



The Straight Scoop

Department Newsletter of the
Marine Corps League
P.O. Box 1224
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COMMANDANT'S MESSAGE

Marines, FMF Corpssmen, FMF Chaplains and Associate Members. I hope this finds you well.

As this virus continues and we are still in the unknown, I have decided to cancel the Department Convention for 2020. We will, however, be holding a quarterly meeting in Parkersburg in September. The Chief of Staff and Department Adjutant have sent out emails explaining how your funds will be refunded. Please reach out to Roger Ware for details on refunds. With that being said, at the quarterly meeting we will be holding our annual elections, giving out the Marine of the Year and Department Awards.

We have held our conference call explaining how Detachments should be holding their elections. I know that a couple of Detachments have already completed their elections. Please remember that all ROI's need to be

submitted to the Department Adjutant as soon as your installations have been completed.

I am also requesting that if your detachment cannot meet in person that you would consider holding a short meeting by conference call. This is a good way to keep up with each other and for other members who can't normally be at your meetings to participate.

Please keep all members of our Armed Forces in your thoughts and Prayers as they serve in harm's way.

Semper Fidelis,
Scott Kirby
Commandant
Dept. of WV
Marine Corps League

Chaplain's Corner

My Cross

My cross is not a relic of two thousand years ago.
It's a symbol and a comfort that's with me whenever I go.
The message is so simple, and its meaning clear to see.
It's kept as a remembrance of what Jesus did for me.

My cross is a reminder, a keepsake that I hold.
It may be carved in wood or gently cast in gold.

When life gets complicated and the world seems gone astray,
that's when the cross I cling to will help me through the day.
I'll keep it with me always, and someday I will see,
standing there at Heaven's Gate, it really was the "Key."

Department of WV MCL Department Convention Canceled

Governor Justice has a plan for restarting WV and our convention falls in his Week 3-6 plan which means everyone has to wear a mask and maintain 6 feet social distance and no more than 25 people in one confined location. We regret but we must cancel the convention. Everyone will get a refund on their hotel fee and banquet. We will keep the \$5 you paid for pre-registration for the expenses that our detachment will absorb. The checks will be mailed tomorrow. We thank everyone for your patience as detachment 956 will be hosting the convention in May 2021. We will make arrangements with the hotel and give more specific details. We will place all the detachment support funds into an escrow account for use in 2021. Please pass this information on to all members. At the present we are unable to contact the American Legion Post 29 about the May 14-16, 2021 time frame. We need to ensure we can reserve that weekend. The Holiday Inn Express has not given us the room price yet but we expect it to be around the \$100 range and until we finalize these two items, we can't announce the actual weekend that Detachment 956 will host the 2021 Convention in Elkins. The banquet will remain at \$30. You will not have to pay the advance registration fee in 2021. Here's something to consider. We are in the process of refunding your pre-payments for rooms and banquet. We expect to get the room price and confirmation from the Legion on Monday May 4. The hotel manager said we can start booking the rooms as soon as we get the price and Legion confirmed. Anyone who has already paid for their rooms and banquet, and wants to reserve their rooms and banquet for 2021, please let me know and I will not send you a refund but will apply your funds toward next year's convention. rware@yahoo.com Email me and I'll enter you into the room block. Please note, we do not have a firm room price as it may be increased a few dollars and you can send in the difference later. So, if you want me to go ahead and reserve your room reservations and banquet for 2021 send me an email at or call me at 304-636-4365. If I do not hear from you within a few days I will start sending out the refund payments.

Hershel “Woody” Williams Scholarship Recipients

John B. Nanny, Chairman, Scholarship Foundation announced the recipients of the 2020 Department scholarship who would normally be presented a check for \$1000.00 each during the Department Convention Banquet in Elkins, West Virginia on May 16, 2020. Since the Convention has been cancelled, the scholarship checks, Certificates, and a special token of remembrance will be mailed to each recipient. Since the inception of the program, a total of 142 scholarship have been awarded with \$124,000 total to date.

Olivia Arline - Ohio State University
Grandfather: Roy Marcum, Huntington Det 340

Brinna Hathaway - WVU
Grandfather: Mike McLain, Wood County Det 1087

Michelle Hathaway – Wood County School of Nursing
Father: Mike McLain, Wood County Det. 1087

Lacey Alison Hunt - WVU
Father: Jason Hunt, Sgt. Mecot Camara Det. 1461

Logan Lee Hunt- WVU
Father: Jason Hunt, Sgt Mecot Camara Det. 1461

Vincent Joseph Kolenich II - Temple University
Self – USMC, Jones-Wolin-O'Brien Det. 771

Alicia Lane - Marshall University
Husband: Zebulun S. Lane, Huntington Det. 340

Kaitlin McLain - WVU
Father: Sgt.Maj. Sean McLain (Ret), Huntington Det. 340

Reilly McLain - Marshall University
Father: Sgt. Maj. Sean McLain (Ret.), Huntington Det. 340

Ryan Paul - Paradise Valley Community College
Grandfather: John Nanny, Jones-Wolin-O'Brien Det. 771

Ava Elizabeth Polinski - WVU
Father: David Polinski, Jones-Wolin-O'Brien Det 771

Madelyn Ross - Marshall University
Grandfather: Denny Wood, Huntington Det. 340

Marleigh Ross - Marshall University Pharmacy
Grandfather: Denny Wood, Huntington Det. 340

Shayna L. Summerlin - Fairmont State
Mother: Tiffany Summerlin, Father Jamie Summerlin, Earl Anderson Det. 342

Another Major Mobile Carrier Gives Veterans Free Data to Contact the VA

TracFone Wireless, America's largest no-contract wireless service provider, announced Monday that it will provide free data to veterans who use their phones to attend virtual medical appointments with providers from the Department of Veterans Affairs via the VA Video Connect service.

The partnership brings the number of mobile carriers giving free data to veterans who are teleconferencing with VA medical staff to four. TracFone Wireless joins T-Mobile, Sprint and Verizon in waiving all data charges when veterans use their mobile phones to connect with their VA medical providers through the VA Video Connect app.

The addition of TracFone also gives veterans using government-funded phones through the SafeLink program free access to VA medical staff. SafeLink phones are available to those who receive:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefits

VA Video Connect enables veterans to videoconference with their VA providers on their smartphone, tablet or computer from any location with an internet connection.

"Our goal at VA is to provide the best health care experience for all veterans, regardless of where they live," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "This new partnership with TracFone increases access for veterans and ensures health care is accessible anywhere. Approximately 150,000 SafeLink customers can benefit from this application."

