

Buckley SFB, CO - RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO) NEWSLETTER - July 2022

18401 East A-Basin Ave, Stop 95, Buckley AFB, CO 80011

Building 606, Room 104, phone **720-847-6693**, e-mail address: **460sw.rao.org@us.af.mil**

Normal Hrs: Mon 1000-1600, Tues 0800-1200, Wed 0900-1400, Thurs 0830-1500 & Fri 0900-1200

Director: Steve Young, Lt Col, USAF, Ret

RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO) LOCATION: We are in Rm 104 of Bldg 606, close to the main building entrance. As you come in the main entrance, turn left, enter the first hallway on your right and Rm 104 is the first room on your left. Remember, we assist military retirees from **all** Services!

RAO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: We currently have only 8 permanent RAO volunteers that support our “Help Desk” (720-847-6693) which, when all volunteers are available, means the office has someone present during some hours of the morning and/or afternoon Mon-Fri. You can leave a voice mail anytime, and we check Voice Mails frequently to return calls. **We still have open time slots during the week and need more volunteers. If you think you might be interested, or just have questions, please contact me (Steve Young) at my home e-mail - elkfive@centurylink.net.**

COVID-19 IMPACTS ON BUCKLEY AFB: 🚫 FACE MASKS MANDATORY INDOORS 🚫

Buckley SFB requires indoor masking for all personnel and visitors, in all facilities across the installation, regardless of vaccination status. We will continue to monitor the CDC COVID-19 Community Level Tracker and look to revisit the masking requirement after a return to the “MEDIUM” category or lower.

For the most current info on base facilities and additional details on **days/hours**, etc. please check the Buckley AFB and 460 FSS FaceBook (FB) pages and Buckley AFB website.

<https://www.facebook.com/BuckleySpaceForceBase/>

<https://www.460fss.com/>

MPF Bldg 606 ID card service hours are: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 0800 to 1500; Wed 0800-1200

MPF Call Center: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri: 1200-1500; 720-847-4357, Option 2 (Questions or make appts)

Retiree & Dependent ID Cards (Appts Only)

- MPF will be closed on 1 July, 4 July, 13 July and 2 September and 5 September
- The AF MPF in Bldg 606 will be open on Saturday, 30 July, 0900-1200 to issue ID cards - need to call for appt.

To find the ID facility nearest you and make an appointment online please go to the RAPIDS Site Locator at the following link: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/#/>

Once you get to the RAPIDS site, click on the “ID Card Office Locator & Appointments” Continue box. The page that comes up should default to the “Search for Site by Address” tab. Ensure “All” is selected under the “Search For” area, then enter your zip code in the “Enter Location” area, select an entry from the “Radius” drop-down menu, and click on the “Search” box. A list of sites will pop up and then you can select “More Info” for the site you want to use, and the “Schedule an Appointment” block. A calendar will come up for that site where you can scroll through the months on the calendar to see when appointments are available. During the pandemic some locations may not show any appointments available. When you pick a day with appointments you will see a list of the times available for that day below the calendar and you can pick the one you want and click on “Book This Appointment.” **Just FYI, you will typically find more online appointments available on the 140th ANG and NOSC sites - both on Buckley SFB - than at the MPF in Bldg 606.**

OBSERVANCES IN JULY: 4 - Independence Day; 25 - Hire a Veteran Day; 27 - National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day; 28 - National Buffalo Soldier’s Day; 29 - Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary.

