

## Veteran Information and Resources

- **United States Department of Veterans Affairs – [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)**
  - Overall benefits – 1-800-827-1000 - Health care benefits – 1-877-222-8387
  - Crisis counseling/suicide prevention – 1-800-273-8255 or [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
- Typically, veterans eligibility for depend on:
  - Type of discharge
  - Length of service (enlisted – started before 9/8/1980; officer – started before 10/17/81 = there is no length of service required) Otherwise, 24 months of continuous service is required (with a few exceptions)
  - Income level
- Services that can be offered:
  - Readjustment counseling
  - Substance abuse
  - Employment counseling
  - Marital and family counseling
  - Bereavement counseling
  - And many more
- **National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)**
- **Realifelines Advisor (Department of Labor) – [www.dol.gov/elaws/vets/realifelines/menu.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vets/realifelines/menu.htm)**
- **Georgia Department of Veteran Services – [www.sdvs.georgia.gov](http://www.sdvs.georgia.gov) or 404-656-2300**
- **Fallen Heroes Family Foundation** - Possible resource for staff/family who have had loved ones killed/injured in the military. The Fallen Heroes Family Foundation is a 501(3)(c) support system founded by a Pike County lady who lost her son in Afganastan.Wesite : [www.fallenheroes-familyfoundation.org](http://www.fallenheroes-familyfoundation.org).
- **American Red Cross - [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) – 1-800-733-2767**

### **Assistance to Veterans - Financial Assistance**

The American Red Cross works under partnership agreements with the Air Force Aid Society, Army Emergency Relief, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to provide quality, reliable financial assistance to eligible applicants 24/7/365. Types of assistance include financial assistance for emergency travel, burial of a loved one, assistance to avoid privation, etc.

In FY 08, the Red Cross, in partnership with the military aid societies, facilitated access to more than \$5.8 million in financial aid to more than 5,000 service members, their military dependents, retired military personnel and widows of retired military personnel.

### **Holiday Mail for Heroes is back!**

In this season of hope and giving the American Red Cross and Pitney Bowes, Inc. have joined forces to invite Americans to “send a touch of home” to United States service members and veterans across the country and abroad. In its third year, the Holiday Mail for Heroes program is an opportunity to share joy and thanks with our service members throughout the holiday season by way of a greeting card.

### **Service for Veterans**

For information and assistance, veterans and their families should contact their local Red Cross chapters, which are listed in local telephone books and can be found at Your Local Red Cross.

### **Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services**

Red Cross volunteer services to U.S. veterans date back to World War I and are consistent with the mission of its congressional charter. Today, the Red Cross is proud to maintain its commitment to the sick and disabled men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

### **Your Opportunity to Serve—and Say “Thanks” – How You Can Help**

Volunteers from Red Cross chapters and Red Cross offices on military installations serve in 153 VA hospitals around the nation. It is their way of saying thank-you to that special group of men and women who answered their country's call and who are now cared for each day in VA medical centers. The opportunities for volunteers to meet the great needs in these centers include:

- Transporting patients to and from treatment sessions
- Working in libraries, bringing magazines, books, and comfort items to patients
- Providing companionship and personal services to patients
- Working in hospital offices, laboratories and at information desks
- Raising funds to support veterans' activities and material needs
- \* Participating in outreach opportunities in community-based outpatient clinics, nursing homes and home visitations

Both youth and adults can volunteer on a regularly scheduled basis or on an occasional basis working on special projects. Youth volunteers are especially welcome and are offered the same opportunities as adults. Regardless of how one serves, being able to reach out to these men and women has special rewards.

## Veteran information and resources (continued):

- **Red Cross (continued)**

### **Veterans Claims for Benefits**

The Red Cross provides assistance and information in preparing, developing, and obtaining sufficient evidence to support applicants' claims for veterans' benefits and also assists claimants who seek to appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA). Red Cross staff at the BVA and a network of State Work-Share Representatives who are accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs work on behalf of the Red Cross to assist claimants.

- **Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center** – 1-866-436-6290 (toll free, 24 hours a day)

Who do we help? We help all members of the Army Reserve Community deal with the challenges we face every day. When you call on us for help, we become partners with you in finding solutions. Our Partners are:

- All Army Reserve Soldiers, whether they drill in a unit, are assigned as Active Guard and Reserve or Individual Mobilization Augmentees, or belong to the Individual Ready Reserve.
- Veterans who served with the Army Reserve.
- Retirees from the Army Reserve.
- The Families of all these Army Reserve Soldiers, past and present

Maybe you have a question about how the military is supposed to work and don't know who to call for an answer? Maybe a situation related to your military service is causing a difficulty for you or your Family? The Warrior and Family Assistance Center is here to help you. The kinds of issues we can help you with include: Medical Care, Military and VA Benefits, Personnel Actions, Financial Difficulties, Individual and Family Counseling  
Call us whenever you have a question about something that is important to you as a member of the Army Reserve Community.