In fiscal 2019, the VA provided 2.6 million telehealth sessions to more than 900,000 veterans, representing a 16% increase from the previous year in the number of veterans receiving care via its telehealth services. While exact figures are not known for more recent use, the VA has greatly expanded its internet and telephone communications with veterans due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

VA Appeals Status Tracker How to check the Status of Your Claim

Knowing what stage of the appeals process your claim is in can help you avoid missing deadlines and better understand how the VA claims and appeals process works. Generally, there are eight steps that disability claims follow:

- 1) **Claim Received.** Your claim is moved to this stage once it has been received by VA.
- 2) **Under Review.** A Veterans Service Representative is reviewing your claim to determine if there is a need for additional evidence. This includes the results of your Compensation and Pension Exam, which VA will schedule.
- 3) **Gathering of Evidence.** If the Veterans Service Representative deems that your claim requires additional evidence, he or she will request it from the appropriate sources.
- 4) **Review of Evidence.** All evidence is received and is under review.
- 5) **Preparation for Decision.** At this stage, the Veterans Service Representative has recommended a decision and is preparing documents detailing that decision.
- 6) **Pending Decision Approval.** The Veterans Service Representative's decision is reviewed, and a decision is made.
- 7) **Preparation for Notification.** Your decision is being prepared for mailing.
- 8) **Complete.** The award or decision is sent to you via U.S. mail, along with the details surrounding this decision.

VA allows veterans to track the progress of their claims throughout the claim stream in three ways:

- 🕒 By visiting a local VA regional office;
- 📞 By calling VA's national toll-free phone number at 800-827-1000;
- 🌐 Or by logging into gov and using VA's appeals tracker.

Online VA Appeals Status Tool VA has created its online appeal status tracker in an attempt to improve transparency and allow veterans easier access to their appeal's status. VA describes this tool as easy to use and provides accessible information to veterans. To use this tool, veterans can sign into vets.gov using: o DS Logon, which is the same log on as your eBenefits account; o My HealtheVet account; o ID me account.

If you do not yet have a login, create an ID me account at <https://api.id.me/en/registration/new>. Once you are logged in, select the "Check your claim and appeal status" option to access the appeals tracker tool. The main page entitled "Your Compensation Appeals and Claims" will show the type of claim that is under appeal (e.g. Appeal of Compensation Decision), the date you received the claim decision, the appeal's status (e.g. a Decision Review Officer is reviewing your appeal), the issues on appeal (e.g. increased rating), and a "View Status" option that will lead you to detailed information about your appeal.

On the "View Status" page, veterans can view the current status of their appeal followed by a description of what happens during the next step of the process (e.g. The Board will make a decision). On this screen, you may also select "See past events" which displays a time line of events that have already occurred throughout your appeal process. Below this time line, you will see the "Current Status" of your appeal. If your appeal stage requires action, an alert box will be highlighted in yellow under this portion of the web page. This section will describe what action must be taken in order to continue on with your appeal and the date by which it must be completed. For example, if a veteran recently received a Statement of the Case, this section will instruct the veteran to submit a VA Form 9 within 60 days of receiving it and provide the deadline.

The "What happens next?" feature will display a projected wait time for reaching the next step in the appeal process. Using the same example as mentioned above, the "What happens next?" section will show an estimate of when your case will be transferred to The Board if you do not submit new evidence with your VA Form 9. In this case, a time line of two events will be provided because veterans are able to submit new evidence in support of their claim at this stage. If you did submit new evidence, you will subsequently receive another Statement of the Case, called a Supplemental Statement of the Case, and a new projected time frame.

Once your appeal has been certified to the Board, you will be able to see a progress bar beneath "What happens next?" showing where your appeal is on the Board's docket. This progress bar shows the total number of appeals on the docket, and the number of appeals ahead of you.

Although you are able to see the progress of your docket number, no time estimate is provided here as the Board is not required to adhere to any deadlines.

At the top of the page, there is a tab entitled "Issues" where you are able to see what issues are currently on appeal and previous issues that have been closed whether they were granted, denied, or withdrawn. If you need assistance during any point of the appeal process, do not hesitate to contact a VA-accredited claims agent, Veteran Service Organization, or VA-accredited attorney

VA Disability Review Frequently Requested to Check Severity of Disabilities

A thorough review of disability examinations is often requested by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to check on the severity of a previously rated service-connected disability. VA staff use review exams, and any other relevant evidence, to assess the current severity of a disability and, if possible, reduce the initial rating assigned. VA regulations point out specific time lines for "examination checks," but, it is not a hard and fast rule, and, oftentimes, ignored by VA personnel. But, rest assured, it will happen at some point. By law, VA should and will request a review exam under the following circumstances:

- ⌚ VA needs to assess the severity of a disability;
- ⌚ Additional or more relevant evidence indicates there has been an important and significant (or material) change in a disability; or
- ⌚ Because of law, VA personnel are required to conduct a periodic review.

The Examination Process Oftentimes, a contracted medical professional or VA medical professional will conduct the disability review exam. The medical examiners and staff will not answer specific questions about benefits, pension program or compensation. Nor, will they consult with a veteran about the disability compensation process. Acting as a stoic conduit within strict bureaucratic protocol, the medical examiners

methodically go through a set of procedures to assess disability conditions. Typically, the examination is conducted in a medically approved facility, with the veteran and medical staff member. In very rare cases, VA personnel may decide that an examination by telephone would be the most appropriate route.

The medical examiner will often conduct the following procedures:

- ⌚ Ask a Veteran questions related to the disability in question;
- ⌚ Perform a physical exam related to the disability;
- ⌚ If multiple disability conditions are to be examined the medical examiner will conduct one examine at-a-time;
- ⌚ Send the veteran for lab work, which may include: blood work, X-rays, MRI, etc.;
- ⌚ While conducting exam, the medical examiner will pay very close attention to how the veteran reacts to certain procedures;
- ⌚ At the conclusion of the exam, sometimes the medical examiner is required to go over the veterans medical file with him/her;
- ⌚ In some instances, if the veteran is accompanied by someone familiar with the disability the veteran is having examined, the medical examiner may ask that person questions related to the disability being examined.

It is important to understand that the medical examiner is not involved in making a rating decision about the disability. The medical examiners' job is simply to conduct the examination based upon certain set of criteria established by VA. However, the words the examiner uses in describing the examination review, may ultimately affect the thinking of the VA rater and how a disability is to be perceived. The medical examiner may select words and sentence structures that may be perceived in a way that a reduction in compensation benefits is necessary, or that an increase is appropriate or no change at all is necessary. benefits may be appropriate at this time.

