

Serving Those Who Served

**The Official Newsletter of the Kentucky Department of
Veterans Affairs**



**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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Greetings teammates,

It's July, and we are already halfway through 2024. We still have lots of good work to do, but before I go into what's coming up for the remainder of 2024, I would like to thank you and all KDVA's community, federal, state, and veteran service organization partners who helped make this a very successful fiscal year. This includes celebrating our 25th anniversary of our existence, releasing KDVA's four-year strategic plan, partnering with VSOs in promoting PTSD/Mental Health, elevating the advocacy for our women veterans, conducting "joint-ventures" with Department of VA teammates, and many, many other initiatives. So let's bring in the new Fiscal Year 2025 with great energy and passion starting with celebrating a great Independence Day later this week.



In the next six months (as well as throughout the FY25), KDVA will continue to raise the bar of quality customer service and support for our Commonwealth's veterans and their families. This includes our KDVA State Commander's Conference, KDVA 5K Race, Benefits Claims Clinics, release of FY24 Annual Report and completion of the Bowling Green Veterans Center (projected end of year 2024). We also plan to work with our fellow state agencies in developing and executing strategic campaign to make Kentucky the best state in nation for veterans to work, live and strive.

Finally, I want to personally thank my KDVA team for completing such an outstanding year, the love and care they continue to give our great veterans and families, and the passion they bring to the table every day. Also, I want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our Commonwealth's veterans for their service and sacrifice as well as their continuing service long after their time in uniform ended. We're committed to supporting you. We have a lot going on for the second half of 2024, so stay tuned.

HOOAH!!!!,

Commissioner Whitney P. Allen, Jr.

Latest VA News

VA announces \$10M in new funding opportunities for state, territory, and Tribal governments to help understand and prevent Veteran suicide

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced \$10 million in [new funding](#) for eligible states, territories, and Tribal governments through cooperative agreements to better inform Veteran suicide prevention strategies.

These cooperative agreements will provide funding and technical assistance intended to establish, coordinate, and manage suicide mortality review committees, which identify and characterize suicide deaths. Suicide mortality review committees help establish a local understanding of suicide, identify populations or locations of special concern, and inform the development and implementation of data-informed suicide prevention strategies for Veterans.

This funding opportunity advances VA's [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#), the Biden-Harris administration's [strategy to reduce military and Veteran suicide](#), and President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation.

"One Veteran suicide is one too many, and we will stop at nothing to end Veteran suicide," said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. "Launching this first-of-its-kind initiative will allow us to better understand suicide deaths and, as a result, deliver better interventions to prevent Veteran suicide."

This initiative also contributes to the objectives of the [Governor's Challenge](#) — a partnership between VA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration — which is actively engaging 55 states and territories to develop state-wide suicide prevention best practices for service members, Veterans, and their families.

This funding is for one year, with awards expected to be made no later than Sept. 30, 2024. The application period for this opportunity opened June 21, 2024 and closes July 24, 2024 at 4:59 p.m., ET. More information can be found in the [notice of funding opportunity](#).

VA extends presumptions of service connection for three new cancer types

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is including three new cancer types in the list of presumed service-connected disabilities due to military environmental exposure under the [PACT Act](#). This announcement marks the continued commitment under the [Biden-Harris administration's Unity Agenda](#) and the [Biden Cancer Moonshot](#) to support the nation's Veterans.

Through a sub-regulatory policy letter published to the [Federal Register](#), the following three cancer types have been included in the list of presumptive diseases:

- Male breast cancer.
- Urethral cancer.
- Cancer of the paraurethral glands.

This policy establishes presumptions of service connection for eligible Gulf War and post-9/11 Veterans who deployed to Afghanistan, Somalia, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan, and the entire [Southwest Asia theater of operations](#), which includes Iraq. Presumptive service connection means VA automatically assumes service connection for the disease and provides benefits to eligible Veterans who have submitted claims with evidence of a diagnosis.

“We are working with urgency to deliver on the promise of the PACT Act to provide health care and benefits to as many toxic-exposed Veterans as possible — we’re leaning in wherever we can,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “VA is working with one goal in mind: getting today and tomorrow’s Veterans and their families the benefits they deserve as fast as possible.”