Someone is available on our toll-free phone line **1-866-436-6290** 24 hours a day.

You can also contact us via email at [ar-wfac@usar.army.mil](mailto:ar-wfac@usar.army.mil).



- **Operation: Military Kids** <http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx> is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with America's communities to support the children and youth impacted by deployment. This initiative was officially launched in April 2005. Since its inception OMK has touched **88,000 military youth** and provided information to **21,009 community members** across the United States.
- **Operation Homefront** - [www.operationhomefront.net](http://www.operationhomefront.net)  
Operation Homefront provides emergency assistance and morale to our troops, to the families they leave behind, and to wounded warriors when they return home.
- Gown Offer - Operation Homefront Georgia is proud to announce a partnership with Alfred Angelo, one of the world's premier gown designers. Alfred Angelo graciously donated over 300 beautiful bridal gowns for gifting to military brides to be. If you are interested or know someone who is, please send us an email or faxed one page essay on why a donation of a beautiful gown would make your dream day complete. Email us at [georgia@operationhomefront.net](mailto:georgia@operationhomefront.net) or fax to 1-866-412-0774.

Recipients agree to wear the gown they've selected and not transfer ownership either by sale, donation or gift for six months after receipt. Gowns vary in size, color and style. For a complete list of gowns available, please call our office at 1-800-390-2115 and request the dress packet.

- **Army Emergency Relief**

(866) 878-6378

[www.aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org)

Army Emergency Relief offers financial counseling and assistance via grants and loans for emergency housing, food, medical assistance and other essentials. It is usually handled via the local or base Army Emergency Relief officer. They also offer scholarship programs. Army Emergency Relief - is a private nonprofit organization incorporated in 1942 by the Secretary of War and the Army Chief of Staff - AER's sole mission is to help soldiers and their dependents. AER is the Army's own emergency financial assistance organization and is dedicated to "Helping the Army Take Care of Its Own". AER provides commanders a valuable asset in accomplishing their basic command responsibility for the morale and welfare of soldiers. AER funds are made available to commanders having AER Sections to provide emergency financial assistance to soldiers - active & retired - and their dependents when there is a valid need. AER funds made available to commanders are not limited and are constrained only by the requirement of valid need. For these reasons, the AER assistance program is conducted within the Army structure by major commanders and their installation/organization commanders through AER sections and other related organizations.

## **Veteran information and resources (continued):**

- **Give An Hour** - [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org)

Give an Hour™ is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), founded in September 2005 by Dr. Barbara Van Dahlen, a psychologist in the Washington, D.C., area. The organization's mission is to develop national networks of volunteers capable of responding to both acute and chronic conditions that arise within our society.

Currently, GAH is dedicated to meeting the mental health needs of the troops and families affected by the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We provide counseling to individuals, couples and families, and children and adolescents. We offer treatment for anxiety, depression, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries, sexual health and intimacy concerns, and loss and grieving. . We understand that individuals who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan--and their families--may need help dealing with the effects of wartime service. We want to help you heal and offer a variety of mental health services to address your needs. We are a nonprofit organization providing free mental health services to U.S. military personnel and families affected by the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We are offering a range of mental health services in order to address a variety of needs for those of you seeking services. We are also providing links to a variety of resources for military families, including articles that discuss the kinds of difficulties military families encounter and services available from national, state, and local organizations.

- **Veteran-to-Veteran Peer Counseling**

1-877-VET2VET

- **Nat'l Veterans Foundation Help Line**

1-888-777-4443 (M-F 9-9 Pacific)

- **VA Suicide Hotline**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

- **Suicide Hotlines**

1-888-649-1366

1-800-SUICIDE

1-800-784-2433

- **Suicide Help Online**

<http://www.hopeline.com>

<http://www.spanusa.org>

- **Veterans of the Vietnam War**

1-800-843-8626

- VA Office of the Inspector General

Report Suspected Wrongdoing in VA Programs and Operations Call the OIG Hotline – (800) 488-8244

- **Veterans' Heart** – <http://www.veteransheartgeorgia.org>

On Veterans' Day, 2007, a small group of Veterans and therapists gathered around a table and committed to establishing an organization devoted to healing PTSD, the invisible wound of war.