If a veteran misses a review exam, it may negatively affect the outcome of any potential increase in compensation benefits. The veteran should always call their VA Regional Office (VARO) to reschedule their appointment as soon as reasonably possible once they realize they won't make it to the scheduled review exam. Harsh, but true, if a veteran misses an exam without details as to why, VA may be required by law to propose an immediate reduction in the disability that was to be examined or an immediate termination of compensation benefits for that specific disability.

It's very important that a veteran review exam results as soon as possible. All too often, what is written by the medical examiner differs quite a bit from what the veteran witnessed. For instance, some veterans have reported that the medical examiner indicated that a certain instrument was used during the exam, and the veteran was sure no such instrument was ever used. Checking the accuracy of the medical exam is crucial. Some veterans use the Post Examination Assessment Form immediately after medical examinations conducted by VA medical staff. In doing so, the veteran has an opportunity to record exam results as he/she remembers them, and the form provides a structured format the way VA personnel like to work with.

Lastly, it is vital to the outcome of any medical examination conducted by VA personnel that the veteran comb over all details of correspondence sent to them related to the medical examination. Addressing any and all issues related to the medical examination is a must. If VA is asking for information, it is very important that a veteran respond to the question as soon as humanly possible. Some veterans may require the help of a certified VSO in interpreting information sent to them by VA personnel. Understanding what a veteran receives from VA is of utmost importance.

You may qualify for this grant if you are a Veteran, or member of the Active Military, Reserves or National Guard

The PenFed Foundation COVID-19 Emergency Financial Relief Program was created to provide financial assistance to all Veterans, active military service members, and those currently serving in the Reserves and the National Guard who are experiencing a financial setback due to the negative economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant amount will support 1 month of payment up to \$1500 in the following areas:

- Rent
- Mortgage
- Auto Loan/Lease
- Utilities (Electric, Water, Heat)

*All checks will be sent directly to the creditor or landlord after the grant is approved. The Foundation can only support one emergency financial request per household.

Link to Apply:

<https://penfedfoundation.org/apply-for-assistance/coronavirus-emergency-financial-assistance/>

What You'll Need:

- DD214 or LES
- A bill or statement for the requested expense
- An explanation of how the financial setback is related to the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, loss of job due to quarantine and/or public health policies)

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for this program you must be in one of the following categories:

- A Veteran that has been honorably discharged
- A current active-duty service member
- Currently active in the Reserves
- Currently active in the National Guard

Professional Development Training

Annual Corporate Report

Every detachment must be incorporated within the state so after annual officer installations are complete, the Detachment must complete and file a Corporation Annual Report prior to 30 June each year and mail to the WV Secretary of State, Business and Licensing Division. If Officers are installed or changed after 1 July, the Detachment must file an Application to Appoint or Change Officers, and/or Office Addresses with the WV Secretary of State. Once the form is completed, a copy should be mailed to the Department Adjutant for record purposes. Every detachment that is incorporated must file an Annual Report for Corporations. The cost is \$25 and is payable to the WV Secretary of State's office. This must be completed before June 30 of each year. This should be done as soon as you have your elections and officers installed. The Secretary of State has recently sent an email to all detachment and Pounds that they must file their ACR on line. They will no longer accept a paper copy. Detachments and Pounds that do not file their annual reports on time are at risk of being administratively dissolved or revoked and will be assessed a mandatory late fee of \$25 (twenty-five dollars) for non-profit organizations as required by West Virginia code.

Detachment Commandants, Paymasters, Adjutants and Adjutant/Paymasters;

It is time for most; if not all; of the Detachments to elect their officers for the 2020 - 2021 terms. That also means it is time for you to submit your Report of Officer Installation (ROI) for 2020 - 2021.

Remember that you have to send in a Report of Officer Installation (ROI) every year even if none of your Officers change. Thanks!

Semper Fi, pattileib024@gmail.com

Mail them to me at:

Patti Leib

Adjutant-Paymaster

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Foods That Can Keep for Years

If you hadn't previously thought about how you would build up a food supply for an emergency, the new coronavirus probably has made you consider it. What kinds of foods are best to keep in the pantry and freezer in case of a natural disaster, zombie apocalypse or pandemic that drags on for more than a couple of weeks? Start with the following options. These foods can last for years before going bad.

1. **Oats** This prolific cereal grain and staple of many American breakfast tables can last up to 30 years, according to the Utah State University Extension. Store oats in airtight containers in a cool, dark, dry place. To maximize shelf life, store with moisture/oxygen absorber packets.
2. **White rice** Also known as polished rice; white rice has a shelf life of 25 to 30 years when properly stored. The best temperature for storing this grain is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. The best container is one that is sealed and oxygen-free.
3. **Popcorn: un-popped kernels** can last two years, according to the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Best storage is at room temperature.
4. **Dark chocolate** Dark chocolate lasts up to two years if properly stored, according to Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. It should be stored in a tightly sealed containers and at a temperature of 65 to 70 degrees. Keep it in a dry location as well. Do not refrigerate it, because the sugar can rise to the surface and give the chocolate a whitish appearance.
5. **Honey** Winnie-the-Pooh's favorite can remain stable indefinitely, according to the National Honey Board. However, a two-year shelf life is standard. The trade group explains: "Honey stored in sealed containers can remain stable for decades and even centuries! However, honey is susceptible to physical and chemical changes during storage; it tends to darken and lose its aroma and flavor or crystallize. These are temperature-dependent processes, making the shelf life of honey difficult to define.
6. **Powdered milk** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Keeper storage guide, powdered milk can last three to five years — but keeps only three months once the package has been opened. For best storage, keep at cool temperatures in a dark location.
7. **Dried beans** Dried beans and lentils have a shelf life of up to 10 years or more when stored properly, according to the Utah State University Extension. However, Utah State notes that — as with many stored foods — after five years, stored beans likely will have lost nearly all their vitamins. The best method of storage is to use No. 10 cans or Mylar-type bags with the oxygen removed, and keep the beans at a colder temperature.
8. **Certain cheeses** Low-moisture, hard cheese can last from 10 months to several years, reports Dairy Foods Magazine. For example, the typical shelf life for parmesan is up to five years, and that of aged cheddar is up to 10 years. The Food Network has a handy how-to on best practices for cheese storage at <https://www.foodnetwork.com/fn-dish/news/2019/01/i-ve-beenstoring-my-cheese-all-wrong--according-to-experts>.
9. **Canned foods** Generally, commercially canned foods that are canned in liquid should maintain their best quality until their expiration date, which is usually two to five years from the manufacture date, according to the Utah State University Extension. Note that unopened home- canned foods have a shorter shelf life — one year — and should be used before two years. The USU Extension explains: "Commercially canned foods are superior to home canned for food storage. Commercial canners can closely control quality and safety to produce the best product."