DFAS SMARTDOC PUSH ABOUT COLORADO RAOs: The Defense Finance & Accounting Service (DFAS) has the capability to target e-mails they send out by zip codes. Last Nov we requested they send out an e-mail to every military retiree and annuitant in Colorado they had an e-mail address for. I coordinated the text I wanted in the e-mail with the Peterson SFB and USAFA RAOs and the message went out on 23 Nov 2021. My guess is this was the first time this was **ever** done, and the e-mail reached over 45k military retirees/annuitants in CO. This was a huge deal for us as we in the RAO could now be sure we have reached out to every CO military retiree/annuitant that DFAS can contact to let them know we exist and how to contact us if they need assistance. The e-mail provided folks with info on what the RAO does, contact info for each RAO, Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) info and a few links to DFAS websites (Gray Area Reservists, etc.) I have asked DFAS to send out another one of these e-mails, virtually identical to the last one, in July. So, if you have a good e-mail address on file with DFAS you should see the e-mail from them regarding Colorado RAOs. If you don't get this e-mail we recommend you contact DFAS and provide them with your e-mail address.

2023 COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) OUTLOOK: The economic indicator responsible for setting the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for military retirees, disabled veterans, Social Security recipients, and others continues to edge upward and point toward a significant adjustment in 2023 to combat inflation.

The March Consumer Price Index for Urban and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), a figure released in Apr, was 1.52% higher than the Feb number, and the largest Feb-to-Mar jump for CPI-W since at least 1978. While the figures determining the annual COLA won't be set until later this year, predictions point to a major increase from last year's 5.9% COLA. Some groups put the predicated increase in the 8% - 9% range. If those predications hold, it would be the third-largest COLA since 1975, behind an 11.2% increase in Jan 1982 and a 14.3% boost in 1981. No other increases have topped 10%.

ESTATE PLANNING: Many people may think "estate planning" is only applicable to the very wealthy and or the elderly. However, an argument could be made that everyone, regardless of their net worth, should have an estate plan, not just to preserve their assets, but also to protect their family and take care of themselves. Many people already have a will, but a comprehensive estate plan goes beyond that and will include beneficiary designations, durable powers of attorney for finance and health care, a living will, and possibly a trust. Here are a few reasons why you may want to consider an estate plan.

- A will may not cover all your property. A will is a legal document directing the distribution of your assets after your death. It can also include instructions on other matters, such as designating a guardian for your minor children or naming an executor for your estate. It's a good foundation for an estate plan, but it may not address all your assets. For insurance policies and retirement plans, for instance, the beneficiary is designated on the account itself, not through the will.
- Your family situation may be complicated. Complex family dynamics could mean a will may not ensure all your wishes are carried out. You may need to create a living trust, which is a legal structure that holds your assets. Trusts can have specific instructions for how you want to distribute assets to various beneficiaries, and they can restrict how and when beneficiaries can use the assets they receive. If you have a special needs child, a trust can help take care of your child and allow them to remain eligible for means-tested public benefits.
- You want to avoid probate. Probate is the legal process that takes place after someone dies. Even if you have a will, your heirs will have to go through probate to prove the will is valid, identify and inventory the assets included in it, pay debts and taxes, and distribute the property. The process is different in every state, but it can be lengthy and costly. I can give you one personal example. When my mother-in-law passed away in NH, she had a simple will and the only assets she had were an ~100 old home and small checking account in her local bank. My wife and her brother were her only kids and my wife's brother was the executor of the will. While there was nothing contested at all between them, it took a **year** to "settle" that "estate"! With a trust, it's possible to avoid probate altogether. While probate is a public process - and after death, a will is a public document - a trust can keep your affairs private.

- You want input on who will make your health care and financial decisions. A will won't become effective until you die. So, if you become incapacitated and want someone to be able to make medical and/or financial decisions for you, you are going to need separate medical and financial powers of attorney. A medical power of attorney grants someone the authority to make medical decisions on your behalf if you become incapacitated. This might be used in conjunction with a living will, which documents your end-of-life preferences. A financial power of attorney can appoint an agent to make financial decisions, including paying bills or managing real estate and other assets, in a similar situation. These powers of attorney can be "durable," meaning that they are in effect once they are signed, or "springing," meaning they become effective only when a certain level of incapacity has been reached.

