

**Buckley SFB, CO - RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE (RAO) NEWSLETTER - May 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@spaceforce.mil**

**Normal Hrs:** Mon 1000-1600, Tues 0800-1200, Wed 0900-1400, Thurs 0830-1400 & 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](mailto:elkfive@centurylink.net).**

**COVID-19 IMPACTS ON BUCKLEY AFB:** Due to the low levels of COVID-19 transmissions on Buckley SFB and the surrounding counties, the installation has transitioned to HPCON Alpha. Buckley SFB Public Health Directive #22-3 is now effective. **Mask wear is no longer required for DoD personnel or visitors on Buckley SFB (including the gym) but is still required in all Medical Group facilities** regardless of vaccination status. **The base has directed that 100% of non-mission essential personnel can now report to work on base.** 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)**

- Agent Letter (allows others to shop commissary, BX, etc for retirees not able to - **walk-ins OK!**)
- **In May the AF MPF in Bldg 606 will be open on Saturday, 21 May, 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 140<sup>th</sup> ANG and NOSC sites - both on Buckley SFB - than at the MPF in Bldg 606.**

**OBSERVANCES IN MAY:** 1 - Silver Star Service Banner Day; 6 - Military Spouses Appreciation Day; 8 - VE Day; 21 - Armed Forces Day; 22 - Maritime Day.

**DENVER VETERANS JOB FAIR:** On Thursday, 5 May, there is a Veterans Job Fair at Empower Field at Mile High from 1100-1500. The event is sponsored by the DAV and RecruitMilitary and as of this writing there are over 50 vendors registered to attend. You can get additional information, and register to attend, at the following link: [Find a job at the Denver Veterans Job Fair 2022-05-05 | RecruitMilitary](#)

**OLDER ADULT WELLNESS FAIR - LAKEWOOD:** On Friday, 20 May, from 0815-1330, an Older Adult Wellness Fair will be held at the Charles Whitlock Recreation Center in Lakewood. You can learn about local resources and services at this free event. Over 40 vendors will be attending to share resources for ages 55+. This event is open to older adults, caregivers and family members. Registration is recommended but not required and you can sign up on the following website: [Older Adult Wellness Fair - City of Lakewood](#) For more information you can call 303-987-4800.

**SENIOR LIFE EXPO - DOUGLAS COUNTY:** On Thursday, 30 June, from 1300-1700 at the Douglas County Events Center there is a free Senior Life Expo. You can meet with senior organizations and businesses associated with housing, home care, insurance, transportation, estate planning, assistance and services, etc. There will be seminars on vision and hearing loss, senior living, insurance, navigating senior care, long-term health care, etc. This even is organized by the Castle Rock Senior Activity Center - 303-688-9498.

**SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICES RESTORE IN-PERSON VISITS:** As of 7 Apr, Social Security offices restored in person services, including for people without an appointment. They strongly encourage people who can to continue using their online services at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), call them, or schedule appointments in advance rather than walking in without an appointment. Those without appointments may well encounter delays and longer wait times. Offices tend to be the busiest first thing in the morning, early in the week, and during the early part of the month.

These offices are continuing to require some safety measures including masking, physical distancing, and self-health checks for COVID-19 symptoms. They will provide masks to the public and employees if they need them.

As social security transitions to a new modern phone system, some people may experience a busy signal or be unintentionally disconnected from their call. They recommend people call when their National 800 Number may be less busy, such as before 1000 or after 1600 local time or later in the week. As with the offices, phone waits are generally shorter later in the month.

**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](mailto: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 \(osd.mil\)](http://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.

**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.

**NAVY SHIFT COLORS:** The **Spring-Summer 2022 issue** of Shift Colors can be found at the link below. This document is the Navy version of the Air Force "Afterburner" and has lots of great articles, website links, phone numbers, etc. [Shift Colors \(navy.mil\)](http://www.navy.mil) Links to all the Service newsletters are on the Buckley SFB RAO website.

**NEWCOMER FUNERAL HOME PRE-PLANNING WORKSHOP:** On Thursday, 12 May, at 0900 and 1200 Newcomer Funeral Home is offering a pre-planning workshop on funeral needs at the Sunrise Sunset restaurant in Lakewood. You can get breakfast or lunch on them, and the workshop is free. They would like you to register for the event so they can get a headcount and you can do that using the following link:

<https://www.newcomerdenver.com/Event/workshop512>

**COMMISSARY/EXCHANGE PARKING LOT WORK:** Many of you probably recall the base started a project last year to take care of holes, cracks, etc. in the parking lot by the commissary and Exchange which had large portion of the parking lot blocked off and led to fairly lengthy walks to get to the pharmacy, commissary, etc. The base is now hoping to complete this project from 2-31 May and it will basically be the lot in front of the BX so it should not be an issue for pharmacy customers.