When buying canned foods, avoid cans that are: ☹ Rusted ☹ Dented ☹ Scratched ☹ Bulging

10. **Frozen foods** That succotash that's been in your freezer for years might not taste amazing, but it's perfectly safe and likely still nutritious — assuming your freezer has been kept at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or colder. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, foods frozen at that temperature remain safe almost indefinitely, and freezer storage has little to no effect on food nutrient value. Quality is a different matter, but

the USDA has a handy storage chart showing how long different frozen foods maintain their quality. The USDA recommends storing frozen food in packaging that keeps air out.

Remember When

"I Was a Sailor Once"

"I REMEMBER - I liked standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe.

- I liked the sounds of the Navy. The piercing trill of the boatswain's pipe, the syncopated clangor of the ship's bell on the quarterdeck, harsh, and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

- I liked Navy vessels ... plodding fleet auxiliaries and amphib, sleek submarines and steady solid aircraft carriers.

- I liked the proud names of Navy ships: Midway, Lexington, Saratoga, Yorktown, Shangri-La, Coral Sea, Canisteo, Antietam, Essex, America, FDR, Intrepid, Wasp, Valley Forge - memorials of great battles won and tribulations overcome.

- I liked the lean angular names of Navy "Tin-Cans" and escorts, mementos of heroes who went before us; and the others - San Jose, San Diego, Los Angeles, St. Paul, Chicago, Oklahoma City, named for our cities.

- I liked the tempo of a Navy band, liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port.

- I even liked the paperwork, on-loads, vert-reps., un-reps, ammo loads, and all hands working parties as my ship filled herself with the multitude of supplies, both mundane and to cut ties to the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe where there was water to float her.

- I liked sailors from all parts of the land, farms, small towns, the mountains and the prairies, from all walks of life.

- I trusted and depended on them as they trusted and depended on me - for professional competence, for comradeship, for strength and courage. In a word, they were "Shipmates", then and forever.

- I liked the surge of adventure in my heart when the word was passed: "Now Hear This, Now hear This", "Now station the special sea and anchor detail, All hands to quarters for leaving port," and I liked the infectious thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands of welcome from family and friends waiting pier side. The work was hard and dangerous, the going rough at times, the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the "all for one and one for all" philosophy of the sea was ever present.

- I liked the fierce and dangerous activity on the flight deck of aircraft carriers, earlier named for battles won: Enterprise, Independence, Boxer, Princeton and oh so many more. Some lost in battle and some, sadly, many scrapped.

- I liked the names of the aircraft and helicopters; Spad, Skyraider, Corsair, Hell-Cat, Crusader, Willie-Fudd, Intruder, Sea King, Phantom, Skyhawk, Huey, Demon, Hupp, Skywarrior, Banshee, Widow-Maker, and many more that bring to mind offensive and defensive orders of battle.

- I liked the excitement of an alongside replenishment as my ship slid in alongside the oiler and the cry of, "Standby to Receive Shotlines", prefaced the hard work of, rigging span wires and fuel hoses, echoed across the narrow gap of water between the ships and welcomed the mail and fresh milk, fruit and vegetables, that sometimes accompanied the fuel. Sometimes we'd Hi-Line the "Chaplain", back and forth in the "Bo'sun Chair". Oh, and I always liked when they would Hi-Line those big brown boxes, that contained the New Movies. Then in-port, we'd have a working party to set up those old folding chairs so, we could watch those movies in hangar bay #1 in port, or down on the Mess Decks. Sometimes we'd even get a treat of popcorn.

- I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship's work, as flying fish flitted across the wave tops and sunset gave way to night. - I liked the feel of the Navy in darkness. The Masthead and Range Lights, the red and green navigation lights and stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters - they cut through the dusk and joined with the mirror of stars overhead. And I liked drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad noises, large and small, that told me that my ship was alive and well, and that my shipmates on watch would keep me safe.

- I liked quiet mid-watches with the aroma of strong coffee, the life blood of the Navy permeating everywhere. The smell of the Chipped-Beef or SOS being cooked for breakfast. And I liked hectic watches when the

- exacting minuet of haze-gray shapes racing at flank speed kept all hands on a razor edge of alertness.
- I liked the sudden electricity of "General Quarters, General Quarters, All Hands Man Your Battle Stations", followed by the hurried clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the ship transformed herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful workplace to a "Weapon of War", ready for anything. And I liked the sight of space-age equipment manned by youngsters clad in dungarees and sound-powered phones that their grandfathers would still recognize.
 - I liked the traditions of the Navy and the men who made them.
 - I liked the proud names of Navy heroes: Halsey, Nimitz, Perry, Farragut, John Paul Jones and Burke.
 - A sailor could find much in the Navy: Comrades-in-Arms, Pride in Self and Country, Mastery of the Seaman's Trade. An Adolescent would find Adulthood.
 - In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea we still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods, the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of Signal Flags snapping at the Yard-Arm, a recall of hearty laughter in the Chief's Mess and Mess Decks.
 - Having gone ashore for good, we grow humble about our Navy days, when the seas were a part of us and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

Remembering this, We Stand Taller and say, "I WAS A SAILOR ONCE."

Emergency Medical Bill Claims Lawsuit Reimbursement Eligibility Letters

More than one million veterans will soon be receiving instructions from Veterans Affairs officials on how to check if they are eligible for thousands of dollars in medical cost reimbursements as part of a court decision last fall. Starting 13 APR, department staffers will send letters to tens of thousands of veterans who were rejected for financial relief in recent years for bills they received for non-department emergency medical care. That move comes over VA objections concerning an ongoing lawsuit over the issue, which could add billions in new costs to the department's budget.

Last fall, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims ruled that the department's current regulation for veterans who seek non-department medical care violates existing federal law. They ordered VA officials to re-examine more than 72,000 rejected claims and update their rules, arguing the department has a responsibility to cover the costs of the unexpected medical visits.

The case centers on veterans whose unpaid emergency room expenses were denied by VA officials under existing policies. The plaintiffs' both had part of their bills paid for by other insurance, but were left with several thousand in personal costs. VA officials argued in court that they did not need to handle the unpaid balance because the veterans were primarily covered under other insurance plans. The court ruled that violates both existing law and past legal precedent.

