



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

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County Executive

PETER K. GOEBEL  
Director

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Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
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Www.rensco.com

## Eligibility for VA health care

### Am I eligible for VA health care benefits?

You may be eligible for VA health care benefits if you served in the active military, naval, or air service and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge.

● If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, you must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which you were called to active duty, unless any of the descriptions below are true for you.

This minimum duty requirement may not apply if any of these are true:

- You were discharged for a disability that was caused—or made worse—by your active-duty service, or
- You were discharged for a hardship or “early out,” or
- You served prior to September 7, 1980

● If you're a current or former member of the Reserves or National Guard, you must have been called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty. If you had or have active-duty status for training purposes only, you don't qualify for VA health care.

### Is there anything that will make me more likely to get these benefits?

Yes. You may qualify for enhanced eligibility status (meaning you'll be placed in a higher priority group, which makes you more likely to get benefits) if you meet at least one of these requirements.

At least one of these must be true:

- You receive financial compensation (payments) from VA for a service-connected disability
- You were discharged for a disability resulting from something that happened to you in the line of duty
- You were discharged for a disability that got worse in the line of duty
- You're a recently discharged combat Veteran

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### 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:  
270-2760.



### VETERANS CRISIS LINE

1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

\*\*Confidential chat at Veterans CrisisLine.net 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.

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- You get a VA pension
- You're a former prisoner of war (POW)
- You have received a Purple Heart
- You have received a Medal of Honor
- You get (or qualify for) Medicaid benefits
- You served in Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975
- You served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War between August 2, 1990 - November 11, 1998
- You served at least 30 days at Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953-December 31, 1987

If none of the above apply to you, you may still qualify for care based on your income. Learn more about how the amount of money your family makes can affect whether you qualify for VA benefits. Learn more about income limits at [https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/annual\\_income\\_limits\\_health\\_benefits.asp](https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/annual_income_limits_health_benefits.asp)

### Commissary and exchange privileges for Veterans

#### Am I eligible for commissary and exchange privileges?

In the U.S., you may be eligible for commissary and exchange privileges if you meet one of the requirements listed below.

If you're a Veteran or service member, one of these must be true. You:

- Have a service-connected disability rating and were honorably discharged, or
- Are retired from military service, or
- Are a former prisoner of war, or
- Are a member of the Reserves, or
- Have received a Purple Heart or the Medal of Honor

If you're a family member, one of these must describe you. You're the:

- Surviving spouse of a service member (if you haven't remarried), or
- Primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran (recognized under the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers), or
- Dependent or survivor of an eligible service member, or
- Dependent of an eligible member of the Reserves

Overseas commissary privileges vary from country to country.

#### Do I need to apply for commissary and exchange privileges?

You don't need to apply, but you'll need to have the right kind of ID at checkout. You can show your Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) or a letter from VA along with your passport or driver's license.

If you have questions, you can call 800-827-1000. Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET.

## Upcoming Events:

October 10th...**COLUMBUS DAY—OFFICE CLOSED**

October 11th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m.,

*Robert E. Miller—USA, Pvt.-Vietnam Era*

November 6th...23rd Annual Veterans Breakfast at Melvin Roads A.L. Post from 8:00am-10:00am, more info call 518-270-2760

November 8th...**ELECTION DAY—OFFICE CLOSED**

November 11th...**VETERANS DAY—OFFICE CLOSED**

November 11th...Annual Memory Walk in Troy, 9am at Monument Square

November 12th... Veterans of Stephentown Veterans Day Celebration at the Stephentown Memorial Park at 11am

November 14th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., .....TBA

### HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED A SALUTE TO VETERANS



**23rd ANNUAL VETERANS BREAKFAST**  
Sunday, November 6, 2022 8:00 am– 10:00 am



Free to all Veterans & Immediate Family Members at the

**Melvin Roads American Legion Post #1231, 200 Columbia Tpk., Rensselaer, New York**

**Sponsored by County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin and the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency**

**For more information on how to purchase an ad in our booklet or to donate, please call (518) 270-2760**

### A Message From the Veterans Service Agency Director

As the weather begins to cool down, enjoy our last remaining weeks of warm weather. After the Schaghticoke Fair, it will soon be time for our Veterans Day activities. Pencil in the date of 6 November for the 23rd Annual County Veterans Breakfast.

