

As measures unfold across Allegheny County and the State of Pennsylvania to help prevent further spread of the COVID-19 virus, the military and veterans community in the Greater Pittsburgh Region wanted to take a moment and provide an update on what is happening within our veterans and military communities.

This document is provided as a resource for the community, but does not speak on behalf of, or represent any agency listed hereinafter.

Federal Updates:

Veterans Health Administration

Several measures are being taken to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 at VA Hospital Systems, including but not limited to:

- Changing face to face outpatient appointments to phone or telehealth
- Postponing elective procedures
- Only one guest may accompany veterans to procedures or appointments
- Mandatory screening measures
- Visitation to community living centers are temporarily limited to family members or caregivers of gravely ill, or those in hospice or palliative care

Veterans Benefits Administration

- The VA Regional Office is closed to visitors and most staff members are working remotely. Additionally, the VA Regional Office has activated its Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).
- VA Claims hearings will be conducting remotely or rescheduled
- Cancellation and postponement of compensation examinations. VA will not deny a claim solely for a failure to report for an exam at this time. Furthermore, the VBA is identifying claims where the record contains sufficient medical evidence necessary to render a decision or use the Acceptable Clinical Evidence (ACE) process.
- GI Bill benefit payments will continue to students whose institution has moved to online courses or closed due to COVID-19 thanks to a recent bill passage.
- VA Home Loans

National Cemeteries

All VA national cemeteries are open and will continue to provide interments for Veterans and eligible individuals. However, effective March 23 — as part of the agency's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) — committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors will discontinue until further notice.

Phone Numbers/Website:

Veterans Health Administration

VA BUTLER: 1.800.362.8262
 VA PITT. (HEINZ): 412.822.2222
 VA PITT. (OAKLAND): 412.688.6000
 VA PHARMACY (OAKLAND): 412.360.6210
 VA PITT. PATIENT ADVOCATE: 412.360.3614
 VA HOMELESS HOTLINE: 412.328.0697
 VA SUICIDE HOTLINE: 1.800.273.8255
 VA PITT WEBSITE:

<https://www.va.gov/pittsburgh-health-care/>

Veterans Benefits Administration

VA BENEFITS LINE: 1800.827.1000
 VA DEBT MANAGEMENT: 612.713.6415
 VETERANS BENEFITS WEBSITE:

<https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

National Cemeteries

NATIONAL CEMETERY OF THE ALLEGHENIES:
 724.746.4352
 NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION
 WEBSITE:

<https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/ncalleghenies.asp>

Vet Centers

Vet Centers continue to remain open and prepared to assist veterans in these uncertain times.

- Can conduct counseling over the phone or through VA Video Teleconferencing which is secure and can be done with a home computer or smartphone – no additional equipment will be required on the part of the veteran.
- Adjusted hours to Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- All counseling groups in the Pittsburgh Vet Center and those we facilitate in the community have been postponed until further notice.

Military Installations

Allegheny County has multiple branches of the United States Military within its borders. Please check with each installation prior to going on base.

In general, HPCON Charlie measures have been in to place on most bases which include the following actions:

- Continue essential missions with required manning. Installation operations will be commensurate with federal, state and local guidelines.
- Maximize telework.
- Limit access to installation for official business.
- Instruct military personnel and encourage civilian employees to limit off-base travel to movement to/from work, grocery, and hospital/medical needs.
- Adhere to strict hygiene (no hand-shaking, frequent hand-washing, clean common-use items).
- Continue to implement social distancing (limit in-person meetings, socials and mass gatherings).

As of April 6, 2020, both the Commissary and PX are open.

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Vet Centers

VET CENTER WHITE OAK: 412.678.7704
VET CENTER GREENTREE: 412.920.1765
VET CENTER WEBSITE:
www.vetcenter.va.gov

Military Installations

911TH AIRWING: 412.474.8000
316TH: 1.800.400.2650
171ST: 412.776.7365
NOSC: 412.776.4000
MILITARY ID SCHEDULING:
<https://rapids-appointments.dmdc.osd.mil/?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

COMMISSARY 412.375.6310

MILITARY HEALTHCARE

TRICARE: 866.363.8779
TRICARE FOR LIFE: 866.773.0404
TRICARE PHARMACY: 877.836.1303

State Updates:

PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

The PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs operates two major division including the:

Military Affairs Division

As of March 26, 2020, over 50 members of the PA National Guard have been activated in response to COVID-19.

Pennsylvania National Guard Family Assistance Centers (FAC)

Member and Family Support, open to ALL services members and families,

Services: FACs staff by FAC Specialists provide information and referral to resources and benefits available within the military network, within local community and at state and national level. Programs include. Family Readiness, State Child and Youth, Joint Family Support Assistance, Military Family Life Consultant, Personal Financial Counselor, Survivor Outreach Services, Transition Assistance Advisors, Resilience Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention, Behavioral Health, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. Yellow Ribbon and Employment Outreach are additional resources offered by State Family Programs Branch. Employment and career

Veterans Affairs Division

- Veterans Temporary Assistance/Military Family Relief Assistance Program - Applications are processed as they are received. Applications for VTA are initiated through the County Director of Veterans Affairs (CDVA). If the CDVA staff are not available due to county office closure the veteran may contact PADMVA directly.
- Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption Program – These applications must be initiated by the local County Directors’ Office of Veteran Affairs.
- Educational Gratuity –PDMVA does not anticipate any delay in April payments.
- Discharge Records Request Programs - PDMVA does not anticipate an interruption of service related to Veterans Discharge Records Request Program. Requests are being processed as they are received. However, please note the State Archives is closed, we are working the requests we can from DMVA Archives. This effects requests for older Pennsylvania National Guard records.