**COMMISSARY SIDEWALK SALE:** The commissary will be having a sidewalk sale on 5, 6 and 7 May for those interested.

**UPCOMING FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON BASE ACTIVITIES:** Below is a list of events on base that may be of interest to retirees. You can check with Facebook or FSS for final dates and details as the time gets closer. <https://www.460fss.com/> and the 460<sup>th</sup> Force Support Squadron (Facebook page) [460th Force Support Squadron | Facebook](#)

Drive-In-Movies (Apr-Oct)

**Patriot Fest - 25 Jun** (Food and fun activities prior to the main event. The main act is The Band Perry with openers John Michael Montgomery and Lindsay Ell. Event times still TBD. Free to all that can access the base.)

**CIVIL AIR PATROL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** Some retirees may be interested in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) as another way of continuing service to the nation and community. CAP was founded in December 1941 and its members contributed to the war effort in various ways. Congress made CAP the official auxiliary of the Air Force by law in May 1948 with missions in emergency services, cadet programs, and aerospace education. USAF designated CAP as part of the “Total Force” in August 2015. CAP headquarters are at Maxwell AFB.

All CAP members are **unpaid** volunteers. Many senior members opt to wear a distinctive version of the AF uniform, fly CAP aircraft, participate in ground search and rescue and federal and local emergency relief operations, and national security related missions. CAP has senior, cadet, and composite squadrons. Senior squadrons conduct flying missions using CAP aircraft. Cadets age 12 and above are provided experiences and training in aerospace related activities, community services, military drill and ceremonies, and cyber security activities.

The CAP Mile High Cadet Squadron (MHCS) is one of 37 CAP units in Colorado. It meets weekly on Buckley SFB and currently has 32 senior members and cadets. MHCS cadets are presently involved in aircraft ground school and emergency services training, and most have had orientation flights in CAP aircraft. The cadets have also had experience constructing and launching high-altitude balloons and rockets, provided support for numerous Buckley events, conducted the annual Wreaths Across America commemoration, competed in the AF Association CyberPatriot program, and provided color guards at community functions. Future projects include training in operation of drones and construction of an autonomous glider. MHCS members have also helped with assembly and distribution of personal protective equipment during the recent pandemic and provided crowd-sourcing support for FEMA following Hurricane Ida.

MHCS is always looking for additional members. Cadet applicants must be 12 to 18 years old or have satisfactorily completed fifth grade. Cadets must maintain at least a passing grade in school and adhere to USAF dress and appearance standards. Senior members must be at least 18, have at least a high school diploma or GED equivalent, and complete an FBI record check. Contact MHCS Squadron Commander CAP 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Elaine Stewart at 720-319-4991 or via email at [elaine.stewart@cowg.cap.gov](mailto:elaine.stewart@cowg.cap.gov) for more information. Detailed information on CAP can be found at the national [www.gocivilairpatrol.com](http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com) website.

**ALL VETERANS HONOR GUARD VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** When someone serves their country honorably in the military, they are entitled to Final Military Honors at their funeral. During this ceremony there is a ‘21-gun salute’, “TAPS” is played, and a folded U.S. flag is presented to the next of kin. The beginning of The All Veterans Honor Guard goes back to 1994. For over 25 years they have attended over 20,000 funerals to honor

our deceased brothers and sisters. Last year, 2021, they provided this service to 1,554 veterans. **This organization is in desperate need of volunteers.** The combined total of their five teams is currently less than 80 people.

**To be on an honor guard you must be a Veteran (by law).** Since most funerals take place on weekdays, they primarily look to vets who are of retirement age. While it would be great to have younger veterans to help, they realize family and jobs take priority. **Your commitment is typically just a couple days each month.**

Some answers to the most common questions they receive: 1) They provide the uniforms and training; 2) 99.99% of the services take place at Ft Logan National Cemetery; 3) One day you may have only one funeral and the next day you may have 11 (that is the current record for services in a single day); 4) They provide services regardless of the weather; 5) They generally start everyone on the rifle detail (they use WWII M1's); 6) No one receives any compensation; and 7) Everyone is equal and is accepted equally as part of the team.