A VA Inspector General report last summer found \$716 million in improperly processed payments in cases involving veterans who sought medical care outside the department's health system in 2017, including about \$53 million that should have been refunded under existing rules. VA officials are considering appealing the ruling, and asked that any action on the cases be postponed until higher courts weigh in on the matter. But earlier this month, the appeals court rejected that motion and ordered letters be sent out starting 13 APR. Advocates praised the decision. "Hundreds of thousands of veterans affected by this class action have suffered far too long and endured severe financial hardships due to VA's wrongful handling of their reimbursement claims," said Bart Stichman, executive director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program.

VA officials have estimated that full compliance with the court order could cost between \$1.8 billion and \$6.5 billion. Reimbursements may date back to cases decided by the department in 2016. The ruling also invalidated all VA decisions denying reimbursement for deductibles and co-insurance costs not covered in emergency visits at non-VA facilities. The letters come as many veterans are facing new debts related to work

interruptions and other financial problems related to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. However, processing of the claims is likely to take several months, and may be stalled further by ongoing legal appeals

VA Compensation and Pension C&P Examination Alternatives during the Pandemic

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has providing information about utilizing alternatives to in-person Compensation and Pension (C&P) examinations during the COVID-19 pandemic to support social distancing and the safety and health of Veterans and clinicians. VBA will continue to complete as many examinations as possible using virtual means that do not involve a face-to-face examination. This message is intended to advise you about the change and provide guidance and resources.

What are C&P Examinations? ⌚ C&P examinations are forensic examinations used to gather evidence used by VBA claims processors in making decisions on Veterans' claims for disability compensation and pension benefits. C&P exams are scheduled when the evidence already in the Veteran's record does not contain all the information needed to make a decision on the claim. ⌚ Disability Benefits Questionnaires, or DBQs, are standardized forms used by clinicians when performing C&P exams. The purpose of a DBQ is to ensure the clinician performing the exam captures and records all the information needed by VBA claims processors to make a decision. ⌚ For many years, both Veterans Health Administration (VHA) clinicians and VBA contract vendors have conducted C&P examinations using DBQs. In FY19, VBA completed about 65 percent of the more than 1.6 million examination requests generated by regional office claims processors.

What are options for conducting C&P Examinations? ⌚ The C&P exam process most familiar to most people is the in-person appointment where the Veteran physically reports to the medical provider's office. For some disabilities, in-person examinations are required and cannot be completed through an alternate method. ⌚ C&P examinations can also be completed using a process called Acceptable Clinical Evidence (ACE) examinations. ACE examinations can occur after a medical provider reviews the evidence of record and determines that the evidence is sufficient to complete a DBQ without an in-person examination. Sometimes, the examiner may need to call the Veteran and ask for clarification or ask the Veteran to answer some questions. Frequently, the ACE examination can be completed without telephone interaction with the Veteran. ⌚ A third way of completing C&P examinations is through video or tele-C&P examinations. Tele-C&P examinations are suitable for the completion of some DBQ types, most commonly for mental health conditions. Tele-C&P examinations enable the Veteran to remain in his or her home and teleconference with the medical provider so the provider can see and speak to the Veteran.

Why has VA decided to suspend the in-person examination option? During the COVID-19 pandemic, VA recognizes the value of social distancing and the need to reduce the amount of face-to-face contact. On April 2, 2020, the VHA temporarily discontinued performing C&P exams in order to prioritize resources for essential and critically needed health care services in this emergency. This directive also eliminates in-person examinations except in urgent care situations and reduces the number of people entering VHA facilities in order to protect employees and patients. VHA will conduct some C&P examinations through tele-exams and ACE where possible. Out of an abundance of caution for Veterans and medical providers, VBA is similarly suspending in-person C&P examinations until further notice and will continue to conduct C&P exams through ACE and Tele-C&P, when possible.

What you can do to assist with my claim? Make sure your current private medical records are part of your VA claims file. The Department of Veterans Affairs encourages all Veterans to submit their private medical records for consideration during the processing of their benefits claim. VA values evidence from your private treatment providers because they are familiar with your medical history, often over a long period of time. VA appreciates the trusted and special relationship between private treatment providers and their Veteran/patients. Key methods that private medical records can be submitted are as follows:

⌚ Veteran/Private treatment provider can send medical records directly to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Claims Intake Center, P.O. Box 4444, Janesville, WI., 53547-4444 or submit to VA regional office. ⌚ VA will request your private medical records for you if you submit signed a VA Form 21-4142 and VA Form 21-4142a. You must complete and submit both of these documents. ⌚ Private treatment records can be uploaded as part

of an on-line submission of a claim at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim>.

Resources VA encourages all Veterans to work with an accredited representative for assistance in completing claims for VA benefits. The accredited representative can help guide the Veteran in submitting applicable medical records for consideration on his or her claim. A list of accredited organizations can be found on the Office of General Counsel site at <https://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp>,

Questions on Claims?

1. For individuals who need more assistance, VBA offers robust resources through the National Call Center (NCC) at 1-800-827-1000.
2. You can start and continue to file claims with no delay. To start or continue a claim File a claim online at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim>. or <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>. Fax a claim to VA's Centralized Mail hub at (844)531-7818

Submit completed applications by paper mail

3. Intent to file a claim is evidenced by: Faxing or mailing a completed VA Form 21-0966 (<https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0966ARE.pdf>) Calling the NCC at 1-800-827- 1000 or Veterans Service Center, Starting a claim online at <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim> , or Asking a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to complete one on a claimant's behalf.

Note: Intent to file a claim will preserve a potential effective date and allow the Veteran up to one year to submit a completed claim form. Veterans can also work with a local VSO to submit claims electronically or by mail.

DAV COVID-19 Grants All Disabled Vets Who Lost Employment Eligible | \$250

Service-connected disabled veterans who lost employment because of the coronavirus pandemic can apply for \$250 grants from Disabled American Veterans, the veterans service organization announced 13 APR. "People are anxious, they're worried about being able to take care of their families," said Dan Clare, a Marine Corps veteran and DAV outreach officer. "We want to provide a little bit of assistance for as many as we can." DAV aims to raise \$2.5 million toward the unemployment relief program and to give that to veterans facing a loss in wages though the end of April, he said.

The grants — made possible through donations from the American public and corporate sponsors — are intended to help veterans pay bills, obtain food and provide for their families. "On top of the additional health risks our wounded, ill and injured veterans face with this virus, thousands of disabled veterans are being laid off or have had to close their small businesses due to the pandemic," DAV National Commander Stephen "Butch" Whitehead said in a statement. "DAV remains dedicated—as we have for 100 years—to assisting our heroes who are desperately struggling and no longer able to make ends meet during this unprecedented time."

