



Jackson County Veterans Office

Sheila Setzer Crumpler, Director & Veteran Service Officer

Ben Woody, Veterans Administrative Assistant



Jackson County
– *North Carolina* –

Citizens of Jackson County

Proudly serving those who served. The Jackson County Veteran Affairs Office is dedicated to supporting veterans and their families with comprehensive benefits, healthcare, and community resources. You service, our mission.

A little bit about your VSO...

- ▶ I have 9 family members who are Veterans and my father is a Marine.
- ▶ I am a State and National Certified Veteran Service Officer.
- ▶ I have been with the Jackson County VA Office for almost 14 years.
- ▶ I am a Blue Ridge Honor Flight Ambassador Guardian.
- ▶ I received a Program graduation in 2018 from the Veteran Support Specialist Program in Psychology from the Duke University School of Medicine.
- ▶ I hold 7 accreditations in 7 different military organizations with the General Counsel in Washington, D.C.
- ▶ I am one of 5 VSO's in the 7 western counties that has a cross-accreditation with the North Carolina Division of Military and Veterans Affairs and Veteran of Foreign Wars.
- ▶ As of November 2022 I conduct my own veteran appeals in my office through zoom and teleconference. I work one on one with a VA Law Judge to help him/her in deciding Veterans claims decisions to see if I can get the Veterans claims overturned
- ▶ My claims success rate is around 91%.

VA and Jackson County?

- ▶ We are the Veterans Benefits Administration NOT the Veterans Health Administration although we help apply for the Healthcare Benefits as well.
- ▶ We are employed and paid by Jackson County.
- ▶ We are legal representatives (POA's) and Certified Veteran Service Officer's for the U.S. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the North Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs.
- ▶ We attend (2) week long conferences a year, quarterly state regional trainings, monthly VSO's meetings, and online courses regulated and issued by the U.S. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to maintain our certifications.
- ▶ We have legal trainings and school through National Veterans Legal Service Program for our legal trainings.
- ▶ We also have to be trained and knowledgeable with the Federal Veterans Laws, Rules, and Regulations Book and the Veterans Benefits Manual 38CFR.
- ▶ The Veteran's can also utilize a Veteran Service Officer as a go between with the Veteran's Health Administration in case of conflicts with appointments, doctor changes, advocacy, pharmacy, enrollment, etc.



Jackson County Veterans Office Mission

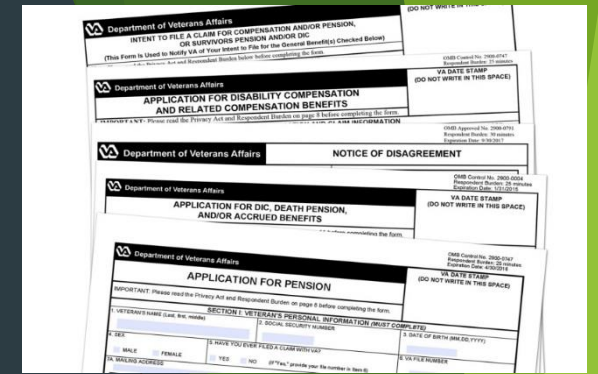
- ▶ To counsel, educate, assist, advocate, and provide representation with utmost respect to our Veterans of the Armed Forces and their families with benefits to which they are entitled.
- ▶ The purpose of our office is to help assist in helping the Veterans get healthcare and additional compensation from service related disabilities or a pension to help with Aid and Attendance and to help with additional resources if our office can not provide a specific service.



Services and Benefits

The Veteran's Service Office administers the laws of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to include:

- ▶ Compensation for service connected disability
- ▶ Pension for non-service connected veterans
- ▶ Headstones/Markers, Burial Flags, Presidential Memorial Certificates, Medals and Military Service Records, Help arrange military grave site rights, Burial Reimbursement, Burial in a National Veteran's Cemetery
- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation, Education, Training
- ▶ VA Home Loans
- ▶ Housebound Status and Nursing Home Care
Aid and Attendance.

A stack of five Department of Veterans Affairs forms. From top to bottom: 1. 'INTENT TO FILE A CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION AND/OR PENSION, OR SURVIVORS PENSION AND/OR DIC (This Form is Used to Notify VA of Your Intent to File for the General Benefits) Checked Below'. 2. 'APPLICATION FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND RELATED COMPENSATION BENEFITS'. 3. 'NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT'. 4. 'APPLICATION FOR DIC, DEATH PENSION, AND/OR ACCRUED BENEFITS'. 5. 'APPLICATION FOR PENSION'. Each form includes the VA logo and various instructions and fields.