- You want to spare your heirs a big tax bill. While the federal estate tax exemption is currently very high (in the millions) some states impose inheritance or estate taxes of their own, which may have lower limits that could impact even modest estates. A living trust doesn't reduce estate taxes, but another type of trust, called an irrevocable trust, might. Charitable trusts may also be a way to reduce the tax burden while donating to a favorite cause.

The bottom line is, even with a modest "estate", there may well be some aspects of estate planning that apply to you.

SOME POTENTIAL RESOURCES FOR OLDER RETIREES: Below are several resources that may be of interest to older retirees and surviving spouses.

VA Aid and Attendance: Also known as housebound allowance, VA Aid and Attendance might be able to provide a monthly financial benefit to assist with personal care services. There are various financial and physical criteria that must be met. A local veteran services organizations, or a Veteran Service Officer (VSO), is a great place to get neutral information and support. For a local VSO, visit [County Veterans Service Offices | Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs](#)

Geriatric Care Managers: These are social workers for hire who can be on a retained contract or situational contract in case of emergency needs. Their experience can help you navigate insurance coverage, emergency services, or placement recommendations if you are looking into senior living locations.

Board-Certified Elder Law Attorney: Often attorneys will list that they offer estate and/or elder law specialties. This is an important area in that "what you don't know will hurt you." A board-certified elder law attorney has a higher level of training and expertise to deal with issues more common to the older population.

Denver Regional Council of Governments - Area Agency on Aging: [Area Agency on Aging | DRCOG](#)

Senior Source: See info at the following link - [Colorado Senior Resources - SeniorResource.com](#)

Older Adults and State Unit on Aging: See the following website [Older adult services | Colorado Department of Human Services](#)

VA DISABILITY BENEFITS CLAIMS ASSISTANCE ON BUCKLEY SFB: On **Tuesday, 19 Jul**, from **1300-1600** in Building 606, Room 140, on Buckley SFB, there will personnel available to help you file a VA disability benefit claim. You can just show up and walk in, no registration is required. If you are discharging from the military within 90-180 days, bring a copy of your medical records, your marriage certificate and your children's birth certificates and they can do the rest. This event is held every month on Buckley. If you have questions, or want to know dates for future events, you can call the Airmen and Guardian Family Readiness Center at 720-847-6681.

NEW COMMISSARY HOURS: Starting on Monday, 4 Jul, the commissary will now be open on Mondays once again, so open 7 days/week. **The Monday hours are only from 0900-1400 and it will be self-checkout only - only the self-checkout registers will be open, accepting credit/debit/cash payments.** If you have any questions, you can contact the commissary (720-847-7100). **Commissary hours on other days are as follows: Tues 0900-1900 and Wed-Sun 0900-1800.**

ARMY ECHOES: The May-Jul 2022 issue of Army Echoes can be found at the link below. This document is the Army version of the Air Force “Afterburner” and has lots of great articles, website links, phone numbers, etc.

<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/echoes/latest.pdf> Links to all the Service newsletters are on the Buckley SFB RAO website.

DFAS RETIREE NEWSLETTER FOR JUNE: The June Retiree Newsletter published by the Defense Finance & Accounting Service (DFAS) should be available at the following link, under “Latest News”: [Retired Military & Annuitants \(dfas.mil\)](#) These newsletters are typically filled with very useful information for military retirees and surviving spouses so we encourage you to look them over.

TRICARE FOR GUARD/RESERVE PERSONNEL: When it comes to TRICARE, Guard and Reserve (G/R) choices can be more complicated than choosing between TRICARE Prime and Select (P/S). When activated for more than 30 days, G/R members and their families become eligible for **all** TRICARE programs and the costs will mirror the costs for active duty servicemembers and their families.

While serving as a drilling G/R member, and not covered by the Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) program, members and their families are eligible for **TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) and TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)**. Members in the Individual Ready Reserve (including Navy Reserve Voluntary Training Units) do not qualify to purchase TRS. TRS costs, while higher than TRICARE P/S, are still significantly lower than the average employer provided health care plan. In addition to the monthly premiums and annual deductible, TRS enrollees will incur coinsurance payments for health care services after the deductible has been met. Enrollment fees, annual deductible, and copays apply to the catastrophic cap; monthly premiums do not.

