

VETERAN news & notes

VA Reaches Out To Veterans Of All Generations

(NAPSA)—One of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) highest priorities is ensuring that America's 24 million veterans are aware of the benefits available to them as a result of their military service.

VA is reaching out particularly to veterans who have an injury or medical condition they believe is related to their active military service to encourage them to contact their local VA regional office for information about the VA Disability Compensation Program.

VA wants to do everything possible for the nation's newest veterans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan, and also make sure that the veterans who served in earlier periods, wartime or peacetime, are not overlooked. Even veterans of conflicts long past who have never filed a claim for disability benefits may still be eligible, and VA regional office employees across the nation can assist them.

Veterans who received a VA disability compensation rating many years ago and whose service-related disabilities have progressed in severity should also contact their local regional office for assistance in submitting a claim for increased benefits.

VA efforts to inform veterans about their disability compensation benefits face a special challenge with older veterans who may not have been in touch with VA for decades, or who may not be aware of the entire range of expanded veterans' benefits avail-



able to them or their families.

Veterans should not hesitate to contact VA and apply for the benefits they have earned in service to our country. While VA cannot guarantee that all benefits claims will be granted, VA cannot grant benefits unless veterans file or reopen their claims.

Veterans and their families may call the VA toll free at 800-827-1000 or visit the veterans benefits Web site at <http://www.vba.va.gov/>. Claims for disability compensation or other benefits may be filed in person, electronically, or by mail.

VA also encourages veterans to seek assistance from the various national, state and local veterans groups and service organizations. Information on veterans organizations can be obtained at <http://www1.va.gov/vso/> or <http://www.va.gov/partners/stateoffice/index.htm>.