



ACTION CORPS WEEKLY



August 23, 2021



Message from VFW National Commander to

Veterans on Afghanistan: With the recent turn of events in Afghanistan, the VFW wants the veterans of the war in Afghanistan to know we stand with you. Scores of VFW members know the anger, frustration, and sadness you are experiencing after hearing the troubling reports and seeing the disturbing images coming from lands where we sacrificed so much. Your service was not in vain. While we continue to watch events unfold in Afghanistan, we remind our brothers and sisters that we are beside you, arm-in-arm, ready to support you. You are not alone. [Read National Commander Mihelcic's statement.](#)



Veteran Mental Health Support Resources:

Through the VFW, VA, and other non-profit organizations, there are people you can talk to and resources available to help you cope during stressful times. VFW partner, [Give an Hour](#), provides free mental health counseling for veterans and their families. All 166 VA Medical Centers offer [same-day mental health services](#) through in-person appointments, telephone calls, VA video connect, or secure messaging. [Vet Centers](#) provide counseling and other services for eligible veterans and their families. The Veteran Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone (1.800.273.8255, press 1), text (838255), or online chat by visiting [VeteransCrisisLine.net](#). Simply contacting a comrade, friend, or battle buddy to talk can also be helpful in managing stress and coping with difficult situations.



Certain Veterans May Be Eligible for Education

Benefit Refunds: VA is looking for certain veterans who may be eligible for refunds from the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP). VA estimates 115,000 veterans may be entitled to a refund of this benefit. Eligible veterans must have entered active duty between Jan. 1, 1977 to June 30, 1985; completed their first period of service; contributed to VEAP while on active duty and before April 1, 1987; have unused contributions; and not have been dishonorably discharged. If you have unused VEAP funds, you should submit VA Form 22-5281 after completing sections 1-6, 14, 15, and 18. It will take 3-4 weeks to receive a response and/or refund via U.S. Treasury check. If you are unsure if you are eligible for a refund or whether you participated in VEAP, call the Education Call Center at 1.888.442.4551 domestically or 001.918.781.5678 overseas, Monday through Friday, 7:00a.m.–6:00p.m. Central Time.



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has not announced any new identifications or burial updates this past week.

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As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to vfwac@vfw.org.