Any veteran with a service-connected disability can apply online for the grants starting Monday. Applicants do not have to be a member of DAV, but is required to verify their job loss, and DAV service officers will verify their service-connected disability with the Department of Veterans Affairs before funds are released. "We are incredibly grateful for all of the generous donors who have made this relief possible," Whitehead said. "While we don't know when this crisis will end, we do know that we can make a lifesaving difference for our fellow veterans and their families with these grants." Veterans can receive one grant per household and are encouraged to also consider taking part in one of DAV's virtual job fairs, which are still taking place during the pandemic. Many of the opportunities allow veterans to work from home, Clare said.

Like everyone during this pandemic, DAV is adapting to changes and preparing for a difficult road to recovery. They anticipate the programs and future donations to take a hit, Clare said. While the nonprofit is still helping veterans file claims with the VA — though not in person — their transportation program that helps veterans get to VA medical appointments has nearly come to a halt. "It's scary for us to think of this program that's a lifeline for veterans to get the care that they earned and they deserve suffering a shortfall," Clare said. "We are worried about the fallout that this is going to have for veterans." Last year the program provided

615,000 rides nationwide, and Clare fears a number of those appointments could be missed without the program. Though some appointments have moved to online, not all care can be provided through video chat.

The unemployment grants, Clare said, are just one-way DAV can remind veterans that Americans are still here for one another. “We have to communicate and take care of each other in different ways,” he said. “Everyone needs to have some hope in their lives right now.” Veterans can apply for a DAV unemployment grant, which will be issued on a first-come first-serve basis, at www.DAV.org/COVIDrelief. Veterans who want to learn more about the benefits available to them can visit www.benefitsquestions.org. To donate to the emergency campaign, go to www.DAV.org/relief or text RELIEF to 484848

Coronavirus Q&A for Nontaxable Recovery Rebate

(Q) How do I get my rebate? For most Americans, no action is required. The IRS will use data from the most current tax returns or Social Security data to provide a rebate to Americans either via direct deposit (if such information is available) or through a paper check in the mail to the last address on file. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said he hopes to distribute rebates to taxpayers who e-filed with direct deposit banking information in three weeks. Taxpayers receiving rebate checks may have to wait six to eight weeks to receive a paper check in the mail. Treasury will be developing a web-based portal for individuals to provide their banking information to the IRS online. Taxpayers will be able to receive payments immediately as opposed to checks in the mail.

(Q) Can I file taxes now for 2019 and have it applied for rebate eligibility? Yes. The IRS has recommended taxpayers to e-file as soon as possible if they think they will be owed a refund and has specifically advised taxpayers not to wait until July 15, the extended deadline from the usual April 15 date.

(Q) Is there a way for me to get my check faster? The IRS has stated that those who filed their taxes electronically and provided direct deposit information will get their money the fastest. Treasury will be developing a web-based portal for individuals to provide their banking information to the IRS online. Taxpayers will be able to receive payments faster as opposed to waiting for checks in the mail.

(Q) Is there any minimum income amount to qualify for the rebate and claim dependents? No, even filers with \$0 of income can file for the rebate. However, they must file a tax return to ensure the IRS can process the rebate. Additionally, they must have a Social Security Number and not be claimed as a dependent on another person’s return.

(Q) Which dependents qualify for a rebate? The CARES Act uses the Child Tax Credit (CTC) eligibility standards. All qualifying children who are under age 17 who have not provided for more than half of their own expenses and lived with the taxpayer for more than six months are eligible. This means that adult dependents, such as college students aged 17 and over, and elderly dependents do not qualify for the \$500 rebate. Adult dependents do not qualify for their own rebate either.

(Q) How many dependents can I claim? The CARES Act does not provide a maximum number of children that can be claimed. However, for each dependent to qualify they must be claimed by the taxpayer on their tax return.

(Q) What if I had a baby in 2019 or earlier this year and haven’t filed a return? If a taxpayer has not already filed a 2019 return with the name and Social Security Number (SSN) of the eligible dependent being claimed, the filer will not receive credit for those dependents born after they filed their 2018 return. However, the taxpayer may claim a \$500 credit for each eligible child on their 2020 return.

(Q) What if I am divorced? Does each parent receive a \$500 check for each of their dependents? Only the parental taxpayer claiming the child as a dependent will receive the \$500.

(Q) Tax filing and payments for tax year 2019 have been delayed until July 15. What information will

Treasury use to determine my rebate? Treasury will use tax year 2019 returns if available. If a taxpayer has not filed for tax year 2019, Treasury can fall back on 2018 return information For those relying on Social Security and Veterans benefits but who have not filed in 2019 or 2018, the IRS requires they submit a simplified return to process the rebate (they will owe no tax when filing the simplified return).

(Q) What if I have not filed my taxes for 2019, is there still an opportunity to get my money? Yes, the IRS will look at your 2018 tax return to check for rebate eligibility but has also advised all taxpayers expecting a refund to file their 2019 tax return as soon as possible.

(Q) If I had high income in 2019 but lost my job, do I still qualify? If a taxpayer's high income in 2019 puts them above the threshold, they may be in the phaseout range and remain eligible for a partial refund. If their income is lower in 2020 when they file taxes, any remaining credit that they are eligible for will also be refunded or deducted from their tax liability when they file taxes for 2020.

(Q) What if my income rises in 2020 and I received a higher rebate using my 2019 return? There is no penalty for receiving a rebate based on a lower income on 2019 or 2018 tax returns. If a filer's eligible rebate rises when using 2020 tax returns, that will be remedied on their 2020 return. If the filer is given too much, the IRS will not penalize them.

(Q) If my rebate is too large due to dependent eligibility mistakes, will I have to pay it back? Will my rebate be considered part of my taxable income in 2020? No. Like all refundable tax credits (e.g., Child Tax Credit, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)), any part of the rebate, even in excess, is not considered as part of taxable income.

(Q) If my income drops in 2020, can I get additional rebate if I got a lower rebate based on 2019 income? Yes, if a taxpayer's income drops in 2020, they will be eligible for any remaining rebate credit they were not able to claim using their 2019 or 2018 return.

(Q) If I make more income in 2020, do I have to pay any amount back? No, if the amount of credit a taxpayer qualifies for in 2020 is less than it was based on their 2019 return, it does not have to be paid back and it is not considered taxable income.

(Q) Will those receiving Social Security benefits still receive a rebate check? Yes, all taxpayers are eligible for the rebate, including those receiving Social Security benefits, subject to the same eligibility rules as other taxpayers. Individuals with Social Security benefits will have to submit a simplified return to the IRS, however.