I encourage all Veterans to join all the Posts which they are eligible for. Our cumulative efforts will pay off to help those Veterans who are not as well off as others. Join to help other Veterans and yourselves.

All Veterans should have their DD-214's or discharge documents registered at the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency and/or the Rensselaer County Clerk's Office. Honorably Discharged Veterans can get their Return the F.A.V.O.R. Card at the County Clerk's Office at 105 Third Street, Troy, New York, when they file their DD-214's. If you or your family ever need your DD-214, you will then have it on file in our office, if you filed it with us. If you don't file it with our office or the County Clerks Office, then neither office will have it on file. Don't be caught without it. Fill out the Pre-Need Burial Form (VA Form 40-10007), if you want to be buried at Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.

Everyone at your Posts and every Veteran out there should know at least one Veteran that the Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Committee can remember in the monthly poignant ceremony and each Post should also contact the Rensselaer County Legislature to honor our living Veterans at (518) 270-2880 or email: [Renscoleg@rensco.com](mailto:Renscoleg@rensco.com).

Enjoy your autumn and do all that you can to help our Veterans. Join us to preserve the rights of Veterans that others are trying to take away and join us to support each other as only we can.

I hope to see everyone at the Great Schaghticoke Fair.

Yours in Patriotism,  
*Peter K. Goebel*



## HONOR-A-DECEASED VETERAN CEREMONY

Every second Monday of the month, Rensselaer County honors a deceased veteran in a very moving and respectful ceremony in the County Legislative Chambers.

If you have a loved one who was a veteran from Rensselaer County and would like to have them honored, please contact the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency at 270-2760 for an application.

The following criteria applies to the honorees:

- Must have personal tie to Rensselaer County (born, raised, or resided in);
- Must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and discharge must accompany application;
- Copy of obituary must accompany application;
- May only be honored once;
- Submitted applications must be legible and have a family contact (name, address and telephone number);
- List of all medals, campaigns, and battles;
- Include civilian history (all community services and organizations);
- Be as detailed as possible, the entire ceremony is dedicated to this one particular veteran and it is their life story;
- Completed applications and supporting info must be turned into:

*Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency, 1600 Seventh Avenue, Troy, New York 12180*

For an application , please call us at 518-270-2760 or download an application at [www.rensco.com](http://www.rensco.com)

### VETERANS HALL - OPEN HOUSE SCHAGHTICOKE FAIRGROUNDS SEPT 24, 2022 10:00-2:00

*Veterans Hall Honors All Veterans Past and Present.* This building is located on the *Schaghticoke Fairgrounds* and is comprised of a group of volunteers who feel passionate about thanking our veterans. Many have visited Veterans Hall during the fair or have come to an Open House to pay tribute to our veterans.

Everyone knows and loves a veteran, and many come to share that connection. Some come to see a picture, a clipping or perhaps an item donated by family or a friend of a veteran that served our country. In addition we are compiling a list of veteran's names from Rensselaer, Saratoga, Albany, Washington, and surrounding counties. Getting your veteran's name on the list is free, easy and a good way to ensure his/her service will be remembered. A form can be obtained by contacting Lorraine at 518-753-6936 or Jody 518-859-2988.

We also have a *Buy a Brick Program* to purchase engraved bricks to honor veterans for \$35.00. A form can be obtained by contacting Lorraine at 518-753-6936 or Jody at 518-859-2988. Parking is available next to the Veterans Hall building for Open Houses. Thank you for your service!

### MILITARY AWARDS & MEDALS

- NEVER RECEIVED YOUR MILITARY AWARDS & MEDALS?
- HAVE YOU MISPLACED OR LOST THEM?
- DO YOU HAVE A LOVED ONE WHO IS A VETERAN AND THEY DO NOT HAVE THEIR MEDALS?
- WOULD YOU LIKE TO REQUEST THEM?

CALL THE RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY at (518) 270-2760