Any Veteran who currently has or previously had one of the listed cancers at any time during military service or after separation may be entitled to disability compensation benefits dated back to Aug. 10, 2022, the date the [PACT Act was signed into law](#). VA will review all claims from impacted Veterans and survivors who previously filed and were denied for these three conditions on or after Aug. 10, 2022, to determine if benefits can now be granted. Veterans enrolled in VA health care can obtain cancer screening and treatment at VA, which recently announced [expansion of cancer care services](#) closer to where Veterans are.

VA has granted its [1 millionth PACT Act-related disability compensation claim](#) and awarded over \$5.7 billion to Veterans and survivors since President Biden signed the bill into law.

Veterans and survivors can apply or learn more about the PACT Act by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](#) or by calling 1-800-MYVA411.

There is no charge to file a claim with VA. For further assistance with the disability claims process, Veterans are encouraged to work with a [VA-accredited representative](#) or contact their [state Veterans affairs office](#).

For more information about VA cancer care, visit [cancer.va.gov](#).

Upcoming Events



Here.Is.Better. Showtime

July 27, 2024

Free Admission!
Free Lunch is provided

Agenda

11:30 am till 12:00 pm Social/Networking
12:00 pm Movie – Here is Better

Questions: email ptsdmovie2024@gmail.com



Movie Viewing Rights Provided by



Register
Here

Address

Veterans Outreach Center
1347 South 3rd St #101
Louisville, KY 40208





HORSESENSING HORSE ACTIVITY DAY

GOLD STAR FAMILY DAY

July 13, 2024, 10am to 1pm
270 Bagdad Road, Shelbyville,
Ky 40065
650-776-4313 or
info@horsesensing.com



What's New at KDVA?

TBI/PTSD: THE SIGNATURE INVISIBLE BRAIN WOUNDS FROM VIETNAM, IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN:

Have you been Exposed to 70,000+ IEDs, Breaching, Large Weapons or Explosions?



TBI/PTSD Veterans can finally be treated with something different than off-label prescription medications!
Could this be you?

2-YEAR STATE FUNDED HBOT TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR KENTUCKY TBI/PTSD VETERANS

Have you been knocked unconscious in combat, exposed to IEDs, explosions, or sexually assaulted? Are you suffering from routine migraine headaches, sensitivity to light, having memory issues, trouble finishing sentences, difficulty expressing thoughts, self medicating? If so, you are only one of over an estimated 877,450 TBI/PTSD Veterans across America suffering from TBI/PTSD in the same manner.

- The HBOT introduction video is here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa3SVLqvdzQ&t=324s>
- TBI is a physical wounding of the brain when the brain hits the inside of the skull. Over 21 Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) evidence based clinical trials and with over 12,500 successful Veteran outcomes. The medical meta-analysis may be viewed here <https://treatnow.org/dr-harch-systematic-review-improving-mtbi-persistent-post-concussion-syndrome>.
- View Veteran video testimonials here <https://www.youtube.com/@treatnowdotorg/videos>.
- You may read all about the treatment process at <https://treatnow.org/treatments/overview-hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy-hbot/>.
- HBOT enacted laws in 10 states which may be viewed here: <https://treatnow.org/knowledgebase/the-national-treatnow-summary-of-state-by-state-hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy-hbot-legislative-and-resolution-effort-10-23-2023/>

- Five major VSOs support HBOT here <https://treatnow.org/knowledgebase/veteran-service-organization-members-support-hbot-for-mtbi-ptsd/>.
- **The state of Kentucky and KDVA is in partnership with HBOT4KYVETS, Inc., and the KY medical community testing and treating TBI/PTSD Veterans. Veterans helping Veterans with financial support from the state to receive alternative medical treatment earned and deserved!**
- Veterans may receive 40, 60, or 80 HBOT treatments, one (1) hour per day, 5 days per week, over

2–4-month period. If you're a Kentucky Veteran with diagnosis of TBI, you may qualify.

- The HBO₂ 1.5 ATA protocol for mTBI with post-concussive symptoms with or without PTSD was safe and could be used in multiple centers. The neurocognitive test scores for subjects improved in 21 of 25 measures. (National Brain Injury, Rescue, and Rehabilitation (NBIRR) Study: Jan-Mar 2019).