Just FYI, on **Tuesday, 14 Jun, Hungry Howie's Pizza (15084 E Mississippi Ave, Aurora) will be hosting a fundraiser for the All Veterans Honor Guard.** Ten percent of all sales that day will be given to the Honor Guard to purchase uniforms for the volunteers and to repair/maintain the WWII weapons that their teams use.

If you are interested in the All Veterans Honor Guard, or just want additional information, please contact Kathy Kraski: 303-523-0533 (cell), 303-660-9138 (home phone) or [honorguard@allveteranshonorguard.org](mailto:honorguard@allveteranshonorguard.org) She will be happy to answer your questions and arrange an opportunity to meet at Ft Logan National Cemetery so you can see what they do and meet some of the team.

**WOMEN VETERANS APPRECIATION LUNCHEON:** On Saturday, 25 Jun, from 1100-1500 there is a Women Veterans Appreciation Luncheon at the Central Christian Church (3690 E. Cherry Creek South Dr, Denver 80209). The event is put on by the American Legion Auxilliary of District Six and is open to all women veterans. Women veterans will get a free meal but any guests of theirs will pay \$15. You can "register" with Ms. Edrie O'Brien but e-mailing her with the number of veterans in your party attending and the number of guests who will be paying. You can e-mail her at [edrieobrien@comcast.net](mailto:edrieobrien@comcast.net) with questions. For women veterans, if you wish to have your biographical information included in a Program Book you can fill out a form and forward it to Donna Thompson ([madprez2468@outlook.com](mailto:madprez2468@outlook.com)) OR 2668 E. Geddes Pl., Centennial, CO 80122 by June 1, 2022. One of these ladies can provide you with the required form. 12 Jun marks the 74<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the "Women's Armed Services Integration Act" signed by Harry Truman.

**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](https://www.health.mil/qualifying-life-events)

**PRE-NEED DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA CEMETERY:** You can apply to find out in advance if you can be buried in a VA national cemetery. This is called a pre-need determination of eligibility and it can help make the burial planning process easier for your family members in their time of need. To be eligible, one of the following must describe you:

- A Veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge when you separated from the military, **or**
- The spouse or dependent child of a service member or Veteran, even if the service member or Veteran has already passed away, **or**
- In some cases, the adult dependent child of a service member or Veteran (if you aren't married)

The VA bases their decision of whether or not you qualify for burial in a VA national cemetery on your service history, or the service history of the Veteran or service member who's sponsoring your application for burial as a spouse, surviving spouse, or unmarried adult child.

The application process describe here is only for VA national cemeteries. If you'd like to be buried in a state or tribal Veterans cemetery, contact that specific cemetery ahead of time to find out about their pre-need program. Some state Veterans cemeteries require that you live in that state or have other rules around eligibility. You can apply for a pre-need determination of eligibility from VA and also from a state or tribal Veterans cemetery. This application also doesn't apply to Arlington National Cemetery or the United States Soldiers and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. If you'd like to be buried in either of these Department of the Army cemeteries, please call 877-907-8585, Monday through Friday, 0800 to 1730. ET, and Saturday, 0900 to 1300 ET. Getting a pre-need determination of eligibility doesn't guarantee you'll be buried in a **specific** VA national cemetery as reservations aren't taken at **any** VA national cemetery. However, you can specify where you prefer to be buried so the VA can try to help fulfill your final wishes.

To apply, you'll need your (or your sponsor's):

- Social Security number
- Date and place of birth
- Military status and service history (like service dates, discharge character, and rank, commonly found on the DD214 or other separation documents)
- Discharge papers (DD214 or other separation documents)

If you don't have all the required documentation, you can still apply and the VA may be able to assist in locating the missing documents. If both you and your spouse are applying you both need to complete an application. If you're applying as a spouse, surviving spouse, or unmarried adult child, you'll also need your personal information, including your Social Security number. If you're applying on behalf of someone else, you'll also need supporting documents showing you have the authority to apply for that person. You'll need to fill out one of these forms: VA Form 21-22 or VA Form 21-22a.