(Q) Do I still receive a check if I am on disability? Yes, although you may need to ensure you have filed a tax return for 2018 or 2019 (or a simplified return) even if you earned no income.

(Q) What if I receive Supplemental Security Income but not Social Security benefits? Do I qualify for a rebate? Yes, taxpayers will qualify for the rebate as long as their Adjusted Gross Income is below the rebate thresholds depending on their filing status. If a taxpayer did not file for taxes in 2018 or 2019, the IRS recommends they do so as soon as possible to ensure they receive the rebate.

How the Virus Stole Easter

By Kristi Bothur (With a nod to Dr. Seuss)

'Twas late in '19 when the virus began
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
the virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.
“There won’t be an Easter,” the world supposed.

“There won’t be church services, and egg hunts are out.
No reason for new dresses when we can’t go about.”

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

“Easter can’t happen this year,” it proclaimed.
“Online and at home, it just won’t be the same.”

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

“Pooh-pooh to the saints,” the world was grumbling.
“They’re finding out now that no Easter is coming.

“They’re just waking up! We know just what they’ll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

“That noise,” said the world, “will be something to hear.”
So, it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn’t depressed. Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn’t be so! But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes.
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,
was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn’t stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling. “Just how can it be?”

“It came without bonnets, it came without bunnies,
it came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money.”

Then the world thought of something it hadn’t before.
“Maybe Easter,” it thought, “doesn’t come from a store.
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more.”

And what happened then? Well....the story’s not done.
What will YOU do? Will you share with that one?

Or two or more people needing hope in this night?
Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,
And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So, this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

May the world see hope when it looks at God's people.
May the world see the church is not a building or steeple.

May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and resurrection,
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.

May 2020 be known as the year of survival,
But not only that – Let it start a revival.

Pending Calendar

2020 Department of West Virginia Department Convention will be May 15-17, 2020 at the Holiday Inn Express, 50 Martin Street, Elkins, WV 26241 hosted by Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Detachment #956. Room rate \$100.00 per night. Phone: 304-630-2266. Free parking and continental breakfast 6 -10 a.m. Banquet \$30 and will be buffet style. POC is Roger Ware 304-636-4365 **CANCELLED***

***PLEASE NOTE: The Woody Williams Scholarships will be awarded to recipients by mail, and the Pistol Raffle will be conducted May 16th as scheduled. The winner of the Pistol Raffle will be notified by telephone; the member and detachment selling the winning ticket will still receive their reward.**

DETACHMENTS: Please submit your raffle ticket stubs and funds by mail to:

Denny L. Wood, Chairman, 9 Cherokee Court, Huntington, WV 25705

DO NOT DELAY!!

2020 Department of North Carolina Department Convention 50th Anniversary will be **July 11-12,** 2020 at the Hilton Charlotte University Hotel, 8629 J M Keynes Dr. Charlotte, NC 28262. Room rate: 800-445-8667 Hosted by Pfc Bruce Larson Detachment #1242 and Charlotte Detachment #750 **Standard Deluxe Rooms Code: NCMAR1 Hotel contract asst: Arron Brown 704-547-7444. MCL rate is \$119 ++** (Regular Rate: \$129 ++ to \$149 ++). 75 Rooms Blocked until **5/15/2020. Reserve Before: 5/15/2020.** Reservations made 5/16 to 6/11 will be guaranteed the MCL rate but the room might not be available if the block is filled. MCL rate is in effect for stays between 6/10 and 6/15. Room choice is One King or Two Double beds. **Breakfast** for 2 is included. **Note Date Change**

2020 Mideast Division Conference will be June 19-21, 2020 hosted by Dept of Virginia at Holiday Inn, 5655 Greenwich Road, VA Beach, VA 23462. Room rate \$120 plus 14% tax – total \$138.80
1-800-567-3856 or 757-499-4400 – (dial 0) use code: MED. Reservations began after July 12, 2019.

2020 MCL National Convention will be August t 10-15, 2020 at Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, 100 North Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL, 32118 Phone: 888-217- 5507. Room rate: \$145.00 includes tax, Wi-Fi, parking and breakfast. Reservation opened on Monday August 12, 2019 at 10 AM EST.

2020 Modern Day Marine Expo will be Sept 22-24, 2020 at MCB, Quantico, VA

2021 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference February 24– 28 2021 Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, 777 Waterside Drive Norfolk, VA <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/orfsi-sheraton-norfolk-waterside-hotel/> Group Code: MCL Phone: (757-622-6664) Room rate includes up to 4 breakfast vouchers per occupancy. \$129.00 per night + prevailing tax (currently 14%) Please make your room reservation directly to the hotel.

2021 Mideast Division Conference hosted by the Department of Delaware 16, 17, 18 April 2021 Atlantic Sands Hotel & Conference Center (Oceanfront) 1 Baltimore Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware 19971 Phone: 800-422-0600 | 302-227-2511 <https://atlanticsandshotel.com/> Room rate \$105.00 plus fees. Discounted breakfast, parking included. **Reservations may be made now.**

*Reservation may be made now by calling 1-800-422-0600, refer to the **Mideast Division Marine Corps League Block #9579** arriving Friday, April 16, 2021. **Reservations are open.**

2021 Modern Day Marine Expo will be May 4-6, 2021 at MCB, Quantico, VA

2021 Department of West Virginia Department Convention will be May 2021 at the Holiday Inn Express, 50 Martin Street, Elkins, WV 26241 hosted by Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Detachment #956. Room rate Pending. Phone: 304-630-2266. Free parking and continental breakfast 6 -10 a.m. Banquet \$30 and will be buffet style. POC is Roger Ware 304-636-4365 Additional information will be forthcoming when available.

2021 MCL National Convention will be August 6-14, 2021 at Wyndham Springfield City Centre, 700 E Adams St, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Room rate is \$129.95 with tax included. Free breakfast, free parking and WiFi. Pet friendly. wyndhamhotels.com Phone. 217-789-1530

2021 Marine South Expo will be Sept 29-30 at MCB, Camp Lejeune, NC

The following is provided by UDSA Agent Todd Hess for distribution to the Dept of WV Marine Corps League Detachment Membership:

The background of the image features a large, faint, circular seal of the Governor of West Virginia. The seal contains the text "THE SEAL OF THE GOVERNOR OF WEST VIRGINIA" around the perimeter and the motto "LIBERTAS E FIDELITATE" in the center. The central image of the seal depicts a landscape with a sun rising over mountains and a river, with a building and a plow in the foreground.

