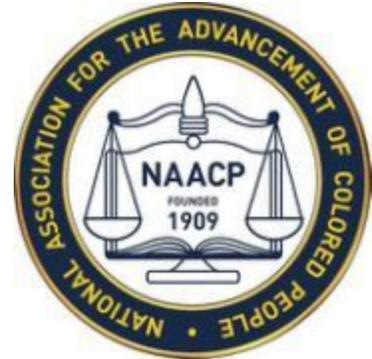


# VSC NAACP VETERANS NEWSLETTER Issue 4

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## **VA would be forced to add three illnesses to Agent Orange presumptive list under Senate-passed plan**

The proposal, attached to the annual defense authorization bill, would add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson's-like symptoms to the list.

[https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2020/07/22/va-would-be-forced-to-add-three-illnesses-to-agent-orange-presumptive-list-under-senate-passed-plan/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Air%20Force%20DNR%207.22.20&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Air%20Force%20-%20Daily%20News%20Roundup](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2020/07/22/va-would-be-forced-to-add-three-illnesses-to-agent-orange-presumptive-list-under-senate-passed-plan/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Air%20Force%20DNR%207.22.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Air%20Force%20-%20Daily%20News%20Roundup)

## **More dental and vision insurance plans to be offered for 2021 open season**

Federal employees and military retirees will have more insurance plans to choose from this year, as the Office of Personnel Management announced Aug. 11 that it has selected the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program insurance carriers that will be available for coverage in 2021.

[https://www.federaltimes.com/management/pay-benefits/2020/08/11/more-dental-and-vision-insurance-plans-to-be-offered-for-2021-open-season/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2008.12.20&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief](https://www.federaltimes.com/management/pay-benefits/2020/08/11/more-dental-and-vision-insurance-plans-to-be-offered-for-2021-open-season/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2008.12.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief)

## VA opposes bill to grant dental care to all veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs voiced its opposition July 23 to legislation that would require the department to provide dental treatment for all veterans enrolled in VA health care.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Julia Brownley, D-Calif., aims to phase in dental care at the VA within four years. Now, the department provides dental treatment only to veterans whose dental issues are related to their military service. Brownley said that is equal to about one in 17 VA enrollees being eligible for dental care.

“Current law restricts the VA’s ability to provide dental care to most veterans,” Brownley said. “The cost of private-sector dental care is often too expensive, leaving too many veterans without dental care at all.”

The House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs considered the bill during a hearing Thursday. The VA was strongly opposed.

“We don’t have the resources from a capacity perspective, and we don’t have the resources from a funding perspective,” said Maria Llorente, an assistant deputy undersecretary of the VA.

About 9.3 million veterans are enrolled in VA health care. Of those, 1.35 million are eligible for dental care through the department. The legislation would increase the number of eligible veterans by more than 670%, Llorente said, and “create a significant spike in the need for resources to meet the increased demand.”

<https://www.stripes.com/news/us/va-opposes-bill-to-grant-dental-care-to-all-veterans-1.638642>

## Virginia woman makes history in US Coast Guard



“Lt. Chanel Lee, a graduate of Henrico High School, became Lt. Commander Chanel Lee at a ceremony with family and friends at her mother’s home on July 25.

Lee is among only five African American women pilots in the Coast Guard. She was the first to fly an MH-60 Seahawk helicopter and the first to be assigned to flight school.”

[https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/virginia-woman-chanel-lee-history-us-coast-guard-blessing?fbclid=IwAR37zqml4MMxii-r26JVqoQZO9Xe\\_43iJX3ZsdUN8bZrKJApBu5pqeSbng](https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/virginia-woman-chanel-lee-history-us-coast-guard-blessing?fbclid=IwAR37zqml4MMxii-r26JVqoQZO9Xe_43iJX3ZsdUN8bZrKJApBu5pqeSbng)  
[U](#)

## **Most working-age retirees must start paying Tricare Select fees, or you'll be kicked out of coverage**

Hundreds of thousands of military retirees will be required to pay an enrollment fee for Tricare Select starting Jan. 1, and if they don't set up their payment by then, they'll be disenrolled from the health care coverage, according to Defense Health Agency officials. These fees affect retirees and their family members in the so-called Group A — the sponsor's initial enlistment or appointment was before Jan. 1, 2018. The retirees in Group A are generally working-age retirees under age 65. Currently they don't pay enrollment fees, but under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017, Congress required defense officials to start charging these working-age retirees enrollment fees. It also applies to Tricare Overseas Program Select Group A retirees.