To apply, fill out an Application for Pre-need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery (VA Form 40-10007). If you need help filling out the form, you can call the VA toll-free hotline at 800-535-1117 or contact a Veterans Service Officer (VSO). You can find a nearby VSO using the following link: [Veteran Service Officers - List of Where to Find Help \(nvf.org\)](#)

**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.

**END OF LIFE PLANNING:** This is a subject we in the RAO bring up periodically. We get quite a few calls from the surviving spouses when their military retiree spouse passes away, and most find very little planning was done that would help them deal with all the notifications and actions that need to be taken. Most people would list a will, a trust, an advance directive, a DNR (do not resuscitate) order, and a durable power of attorney among end-of-life documents. However, the list of documents that deal with end-of-life issues is much longer. Deeds to real property, beneficiary declaration for life insurance, the signature card to a bank account, and many others, are all end-of-life documents. They all determine who gets what and through which legal procedure when someone dies. Fortunately, there are many checklists to help create an end-of-life plan available through a number of trustworthy organizations like Veterans Affairs, Military.com, and the RAO. Some are more comprehensive than others, some are free, and some are not. While doing this properly requires a lot of work, we strongly recommend you do some

research, pick a checklist, or create one of your own, and get to work on completing this project **before** you need it. You may need to consult various professionals - lawyer, accountant, insurance agent, financial advisor, etc. - to help build the plan. Once complete, discuss your plan with those who hold health care proxy, powers of attorney, and other authority over your person and/or property, put documents in a safe place, and make sure those who will need them when you are gone know where they are. We recommend you review, update, redraft, and re-execute documents, lists, and paperwork annually, as needed. **You can locate the Buckley SFB RAO End-of-Life checklist on our website: [www.buckley.spaceforce.mil](http://www.buckley.spaceforce.mil)**

**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](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](mailto: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>

**COLORADO PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED VETS:** The Colorado Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption is a property tax exemption available to 100% disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses of 100% disabled Veterans. This is an exemption of the first 50% of the first \$200,000 in actual value of their primary residence. The Colorado State Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption is from *January 1 - July 1 for each tax year*. the application has changed from last year and the only acceptable application is the one you find on [vets.colorado.gov](http://vets.colorado.gov). The applicant will be sent a letter to the address on the form stating their office has received the application. Once the application has been processed, the applicant will receive a letter of their status update; accepted, incomplete, (denied with explanation) via the US Postal Service. If the application is approved, the application will be sent to the veteran's county assessor of further processing. To assist in this process please include the VA Rating Letter *or the Branch of service medical retirement letter*. Please send applications to 155 Van Gordon Street, Suite 201, Lakewood, CO 80228.

Emailed applications will not be accepted or reviewed due to Personal Identifiable Information (PII) concerns. Veterans who are not rated 100% but are on Individual Unemployability are not eligible for this tax exemption. For other questions, please reach out to Beth Maxwell at 303-914-5832.

There is also a property tax exemption for qualifying seniors. Requirements for eligibility are as follows:

- Applicant must be a senior who is 65 or older or a surviving spouse of a senior who previously qualified for the exemption.
- Applicants must have owned and occupied the property as their primary residence for ten or more years.
- Fifty percent of the first \$200,000 in actual property value is exempt from property taxation.

More information on both of these can be found at the following link: [Senior and Veteran Property-Tax Programs | Colorado Department of the Treasury](#)

**TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS (TAPS):** TAPS, is a 24/7 tragedy-assistance resource for anyone who has suffered the death of a military loved one, regardless of the relationship to the deceased or the circumstance of the death. The program provides comfort and care through comprehensive grief services and programs including peer-based emotional support, casework assistance, connections to community-based care and grief and trauma resources, at no cost to surviving families and loved ones. Since 1994 TAPS has provided compassionate care to all those grieving the death of a military loved one. If you are grieving the loss of a service member, or if you know someone who can use our support, the [TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline](#) is always available toll-free with loving support and resources at 800-959-TAPS (8277).

**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., May 14-15, 2022, 0800 EST  
Sat.-Sun., Sept. 10-11, 2022, 0800 PST  
Wed., Sept. 14, 2022, 0800 CST

Retirement Awareness Workshop (RAW): preferred for those seeking detailed retirement preparations.  
Tues.-Thurs., May 3-5, 2022, 0800 CST (hybrid option: virtual/in-person)

Reserve Retirement Waypoint (RRW) Events: preferred for those retiring with pay within two years.  
Tues., Jun. 21, 2022, 1800 CST  
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](mailto: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 (**11 May** for this month). **They will also be closed on 26 May at 1130 (Wingman Day), 27 May (Family Day) and 30 May (Memorial Day).** 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.

**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](mailto: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 \(af.mil\)](#)

**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 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 Mondays and Wednesdays 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 \(AFLASS\)](#) 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 Form1099 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 \(dfas.mil\)](#)) 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](mailto: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

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.**