Gray Area retirees (GARs) are G/R members who have qualified for retired pay, have retired from their service (stopped drilling), but are **not** yet eligible for retired pay (typically at age 60). GARs may be eligible for retired pay prior to reaching age 60, but TRICARE P/S eligibility is not attained until the G/R member reaches age 60 and retirement processing has been completed by service and pay agency (DFAS or Coast Guard) and is reflected in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

GARs without an employer-provided health care plan have **TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR)** as an option until reaching age 60. TRR is not cheap, but may well be less expensive than finding a plan on the government or open market exchanges.

G/R retirees and their spouses remain eligible for TRICARE P/S programs until individually reaching age 65 when they “age out” of TRICARE and must enroll in Medicare. Like active-duty retirees, once enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B beneficiaries are eligible for TRICARE for Life (TFL).

Plan Costs

TRICARE Reserve Select

- Enrollment fee/premiums: \$46.70/month individual; \$229.99/month family
- Annual deductible, E-1 to E-4: \$56 individual; \$112 family
- Annual deductible, E-5 and above: \$168 individual; \$336 family

TRICARE Retired Reserve

- Enrollment fee/premiums: \$502.32/month individual; \$1,206.59/month family

- Annual deductible (network): \$168 individual; \$336 family

NEW VETERANS BURIAL SITES PLANNED: The VA is pushing for funding to open four new burial sites within the next two years, two columbaria (room/building for funeral urns with cremated remains) and two rural cemeteries that eventually can entomb 310,000 veterans or family members.

The four sites are in New York City; Indianapolis; Elko, Nevada; and Cedar City, Utah, and it will cost the VA \$3 million next year to ensure that they will open and be staffed within the next two years.

The New York site in Queens and the Indiana site are part of the VA's Urban Initiative effort, which looks to provide columbarium-only locations for cremated bodies in city centers with few in-ground burial options. Under the Urban Initiative, the VA has plans to build facilities in five cities across the country. In addition to NY and Indianapolis, the other three are Los Angeles (the only one currently open), Chicago and San Francisco.

Among the eight new national cemeteries in rural areas, the VA has dedicated and opened six, with the Elko, Nevada, and Cedar City, Utah, the two sites remaining.

The National Cemetery Administration, or NCA, started these projects to ensure that veterans have "reasonable access" for burial, with either a state or national cemetery within 75 miles of their homes.

VA officials also have requested \$9.4 million for 2023 for existing cemeteries that are facing "workload increases and project expansions." The VA estimates that 570,000 veterans will die in 2022, and roughly 136,500 of those will be buried in VA cemeteries. In 2018, the VA had 3.7 million gravesites with that number expected to reach 4.2 million in 2023.

As part of its budget proposal, the VA has asked Congress for legislation that would allow it to designate parts of cemeteries as "green burial sections," where veterans could choose to have their gravesites marked by means other than upright headstones or choose to be buried without a vault.

DD-214s FOR CO NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL: For discharged/retired Colorado Army and Air National Guard personnel the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) should be able to provide a copy of any paperwork in their record (DD-214s etc.). You can call or fill out a digital request for these documents. Personnel File general inquiries should be sent to archives@dmva.state.co.us For additional information and instructions on how to submit requests you can visit the website at [Services | Department of Military and Veterans Affairs \(colorado.gov\)](#) There are other ways to get copies of your records as well, such as the National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/locations>), milConnect ([milConnect \(osd.mil\)](#)), etc.

