



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Year Good Time for Veterans to Review, Update Benefits Earned in Service to our Country

*Hundreds of PA Accredited Veteran Service Officers Provide Benefits Review at No
Cost*

Anncville, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) reminds veterans that the start of the New Year it is a good time to meet with a professional to ensure they are receiving or maximizing the benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

“Often times veterans apply for benefits, accept the results and don’t ever check later to see if there are updates that could work in their favor,” said Joel Mutschler, director, Bureau of Veterans Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration, and Outreach. “By meeting with an accredited veteran service officer, veterans can see if a life change or an update to benefit policies may have changed their eligibility. There are numerous accredited veteran service officers and veteran service organizations around the state that are eager to help. In this era of the pandemic a benefits review can take place by phone or virtually.”

Mutschler said safeguarding military paperwork, especially the DD-214, which is used to verify military service, is an important first step for securing benefits.

The easiest way to manage military documents is to make sure they are filed in a safe place immediately upon leaving the military. Veterans often find that filing their documents for free at their county courthouse of record is an easy way to secure them until needed, which can often be decades into the future. Anyone needing assistance locating their military documentation can count on assistance from the DMVA by calling toll-free 800-547-2838 or e-mailing: RA-REQ@pa.gov.

Another key step, says Mutschler, is for veterans to apply for federal health care and state benefits by visiting their local county director of veterans affairs or area accredited veteran service organizations to take a look at what benefits they may be eligible for and to get help applying for those benefits.

A complete list of county directors and their contact information can be found here: [County Directors of Veterans Affairs](#). Contact information for veteran service officers can be found here: [Veteran Service Officers Contact Information](#).

In addition to connecting with a county director or an accredited veteran service organization, Mutschler recommends that every one of Pennsylvania's nearly 800,000 veterans should sign up for the DMVA Veterans Registry, an extremely helpful, free tool that electronically delivers timely information about the many state benefits, programs and services available to veterans. Veterans, family members and people who work with veterans can sign up by computer or mobile device at www.register.dmv.pa.gov.

Mutschler cautions that, "Veterans and their dependents should never pay for help to apply for veteran's benefits because an abundance of free, professional help is available. If someone tries to charge a veteran for this service, the veteran should decline the assistance. There are about 200 veteran service officers in Pennsylvania who work with organizations such as the DMVA, county veterans affairs offices, and several veterans service organizations. They are experienced, trained professionals who provide veterans with the best advice and assistance at no cost."

For more about the DMVA visit us online at www.dmv.pa.gov or follow us at www.facebook.com/padmva or www.twitter.com/padmva.