

La Plata County Veterans Services
By: Richard S Schleeter

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The La Plata County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) provides information and assistance to veterans and their families. 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. 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.

Happy New Year 2015

It's a brand new year so start it out right by paying a visit to your local Veterans Service Office to find out what VA benefits you may qualify for. Below is a brief description of some of the Veterans benefits available.

Disability benefits: These are called Compensation benefits if you are at least 10% disabled due to your military service. You may be eligible for Pension benefits if you are a wartime veteran with limited income and you are disabled or age 65 or older.

Education benefits include the Montgomery GI bill, Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), Post-9/11 GI Bill, Survivors & Dependents Educational Assistance program, and Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans.

Home Loan Guaranty: The VA guarantees loans to eligible service members, veterans, reservists and certain surviving spouses to purchase a home, condominium or manufactured home and for refinancing purposes.

Dependents' and survivors' benefits: Disability and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is payable to survivors of service members who died on active duty, veterans who died from service related disabilities, and certain veterans who were being paid 100% disability by the VA.

Death Pension is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime veterans and is based on financial need.

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VA Civilian Health and Medical program (CHAMPVA) shares the cost of medical services for eligible dependents and survivors of certain veterans.

VA Health Care provides hospital care and outpatient medical, dental, pharmacy and prosthetic services, as well as domiciliary, nursing home, and community-based residential care. Other care available includes mental health counseling, specialized health care for women veterans, and sexual trauma counseling. The VA also provides health and rehabilitation programs for homeless veterans.

Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance is disability life insurance for service-connected disabled veterans.

Veteran Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is for veterans who are severely disabled and receive a Specially-Adapted Housing grant from the VA.

Burial Benefits: The VA may furnish a headstone or marker. A Presidential Memorial Certificate and/or a burial flag to honor a veteran's service to this country may be available. Additional benefits may include reimbursement for burial expenses for service connected veterans and/or burial in a State or National Cemetery, even burial at sea if requested.

Each benefit listed above has its own eligibility requirements and time limits and may be available for all eligible veterans. Contact your County Veterans Service Office for additional information.