DOD INSTRUCTION 1336.01 - CERTIFICATE OF UNIFORMED SERVICE (DD FORM 214/5 SERIES): On 17 Feb 2022 the Department of Defense (DoD) published an update to DoD Instruction 1336.01, Certificate of Uniformed Service (DD Form 214/215 Series). According to the instruction, this will provide "The uniformed services member, excluding members of the Commissioned Corps of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, ... with a clear, concise summary of each discrete period of active service, and Reserve Component service as applicable, with the uniformed services at the time of transfer between Services, release, discharge, transfer to another component of a Service, or other change of status. This includes relevant data regarding the member's service and the circumstances of termination, except as limited in this issuance." My understanding is this should provide all National Guard and Reserve Component Service members with Federally recognized service documents that will encompass their entire service time and allow them to access the Veteran benefits and entitlements they have earned. I've been told they have three years to phase this in.

VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) HOME HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS: The VA offers quite a few different programs related to home health care for veterans, and also some geared toward support of the veteran caregiver in the home. To qualify for any of these programs the veteran must first be registered with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). To get registered for VHA and enroll in the system, you need a copy of your DD-214, a completed VA Form 10-10EZ (Application for Health Benefits) and a valid ID. No medical records are necessary. If the veteran does not have a DD-214 one can be requested with the help of a Veteran Service Officer (VSO), the National Archives, or other avenue.

There are some general numbers at the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center you can call for assistance in this area. For a **new** home healthcare (HHC) request, you should start with your primary care team - their main number is 303-399-8020, Option 2. If you already have HHC and want to talk to the HHC Coordinators, they can be reached at 303-329-8500.

Below is a general list of these programs we got from the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center. We have a paper summarizing each of these programs if you are interested.

Community Adult Day Healthcare (CADHC) Program (Vet's Club); Community Living Center (CLC); Community Nursing Home (CNH) Program; State Veterans Home (SVH); Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) Social Work: Denver Metro and Southern Colorado (2 locations); Medical Foster Home (MFH) Program; Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Program; Tele Geriatrics; Tele Palliative Care; and Veteran Directed Care (VDC) Program.

NEW VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS: Since 2021 the Department of Veterans Affairs has begun processing service-connected disability claims for six new presumptive conditions related to environmental exposures during military service. In May 2021, VA started implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of medical conditions presumptively associated with exposure to Agent Orange. A few months later VA added asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis) on a presumptive basis based on particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and certain other areas.

Any Veteran who was previously denied service-connection for any of these six conditions, but had symptoms manifest within 10 years of military service, would need to file a supplemental claim. Officials advise using VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim, when filing. The claim form should include the name of the condition and specify that the condition is being claimed because of in-service exposure to environmental hazards. We would suggest anyone wishing to file such a claim contact a local Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for assistance. For more information about VA benefits and eligibility, or how to file a claim, veterans and survivors can visit VA's website at <http://www.va.gov> (or call toll-free at 1-800-827-1000), contact one of the Veterans Benefits Advisors on Buckley SFB or reach out to a local VSO.

TRICARE QUALIFYING LIFE EVENTS (QLEs): When life changes for TRICARE beneficiaries, their health plan options may also change. These types of changes are called TRICARE Qualifying Life Events, or QLEs. A QLE may allow families to enroll in or change their health plan coverage outside the normal open enrollment season. A **toolkit** is now available with QLE information and resources, including graphics, screensavers, Q&As, TRICARE 101, a video, and more. These tools can help answer many questions you might have about QLEs, from what they are to what actions need to be taken. Here is a link to the Toolkit on the Military Health System website: [Qualifying Life Events Toolkit | Health.mil](#)

BURN PIT BILL AIMS TO EXPAND VA ACCESS FOR POST-9/11 VETERANS: The bipartisan Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act, passed by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs (SVAC) on 2 Feb, would expand VA eligibility to about 1 million Post-9/11 combat veterans, with the goal of improving access to treatment for conditions stemming from toxic exposure. The bill would open VA health care eligibility for

these veterans from five years after discharge to 10 and would also allow for a one-year open enrollment period for any Post-9/11 combat veterans outside that 10-year window. The bill is the first in a three-phase plan to expand benefits. The second phase would involve the creation of a “new, transparent process” for the VA in determining what illnesses can be presumptively connected to toxic exposure, while the third phase would provide “overdue benefits to thousands of toxic exposure veterans who have been long ignored or forgotten.” The bill also requires several studies related to toxic exposure, including one on mortality rates of veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Persian Gulf War. It would increase VA reporting requirements and outreach efforts on toxic exposure and require the VA provide a toxic exposure screening for all veterans during medical visits.

