

VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.
P.O. BOX 362234
DECATUR, GA. 30036



March 31, 2018

My fellow Veterans, Grace and peace to you and your family.

Court ruling could extend disability benefits to thousands of injured veterans

WASHINGTON — Thousands of veterans previously denied [disability benefits](#) for pain issues related to their military service may now be eligible for that assistance, thanks to a federal court ruling this week.

On Wednesday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit overturned a 19-year-old precedent used in more than 11,000 VA [claims denials](#) that stated veterans had to have a clear medical diagnosis connected to their pain in order to be eligible for those [disability payouts](#).

Advocates said the ruling could be life-changing for individuals who are unable to work because of service-connected injuries but excluded from veterans assistance because of medical technicalities.

“This was an all-or-nothing issue,” said Bart Stichman, executive director and co-founder of the National Veterans Legal Services Program.

“This isn’t about arguing over the degree of disability where is the difference of \$2,000 or \$3,000 a month in help. These are people who are getting zero benefits, despite their pain.”

The court challenge, which was brought by NVLSP, involved Army veteran Melba Saunders, who served in first Gulf War. She injured her knees during her seven years in service, a fact that military doctors noted in her files without determining a specific medical diagnosis of the issue.

When she left the service and applied for veterans disability benefits, her claim was denied. VA officials acknowledged the problem stemmed from her time in service but the Board of Veterans’

Appeals cited a 1999 Veterans Court decision which held that “pain alone is not a disability for the purpose of VA disability compensation.”



A retired brigadier general gets his blood pressure checked at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Feb. 22, 2017. A federal court ruling this week concerning veterans experiencing pain from their time in service could dramatically expand eligibility rules for disability benefits. (Airman 1st Class Dennis Spain/Air Force)

The new court ruling erases that precedent, at least for now. Veterans still need to show a clear connection between their pain and their military service to be eligible, but would not longer have to have a specific medical reason for the pain to apply for benefits.

VA officials can appeal the decision, although it's unclear if they will do so.

In a statement, Saunders' lawyer, Mel Bostwick, called the court case “a significant victory for disabled veterans” and a long-overdue correction in VA policy.

“Congress recognized that the nation owes these veterans for their sacrifices, and the court today vindicated the common-sense notion that this debt does not depend on whether a veteran's disabling pain can be labeled with a specific medical diagnosis,” she said.

Stichman said veterans who have previously been rejected for disability benefits — or who have avoided applying in the past because they assumed they would not be eligible — should now reapply to see if the new ruling will allow them to qualify.

“We just don’t know how many veterans this could affect,” he said. “We know the Board of Veterans Appeals has cited this precedent in more than 11,000 cases. But we don’t know about all the other veterans who never even applied.”

VA, Postal Inspection Service spot 2 scams targeting veterans

The Veterans Affairs Department and U.S. Postal Inspection Service is warning veterans of two kinds of scams which are specifically targeting former service members.

Fake charities posing as organizations that benefit the veteran population and companies claiming to offer pension buyouts are becoming prevalent and dangerous to this community, VA wrote in a recent [blog post](#).

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service and non-profit AARP say they are noticing more fake charities using names that sound real and authentic as a ploy to convince veterans to donate. These fraudulent organizations attempt to appeal to a veteran’s sense of duty and honor when soliciting donations.

Most of these “charities” are pocketing the donations for themselves, the agencies said. One scammer operated two fake charities and pocketed the veterans’ donations, then used the personal information written on the checks to steal donors’ identifies and take more cash, according to a VA [blog post](#).

Before donating to a charity, veterans should verify the organization’s name and do some research about their mission and reputation, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service said.

In addition, veterans should understand where specifically their donations will go and who will benefit from them. The Postal Inspection Service and VA recommend [CharityWatch](#) as a resource, which reviews charities’ financial statements and gives organizations a rating based on their transparency and spending.

Others are scamming veterans in attempt to go after their pensions, the agencies said.

For most veterans, their VA pensions are hard-fought, but the Postal Inspection Service said some fraudulent companies are offering veterans a “pension advance” or buyout. In these

situations, a company offers a veteran a lump sum in exchange for a piece of all future pension payments.

Watch for scams' high fees

Veterans might see this as an attractive option, especially if they are looking for fast cash.

But VA and the Postal Inspection Service say these schemes are typically a bust, because these companies often charge high interest rates. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has seen some interest rates as high as 106 percent, the agencies said.

VA, Postal Inspection Service warns veterans on 2 new scams

Again, these organizations often have patriotic-sounding names and logos and sometimes claim they have been endorsed by the VA.

The Postal Inspection Service suggested veterans avoid high fees and interest rates, and that they should never sign over control of their benefits.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service and AARP Fraud Network [teamed up late last year](#) to launch "Operation Protect Veterans," a campaign designed to better educate veterans about possible scams and how they can protect themselves.

According to an AARP November survey, 16 percent of veterans have lost money to fraudsters, compared to 8 percent of non-veterans.

Fraudsters often like to target specific groups of people, like veterans or federal annuitants, the Securities and Exchange Commission [said](#).

The Office of Personnel Management [warned](#) the federal workforce last year of an aggressive marketing campaign by companies offering cash payments in exchange for all or part of beneficiaries' annuity payments.

Last summer, the SEC [warned](#) Thrift Savings Plan participants of a scam from a fake federal benefits consulting group, which created a misleading impression that it was affiliated with and approved by the TSP.

