



The Maryland VETERAN



Employment Services for Maryland Veterans

The State of Maryland has a number of services in place to support veteran employment. From providing assistance with resume development and expedited credentialing for professional licenses, to hiring toolkits available for employers, we are bridging the gap between our veterans who are seeking employment and the employers who are looking to hire them. Each of these services, offered by a number of State agencies, is in alignment with the O'Malley-Brown Administration's strategic goal of full employment for our veterans by the end of calendar year 2015.

VETERANS SERVICES AT MARYLAND'S ONE STOP CAREER CENTERS

One Stop Career Centers offer a variety of services to assist veterans. Local Veterans Employment Representatives work with businesses to encourage the hiring of qualified veterans. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program staff provide specialized intensive employment assistance to eligible veterans who have special employment and training needs. For more information about veterans services, contact your local veterans representative by visiting <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/onestopsvets.shtml>.

VETERANS FULL EMPLOYMENT ACT

This act, which became law in 2013, helps qualified veteran and military spouses who are actively licensed in other states obtain expedited licensing

in Maryland. Veterans who received an honorable discharge or otherwise were released (except for dishonorable discharge) from the U.S. Armed Forces or are on active duty as a member of a Reserve or National Guard component of these services are eligible. In addition, someone who is a member, or the spouse of a service member, of the U.S. Armed Forces who is assigned to a duty station in Maryland, or the spouse of a recently discharged veteran or member of the U.S. Armed Forces, or surviving spouse of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces are also eligible.

For current service members and spouses, you may apply while assigned to a duty station in Maryland. Veterans, and spouses (to include surviving spouses) of veterans must apply within one year of the date of separation from service or, for surviving spouses, the date of death of the service member.

The Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, as well as the Commissioner of Financial Regulation, offers a variety of expedited licenses for veterans and spouses of veterans. For more information on the Full Employment Act, visit <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/license/opvetlic.shtml>

VETERAN EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

Starting June 1, the State initiated Operation Hire: Maryland's 100 Day Veteran Hiring Challenge. This campaign encourages our state and local agencies as well as private sector businesses to learn more about veteran



hiring practices, from recruitment and onboarding to supporting veterans once they are in the civilian workforce. Permanently housed on the MDVA website is a list of resources and best practices to educate our business and agency partners on ways to incorporate veteran friendly business practices. To view the tool kit go to <http://veterans.maryland.gov/veteran-employer-tool-kit/>

MDVA OPENS NEW SERVICE OFFICES

The MDVA has opened two new service offices to assist veterans and dependents with filing claims for benefits.

Easton Service Center

11 South Harrison Street
Easton, MD 21601
410-690-7181

Montgomery College

Counseling and Advising Building
Room CB103
51 Mannakee Street
Rockville, MD 20850
240-567-5405

Questions and Answers with Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown

The MDVA had the opportunity to ask a few questions of the Lt. Governor for our newsletter.
Lt. Governor, you served as a Colonel in the United States Army Reserves with a deployment to Iraq.

What message do you have for our veterans as we welcome them home and what can we learn from their experiences?

My message to Maryland's Veterans is simple: welcome home. You belong here, and our goal is to make our state a great place for you and your families to call home. We work, each and every day, to remind Maryland's Veterans and their families how much we appreciate the sacrifices they've made in order to keep us safe.

Tell us how your training and experiences while serving on active duty helped shape your career and support you as Lt. Governor.

When I returned from Iraq, people often asked me what I learned from my tour. And I told them: what I learned is that regardless of where people live, whether in Prince George's County or Baltimore County, whether in Iraq or the United States, they want the same things for themselves and for their families. They want jobs and opportunities made possible by a good education. They want access to quality medical care. They want a healthy environment, along with safety in their homes and in their neighborhoods.

In Iraq, and here at home, I also saw that in some communities and in some countries, it's more difficult to achieve these things. So as Lieutenant Governor, I've worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs and all of our agencies to ensure that Marylanders in every community in our state have access to those opportunities.

Maryland has a commitment to supporting veteran employment. What message do you have for employers as it relates to hiring veterans?