Veteran's Heart Georgia fosters the healing of veterans of all wars by attending to the spiritual and emotional needs of veterans, their families and our communities. We are addressing the effects of war by creating a community-based network of services, resources and education. This network includes: consultation with specially trained counselors and mental health clinicians for veterans and families; workshops and programs for veterans, couples and families, community gatherings and training for professionals; outreach and mentoring by trained, seasoned veterans; community education and involvement.

- <http://www.veteranlove.com> – Veteran Love and Appreciation Inc.

Veteran Love and Appreciation Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3), exists to provide direct services to our severely wounded and disabled men and women who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

- **USA Together** – <https://app01.usatogether.org/>

How it works - USA Together brings together injured service members who need assistance and the people who want to help them.

## **Veteran information and resources (continued):**

- **Armed Forces Relief Trust**  
[www.afrtrust.org/](http://www.afrtrust.org/)  
This is the main Web site for collecting donations for Military relief organizations.
- **Coast Guard Mutual Assistance**  
(800) 881-2462  
[www.cgmahq.org/](http://www.cgmahq.org/)  
The Coast Guard Mutual Assistance program offers financial counseling and assistance via grants and loans for emergency housing, food, medical assistance and other essentials.
- **Navy Marine Corps Relief Society**  
<http://www.nmcrs.org/about.html>  
Navy Marine Corps Relief Society offers financial counseling and assistance via grants and loans for emergency housing, food, medical assistance and other essentials. Please contact the nearest office for assistance.
- **Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) – [www.esgr.org](http://www.esgr.org)**  
  
ESGR Mission: Gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve as defined by demonstrated employer commitment to employee military service.
- **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) – [www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm)**  
  
The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) Advisor helps Veterans understand employee eligibility and job entitlements, employer obligations, benefits and remedies under the Act. The law is intended to encourage non-career uniformed service so that America can enjoy the protection of those services, staffed by qualified people, while maintaining a balance with the needs of private and public employers who also depend on these same individuals.
- **The Association of the United States Army Family Programs Update – [www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org) – then select “family programs”**  
  
AUSA's Family Programs Directorate works on behalf of Army families through installation visits, information gathering, supporting family readiness activities and hosting Military Family Forums.
- **Reserve Component Members – [www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/)**  
  
When on military duty, RC members are covered for any injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, including traveling to and from military duty, under line-of-duty procedures. Medical coverage (direct care at the MTF) is available when the member is activated. When ordered to active duty for more than 30 consecutive days, RC members have comprehensive health care coverage under TRICARE.
- **The Unmet Needs Program – [www.unmetneeds.com/ApplyforAssistance.aspx](http://www.unmetneeds.com/ApplyforAssistance.aspx)**  
  
The Unmet Needs Program is intended to provide funds in the form of grants (not loans) to families of members of the military that have deployed in support of the War on Terrorism. Although the families of Active Duty military are not excluded and may apply, this program and money primarily is intended for the families of deployed Reserve and National Guard where less family support and assistance structure exists.

- **Possible Enhanced Education Benefits**

Many Department of Corrections employees will be eligible for enhanced education benefits and programs on their return from the Iraqi Theater of Operations. The Department of Veterans' Service (DVA) Regional Processing Office in Atlanta has begun processing education claims under the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), Chapter 1607. Eligible veterans can now submit their applications and supporting documents for Chapter 1607 claims. VA has a large number of pending REAP claims, so please be patient while they work through their current inventory. Veterans with eligibility who has never applied for benefits should start the application process by completing VA Form 22-1990, Application for VA Education Benefits.

Complete as instructions indicate, but with two modifications. Item 1, C. of the referenced form should be modified to read 1607 where it currently reflects 1606. In item 31, Remarks, of this form, an entry should be placed that reads, "This is a Chapter 1607 Education Claim." A copy of the document ordering the claimant to active duty, and indicating the period of active duty, to include a DD Form 214, must be attached. For applicants who have previously used education benefits and are using VA Form 22-1995 to apply, write "This is a Chapter 1607 Claim" at the top of the form. For VA to concentrate on implementing the processing of 1607 claims under REAP, they will need your assistance. Please allow them time to work the cases before contacting the RPO. If you must contact the RPO with a veteran specific REAP question, please use their Internet site at [www.GIBILL.va.gov](http://www.GIBILL.va.gov) to ask your question. For additional information, veterans are encouraged to check with the VA website at: <http://www.va.gov/>. A list of questions and answers concerning Chapter 1607 benefits is attached that may be helpful. You may also call VA toll free number 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) or visit any VA Regional Office. Call the Department of Veterans Service, Education and Training if you have questions. (404)656-2306/2322.