PA 2-1-1 Southwest

PA 211 connect individuals to services that help for transportation assistance, financial assistance, utility assistance, housing, legal aid, other programs for veterans.

PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP: 717.861.2000

PADMVA WEBSITE:

<https://www.dmva.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Pennsylvania National Guard Family Assistance Centers (FAC)

PHONE:412.203.1002, ext. 208;

CELL: 717.821.4668

PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Phone: 800.547.2838

PADMVA WEBSITE:

<https://www.dmva.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

PADMVA TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE EMAIL:

Ra-vta@pa.gov

PA 2-1-1 Southwest

PHONE: Dial 2-1-1 or (888)

553.5778

WEBSITE: pa211sw.org

Notes: _____



County Updates:

Allegheny County Veterans Services

Temporarily relocated from Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall to 202 County Courthouse (436 Grant Street) Please note that despite the move, they remain open, but by appointment only.

- Veterans Temporary Assistance/Military Family Relief Assistance Program - Applications are initiated with Allegheny County Veterans Services
- Please call for resource and assistance referral
- Please call for any military or veteran benefit related questions

Allegheny County Health Department

The Health Department is the lead agency providing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide information on the virus, its impact in Allegheny County, information and guidance from the department and its partners, and resources for residents and specific groups.

Veteran's Court Allegheny Court:

As of 4/7/2020 Veterans Court is closed until 5/8/2020. Veterans Court re-opening is subject to change.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Allegheny County's Department of Human Services (DHS) mission is to create an accessible, culturally competent, integrated and comprehensive human services system that ensures individually tailored, seamless and holistic services to Allegheny County residents, in particular, the county's vulnerable populations. They run a number of programs and services that could assist our regions veterans during this pandemic.

Senior line

Allegheny Link

Veterans Non-Profits/Service Organizations

PAServes

PAServes is a program designed for military veterans, service members and their families to aid them in connecting with resources in the greater Pittsburgh area. PAServes keeps a list of community partners and their operating capacity. If you don't know where to start or are overwhelmed by all the resources **call PAServes first.**

Veterans Place of Washington Blvd.

Veterans Place remains open, but with enhanced cleaning measures and health checks upon entrance.

- On site food bank is open
- On site showers are open
- On site computer usage is open
- Breakfast and lunch operations are open
- Face to face case management is open

Allegheny County Veterans Services

PHONE: 412.621.4357

EMAIL: veterans@alleghenycounty.us.

VETERANS SERVICES WEBSITE:

<https://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/veterans/index.aspx>

Allegheny County Health Department

PHONE: 412.687.2243

WEBSITE:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/healthdepartment/index.aspx>

Allegheny County Department of Human Services

PHONE: 412.350.5701

WEBSITE:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/human-services/index.aspx>

PAServes

PHONE: 855.838.7744

WEBSITE:

<https://pittsburgh.americaserves.org/>

Veterans Place of Washington BLVD.

PHONE: 412.481.8200

WEBSITE: <https://www.veteransplaceusa.org/>

Veterans Leadership Program

VLP has implemented their contingent remote operations plans as of 3/16/2020. Although face to face meetings are suspended VLP will continue to serve veterans during this pandemic.

- Request for assistance can still be made online or via phone
- Veterans can also arrange for pre-bagged food, toiletries, and other sundry items via curbside pick-up
- HUDVASH and case management operations are open via phone
- VLP has a military and veteran food share program

Wounded Warrior Project

The Wounded Warrior Project is closed to the public, but they are still available via phone and video. They run several programs including some mental health programs via telemedicine that are still active.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Many VFW's in Allegheny County are offering food assistance at the moment, as well as providing some other community information and resources for veterans.

Operation Troop Appreciation

OTA is currently closed to the public but have boxes of non-perishable food items and toiletries available.

- OTA's transportation service is running as normal so veterans can get to critical doctor appointments and other essential services.
- OTA's active-duty program is up and running.

Shepard's Heart Fellowship & Veterans Home

Veterans Place remains open, but with enhanced cleaning measures and health checks upon entrance.

Veterans' Breakfast Club:

Veterans' Breakfast Club has suspended in person events until further notice. However, they are now offering live virtual events twice a week.

Mission Continues:

The Mission Continues is an organization made of veterans who do volunteer work in support of the community projects.

Team Red, White and Blue:

Team Red, White, and Blue enriches the lives of America's veterans by connecting them to their community through physical and social activity.

Veterans Leadership Program

PHONE: 412.481.8200

WEBSITE:

<https://www.veteransleadershipprogram.org/>

Wounded Warrior Project

PHONE: 412.471.0935

WEBSITE:

<https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/>

Veterans of Foreign Wars

EMAIL: district29vfw@gmail.com

PHONE: 412.618.8902

Operation Troop Appreciation

PHONE: 412.973.1831,

EMAIL: sdeinhaus@comcast.net

WEBSITE:

<https://operationtroopappreciation.org/>

Shepard's Heart Fellowship & Veterans Home

PHONE: 412.281.1305

WEBSITE: <https://shepheart.org/>

Veterans Breakfast Club

PHONE: 412.623.9029

WEBSITE: <http://vbcpgh.org/>

The Mission Continues

WEBSITE:

<https://missioncontinues.org/service-platoon/Pittsburgh-platoons>

Team Red, White, and Blue

WEBSITE:

<https://www.teamrbw.org/chapter/team-rwb-pittsburgh-pa/>

EMAIL: sean.buzzard@teamrbw.org

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