To Treat Pain, PTSD And Other Ills, Some Vets Try Tai Chi

Every week in Murfreesboro, Tenn., Zibin Guo guides veterans in wheelchairs through slow-motion tai chi poses as a Bluetooth speaker plays soothing instrumental music.

"Cloudy hands to the right, cloudy hands to the left," he tells them. "Now we're going to open your arms, grab the wheels and 180-degree turn."

The participants swivel about-face and continue to the next pose. [Guo](#), a medical anthropologist at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, has modified his tai chi to work from a seated position. Even though many of the participants aren't in wheelchairs, using the mobile chairs makes it easier for them to get through a half-hour of movement.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has given \$120,000 in grant money to Guo to spread his special wheelchair tai chi curriculum. He started in Chattanooga, and has expanded his class offerings to Murfreesboro.



Veterans in Murfreesboro, Tenn., enjoy a wheelchair tai chi class; other alternative health programs now commonly offered at VA hospitals in the U.S. include yoga, mindfulness training and art therapy.
Blake Farmer/Nashville Public Radio

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The [VA acknowledges that there's little evidence](#) at this point that tai chi or mindfulness therapy or acupuncture will ease PTSD or addiction, though recently there *has* been research into the quality of life benefits of tai chi [among the elderly](#).

Veterans For Christ, Inc. \$500.00 Scholarship will be awarded to a qualifying Veteran's child in September 2018. Application Deadline is August 1, 2018

ELIGIBILITY:

- A legally dependent child of a veteran.**
- A high school senior or college student up to age 25.**
- Must live in the Atlanta, GA metropolitan area.**
- Must have a 2.5 or better grade point average.**
- Must have an acceptance letter to a 2 or 4 year college or university and be enrolled.**

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Must submit three recommendation letters:**
- One from the high school**
- One from a parent/grandparent**
- One from a community service organization**
- Must complete a 250 - 350 word essay that explains:**
- Why you deserve the scholarship and**

How the scholarship will help you achieve your academic goals?

The essay must be typed in Times Roman 12 size font.

Copy of Veteran's DD-214

Copy of Deceased Veteran's Certificate of Death DD-1300 (if applicable)

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Download our application from www.veteransforchristinc.org. Type or legibly print all applicable fields.

2. Do not attach any additional documents to your application, except those specified above in the application requirements.

3. Failure to comply with all rules, regulations and/or requirements may lead to being disqualified for consideration.

Letter from Susan Edmonds Robins Commissary Director 406 926-3714

Our next On-Site Sale in Marietta will be held 19-21 April 2018. Times for the sale are: Thursday and Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM and Saturday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

The address is 1901 Terrell Mill Rd, Suite 200 Marietta, GA 30067. We are located on the corner of Cobb Parkway and Terrell Mill Rd. Directions are: I-75 North to exit 261, Windy Hill Rd. Turn left and travel approximately 4 miles. Turn right onto Cobb Parkway. Travel approximately 1/4 mile and turn right into Marietta Plaza Shopping Mall. We are located next door to Burlington.

If you would like to place a special order to pick up at the sale, please have it to me no later than Wednesday, 11 April. Special orders for dry products must be made in case quantity. Special orders of meat items may be made for individual items. Be sure to specify how thick you want the cuts, how you want them packaged, etc. Any late orders will not be able to be processed for the April sale.

I would also like to get your input on new items you would like to see for sale at the Marietta sales. Please send me your suggestions. I will take all the suggestions and add items as well as delete other items we currently bring. I would also like to get your input on what we can do to better serve you at these sales.

Thank you for your patronage and Thank you for your service to our great nation.

It's a Veterans Affair. Fellowship with the Veterans for Christ, Inc. at Bo Jangles 2685 Panola Rd. May 19th. Come out taste and see what cooking in your Community at all Bo Jangles. 10 % discount for all Veterans purchases.

New Veterans for Christ, Inc. Chapter coming soon in Bethlehem, Ga.

The Veterans for Christ, Inc. will be starting a new chapter in the Athens area in the coming months to help veterans less fortunate than ourselves.

For further information on this new chapter email David McKinney at gtp0.148@gmail.com

YOU TOO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.

Sign up online to become an associate member. The annual associate membership of \$120.00 which can be used as a tax deduction for supporters. Registration fees can be paid online through our PayPal account. You will get a free VFC T-shirt with your associate membership. Your tax deductible membership fee will support the VFC mission.

All Honorably Discharged Veterans are welcome to come and observe the VFC; feel free to ask questions and learn more. If we don't know the answer we know someone who does. Please browse our web site www.veteransforchristinc.org. There you'll find information on many subjects of interest to veterans. You'll also find a Newsletter for your branch of service and links to Social Security and many other links with an abundance of information.

Our monthly meetings are held at the God's Amazing Grace Christians Ministries 3576 Covington Hwy, . Decatur, Ga. Our meetings are the third Tuesday of every month and start at 6:30 (PM) for approximately one hour and a half, unless otherwise advertised. We will be respectful of your time.

Thank you for your interest in the VFC. We look forward to communicating and fellowshiping with you soon. We are looking for a corporate sponsor for our VFC Gerald Prince College Scholarship which is donated each September at our Anniversary Luncheon

"Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, being men of courage, be strong." 1Cor 16:13

Sincerely,

William A. Harris, Jr.

William A. Harris, Jr., USAF Retired
President, Veterans for Christ, Inc.

www.veteransforchristinc.org