



Anoka County

MINNESOTA

Veteran Services

Government Center
2100 3rd Avenue, Suite 216
Anoka, MN 55303
(763) 324-4500

VETERANS ADVOCATE

Summer 2024

VIETNAM WAR 50TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM AT MALL OF AMERICA JUNE 13-15

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) is announcing the schedule of activities during the commemoration event marking the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The three-day event for Vietnam-era Veterans and their families, allies of the United States and all Minnesotans who wish to thank our Veterans, is being held June 13-15 at Mall of America.

Over the three days, attendees can see historical displays, the American Veterans Traveling Tribute Wall, view Vietnam War documentaries and more. In addition, on Friday June 14, there will be a Commemoration Program at Mall of America in the Huntington Bank Rotunda with speakers, music and storytelling, followed by a complimentary brunch for Vietnam Veterans.

For Veterans who need transportation to the event, MDVA is working with Veteran Service Organizations around the state to organize transportation on buses that will travel to Mall of America on Friday, June 14 in the early morning and return to their communities later that afternoon. For more details on the event, visit MinnesotaVeteran.org/Vietnam50.

- Thurs., June 13: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Fri., June 14: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- 11 a.m. Official Commemoration Program
- Sat., June 15: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

ANOKA COUNTY FAIR FLAG RAISING

The 35th annual Veterans Flag Raising Ceremony at the Anoka County Fairgrounds Veterans Memorial Flagpole area will take place at Noon on Tuesday, July 23, 2024. As more information about this event becomes available it will be posted on the Anoka County Veteran Services Facebook page. We look forward to seeing you there.

PROTECTING VETERANS FROM BENEFITS CLAIM SHARKS

A Claim Shark is an individual or company that charges hefty fees to “assist” or “consult” Veterans with filing their VA benefit claims. Claim sharks are not VA-accredited, so they are not required to adhere to the same professional and ethical standards. They often promise a guaranteed raise in disability compensation and to speed up the timeline for the process, saying they will only accept pay when the disability check is delivered. Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts; everyone must go through the same VA claims process. In fact, these companies often charge five times the amount of the veteran’s retroactive compensation, potentially costing him or her thousands of dollars, according to the VFW. This is an issue that impacts the livelihood of Veterans and their families, individuals who have already sacrificed so much. As a reminder:

- Paying for services will not speed up the VA claims process.
- Veterans must attend all exams ordered by the

VA.

- Veterans should not sign contracts, agree to fees or payments from future benefits, agree to pay for medical consultations or opinions, or provide access to Protected Health Information or Personal Identifiable Information.

Anoka County Veteran Services (and each County in Minnesota) are VA-accredited and provide these services at no charge. Veteran Service Organizations such as the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, VFW, American Legion, and Disabled American Veterans, also provide these services at no charge.

MEALS ON WHEELS FOR VETERANS

Metro Meals on Wheels has funding to provide healthy, home-delivered meals to Veterans thanks to a grant from the Minnesota Legislature. In addition to receiving nutritious meals prepared at a local kitchen, the program provides regular connection with a volunteer driver.

To be eligible, veterans must be:

- age 60+ or,
- experiencing food insecurity or,
- unable to obtain food because of a medical or mental health condition.

Information about our meals can be found online at www.meals-on-wheels.com. Veterans should call Metro Meals on Wheels at 612-623-3363 to find out more and enroll.

EXPANDED VA HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY

The VA announced that all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving in the military — at home or abroad — became eligible to enroll directly in VA health care beginning March 5, 2024. This means that all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Global War on Terror, or any other combat zone after 9/11 will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without

first applying for VA benefits.

This expansion also covers many Veterans who never deployed as a part of a conflict but were exposed to toxins or hazards while serving in the U.S. Specifically, under this expansion of care, any Veteran who participated in a toxic exposure risk activity (TERA) — at home or abroad — is eligible for VA health care.

VA encourages all eligible Veterans to visit VA.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and apply for VA health care beginning March 5.

MOTOR VEHICLE TAX EXEMPTION FOR 100% PERMANENT AND TOTAL DISABLED VETERANS

The 2023 Legislative Session ended with some positive changes in laws that will benefit Veterans with the most notable being related to Vehicle taxes. Starting July 1, 2024, purchases of a motor vehicle by a veteran having a total service-connected disability are exempt from the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax and Registration Tax.