WEST VIRGINIA STRONG

The Comeback

The Comeback ROADMAP

- Expanded testing capacity
- Increased hospital surge capacity while allowing elective medical procedures to restart this week
- Ramping up our supply of PPE
- Ramping up our contact tracing capability

WEST VIRGINIANS SHOULD CONTINUE TO

- Continue to practice physical distancing
- Wear face coverings in public where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain
- Follow statewide Stay at Home Order until lifted
- Follow all county Health Department regulations
- Telework when possible

OPENING CRITERIA

- Three consecutive days maintaining statewide Cumulative Percent of Positive Test Results below 3%
- Allowing to open, NOT requiring to open

Cumulative Percent of Positive Test Results

West Virginia Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources
Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services

Home Resident Positive Cases County Level Information Lab Cases Long-Term Care Facility Health Status State Comparison

CORONAVIRUS.WV.GOV

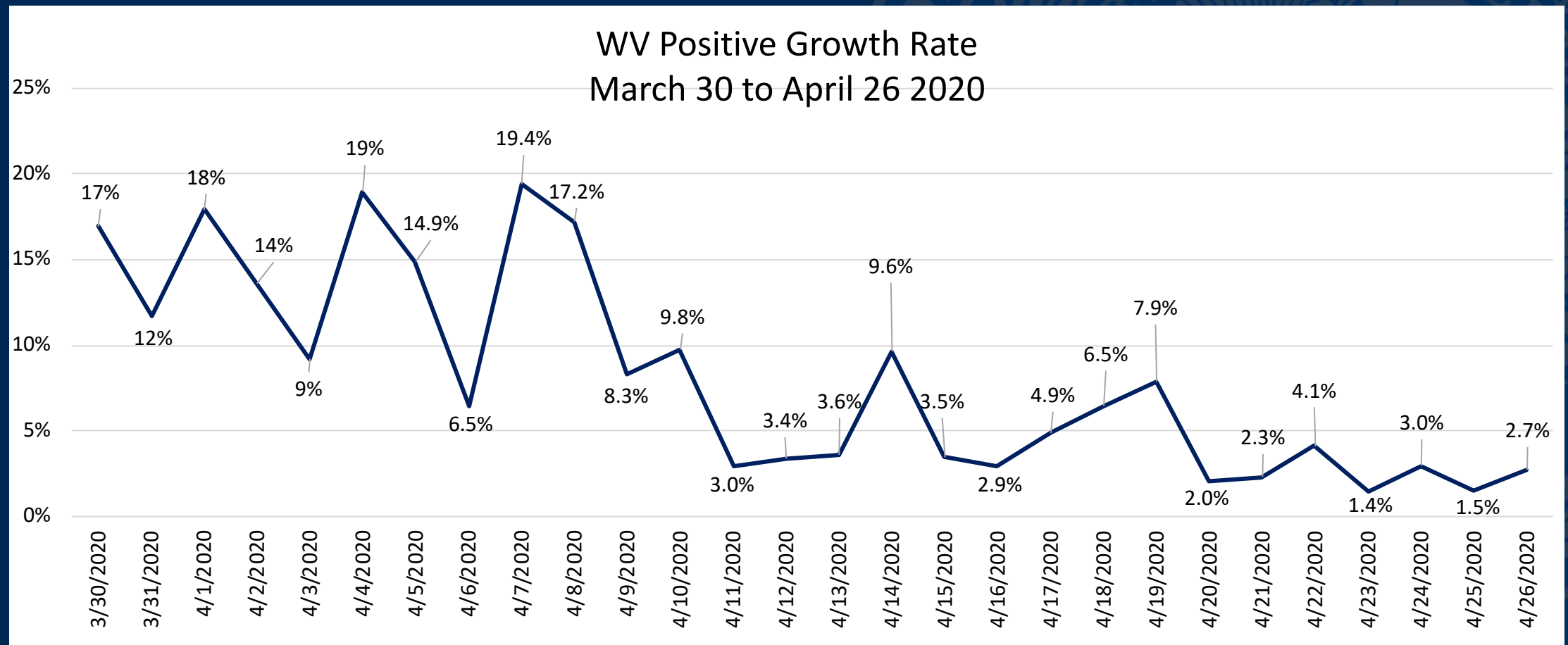
↓

Total Number of WV Resident Positive Cases	Total Number of WV Resident Deaths	Total Number of Laboratory Results Reported to WVDHHR	Cumulative Percent Positive Test Results
1,063	36	43,039	2.47%

Note: All data are provisional and subject to change based on information obtained during public health investigations.

WEST VIRGINIA STRONG – THE COMEBACK *Updated 04/27/20200 10:00am*

CUMULATIVE PERCENT POSITIVE CHART



WEEK 1

- Hospitals and elective medical procedures
- Outpatient Healthcare (working with boards and associations to develop appropriate criteria)
 - Primary Care
 - Dentistry
 - Physical therapy/Occupational therapy
 - Psychological/mental health
 - Etc
- Testing of Daycare staff

WEEK 2

- Small businesses with less than 10 employees
- Professional Services (by appointment only and waiting in vehicle instead of inside)
 - Hair and nail salons, barbershops
 - Dog grooming
- Outdoor dining at restaurants
- Churches and funerals with limited gathering size
 - Every other pew, physical distancing, face coverings

ALL with physical distancing, sanitization, face coverings

WEEKS 3-6

- Office/government buildings
- Specialty retail stores
- Parks and/or restrooms and facilities at parks
- Gyms, fitness centers, recreational centers
- Dine-in restaurants
- Hotels
- Casinos
- Spas/massage parlors
- Remaining small businesses

WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO REOPENING

NO TIMELINE FOR REOPENING RIGHT NOW

- Nursing home visitation
- Entertainment venues
 - Movie theaters
 - Sporting events
 - Concerts
- Gatherings larger than 25 people

CONDITIONS FOR REOPENING TO SLOW, STOP OR REVERSE

- An unexpected increase in COVID-19 positive hospitalizations
- Significant outbreaks of community-based transmission (not clusters or outbreaks in nursing homes or vulnerable communities)
 - This could be on a county by county or regional hotspot basis
- Cumulative Percent of Positive Test Results surges above 3%

WEST VIRGINIANS SHOULD CONTINUE TO

- Continue to practice physical distancing
- Wear face coverings in public where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain
- Follow statewide Stay at Home Order until lifted
- Follow all county Health Department regulations
- Telework when possible

GOING FORWARD

- Guidance for each business sector will be released in advance
- Limitation on size of gatherings still in place until lifted
- Testing data tracked and analyzed daily
- Reopening plan will be modified as necessary
- Follow updates:
 - coronavirus.wv.gov
 - governor.wv.gov