2022 U.S. ARMY RETIRED SOLDIER HANDBOOK: Produced by Army Retirement Services, the 2022 U.S. Army Retired Soldier Handbook is available for download as a PDF document from the Army Retirement Services website at https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/static/Post/2022_ArmyRetSoldierHandbk.pdf

ARMY GRAY AREA RETIREMENTS (GARs): Army Human Resources Command (HRC) services Retired USAR and ARNG Soldiers processing retirement pay packets and family members with RCSBP. You can reach them at (888) 276-9472 or (502) 613-8950. You can download retirement applications at: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/asset/19367> or email your request to usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-ask-hrc@army.mil The HRC-GAR website is at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/content/Gray%20Area%20Retirements%20Branch>

NAVY RESERVE RETIREMENT TRANSITION OUTREACH EVENTS: Navy Personnel Command’s Retirement Transition Outreach (RTO) provides information to Navy Reserve members on the processes and benefits of reserve retirement. Members of the Navy Reserve Component and their spouses at all milestones toward full retirement with pay are invited to attend a FY22 RTO event. Attendance is not mandatory for Reserve members prior to approval of a retirement request. See below for an updated schedule as well as directions for how to register for an available FY22 RTO event.

Reserve Retirement Counseling Session (RRCS): preferred format for most current SELRES, VTU, and IRR.
Sat.-Sun., Sept. 10-11, 2022, 0800 PST
Wed., Sept. 14, 2022, 0800 CST

Reserve Retirement Waypoint (RRW) Events: preferred for those retiring with pay within two years.
Tues., Sept. 20, 2022, 1800 CST

Register here:

FY22 RTO Registration via FLANK SPEED Microsoft Forms: <https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/iukurzfztP>
Or, email the RTO Team to request registration for a specific FY22 RTO event: pers-9_RTO@us.navy.mil

Registration will be limited to 150 participants per event. Top priority will be given to Navy Reserve members who will be eligible for retirement with pay in less than 24 months, and to currently serving members who will soon reach their notice of eligibility milestone (20 qualifying years). The RTO event team will provide event joining link and instructions, plus read-ahead materials, via email to registered participants prior to the event. Please note, questions about individual records or request packages will not be addressed by the RTO team including during events.

Please visit the RTO webpage on MyNavy HR for more information about RTO events:
<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Reserve-Personnel-Mgmt/Reserve-Retirements/Retirement-Transition-Outreach/>

PHARMACY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED & LINE RECOMMENDATIONS: The Buckley SFB Pharmacy is in dire need of volunteers, and they asked me to advertise that in our newsletter. Volunteers will need to be fully vaccinated and may need to complete some training. Anyone interested in more information can **call the**

pharmacy at (720) 847-9355 (Option 4, then Option 3) to inquire or to get started. In addition, for those who have trouble standing while waiting for a prescription pick-up in the lobby, they highly recommend you use the drive thru. Prior to COVID, the drive-thru was strictly pick-up only but that is no longer the case. Everything you need from the pharmacy can now be accomplished using the drive thru.

PHARMACY HOURS: As of 1 Jan, the pharmacy implemented the following new hours: Mon-Fri 0800-1700. In addition, they will be **closed** on the second Wed of each month for a Training Day (13 July for this month).