[https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/2020/08/05/most-working-age-retirees-must-start-paying-tricare-select-fees-or-youll-be-kicked-out-of-coverage/?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=MIL%20EBB%208.6.20&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Briefjgt=](https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/2020/08/05/most-working-age-retirees-must-start-paying-tricare-select-fees-or-youll-be-kicked-out-of-coverage/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MIL%20EBB%208.6.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Military%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Briefjgt=)

## **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

*Military Hire is a veteran job and services organization which has the primary goal of assisting veteran transitions from military to civilian life through job placement and awareness of other services available. Military Hire has over 600,000 veteran members and over 25,000 companies which it serves in this initiative. [Militaryhire.com](https://militaryhire.com)*

JOBZONE Job Fairs bring together the area's top employers including defense and commercial companies, federal agencies, placement and staffing companies, colleges and universities.

- 12/10/20 - VIRTUAL JOB FAIR-FOCUS: VIRGINIA - FORT LEE / FREDERICKSBURG / SPRINGFIELD, VA
- 01/26/21 - VIRTUAL JOB FAIR - FOCUS: MD-VA PATUXENT RIVER, MD / ANDREWS AFB. MD / DAHLGREN, VA

View complete schedule at [www.jobZoneOnline.com](http://www.jobZoneOnline.com) Contact JobZone at 434-263-5102 and 540-226-1473. [janet.Giles@jobZoneOnline.com](mailto:janet.Giles@jobZoneOnline.com)

## **NASA astronaut Jeanette Epps to be 1st Black woman on International Space Station crew**



NASA astronaut Jeanette Epps will soon make history, becoming the first Black woman to live and work long-term aboard the International Space Station. Her flight is scheduled for 2021.

NASA announced in August 2020 that Epps has been assigned to the first operational crewed flight of the Boeing CST-100 Starliner spacecraft. She will join astronauts Sunita Williams and Josh Cassada for a six-month stay on the ISS, the space agency said.

In 1992, astronaut Mae Jemison became the first Black woman in space. Six African-American astronauts have visited the space station during shuttle assembly flights, but none have stayed aboard as long-term crew members.

When NASA astronaut Victor Glover travels to the ISS in October on the first SpaceX Crew Dragon operational mission, he will become the first Black astronaut to join a long-term crew on the ISS.

<https://wtop.com/science/2020/08/astronaut-jeanette-epps-to-be-first-black-woman-to-join-iss-crew/>

## ***The Few, the Proud, the White: The Marine Corps Balks at Promoting Generals of Color***



WASHINGTON —Aug, 31, 2020 - All things being equal, Col. Anthony Henderson has the military background that the Marine Corps says it prizes in a general: multiple combat tours, leadership experience and the respect of those he commanded and most who commanded him.

Yet three times he has been passed over for brigadier general, a prominent one-star rank that would put Colonel Henderson on the path to the top tier of Marine Corps leadership. Last year, the Navy secretary, Richard V. Spencer, even added a handwritten recommendation to Colonel Henderson's candidacy: "Eminently qualified Marine we need now as BG," he wrote.

But never in its history has the Marine Corps had anyone other than a white man in its most senior leadership posts. Colonel Henderson is Black.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/31/us/politics/marines-race-general.html?smid=tw-nytimes&smtyp=cur&fbclid=IwAR1vPNHKX8qClwjYjYzRadAcbLLhFXZ8t6B1JTFNfeotqT-W7mw2bhirWr4>

Military Members, Veterans and their families can save thousands each year with these amazing benefits and discounts!

[https://military-deals.com/savings-july/?ad\\_campaign=napaq-cc-md.com-alpha45-daily&ad\\_group=n07-us-mf25-demo-all-park4&ad=ad1&fbclid=IwAR3ZVUDjgY0QhqkpZev6vD08sUdkMYVZd-NnEyVGRndiKX4XPPP6DCehYHM](https://military-deals.com/savings-july/?ad_campaign=napaq-cc-md.com-alpha45-daily&ad_group=n07-us-mf25-demo-all-park4&ad=ad1&fbclid=IwAR3ZVUDjgY0QhqkpZev6vD08sUdkMYVZd-NnEyVGRndiKX4XPPP6DCehYHM)

## SENATOR WARNER CAN NEED HELP

“If you or a veteran or service member you know needs help with a federal agency, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 540-857-2676 or send me an email using the form on my Senate website,” said Senator Mark R. Warner. <https://www.warner.senate.gov/public/>

