

### HOW MUCH DOES VA PAY?

VA calculates annual pension by first determining for your particular circumstances that Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR), an amount set by Congress. For example, if you are a Veteran with no dependents, the MAPR is \$13,166. Next, VA determines your countable income. VA determines countable income by subtracting from your total income received in a particular 12-month period, the amount of those exclusions provided by law. VA subtracts your countable income from the MAPR; the difference is your annual pension entitlement. VA divides this amount by 12 and rounds down to the nearest dollar, this is the approximate amount of your monthly pension payment.

VA deducts certain expenses paid by you, e.g., unreimbursed medical expenses, from your annual household income, which will decrease your countable income and increase your monthly pension.

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the Albany VA Medical Center ?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the Albany VAMC for *most morning* medical appointments.
- \* For more details call 518-270-2760



### VETERANS CRISIS LINE

**DIAL 988**  
PRESS #1

Confidential chat at  
[VeteransCrisisLine.net/](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/)  
Chat or text to (838255)  
TTY service 1-800-799-4889

Confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for veterans and their loved ones.



## **NEW YORK STATE SILVER ROSE VETERANS SERVICE CERTIFICATE**

### **Description**

**The New York State Silver Rose Veterans Service Certificate recognizes New Yorkers who served in the Armed Forces and during their service were exposed to the dioxin or phenoxy herbicides, more commonly known as “Agent Orange.”**

**The New York State Legislature passed the law creating the Silver Rose Veterans Service Certificate in 2018 and it was signed into Law by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.**

**The Silver Rose Veterans Certificate honors the sacrifices of veterans who have suffered from the effects of tactical herbicides known collectively as Agent Orange. The New York State Silver Rose Certificate is available to current state citizens or individuals who were state citizens during the period when their exposure occurred and who are suffering from the toxic effects of these herbicides.**

**The New York State Silver Rose Certificate is an acknowledgement of their enormous sacrifice and a symbol of awareness of the dangers of Agent Orange.**

**In 1961, President John F. Kennedy authorized “Operation Ranch Hand,” the code name for the United States Air Force’s herbicide program in Vietnam. A number of herbicidal agents were used, including, most infamously, Agent Orange. Approximately 20 million gallons of the herbicide were used to help U.S. forces by defoliating forest areas that concealed the enemy and destroying the crops that provided their food. As many as 2.6 million U.S. service members were exposed to the chemical.**

**The Department of Veterans Affairs recognizes over 40 cancers and sicknesses, including diabetes, as Agent Orange related and service connected.**

**The Silver Rose has been adopted by some veterans groups as the symbol for veterans dealing with the impact of herbicide exposure incurred during their service. In creating this certificate the New York State Legislature honored this selection of a symbol by veterans.**

### **Eligibility**

**Veterans who have suffered from the effects of tactical herbicides such as Agent Orange are eligible to receive the New York State Silver Rose Veterans Service Certificate under the new law. The designation may also be awarded posthumously on behalf of the veteran to next of kin.**

**Awarding of the New York State Silver Rose Veterans Service Certificate does not provide the holder with any monetary benefits or disability compensation. The certificate is not recognized by the federal Veterans Administration as proof of exposure to toxic chemicals. It is simply an expression of support and appreciation from the New York State Legislature and the people of New York to veterans who have had their health adversely impacted by their exposure to herbicides as a result of honorable military service.**

**Must apply online: <https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/apply/silverrose/>**

**For additional NYS Military Awards and Decorations: <https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/>**



**MEMBERS OF THE  
NORTHEAST NY CHAPTER  
KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION**

**INVITE YOU TO ATTEND**

**75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION  
OF THE KOREAN WAR**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025, 11:00 A.M.**

**AT THE RENSSELAER COUNTY  
KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL  
RIVER STREET, TROY, NY**

**For further information please contact  
Marie Busher at 518-237-9367**

## **A Message from the County Veterans Director**

Spring is here and we can finally get out to enjoy the warmer weather. We have many events occurring and we are always looking for new ideas to help support and educate our Veterans.

I'd like to thank all of our Veterans, young and old, in every branch for their service and sacrifice to this great country. All our service members work to ensure we can peacefully live in the best country on earth. Our service members provide security for us here in the U.S. and for others all around the world. They ensure that we the people, have our constitution to guide us so we remain a strong, diverse, and free country.

We hope to see you at some of the upcoming events which are all listed on the Rensselaer County website under the Veterans Department (<https://www.rensco.com/348/Veterans>), Calendar of Events tab.

Thank you all for your service. Thank you, Rensselaer County, for always supporting Veterans.

Never Forget,

Christopher E. Albert

### **Upcoming Events:**

*Call us at (518) 270-2760 to have your event listed in the newsletter.*

May 12th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony, Legislative Chambers at 8:30am:

*Thomas M. Walsh, Sr. –NYARNG-Lt.Col.-Korean War Era & Vietnam Era*

May 17th...2nd Annual Col. Peter Goebel Memorial Golf Tournament, POC: Ned 518-378-9542

May 22nd... Melrose/Schaghticoke/Valley Falls/Johnsonville Memorial Day Parade, Line-up @ 6:15pm at Schaghticoke Fair Grounds, step off @ 7pm

May 23rd...Lansingburgh Veterans flag placement at 8am at St. John's Cemetery, volunteers needed

May 24th...Lansingburgh Veterans flag placement at 9am Oakwood Cemetery's Soldiers Plot

May 24th... East Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10 am

May 25th... Rensselaer Memorial Day Ceremony @ 1pm, Parade step off @ 2 pm

May 26th... MEMORIAL DAY—OFFICE CLOSED

May 26th... Sand Lake Memorial Day Parade, step-off @ 10am

May 26th... Hoosick Falls Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10am

May 26th... Castleton Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10am

May 26th... Berlin Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 11am

May 26th... Poestenkill Memorial Day Parade @ 11am

May 26th... North Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 1:00 pm

May 26th... Nassau Memorial Day Parade @ 2pm

June 5th-8th...The Wall That Heals at LaSalle Institute: [www.TheWallThatHealsTroy2025.org](http://www.TheWallThatHealsTroy2025.org)

June 9th... Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony, Legislative Chambers at 8:30am:

*William R. McDonough—USA- Sgt.- Korean War*

June 19th... Juneteenth- OFFICE CLOSED

June 25th...75th Anniversary Commemoration of the Korean War at the Korean War Memorial in Troy River Front Park at 11 am.