When there is delayed reporting for non-mission essential personnel the pharmacy will open 30 minutes **after** the Report No Earlier Than time. Please remember holidays, family days, etc. can impact these hours so you can always check the Buckley SFB Facebook page for the latest info on hours. **For July the pharmacy is also closed on 1 July (family day), 4 July (Holiday) and they will close at 1500 on 12 July.**

PHARMACY - PATIENT ADVOCATE E-MAIL ADDRESS: As you know, pharmacy patient advocates are available to hear your comments and concerns related to pharmacy operations. There are forms available in the pharmacy for you to submit comments to them, but with the pandemic you don't have access to those. The pharmacy has established an e-mail inbox for the patient advocates so you can now e-mail them directly at the pharmacy patient advocate org box: usaf.buckley.460sw-mdg.mbx.pharmacy-patient-advocate@mail.mil .

MY AIR FORCE BENEFITS WEBSITE: While the site is mainly focused on active-duty folks, there is a **lot** of information on there of interest to retirees/surviving spouses as well. The site has about 180 fact sheets on various benefits and a section for "Transition and Retirement Planning." If you look under the "Benefit Library" tab (top left of the page), and click on the "Resource Locator" link, you can then click on CO (or any other state) to see a wealth of information on resources in your state (with base specific resources as well). I strongly encourage you to check out this website. [Home | An Official Air Force Benefits Website \(af.mil\)](http://Home | An Official Air Force Benefits Website (af.mil))

LEGAL OFFICE OPEN FOR "LIMITED SERVICES" FOR RETIREES & DEPENDENTS: Legal is once again providing **limited** legal assistance services for military retirees and their dependents. **Wills for retirees and dependents will only be done on Wednesdays and Thursdays of each week from 1300 to 1500 and you must have an appointment.** For notary services and powers of attorney, walk-ins for retirees are available on Mon-Thurs from 0800-1200. Retirees have the option of conducting their legal assistance appointment by telephone or in person. Legal expects the will appointments to fill up very quickly and they will **not** have a "waitlist." Thus, legal may ask that retirees call back in 2-3 weeks to check for open appointments once they are booked for several weeks. **Prior to scheduling an appointment for a will, medical directive or power of attorney, legal will require a ticket # or worksheet, as well as your DoD ID Number** which is located in the lower right front of the old (DD Fm 2) ID card (10-digit number). You can obtain a ticket # from the AF legal assistance website at [U.S. Air Force Legal Assistance \(AFLASS\)](http://U.S. Air Force Legal Assistance (AFLASS)) when you go to the site to fill out the required information for whatever document it is you want completed. **If you call legal to make an appointment, they will not give you an appointment unless you have the ticket number issued by the website.** For any questions call base legal at 720-847-6444.

HOW TO CREATE A MYPAY ACCOUNT WITH DEFENSE FINANCE & ACCOUNTING SERVICE (DFAS): If you don't have a MyPay account with DFAS I recommend you create one. With your own account you can download your Form 1099 for taxes, print a copy of your Retiree Account Statement (RAS), set up beneficiaries for Arrears of Pay, update your mailing and e-mail address, adjust federal and state withholding for taxes, etc. You start by requesting an initial password on the myPay homepage ([myPay Web Site \(dfas.mil\)](http://myPay Web Site (dfas.mil))) using the "Forgot or Need a Password" link. The password will be mailed to the address you have on file with DFAS and you will receive it in about 10 business days. Once you receive your password in the mail, you return to the myPay homepage and log in with your social security number and the password you received in the mail to create your myPay profile. DFAS has a downloadable step-by-step Get Started Guide to myPay on their website and a how-to video on the DFAS YouTube channel. For additional info on obtaining a MyAccount you can visit: <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/manage/mypay/>