HBOT4KYVETS, Inc is a 501C3 non-profit which opened HBOT chambers to TBI/PTSD Kentucky Veterans for treatments in 2018 under KRS 217.930-942. If you are a Kentucky TBI/PTSD Veteran resident seeking a safe and effective treatment, **WE WANT TO SPEAK WITH YOU**. You may visit our website for more information at HBOT4KYVETS.com to review requirements and to sign up for the state funded treatment program.

10,000th Interment at KVCC



Kentucky Veteran Cemetery Central (KVCC) was constructed on land donated by Fort Knox and officially opened on June 1, 2007, in Radcliff, Kentucky. US Army Sgt. Janice Ann Barno was KVCC's first interment on June 5, 2007. Since that time KVCC has strived to provide dignified burials for veterans and their spouse in a sacred space that stands as a tribute to their service to the nation and the Commonwealth.

On June 27, 2024, we will inter our 10,000th individual into the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central since opening on June 1, 2007. US Air Force Senior Master Sgt. (Retired) Richard McNary joined the Air Force in 1959, fought in the Vietnam War and was awarded a Bronze Star. He stayed in the Air Force for almost 25 years before retiring in 1984. He passed away on June 10, 2024, and will be laid to rest with his wife, Michiko McNary. Their name, like all the others, will be engraved on a Veterans headstone for all to see, adding their story to ours.

We have several memorials that have been placed by various Veterans Service Organizations to include a Veterans Memorial, POW/MIA memorial, Gold Star Families memorial and the largest 9/11 Memorial in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. These memorials and all the people who volunteer their time here, are to honor all our veterans who have served to protect this great nation. We also have some of the best veteran organizations and individuals that support the veterans and their family members that have been laid to rest here over the years. We are proud to be a part of this commitment to our veterans and their families.

We have interred Veterans that served in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. We are very proud to be part of their story as they chose KVCC as their final resting place. We are also proud of every veteran that is here, whether they served in a war period or not, because they all were trained, capable and willing to defend our great nation if called upon. We will continue to grow but we will always strive to display respect, dignity and compassion to all veterans and their families.

2024 Women Veterans State Conference





KDVA held the annual Women Veterans State Conference at the University of Louisville Shelby Campus Conference Center in Louisville, KY, June 25, 2024. With choice words of motivate, elevate and celebrate at the core of the conference, KDVA had several speakers and activities to celebrate our Kentucky Women Veterans. The topics covered included everything from benefits for women to concerns they face.

Military Related Students Success Forum



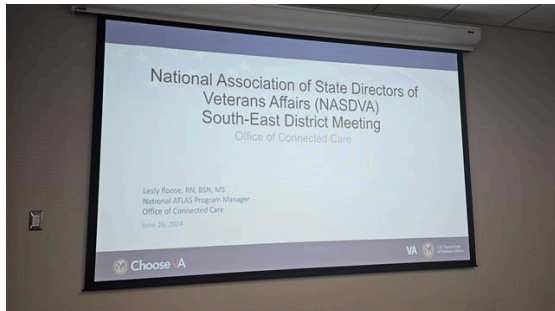
As a part of a partnership between KDVA and the Council on Postsecondary Education, we hosted a Military Related Students Success Forum at UoL on Jun 18, 2024. Eleven public institutions, and three private institutions participated in this event. The forum's aim was to enhance and equip military related students directors/coordinator's for every public university or college in Kentucky. Many organizations shared relevant resources and information to help students lead to success including employment, wellness, training, free books and more.

VFW Annual State Convention



Governor Beshear and Commissioner Allen were honored to address the Kentucky Department of Veterans of Foreign Wars at their annual state convention in Bowling Green, KY on Friday June 21, 2024.

NASDVA Regional Conference



Commissioner Allen attended the National Association of State Directors of Veterans (NASDVA) Southeast District meeting in Montgomery, AL from June 26-27, 2024. The two-day conference brings together the top state veteran affairs leaders from the US Southeastern states and territories to discuss national and state VA policies impacting veterans and their families. Guest speakers included representatives from the office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Veteran Experience Office, and National Health Eligibility Center. Topics included the latest PAC ACT info, veterans benefits equity initiatives and

accessing telehealth through local area stations. The conference was hosted by Commissioner W. Kent Davis, Rear Admiral, USN (Ret) and Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and presided over by Southeast District Vice President Patrick D. Farrell of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs.

