



County of Sacramento

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sacramento County Veterans Service Office Reaches Out to Local Vets

One-on-one assistance and referral services available for veterans

Sacramento, CA -- As Veterans Day approaches, the Sacramento County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) is reaching out to community members to ask for their help in connecting county veterans with services.

Established in 1943, the Sacramento CVSO is an access point to federal and state veterans' programs. Veterans Claims Representatives connect local veterans with benefits ranging from financial compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs to locally-administered social service programs and resources.

"There are hundreds of programs and benefits available to veterans, and many don't realize they are eligible," said Paul Lake, director of Sacramento County's Department of Human Assistance that administers the CVSO. "Our office is ready to assist veterans in learning what benefits are available to them and to help them fill out the necessary paperwork to apply for these benefits."

In 2010, the CVSO helped an estimated 5,000 local veterans and their family members; filed 1,788 claims, captured \$2.6 million in retroactive benefits; \$320,756 in monthly payments; \$217,121 in lump sum payments; and \$3.3 million in college fee waivers.

Ted Canty, Sacramento County's Veterans Service Officer, said his office is seeing more veterans of the Iraq or Afghanistan engagements, however, most new referrals are aging veterans of the Vietnam War or World War II. The majority of these are Vietnam veterans who may be unaware that they can file claims for post-traumatic stress disorder or that a chronic condition can be attributed to chemicals they were exposed to while deployed.

Elderly World War II veterans are the second largest group of service seekers. Many are either homebound or in long-term care, entirely unaware of the continuum of services available to them. In addition, the number of women veterans seeking services is steadily increasing.

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"As a veteran and former dependent of a veteran, our goal is to increase awareness of veterans programs and the number of applications filed by veterans and their families," said Canty.

In addition to serving as navigators, County Veterans Service staff fills a much-needed advocacy role. They have helped veterans find the documentation needed to substantiate a claim, sometimes involving in-depth research, persistence, and interactions with various agencies from the Department of Defense to a local doctor's office.

The Sacramento County Veterans Service Office is located at 2007 19th Street (between T and U Streets), Sacramento, CA 95818. For assistance or to make an appointment, call (916) 874-6811 Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information online, go to www.dhweb.saccounty.net/Veterans/index.htm.

Veterans of all ages may be eligible for a range of services and benefits, compensation, pensions, and medical services. They may also receive in-home care, vocational counseling, home loans and college fee waivers for their dependents. To learn more about veteran services and benefits, visit the Department of Veterans Affairs at www.va.gov.

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