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR VETERANS: Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (A/D Works!) Workforce Center is a member of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and provides a variety of no-cost services to veteran job seekers; resources and workshops for a self-directed job search, one-on-one employment counseling, customizing resumes, referrals to other state and federal agencies and training assistance. For more information you can visit their website at <http://www.adworks.org/> Just FYI, there is an A/D Works! Veterans Employment Specialist that works several days a week in Bldg 606 on base (when non-mission essential personnel are allowed back in their offices on Buckley AFB). For more info you can also contact the AD Works! Call Center at (303) 636-1160 and ask to be contacted to a Veterans Employment Team Member.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED UNSATISFACTORY SERVICE FROM THE RAO? We are staffed completely with volunteers who do their very best to help with your issues. While we always strive to provide you with the best possible support, we realize there may be times you experience what you consider to be unsatisfactory customer service when you contact the RAO. Perhaps you never received a response to a voice mail/e-mail you left, you got inaccurate information regarding a question you had or the person who helped you was unable to provide an adequate answer to your question. **If you are ever dissatisfied with the support you get from the RAO please contact the RAO Director to discuss the situation.** The best way to reach me is via my home e-mail - elkfive@centurylink.net.

DENVER VA REGIONAL BENEFITS OFFICE HOURS & LOCATIONS: *Do you have a question about your VA Benefits? Compensation Claim, Pension Claim, Aid and Attendance, Appeals, survivor and burial benefits, Home Loans, Employment, or Education*

The VBA Office in the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center is holding office hours:

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (last appt. at 3:30 p.m.)

Phone: [\(800\) 827-1000](tel:(800)827-1000)

Location:

Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

1700 North Wheeling Street

Aurora, CO 80045

Sign up to meet with a counselor in the Pharmacy waiting room.

We also have a Veterans Affairs Office on Buckley SFB in Bldg 606 with Benefits Advisors (Mr Tyrone Groce & Ms Deloris Evans) who can normally be reached at 720-847-4838 from Mon-Fri 0800 - 1600.

LIFE CHANGING EVENT? KEEP DFAS INFORMED: Ensuring your retired pay comes to you accurately and on time is the primary goal at DFAS. To do this, they need your help to keep your account up to date.

Keeping your account up to date includes making sure your mailing address, banking information, allotments, tax withholding status, and your beneficiary choices are current. Be sure to report any change of life events as soon as they happen. These life-changing events include:

- Marriage
- Divorce
- Death of a spouse or child
- Birth or adoption of a child

Some changes, especially those regarding SBP, have a one-year time limit, so it is very important that DFAS is notified of life-changing events when they happen. When you notify them, be sure to include supporting documents, such as birth or marriage certificates. Keeping your contact information updated is also key to staying informed. DFAS occasionally sends out correspondence regarding changes in the law that affect your pay, and a new Retired Account Statement (RAS) is sent when your net pay changes (unless you are on **myPay** where the new RAS is available online). **If your mailing address is not correct and you are not on myPay, they have no way of notifying you about changes. The easiest way to stay up to date is to use myPay. You can use**

myPay to change your mailing address, your direct deposit information, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage, certain allotments and your tax withholding status. You can create a myPay account at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/>

Reporting the Death of a Retiree

Do your loved ones know who to contact in the event of your death? Casualty Assistance Representatives (CARs) stand ready to lend a hand with your casualty assistance needs. Call them for an appointment to talk about what you should have ready for your loved ones in the event of your passing. **If you are not sure who your AF Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) is, you can call 877-353-6807, enter your zip code, and you will be automatically transferred to the base CAR responsible for your area.**

Buckley SFB Casualty Assistance Office (Loretta Lopez) - CAR/SBP Rep 720-847-6946

Retired Air Force.....	1-877-353-6807
Retired Army.....	1-800-626-3317
Retired Coast Guard.....	1-800-772-8724
Retired Marines.....	1-800-847-1597
Retired Navy.....	1-800-368-3202
Retired Civil Service.....	1-888-767-6738
Receiving VA Compensation.....	1-800-827-1000
Social Security Administration.....	1-800-772-1213

AFTERBURNER: Air Force Retiree Services (AFRS) at Randolph AFB, TX publishes the Afterburner twice a year. You can find copies of the Afterburner at the following link:
<https://www.retirees.af.mil/library/afterburner/>

This newsletter is a RAO publication for retirees, annuitants and surviving spouses. Content is not to be construed as the official view of, or endorsement by, the RAO, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Air Force.