80th anniversary of D-Day





18 World War II veterans had the opportunity fly in a 1944 B-25 Bomber to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. The event was held at Bowman Field in Louisville, KY, June 6, 2024. Honor Flight Bluegrass sponsored the event through a grant of \$25,000 from the Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund and with the help of community volunteers and sponsors like Mission BBQ and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

Here.Is.Better. showing at VFW Post 2921



June is PTSD awareness month. KDVA partnered with Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2921, hosting a film viewing of "Here.Is.Better." in Louisville, Kentucky, June 12, 2024. WDRB in Louisville covered the event on the evening news. Special thank you to Bob Casher (Sergeant of Arms, Department of Kentucky DAV) for securing the movie viewing rights. In addition, thank you to John Wingfield (VFW's State Commander – Kentucky), Matt Tungate (VFW Post 2921 Post Commander), Rod Russell (VFW Post 2921 Post Quartermaster) and VFW Post 2921 for hosting the event.

KDVA

A big welcome to our new General Counsel:

Lucas Roberts



**KDVA Staff Attorney Selected for National
Veteran Leadership Program**

BUSH INSTITUTE PICKS KOVA STAFF ATTORNEY FOR NATIONAL VETERAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

USAF combat veteran **Tamara Reid Mdnosh**, Staff Attorney with the Office of Veteran Legal Services, Kentucky Dept. of Veterans Affairs (KDVA) has been named by the George W. Bush Institute as one of 24 scholars selected to participate in the prestigious Stand-To Veteran Leadership Program.

The first-of-its-kind initiative is aimed at bold leaders from diverse sectors across the country - including civilians, veterans and active-duty military - who are supporting the nation's veterans and their families.

Participants were selected after a rigorous application and review process. Each participant joins the program with a planned personal project.

Tamara said her project is focused on establishing a Veterans Legal Service Exchange that will expand veterans' access to legal representation by attorneys who understand the unique issues faced by Kentucky's veterans.

She told *Connections* that in her role at KDVA, "I was able to find resources for veterans based on income, via Kentucky's Legal Aid societies. Yet, means testing determines eligibility for those services.

"Similarly, veterans who are retired from military service have access the Legal Offices on military installations for the remainder of their lives. Where veterans do not fit within either of those extremes, there are simply not enough attorneys who understand the veteran-centric nuances that are applicable to their veteran clients. My hope is to change that reality for veterans and their families throughout the Commonwealth."

The recognition adds to many accolades Tamara has received during her remarkable career, beginning with a USAF stint that included service during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In those operations she was deployed with an Electric Security Squadron to support intelligence efforts in the region.

"When my tour of duty ended in 1992, I left the Air Force with the hope of expe-



NOW AND THEN - Tamara Reid Mdnosh in her official KDVA photo and as an airman, serving from 1989-1992.



ditiously completing my undergraduate education to return as an officer," she said.

"Unfortunately, I began having health issues shortly after my tour ended. I was diagnosed with cancer in 1997, which rendered me unfit for military service. I do believe that things turn out as they should; my cancer battle and other health issues have served as the bases for my motivation to

utilize my legal education to give back to the veterans who have served this great nation." She has been cancer-free since 1999.

That legal education began with a B.A. and M.A. in English from the Univ. of Dayton, a J.D. from the Univ. of Cincinnati, and a Ph.D. from the Univ. of Birmingham (England) Law School.

Tamara has been licensed to practice law in Kentucky since 2004. She joined KDVA in 2021. Her career prior to that include staff positions with the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, the Univ. of Louisville, and two energy services companies.

In addition to her legal responsibilities, she has served as an adjunct professor since 2003, teaching undergraduate legal specialty courses for several universities in Ohio and Ken-

tucky. She is presently an Adjunct Associate Professor for the Univ. of Cincinnati and offers online instruction for several other schools.

Tamara is a Dayton, OH, native, but she points out that her father's family migrated from Henderson Co., KY. "So although I was not born here, I got back down here as soon as I could, and I call Kentucky HOME."

Tamara brings a lot to the veteran community in her position as an attorney with KDVA. I have the greatest respect for her and what she is accomplishing in her life with the challenges that she faces, not only as an individual but as a veteran.

