

**NOBLES COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE  
NEWSLETTER**



This holiday season is a time of giving. Although it is focused on giving and sharing with loved ones, it is always encouraged to be considerate to those who you may not know.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) of Minnesota encourages the public to donate items that will benefit disabled veterans and their families. These items can range from clothing to household items. **Your donation(s) will be considered tax deductible for income taxes.**

There is currently one drop off location in the city of Worthington. It can be found at:

- **Petersen Cleaning Supply 2167 Oxford Street. Worthington, MN**

Feel free to contact this office if you have any questions or visit the DAV website at **[donatedavmn.org](http://donatedavmn.org)**

Thank you!

# **VA PROCESSING CLAIMS FOR GULF WAR VETERANS**

As of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, the Department of Veterans Affairs has started processing disability claims related to particulate matter exposure. They have determined the following conditions as being presumptive:

- Asthma
- Rhinitis
- Sinusitis

These conditions are based on a presumptive basis due to exposure during military service in Southwest Asia and other areas. These conditions will be examined if they manifested within 10 years of a qualifying period of military service.

To be eligible for a potentially successful claim, you must meet the following requirements:

- Served in the Southwest theater of operations beginning August 2, 1990 to the present

OR

- Served in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Syria, or Djibouti beginning on September 19, 2001 to present.

## **FAQ**

**Q: What do you mean by Southwest Asia theaters?**

**A: This area identifies Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and the airspace that covers these regions.**

**If you believe that you qualify, please feel free to contact the Nobles County Veteran Service office at (507) 295-5292 and schedule your appointment today.**

## **VA Offering Course to Enhance Suicide Awareness**

September was Suicide Prevention Month, but the fight to eliminate veteran suicide does not stop upon months end. A recent partnership between the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and the Mental Health Association of New Jersey will be working together in an attempt to reduce these alarming numbers.

The course will offer first aid training to veterans and their family members. It is also available to those who are currently serving as well. The training consists mainly of identifying those who are in crisis and how to go about responding to them in a compassionate manner.

This program is also used as a reintegration tool that assists veterans in the acclimation to civilian life once they have separated from the service. This program is offered nationally at all VA facilities and consists of eight hours in first aid training.

If you are a veteran or know of a veteran who might benefit from this course, please reach out to your nearest VA hospital for more information.



## DAV Transportation Program



**FULFILLING OUR PROMISES**  
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

The Nobles County DAV Transportation Program is here to assist veterans who are in need of transportation to and from their scheduled or paid VA appointments. The program is completely free for the veteran.

Established in 2017, the sole purpose of the program is to assist Southwest Minnesota veterans with access to the medical benefits that they have earned at VA facilities. Through a partnership with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the Veteran Service office provides a donated van that is stationed in Worthington and is coordinated by the Veterans Service Officer (VSO). Veterans who are ambulatory can access this service. Caregivers are welcome to ride along if it is needed.

<b>WHEN SHOULD I SCHEDULE A RIDE?</b>	<b>WHAT IF THE VETERAN IS NON-AMBULATORY?</b>	<b>WHAT IF THE DATES/TIMES CHANGE FOR MY APPOINTMENT(S)?</b>
<b>SCHEDULE YOUR RIDE REQUEST A MINIMUM OF A WEEK IN ADVANCE</b>	<b>WHEELCHAIR BOUND VETERANS CANNOT BE SAFELY TRANSPORTED AND THEY WILL NEED TO CALL THE TRANSPORTATION OFFICE AT THE SIOUX FALLS VA</b>	<b>CALL THE VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE IF THESE CHANGE AND/OR YOU NO LONGER NEED A RIDE</b>

## **Walmart Departs From Tricare Pharmacy Network**

**Effective December 15, 2021, Walmart and Sam's Club will no longer provide discounts for military beneficiaries due to their inability to provide discounts to the populace. There will no longer be any pharmaceutical items discounted, meaning that the veteran will have to pay the full amount. This new move will have an impact on those in the rural areas of the country.**

**On the bright side, CVS Pharmacy has announced that they are re-joining the Tricare Network and should be able to provide the discounts that are offered under Tricare's program. This opens up all of its 10,000+ locations and should assist veterans seeking prescription assistance.**



## Vet Center Support Act

On November 4, 2021, U.S. Senators worked together and introduced a bill that will assist veterans in underserved areas with mental health services. The bill helps with enhancing the recognition and intervention for those who are struggling with mental health.

The bipartisan bill has identified a couple of states who are experiencing inequities, with one being Minnesota. According to the proposed bill, Minnesota currently has three Veteran Centers (two in the Twin Cities; one in Duluth). The current ballpark population has estimated that Minnesota has roughly around 321,000 veterans residing in the state, making that one veteran center for over 107,000 veterans.

The purpose of a Vet Center is to take up the spaces that are not covered by the VA and other private health care sectors. Areas in rural areas are a primary example of this. The center assists in providing community care, including mental health counseling and assisting service members with acclimating to civilian life following separation from their military service.



## GWOT Challenge Coins

In recognition of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, this office will be, for a limited time only, distributing challenge coins to veterans who have been deployed as part of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

If you are a veteran who has served this nation since that tragic day, please stop by this office and I will give you your free coin. Again, these supplies are limited and are only around for a short time. You also have the option to register online as well (information below).

### Commemorative Coin available to GWOT Veterans

In recognition of the 20th Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and subsequent Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has created a commemorative coin as an expression of appreciation to Minnesota Veterans who have served since that fateful day. These coins are a limited edition and available for a short time.



Minnesota GWOT Veterans are invited to register for this **free** coin by visiting: <https://bit.ly/GWOTvetcoin>. Coins will be distributed by County Veterans Services Officers.