If you're an Anoka County resident and are a Veteran or survivor, and you believe the PACT Act affects you, contact Anoka County Veteran Services to schedule an appointment for assistance filing claims for PACT Act-related benefits.

ANOKA COUNTY VETERANS SUPPORT NETWORK

Similar to how the Veterans Advisory Board operated, there will be quarterly meetings with stakeholders, and the Anoka County Veteran Services Office will serve as a facilitator for these meetings. This renamed group will allow for all local Veteran Service Organizations, support groups, and stakeholders to collaborate and ensure that the needs of our local Veterans are met.

Please help us spread the word to ensure that any interested groups or individuals can attend.

The next meeting will be held:
****Monday, June 17, 2024 - 2:00 PM****
Anoka American Legion Post 102
400 W. Main Street
Anoka, MN 55303

LOCAL VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATION MEETING SCHEDULE

Anoka American Legion Post 102
Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00
PM
400 West Main Street
Anoka, MN 55303

Blaine VFW - SGT John Rice Post 6316
Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00
PM
1374 109th Avenue NE
Blaine, MN 55434

**Coon Rapids American Legion and Auxiliary
Post 334**
Meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month at
6:30 PM at the Anoka American Legion
400 West Main Street
Anoka, MN 55303

Lino Lakes American Legion Post 566
Meeting on the first Monday of each month at 6:30
PM at the Lino Lakes American Legion
7731 Lake Drive
Lino Lakes, MN 55014

Coon Rapids VFW Post and Auxiliary Post 9625
Meeting on the second Monday of each month.
Auxiliary meets at 6:30 PM and VFW Post meets at
7:00 PM at the Coon Rapids VFW
1919 Coon Rapids Blvd NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Anoka DAV Chapter 39
Meeting on the second Thursday of each month at
6:30 PM at the Coon Rapids VFW
1919 Coon Rapids Blvd NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

Columbia Heights VFW Post and Auxiliary Post 230

VFW Post meets on the second Tuesday of each
month at 6:00 PM and the Auxiliary Post meets on
the third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 PM at
the Columbia Heights VFW
4446 Central Ave NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 470
Meets at 7:00 PM on the first Wednesday of each
month at the Anoka American Legion
400 West Main Street
Anoka, MN 55303

Palmer Lake VFW Post #3915
Meeting on the second Wednesday of each month
at 7:00 PM at the Palmer Lake VFW
2817 Brookdale Drive
Brooklyn Park, MN 55444


**Shaddrick and LaBeau American Legion Post
#303**
Post/Aux - First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM
SAL - Second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM
Riders - Second Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM
7365 Central Ave NE
Fridley, MN 55432

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon NE Metro
Meetings held on the 3rd Wednesday of each
month from 12:15 to 12:45 va Zoom. Email
radermacher.dorothy@gmail.com to be added to
the meeting invite list.

**If your organization's meeting information is
not listed here, email the dates and times of your
meetings to veterans@anokacountymn.gov



We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit serving the NE
portion of the Twin Cities Metro Area.

 651-321-4722

 btyrmetro.org

 Beyond the Yellow Ribbon NE Metro

We've got the back of our military community.

2024 ANOKA COUNTY HOLIDAYS

The Anoka County Veteran Services Office will be closed on the following dates in observance of Federal Holidays:

June 19, 2024 - Juneteenth

July 4, 2024 - Independence Day

September 2, 2024 - Labor Day

November 11, 2024 - Veterans Day

November 28-29, 2024 - Thanksgiving

December 25, 2024 - Christmas Day

ABOUT ANOKA COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES

Our hours of operation are:

Monday - 8:00am - 4:00pm

Tuesday - 8:00am - 4:00pm

Wednesday - 8:00am - 4:00pm

Thursday - 8:00am - 4:00pm

Friday - 8:00am - 3:00pm

Closed on all Federal Holidays

Phone: (763) 324-4500

Fax: (763) 324-1040

Email: veterans@anokacountymn.gov

Website: www.anokacountymn.gov/veterans

*****PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN COUNTY
WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESS TO
ANOKACOUNTYMN.GOV**

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.



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