

August Veterans & Family Support Promotion

Jacqueline Rauch, Department Chairman

VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS – The Unsung Heroes

If you have family, friends, comrades who are in the process of submitting claims with the VA, are confused about where to get their records, what they are entitled to, uncertain about the status of their claim or have been denied, please direct them to a **Veterans Service Officers (VSOs)**. A VSO is someone who is trained and accredited to help veterans, their dependents and their survivors with VA benefits and other resources. The VSO can be a hero to a Veteran. **Calvet**, or the California Department of Veterans Affairs, is the state agency that provides services and benefits to veterans and their families in California. They are staffed with County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs) who can help with such things as home loans, education, residency in veteran homes, Women Veteran Services, healthcare, employment, housing and VA Claims. A full list of California locations with contact information is available at the link below. Supplying a Veteran, or Veterans family member with this information is reportable.

[CalVet Veteran Services CVSO Locations](#)

In addition to the state provided services, Veterans organizations such as the VFW, American Legion and Disabled American Veterans also have accredited Veterans Services Officers that can provide assistance. These officers provide similar services to the County Veterans Service Officers and can often provide a fresh perspective for claimants on various topics of discussion.

Auxiliary members are encouraged to consider donating to the Veteran Service Officers. Any amount is acceptable and the monies collected each year are presented to the VFW to help run their Service Department. This funding helps our Veterans get the answers they need and the benefits they have earned. And don't forget, **all donations** to the VSO are reportable under Veterans and Family Services. Get those reports entered and please consider the VSO program when funding your annual Auxiliary donations.

I've included some information that could be useful to our Veterans who are unable to locate their Medical Records, again the VSO can be a real hero in assisting with this as well.



DID YOU KNOW?



You can still request your **MILITARY** and **DEPENDENT MEDICAL RECORDS**—even if you separated 20, 30, or more years ago.

Many Veterans believe their records are gone or that it's too late to obtain them. In many cases, military personnel records, service treatment records, and even some dependent medical records can still be located through official government sources.



WHO MAY BENEFIT?

- ✓ Veterans
- ✓ Retirees
- ✓ Former service members
- ✓ Military spouses who received care as dependents
- ✓ Anyone filing, reopening, or appealing a VA disability claim

STEPS TO GET STARTED

- Request your military personnel records.**
This includes your DD-214 and Official Military Personnel File (OMPF).
- Request your military medical records.**
If you received treatment while on active duty, request your Service Treatment Records (STRs).
- Request dependent medical records (if applicable).**
If you received care as a military dependent while married to an active-duty service member, those records may still be available through the National Archives or the military treatment facility where you received care.
- Gather supporting evidence.**
Collect civilian medical records, VA medical records, buddy statements, and copies of previous VA decision letters.
- File your VA claim or request a review.**
You **do not** have to wait for your military records before filing a VA claim. VA has a duty to assist in obtaining federal records. Having your own copies, however, can help strengthen your claim and identify missing evidence.
- Get free help from an accredited VSO.**
Before paying anyone or hiring an attorney, speak with an accredited VSO. They can review your records, explain your options, and help you submit the strongest claim possible.

FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE THROUGH

- Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- American Legion
- Your State or County Veterans Service Office

★ OFFICIAL RESOURCES ★

- Request Military Service Records**
archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records
- Military & Dependent Medical Records**
archives.gov/personnel-records-center/other-medical-records
- My Military Health Records**
tricare.mil/Records
- Find an Accredited Veterans Service Officer**
va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative

HELPFUL TIPS

- ✓ Request your complete records—not just your DD-214.
- ✓ Keep copies of everything you submit.
- ✓ Don't assume older records are unavailable.
- ✓ If your claim was denied years ago, you may still have options.
- ✓ Never pay for assistance before speaking with a free accredited VSO.

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