



ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY

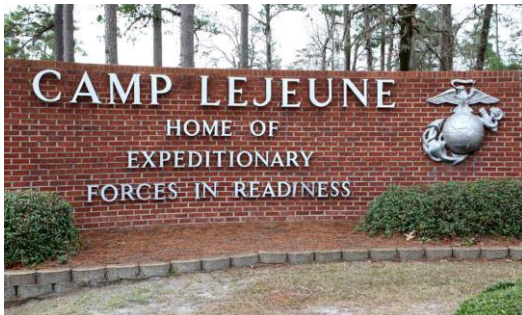


* The next edition will be on Monday, December 4, 2023. We wish you a Happy Thanksgiving! *

November 20, 2023



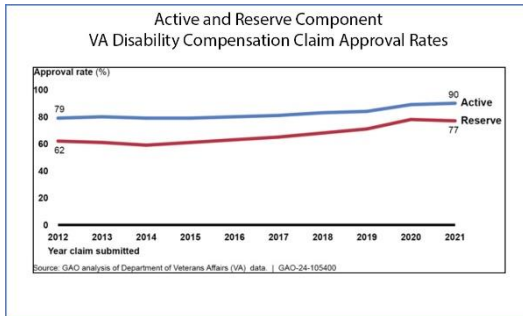
Fight Against Claim Sharks: The VFW was joined by congressional lawmakers, representatives from veteran organizations, and veteran advocates for a press conference warning veterans and survivors about the dangers of pay-to-play claims consulting companies, known as “Claim Sharks.” Some Claim Sharks offer high-priced assistance and suspect medical advice on VA claims without following the well-established professional and ethical standards of accreditation. No veteran should pay excessive and unregulated fees to access their earned VA benefits. VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci stated, “We’re not going to stop in this [fight] because these are illicit organizations. What they are doing is illegal.” He added, “Even if you legalize these activities, it doesn’t do anything about the fraud. Our goal is to make sure that not another veteran falls victim to their scams.” [Get the facts](#) or [watch the video](#).



Certain Health Care Costs Covered for Camp Lejeune Families: Families of veterans exposed to contaminated drinking water at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune are now eligible for reimbursement of health care costs associated with Parkinson’s disease in addition to the list of serious health conditions currently covered. [Learn more or apply](#) for health care reimbursement under VA’s Camp Lejeune Family Member Program. To apply for disability benefits related to Camp Lejeune, [find a VFW Accredited Service Officer](#) in your area.



VA National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report: VA has released its 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report. This is the largest national analysis of veteran suicides through 2021. The report shows 6,392 veterans died by suicide that year, which is 114 more than in 2020. The first full year of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 led to greater financial strain, housing instability, anxiety and depression levels, and barriers to health care. All of these factors are known to be associated with an increased risk of suicide for veterans and non-veterans alike. This report is a peer-reviewed publication that is based on verified data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and DOD. [Read the report.](#)



Reserve Component Compensation Challenges: Recently published data revealed a disparity in the approval of disability compensation claims between National Guard/ Reserve and active duty component members. The Government Accountability Office recommends that VA should implement guidance informing reservists about the importance of reporting medical conditions in real time as related to claims for disability compensation. [Read more.](#)



Bring Christmas Joy Through Toys for Tots: Since 1947, Marine Toys for Tots has been bringing the joy of Christmas to America's less-fortunate children and fostering community engagement. Every holiday season, new unwrapped toys are distributed to children in need. Donated items may be dropped off at designated locations, or you may make a virtual donation. [Learn more.](#)



Holiday Overseas Mail Deadlines Approaching:

The U.S. Postal Service is preparing for the holiday season as many families spend holidays apart due to military service. In order to ensure overseas packages are delivered before Dec. 25, it has provided the following deadlines: **Dec. 9** for all Air/Army Post Office (APO), Fleet Post Office (FPO) and Diplomatic Post Office (DPO) addresses with AE zip codes using Priority Mail and First-Class Mail; and **Dec. 15** for APO/FPO/DPO addresses using USPS Priority Mail Express (excluding zip 093). The Postal Service offers a free [military care kit](#) to ship items. [Read more.](#)



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced three burial updates for service members who have been missing and unaccounted for from World War II and the Korean War. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

--**Army Pfc. Clinton E. Smith Jr., 19**, of Wichita Falls, Texas, was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. He was killed in action on January 14, 1945. He will be buried in San Antonio, Texas, on Nov. 27, 2023. [Read about Smith.](#)

--**Army Air Force Pfc. Henry J. McConnell, 28**, of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, was assigned to the 2nd Observation Squadron. He died while a prisoner of war on July 26, 1942. He will be buried in his hometown on Nov. 30, 2023. [Read about McConnell.](#)

--**Army Cpl. William J. Herrington, 19**, of Alliance, Ohio, was a member of Dog Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death on Dec. 31, 1953. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Virginia, in July 2024. [Read about Herrington.](#)

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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.