

La Plata County Veterans Services
By: Richard S Schleeter

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The main objective of the Veterans Service Office is to provide prevention, protection, advocacy and support services to veterans and their families so they can maximize their quality of life, well-being and potential. The La Plata County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) provides information and assistance to veterans and their families. There is a wide range of benefits available for our nation's veterans. Every veteran is encouraged to contact the CVSO to find out more about their VA benefits. Your CVSO can assist you in any matter pertaining to the Department of Veterans Affairs. These services are free of charge. Please visit the La Plata County web site at <http://www.co.laplata.co.us/> for more information about what the La Plata County Veterans Service Office can do for you.

The La Plata County Veterans Service Office is co-located with the Durango VA Clinic at 1970 E. 3rd Avenue, Suite 102, Durango, CO. 81301. For clinic appointments, call 970-247-2214. The Veterans Service Office phone number is 970-759-0117. Office hours are 8am to 12pm and 1pm to 5 pm, Monday – Friday, except holidays, and appointments are encouraged. Call (970) 382-6150 to schedule an appointment with the Veterans Service Office

What does the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offer?

VA benefits and services are in these major categories: Compensation, Pension, and Health Care, Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment, Education & Training, Home Loans, Life Insurance, Dependent and Survivors, and Burial Benefits and State Benefits.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible for VA benefits if you are a veteran; a veteran's dependent; a surviving spouse, child, or parent of a deceased veteran; an active duty military service member; or a member of the Reserve or National Guard who has been called to active duty in support of a war or conflict and discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

What are the time limits to apply for benefits?

A variety of time limits apply to education and training benefits. There is no time limit to file a compensation or pension claim or register for VA health care benefits. However the longer you wait the harder it is to get them approved. It's best to start the process before you really need it, that way it's easier for you to get the help you need when you need it and not have to wait for the enrollment/application process to get approved for any services you may need. In other cases, claims for burial benefits must be filed within two years of the veteran's burial.

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Do you need a VA Identification (ID) card?

To get a new or replacement VA ID card, you can stop by the Durango VA Clinic between 1 and 3 pm on Friday afternoons. You must bring a utility bill to verify your address and at least two other forms of identification. You must be actively enrolled in VA Health Care to receive a VA health care ID card. Please call the Durango VA Clinic for more information at (970) 247-2214 and press 1 for the front desk

If you are not enrolled in VA Health Care and wish to have an ID card verifying your veterans status, you can go to your local driver licensing office with a copy of your DD-214 and they will update your Driver's License or State ID card to reflect your Branch of Service and Veterans status. Normal replacement card fees apply. This can eliminate the need to carry a copy of your DD-214 with you, and it's an easy way to verify your veterans status and receive a Veterans Discount, which is offered by many of La Plata County area's local business and restaurants. If they don't have a sign up advertising a veterans discount, just ask and you may receive one.

For more information please call me at (970) 759-0117, or send me an email schleeterrrs@co.laplata.co.us.

Thank you for your service.