Service and Benefits continued

- ▶ Healthcare and dental care
- ▶ Special housing and automobile adaptation
- ▶ Fiduciary/Guardianship protection programs
- ▶ Homeless
- ▶ Mental healthcare
- ▶ License Plates, Property Tax Exclusions for those who qualify, Hunting and Fishing License, etc.



- www.wishforourheroes.org The Wish For Our Hero's Foundation awards a Veteran with a terminal illness who's life expectancy is 6 months or less.
- The Veteran can submit the request or you can submit the request on behalf of the Veteran.
- They are awarded a \$2500.00 check and they are able to use the money as long as it goes to their last wish.

Productivity of the Office



- ▶ We see several Veterans a day either who have an appointment, walk-in or they are sent by referral. This does not include the veterans we communicate with by phone, email, fax or event that reside in Jackson County. We see 7-9 new Veterans each week.
- ▶ On an average one claim can consist of 5 or more disabilities for one veteran which is service connected. When they are awarded the disability can range from 10% to 100%. The rates are different for a Non-Service Connected Pension based on Nursing fees and Housebound Status which can be greater.
- ▶ When the Veteran is awarded depending on his/her combined rating with spouse and children, he/she can draw from \$171.00 to \$4500.00 each month. These monies are tax-free.
- ▶ Burial reimbursements can range from \$300-\$2,000, HISA Grants are \$6800 per grant, for home renovations and \$21,000 for an Adaptive Vehicle. These are paid out (once) in a lifetime to the Veteran.

Revenue from the Jackson County Veterans Office from Compensation and Pension Claims.



- ▶ There is approximately 800 disabilities awarded each month in Jackson County.
- ▶ Of those disabilities, \$931,049.37 a month is awarded in Compensation and Pension claims that go back into Jackson counties economy which is tax free money.
- ▶ For the year 2024 to present my office produced 13.5 million dollars according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Census and the North Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs.



Resources

Healthcare



Charles
George
VAMC
Asheville

Franklin
Community
Based
Outpatient
Clinic

VA Home Loans



United
Community
Bank

HomeStar
Financial

Wells Fargo
Bank

Education



Post 9/11 GI
Bill

Montgomery
Bill

Homeless



Asheville Buncombe
Community
Christian Ministry
HUDVash at the
VAMC in Asheville

Veterans
Restoration
Quarters-
Asheville

Entrepreneurship



North Carolina
Veteran's
Business
Association

www.ncvetbiz.org

NC4Vets

NC4ME

NCserves

Women Veterans



Women
Veterans Clinic
at the Charles
George VAMC in
Asheville

Milestones

2015

1st Annual Veterans Day Parade 2015

1st Annual Smoky Mountain Veterans Stand Down

May 21, 2015 Proclamation making Jackson County a Purple Heart County

August 19, 2015 Jackson County Veterans Office became a Commemorative Partner of the Department of Defense Vietnam War Commemoration

2016

2nd Annual Veterans Day Parade

The Department of Aging turned all responsibility of the Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner to the Jackson Veterans Office

2017

3rd Annual Veterans Day Parade

Helped Organize the 210th Military Police Deployment Dinner at the SCC Burrell Building September 2017

Helped gather items for care boxes to send to the 210th MP in Cuba

2018-2019

4th Annual Veterans Day Parade

1st Tricare Seminar for Retirees of the Military

Tuesday, June 11th Quilt of Valor Ceremonies Began

2020-2022

1st Blood Connection Blood Drive

1st Drive-thru Veterans Dinner due to the Pandemic

2023-2024

- Our first Veterans Monthly Lunch
- Our first Veterans monthly coffee social
- We take Blue Ridge Honor Flight Applications for processing and flights

A lot of people ask... What do the Dependents Qualify For?
Did you know that a Widow's/Survivor's Benefit is the least applied for within the VA?

A Widow/Survivor will automatically qualify for a DIC (Death and Indemnity Compensation) when the Veteran dies of a Service-Connected Death. The DIC is always a flat rate of pay.

A Widow's/Survivor Pension is income and asset based and at least 5% of their income must be medical expenses.

If the Veteran is 100% Service-Connected, the Spouse can apply for CHAMPA Supplemental Insurance under the Veteran.