Employers should know that Maryland's Veterans have the skills, training, and aptitude to be great workers and get the job done. Every Maryland Veteran who wants a job should be able to find one, so as a state, we've established a goal of 3 percent unemployment for our Veterans, and continue to work with our agencies and fellow local public sector employers to hire Veterans.

But we also know that in order to reach our goal, we're going to need the support of the private sector. So through our Operation Hire initiative, we're encouraging Maryland's private sector employers to support Veteran hiring by providing them with toolkits and the resources they need to be successful.

Tell us about efforts made and accomplishments achieved in support of the diverse needs of our returning Maryland veterans and their families.

The first thing a Veteran needs when he or she returns is access to a job, which is why it has been a priority of our administration over the past eight years. Together, we've taken steps to support that goal, from passing the Veterans Full Employment Act into law last year, to providing no-interest loans for Veteran business owners, investing close to \$7 million in our Veterans' Behavioral Health Initiative, or providing over \$5 million in scholarships that help Veterans train for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

But we also remain committed to providing Veterans and their families with the services they deserve and have earned. So last year, the MDVA Veteran Service Program processed an all-time high 5,138 claims, for veterans benefits, providing an average of \$23.4 million per year in benefits. We've increased the number of Veterans contacted over the past eight years by 82 percent and opened up new Veterans Services offices in Montgomery County, Bel Air, Salisbury, Easton, and Hagerstown.

Lastly, what is your vision for veteran services in Maryland as we move in to the future?

Our Veterans are all different – from rural communities and big cities, of different faiths, ethnicities, nationalities and races. Our Veterans have served as mechanics and cooks, medics and clerks; we've driven trucks and flown helicopters. But we're united by a common bond—our love for America, and our communities.

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Lt. Governor Brown greets returning soldiers and their families at a Freedom Salute Ceremony.

Questions and Answers with the Lieutenant Governor

(continued from page 2)

Those differences make us stronger, but it also means that Veterans have different needs and skills. So as we look to the future, we're committed to Veterans services that serve each and every one of our Veterans, no matter where they live in our state. By working together, we can ensure that Maryland is a great place to live, work, and raise a family for our Veterans.

Thank you Sir, for your service and for your commitment to serving our Maryland veterans and their families.

A Colonel in the United States Army Reserves with nearly 30 years of military service, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown is one of the nation's highest ranking elected officials to have served a tour of duty in Iraq. As Lt. Governor he has led the administration's efforts to expand and improve opportunities and resources for veterans and military families.

A Message from Secretary Chow

This past year has been a busy one for the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs. Continued partnerships with government agencies and community organizations have allowed us to expand our outreach efforts and supportive services to Maryland veterans and their families.

Our service program provided all-time high claims representation to over 5,100 veterans and dependents in fiscal year 2014, providing much needed benefits to those who served the nation. The MDVA established a Memorandum of Understanding with Carroll County which enabled us to assist in the hiring and training of the Carroll County Veteran Service Officer. In addition, our service program staff trained the Health Management Resources Service Officer who assists the resident population of Charlotte Hall in obtaining benefits, which helps to defer state costs for care.

I am proud to acknowledge Charlotte Hall Veterans Home for achieving a five star quality rating by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Our cemetery program remains the busiest state veterans cemetery program in the country and has received, for the first time ever, grants for enhancements and improvements at all five cemeteries. With an updated website, new benefits guide, social media, and a subscriber list with over 20,000 emails the MDVA is sharing valuable information on a daily basis with our veteran community.

From our initiatives to support full employment and college campus services to veterans, to supporting our commissions and state agency veterans' programs, the MDVA will continue in the mission to serve our Maryland veterans and their families.

