

World War I veterans founded The American Legion (TAL) in 1919 to assist their fellow disabled veterans and their families and to maintain a strong national defense. This concept of service has been expanded over the years to include programs involving veterans' employment assistance, family, community, and patriotic values. These services are funded from the dues of our 2.8 million wartime veteran members, many of whom are still on active duty. With over one million members of The American Legion Auxiliary and a quarter of a million members of the Sons of The American Legion, TAL Family is over 4 million strong. Numbers are important in the fight to maintain a strong national defense and to protect and improve veterans' benefits.



Over the last 80 years, The American Legion has had a major influence on the course of American history. One of the most significant achievements was the development and enactment of the original 1944 GI Bill for World War II veterans. This legislation has helped make the United States the economic power it is today. Over many years, The American Legion successfully fought to improve veterans' health care, seek compensation for the victims of Agent Orange, radiation exposure, undiagnosed Gulf War veteran's illnesses, and for the passage of the recent Veterans' Claims Assistance Act of 2000 to improve the way VA handles veterans' benefit claims.



Current American Legion priorities:

- **Increased military pay and concurrent receipt of military longevity retirement and VA disability comp.**
- **Better military housing**
- **Military readiness issues**
- **Needed improvements in TRICARE and VA medical care**
- **Provide VA disability benefits and health care for veterans with Hepatitis C, radiation, diabetes related to Agent Orange, and Gulf War illnesses**
- **Flag protection**
- **Annual benefits (i.e. COLAs)**
- **Restore veterans' right to compensation for tobacco-related illnesses**
- **Employment services and transition assistance for veterans and for active duty personnel**
- **Improved Montgomery GI Bill education benefits**

The American Legion is actively involved with members of congress to further the priorities of the organization. Your influence can be extremely important to the ultimate enactment of successful legislation. We urge you to join with The American Legion and make personal contact with your legislators by mail, phone, fax, and email to improve veterans' services and benefit programs.

The American Legion also has national and local programs to provide temporary financial assistance to veterans and their families. Our Family Support Network helps families of deployed servicemembers. Other programs focus on education, safety, drug awareness, scouting, baseball, volunteerism, oratorical competition, Boys and Girls State, and the flag. **There is something for everyone.**

The American Legion is available to provide you with information on all VA benefit programs as well as direct, professional no-cost, assistance in filing any VA benefit claim, including VA medical care. You should be aware that the VA claims process is not always "user-friendly" and mistakes happen. It is important that you have representation so you can receive all the benefits to which you are entitled.

Our assistance will be available to you, whether you remain in this area or move away after service. American Legion representatives are located at each of the 58 VA regional offices and the names and addresses are available through the Legion's website www.legion.org or by contacting our DC office at 1608 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 861-2700 or VA's homepage www.va.gov.

As an honorably discharged veteran, you are eligible to receive employment assistance through the Department of Labor's – Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS). This program identifies large and small employees in many geographic locations. Check with your local state employment service office for information on veterans' employment opportunities.

If you are enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) program, you are eligible to use your education benefit for transition to civilian occupations. The passage of Public Law 106-419, The Veterans' and Dependents Millennium Education Act, expands veterans' benefits under the MGIB to include reimbursement of certification and licensure costs up to \$2,000. Check with your VA education representative or with the state veterans' employment representative for more information on this subject. You can also access additional information on licensure and certification of military occupations by searching the above items related items on the World Wide Web.



The Internet provides many veteran specific Web sites to provide additional assistance and information. Some of these are:

- <http://www.corpscaredcareers.tv/main.htm> – Large database of jobs run by veterans for veterans
- www.dmdc.osd.mil/tbb – Defense Transition Bulletin Board
- www.taonline.com – Transition Assistance Online
- www.military.com – One stop military info site
- www.dmdc.osd.mil/ot – Defense Outplacement Referral System

Membership in The American Legion is not a requirement for TAL to assist anyone. These benefits are a result of our many members. If you're interested in helping and meet the eligibility requirements, we would be honored to have you as a member. Contact any Legion member, or visit or call the Legion post in your neighborhood, or write or call our National Headquarters today.

(317) 630-1321 www.legion.org

Local Contact:

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THE AMERICAN LEGION



Who We Are

What We Have Done

**What We Can Do For
You**