Children of Veteran may apply for Educational Benefits and Scholarships through the VA. The veteran's qualifying criteria must have occurred during a period of war. At time of application, applicant must be a resident of North Carolina. <https://www.milvets.nc.gov/services/scholarships>

**National Association
of County Veterans Service Officers** <https://www.nacvso.org/conference/scholarships>

Veterans Events We Host

- ▶ Annual Veterans Day Parade
- ▶ Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner
- ▶ Annual Smoky Mountain Veterans Stand Down
 - ▶ Quilt of Valor Ceremonies
 - ▶ Veteran's Once a Month Lunch
 - ▶ Veteran's Coffee Socials
- ▶ Veterans Jobs and Claims Expos in Cherokee



Partnerships

- ▶ Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- ▶ American Legion Post 104, Sylva
- ▶ American Legion Post 143, Cherokee
- ▶ East Carolina Dental Clinic offers Dental Care Events called (VetSmiles) for those Veteran's who are not 100% Permanent and Total by the VA
 - ▶ Blue Ridge Dental Clinic sponsors free dental clinic services for Veterans each year



There are 5 VA Disability Presumptive Lists for Veterans who can now apply for disabilities related to the chemical exposures.

Agent Orange Presumptive List for Vietnam Veterans 1991
Gulf War Undiagnosed Illness Presumptive List
Camp Lejeune Water Contamination List
Iraq/Afghanistan Presumptive List
The PACT ACT of 2022

The Sergeant First Class (SFC) Health Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 which extends additional presumptive illnesses to Agent Orange, Gulf War, and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans. The Iraq/Afghanistan list will fall under the presumptive of the Gulf War Veterans.

2021 Presumptions were Added to the Agent Orange List

2022 Presumptions were added to the PACT ACT



VETERANS HEALTHCARE THROUGH COMMUNITY CARE

The Community Care Program replaced the Veterans Choice Program. The benefits for this program are for those Veteran's who are enrolled in VA Healthcare.

Community Care is utilized for a Veteran if he/she has been waiting for an appointment in VA Healthcare for more than 30 days, lives more than 40 miles from the nearest VA Hospital or Clinic, or the Veteran is needing a service that VA Healthcare cannot provide.

An added bonus is if the Veteran is having an emergency and he/she can't drive all the way to the VA Hospital. The 72 Hour Assistance Program allows the Veteran flexibility in seeking medical care for an emergency to utilize local emergency departments. This service is activated by the Veteran or family member notifying the 72 Hour Assistance Program of the emergency incident which allows the VA Healthcare System to pay the bill.

Special Thanks



- ▶ To the Veterans and their families.
- ▶ The County Manager and the Chairman and Board of Commissioners for being so supportive in helping with our annual budget to provide monies and dinnerware to feed the Veterans and their families at our Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner and The donations made to help with the Pre-Deployment Dinner for the 210th Military Police in Sylva.
- ▶ The local Veterans Organizations (American Legion Post 104, VFW Tuckasegee, Vietnam Veterans of American, Veterans Support Group), Community Organizations (Rotary, Veterans Council) , businesses (Andy Shaw Ford, Ingles, McDonalds, Food Lion, Walmart) funeral homes (Appalachian, Crisp Funeral Home, Smoky Mountain Crematorium, WCU Body Farm), churches, local healthcare facilities (Franklin CBOC, VAMC Asheville, and Harris Regional Hospitals and Cancer Care), etc.
- ▶ Local Law enforcement, Emergency Management, Rescue Squads, and Fire Departments. 40% of the departments are Veterans.
- ▶ Volunteers and the kitchen staff at the Department on Aging and SCC.
- ▶ The sign shop and Veterans Student Services at Western Carolina University.
- ▶ The Sylva Herald, WRGC, and Smoky Mtn News for our advertisements.
- ▶ And The Town of Sylva, Jackson County Transit, EBCI, WoodmanLife Chapter 560, Tricare, Quilt of Valor and Smoky Mountain Quilters Guild, Blue Ridge Honor Flight, much more.
- ▶ Charles George VAMC in Asheville, Franklin CBOC, Winston-Salem Regional Office

Contact

- ▶ By Phone 828-631-2231
 - ▶ Fax: 828-631-8034
 - ▶ Email: sheilasetzer@jacksonnc.org
benwoody@jacksonnc.org
 - ▶ Office Hours Monday-Friday
 - ▶ Hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
 - ▶ We see Veterans by appointment only Monday -Thursday and we do not see Veterans on Fridays
- We are located at:
100 County Services Park
Sylva, NC 28779
(Inside the Department on Aging)



Questions?