Sincerely,



Edward Chow, Jr.
Secretary



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Office of the Secretary

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Vacant, Deputy Secretary
Jerry Boden, Chief of Staff
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Phone: 410-260-3867

Outreach and Advocacy Program

Dana Hendrickson, Director
Phone: 410-260-3842

Maryland Veterans Trust Fund

Mark Hendricks, Administrator
Phone: 410-974-2399
The Wineland Building
16 Francis Street, 4th Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

Service Program

Phillip Munley, Director
Federal Building- Room 3020
31 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, MD 21201
Phone: 410-230-4444
Toll Free: 800-446-4926, ext. 6450
Fax: 410-230-4445

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

Sharon M. Mattia, Director
29449 Charlotte Hall Road
Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
Phone: 301-884-8171
Toll Free: 800-522-8387
Fax: 301-884-8036

Boards and Commissions

Maryland Veterans Commission

Fred L. Shinbur, Chair

Maryland Veterans

Home Commission

BG Warner I. Sumpter,
USA (Ret.), Chair

The War Memorial Commission

War Memorial Building
Norman Johnson, Chair

Maryland Military

Monuments Commission

Secretary Edward Chow, Jr., Chair

Commission on the Establishment of a Women in Military Service Monument

Senator Katherine Klausmeier, Chair

Maryland General Assembly Recognizes Maryland Vietnam Era Veterans

After Recognition in the House and Senate, Veterans are greeted by Governor and Lt. Governor

On March 5th, the Maryland General Assembly recognized the service of 135 Maryland Vietnam Era Veterans by inviting them onto the floor of both the House and Senate Chambers. The veterans were greeted with standing ovations by both chambers. The State of Maryland coordinated this event as an official Commemorative Partner with the Department of Defense's Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. The program is designed for federal, state and local communities, veterans' organizations and other nongovernmental organizations to assist a grateful nation in thanking and honoring our Vietnam Veterans and their families.

In the House Chamber, House Speaker Michael Busch presented a House Resolution to MDVA Secretary Edward Chow, Jr. Remarks were then delivered by the Co-Chair of the Veterans Caucus, Delegate C.T. Wilson. In the Senate Chamber, Senate President Mike Miller welcomed the veterans to the floor. The other Co-Chair of the Veterans Caucus, Senator Doug Peters, recognized all the State Senators who are Vietnam Era Veterans. Senator John Astle, who is a Vietnam combat veteran, read the Senate Resolution and spoke about his experience as a Vietnam veteran.

The guests and spouses of the Vietnam veterans were invited to view both ceremonies from the gallery overlooking the floors of the House and Senate. The veterans and their guests were then escorted up to the second floor of the State House for a reception in the Governor's Reception Room. Governor Martin O'Malley and Lt. Governor Anthony Brown addressed the group. Governor O'Malley then took the veterans and their guests on a personal tour of his office. Finally, the Governor arranged for the veterans to tour Government House (the Governor's residence).

See pictures from the event at right. Special thanks to Senate President Miller, House Speaker Busch, Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown for opening their doors to our Maryland Vietnam Era Veterans.



Staff Update

WELCOME TO DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY, DANA HENDRICKSON

Born and raised in Maryland, Dana Hendrickson is a proud second generation Annapolitan. She received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Delaware and a Master's Degree in psychology from Towson University.

Dana has a strong foundation in public service, including the State of Delaware and Maryland, and Anne Arundel County. She received the Superintendent's Award of Excellence from the Anne Arundel County Detention Facilities in 2006 and was an adjunct professor at Baltimore City Community College from 2011 through 2012. Dana

served as the Central Region Resource Coordinator with Maryland's Commitment to Veterans from 2012 to 2013, coming on board with MDVA in October 2013.

She successfully completed the 'Serving our Veterans-Behavioral Health Certificate' in 2012 and the 'Certified Associate in Project Management' course through Towson University's Center for Professional Studies in 2014.

She is a granddaughter and great niece to three WWII U.S. Army Veterans and is the proud spouse of a Combat Veteran. Dana resides in Anne Arundel County with her husband and two sons. She is honored to be on staff with the MDVA.