“My top priority as your United States Senator is to provide efficient and effective constituent service to all Virginians. Please provide a signed letter requesting assistance. The letter should detail a description of the problem, the actions taken to resolve the matter, a description of a favorable outcome and the role my office can take in achieving that outcome. Additionally, The Privacy Act of 1974 requires written authorization before the agency can communicate with my office about these concerns. Please complete the Privacy Act Release to provide this authorization. In addition, please provide copies of the most recent correspondence received from the agency involved. This information should be submitted to my office at: The Honorable Mark R. Warner, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Site 200, Vienna, VA 22183. P: 703-442-0670, F: 703-442-0408. [casework@warner.senate.gov](mailto:casework@warner.senate.gov) Please note mail delivery may be significantly delayed. It is strongly recommended that you email or fax your response if possible.”

Military retirees and families are getting new IDs for the first time in three decades



WASHINGTON — The Defense Department is replacing its 30-year-old identification cards for military families, retirees, and civilians workers in an effort to upgrade the cards and avoid security risks.

The Defense Department began issuing the new IDs in July and some are already in circulation. But Michael Sorrento, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center, said cardholders don't have to scramble for the new IDs. In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, he said he doesn't want ID facilities jam-packed with people, so the old cards do not need to be replaced until they expire or the phase-out date in January 2026.

NOTE: The Ft. Belvoir VA newspaper <http://www.belvoireagleonline.com/> states "the Department of Defense has extended Uniformed Services ID cards (dependent and retiree ID cards) until June 30, 2021" (at its installation).

[https://www.stripes.com/military-retirees-and-families-are-getting-new-ids-for-the-first-time-in-three-decades-1.642754?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm\\_campaign=Weekly+Update](https://www.stripes.com/military-retirees-and-families-are-getting-new-ids-for-the-first-time-in-three-decades-1.642754?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm_campaign=Weekly+Update)

[https://www.army.mil/article/238436/new\\_id\\_cards\\_being\\_issued\\_for\\_military\\_family\\_members\\_retirees](https://www.army.mil/article/238436/new_id_cards_being_issued_for_military_family_members_retirees)

## Ed Dwight - The First Black Qualified as an Astronaut



Robert Lawrence, Jr. (1967) was the first Black astronaut, but he died in a plane crash during a training flight in 1969 and never made it into space. Guion Bluford (1983) became the first Black American astronaut to travel in space; Mae Jemison (1992) became the first Black female astronaut. Frederick Gregory (1998) was the first African-American shuttle commander. But, it was Kansas City, Kansas native Ed Dwight who paved their way. Ed Dwight Jr. was the first African American astronaut candidate for what is now NASA. Dwight joined the air force in 1953 as a test pilot. After earning his aeronautical engineering degree, Dwight was referred to President John F. Kennedy as a space candidate by Whitney Young Jr. In 1962, Dwight was entered into the U.S. astronaut training program as an experimental test pilot in preparation to become the first African American astronaut candidate.

<https://blackamericaweb.com/2013/04/01/little-known-black-history-fact-ed-dwight-jr-first-black-astronaut-candidate/#:~:text=was%20the%20first%20African%20American%20astronaut%20candidate%20for,to%20become%20the%20first%20African%20American%20astronaut%20candidate.>

<https://portofharlem.net/snippets20/sep092020-ed-dwight.html>

# VA data breach exposes personal information for 46,000 veterans

A cybersecurity breach at the Department of Veterans Affairs has potentially exposed personnel information for 46,000 veterans, the agency said on Sep 14..

VA is alerting impacted veterans, including their family members or next-of-kin, about the data breach, the department said. It will offer free credit monitoring services to those whose Social Security numbers have potentially been compromised.

Veterans will receive more information by mail, which will include instructions on the steps they can take to protect their personal data. Veterans who don't receive any alert from the department were not impacted by the recent data breach, VA said.

<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/veterans-affairs/2020/09/va-data-breach-exposes-personal-information-for-46000-veterans/>

## Nov 3, 2020 Virginia ballot will include this proposed constitutional amendment

Question 2, the Motor Vehicle Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans Amendment, asks if one automobile or pickup truck owned by a U.S. military or Virginia National Guard veteran with a 100% service-connected disability should be exempt from state and local property taxes. A “yes” vote supports the exemption.



Veterans Day for the year 2020 is celebrated/ observed on Wednesday, November 11th.