— PHYLLIS ABBOTT



PERSIAN GULF VET - Tamara served as an intelligence specialist during Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

ABOUT THE BUSH INSTITUTE

The George W. Bush Institute is a solution-oriented nonpartisan policy organization focused on ensuring opportunity for all, strengthening democracy, and advancing free societies. Housed within the George W. Bush Presidential Center, the Bush Institute is rooted in compassionate conservative values and committed to creating positive, meaningful, and lasting change at home and abroad. We utilize our unique platform and convening power to advance solutions to national and global issues of the day.

Summary of Kentucky Military and Veterans Benefits Resource Document Now Available on our Website:

veterans.ky.gov

Document Preview Below

Kentucky Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans: Kentucky homeowners who are at least 65 years of age or who are totally disabled are eligible to receive a homestead exemption from Kentucky property taxes <https://warrenkywa.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/58/2022/11/2023-2024-HFEX-Memo.pdf>

Survey

I Support Veterans License Plates



Who is eligible

Any owner of a noncommercial motor vehicle required to be registered for use on Kentucky Highways.

Steps Requirement

Application must be made at your local County Clerk's office. Upon receipt of this plate, your regular (special) issue license plate must be turned in or issued to another vehicle.

Decal Expires Customer's Birth Month

\$10.00 of the initial and \$5.00 of the renewal registration fee goes to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs. For more information, please visit <http://veterans.ky.gov> . This plate is available for personalization with an additional \$25.00 fee annually. Personalization is limited to a maximum of 5 characters.

Relevant KRS [186.162](#)

Military Women's Memorial "Tell Her Story"



The Military Women's Memorial (MWM) is the only major national memorial honoring all servicewomen – past, present and future. The MWM honors more than 3 million women who served and continue to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces since the American Revolution.

Women's military service should be no less recognized than men's but historically the focus of history and preservation has been on men.

Why it's Important to Register?

EVERY STORY is important, EVERY STORY deserves to be told. Yet we have lost most of our WWI women veterans and our WWII women are fast coming to their final chapter. What history we have not recorded will be lost with them. We absolutely CANNOT let another generation go by without ensuring that our collective contributions are captured and remembered.

Please REGISTER HERE : www.womensmemorial.org

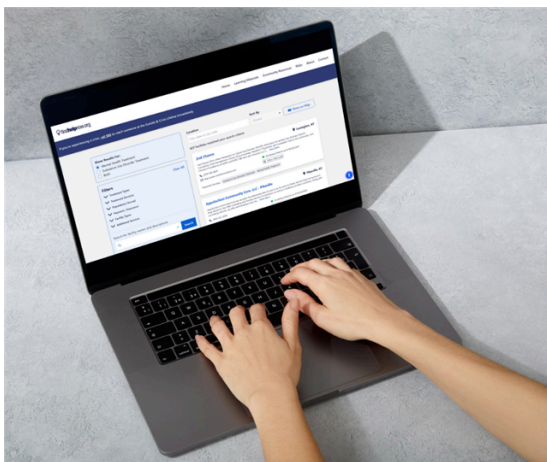
There is no cost to register! You can register any woman you know who is in or has served in the military. Let's keep "HER-Story alive!"

Useful VA Links

- **VA Housing Assistance Page** - Information about home loans, eligibility, interest rates reductions and other related topics: <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/>
- **National Center for PTSD** - Provides information and resources to veterans, care providers and organizations relating PTSD: <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>
- **Covid-19 Vaccine Updates** - Latest updates on Covid-19 guidance and vaccinations: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>
- **VA Life Insurance (VALife)** - <https://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/valife.asp>
- **Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E)** - job training, education, employment coaching, etc.: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp>

Upcoming Veterans Dates and Events

- Independence Day (**July 4**)
- National Hire A Veteran Day (**July 25**)
- National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (**July 27**)
- National Buffalo Soldiers Day (**July 28**)
- Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary (**July 29**)



At the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, we are committed to supporting our veterans with the resources they need.

Discover a wealth of services and support options through FindHelpNow.org - your go-to resource for immediate assistance. Whether you're looking for mental health support, housing assistance, or employment resources, FindHelpNow.org has got you covered! Be sure to look for the "Veterans/Military" population filters

available. The website displays near real-time available openings at substance use disorder and mental health facilities, recovery houses, naloxone distribution sites, and

social services resources. Visit [FindHelpNow.org](https://www.findhelpnow.org) today to explore these enhanced resources and find the support you need! See YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWfaLHz_kk

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