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Legislative Session 2014 Highlights

Maryland Health Care Commission – Requirement for Certificate of Need - Exceptions

- This new law, signed by the Governor on April 8, 2014, eliminates the requirement for a new state veterans home to obtain a Certificate of Need (CON) from the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC).
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home is currently the only state veterans home in Maryland.
- As MDVA continues to explore opportunities to build a second state veterans home, one of the potential hurdles we would face is obtaining a CON from the MHCC.
- Since a state veterans home provides services to veterans throughout the state, and the CON is based on local nursing home bed supply and demand, MDVA and MHCC agreed it is not necessary to require a state veterans home to obtain a CON.
- The new law clarifies that the CON process does not apply to a state veterans home. The law takes effect October 1, 2014.

Higher Education – Maryland Technology Internship Program

- This new law establishes a Maryland Technology Internship Program to connect college university students, recent graduates, and veterans with small innovative businesses in the high-growth technology sector through internships.
- The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) will administer this program, in which

the state will reimburse a technology-based business up to 50% of a stipend paid to an intern.

- Honorably discharged Maryland veterans who graduated from a public or private nonprofit institution of higher education are eligible to participate in this program. More details will become available when this program goes into effect on July 1, 2014.

Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness

- This new law establishes a Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness
- The purpose of the committee is to ensure that public resources, programs, and policies are coordinated and effective in ending homelessness in Maryland.
- To accomplish their goal, the committee will study the following issues related to homelessness: housing, income, health care, education, government support and veterans experiencing homelessness.
- The law takes effect June 1, 2015.

Scholarship Funding

\$750,000 for the Veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship Program

No-Interest Loan Program Funding

\$300,000 for the Military Personnel and Veteran-Owned Small Business No-Interest Loan Program

Veterans Behavioral Health Initiative Funding

\$463,000 to provide behavioral health services and transportation services for veterans who require behavioral health treatment

Staff Update *(continued from page 4)*

WELCOME TO DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, PETER PANTZER

Peter Pantzer is a native Marylander who recently returned to the state with his family and accepted a position as Director of Finance and Administration with the MDVA in May 2014. Peter received his Bachelor's Degree in mathematics from Cedarville College in 1989 and his Master of Business Administration degree from Hamline University (Saint Paul, MN) in 2010.

Peter brings a rich variety of experience from his work with manufacturing, software, non-profit, and social enterprise

businesses across the country. He was privileged to live, work, and travel overseas, in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Sudan while working for a humanitarian agency doing post-disaster rebuilding and development.

Peter's late father served in the U.S. Navy, and he has three brothers who served in the Army and the Air Force. Peter currently resides in Baltimore County with his wife Amy and sons Aiden, Ethan, and Lincoln. He is grateful for the opportunity to serve the veterans of Maryland.

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Achieves Five Star Rating

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, Maryland's only State Veterans Home, has been rated by CMS as a 5 Star facility according to the latest update to the CMS 5 Star Ratings in Maryland.

Facilities that are certified to accept Medicare or Medicaid are reviewed annually by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and rated in their 5-Star Quality Rating System. The system is intended to help patients and their families select a high-quality long-term care center. Based on a ranking of one to five stars, facilities with one star are considered to have a lower average quality of care, while those with five stars are considered to have a much higher than average quality of care.

"We're proud of our dedicated and compassionate staff – it takes a team to accomplish these results", stated Director Sharon Mattia, MD Department of Veterans Affairs, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home.

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home is a provider of long-term healthcare, rehabilitation services and assisted living for Maryland veterans and their eligible non-veteran spouse. Charlotte Hall is licensed for 286 skilled nursing beds and 168 assisted living beds and is located in beautiful St. Mary's County.

For information regarding admission please contact the Admission's Office at 301-884-817 Ext. 409 or visit our web site at www.charhall.org.



Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Entrance

CEMETERY & MEMORIAL PROGRAMS

Christopher Piscitelli, *Director*
1122 Sunrise Beach Road
Crownsville, MD 21032
Anne Arundel County
410-923-6981

CHELTENHAM VETERANS CEMETERY

Dimitra Johnson,
Superintendent
Cheltenham
Prince George's County
301-372-6398

CROWNSVILLE VETERANS CEMETERY

Virginia "Pat" Ritter,
Superintendent
Crownsville
Anne Arundel County
410-987-6320

EASTERN SHORE VETERANS CEMETERY

Bruce W. Webster,
Superintendent
Hurlock
Dorchester County
410-943-3420

GARRISON FOREST VETERANS CEMETERY

Kenneth McKisset,
Superintendent
Owings Mills
Baltimore County
410-363-6090

ROCKY GAP VETERANS CEMETERY

Mike Gregory,
Superintendent
Allegany County
301-777-2185

MEMORIALS

Patrick M. Tracy,
Assistant Director
Cemetery & Memorial Programs
Baltimore
410-354-3550

Maryland Homefront – The Veterans and Military Family Mortgage Program

The Veterans and Military Family Mortgage Program, launched by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, is designed to help current and former military homebuyers purchase a home by offering a lower-than-market interest rate. The program provides down payment and closing cost assistance and can be used anywhere in the State of Maryland. As an incentive for Homefront borrowers to take advantage of the new Maryland HomeCredit program, DHCD is waiving the program fee for a mortgage credit certificate obtained with a Maryland Homefront loan (lender fee may still apply). The program is open to active duty military (including Reserves and National Guard) or honorably discharged veterans.

To get started:

- Talk to a Lender - Your lender can help you confirm your eligibility for the Homefront Program and will make sure you meet all the requirements, such as attending the right Homebuyer Education Class.
- Check Your Eligibility- Check to see whether you can apply for an Maryland Mortgage Program loan. Note that being eligible to apply does not guarantee approval, and lenders will take into account things like your income, credit history and employment situation when considering your application.
- Complete a Homebuyer Education Class - Completing a Homebuyer Education prepares you to make the right decisions when purchasing your home. Homebuyer



Education classes are available throughout Maryland, and are provided by a range of Community and Non-Profit organizations as well as local government housing agencies.

- Learn about Down Payment Assistance - The Maryland Mortgage Program provides help in the form of Down Payment Assistance alongside a range of Partner Match programs from employers, developers and community organizations that can help cover down payment and closing costs.

Visit the Department of Housing and Community Development website for more information at: <http://mmp.maryland.gov/Pages/Homefront.aspx>

MDVA Veterans Benefits & Services Guide and Website Update

The MDVA Veteran State Benefits & Services Guide has been revised. To read the guide visit: <https://veterans.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/07/MDVA-Benefits-10.pdf>

The MDVA launched a new website, veterans.maryland.gov, in November 2013. Updated regularly, the site contains a wealth of valuable information for our veteran community. Visit often!

Like us on Facebook at Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs for regular updates and information.





Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV) offers a statewide confidential forum for veterans and family members to discuss any variety of challenges. Under the leadership of Director Shauna Donahue, four resource coordinators provide links to needed services. The newest member to join their team is Dina Karpf. A recent graduate of Salisbury University, Dina is a certified community mediator, and covers the Eastern Shore of Maryland for MCV. In FY2014, MCV fielded 1,401 calls, with 74% of callers being veterans. This is a program record.

The resource coordinator staff with MCV is now trained to facilitate Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). The skills learned in this training are designed to provide individuals with no clinical training the ability to respond to a mental health crisis while awaiting professional intervention. Recommended for this training is anyone who works with veterans and their families.

For more information on Mental Health First Aid training or to learn more about Maryland's Commitment to Veterans, call 877-770-4801 or visit their website veterans.dhmb.maryland.gov



Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs... Proudly Serving Maryland Veterans

Office of the Secretary	866-793-1577
Outreach & Advocacy	866-793-1577
Cemetery & Memorial Programs.....	410-923-6981
Charlotte Hall Veterans Home	800-522-8387

VETERANS SERVICE PROGRAM & CLAIMS ASSISTANCE

Baltimore-Headquarters.....	800-446-4926 x6450
Bel Air.....	410-836-4900
Camp Springs	301-248-0463
Charlotte Hall.....	301-884-8171 x7155
Cumberland	301-759-5251
Easton.....	410-600-7181
Frederick.....	301-600-2155
Hagerstown.....	301-791-0356
Montgomery College.....	240-567-5405
Salisbury	410-713-3482

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