

CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS MEETING

600 Gunder Road NE, Elkader, Iowa 52043

July 8, 2024, at 7:30 a.m.

Veterans Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on July 8, 2024, at the Clayton County Office Building Meeting Room.

I.) Roll Call: Commissioners Clark, Eilers, Torkelson and Jordan, Director, present.

II.) Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Eilers to approve the minutes from June 10, 2024. Motion was seconded by Clark; Motion carried.

III.) Public Comments: Torkelson noted that she had received many favorable comments regarding the outstanding job that Christopher Jordan has been doing to help veterans in our county.

IV.) Budget Review. Jordan distributed the current Fiscal Budget for 2024-2025. The Veterans Affairs office spent all the funds allocated for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Clark made the motion to approve the budget, Eilers seconded the motion; motion carried.

V.) Old Business:

a). Fall Training of Commissioners will be on October 14, 2024. Commissioners are encouraged to attend. The location for the training will be in the Des Moines area. Information will be forthcoming regarding the meeting schedule and registration along with hotel accommodation and meals.

VI.) New Business

a). Discussion was conducted on the veteran's outreach program in Clayton County. Jordan has distributed brochures to healthcare facilities, financial institutions, large employers in the area, and municipalities in Marquette, McGregor and Prairie du Chien. The focus for 2024-2025 will be to distribute brochures in the Garnavillo, Guttenberg and Buena Vista areas. Brochures and coasters will also be distributed to area restaurants and bars. The monthly planners will continue to be distributed to clients visiting the Clayton County Veterans Affairs Office. Jordan distributed 90 of the monthly planners to new clients this past year.

b). Jordan contacted the other counties in our area to see about collaborating events intended to help veterans with access to services and/or benefits. Allamakee County Veterans Service Officer indicated a willingness to work with our county in planning such events.

c). The VA State Updates were reviewed. The Department of Veteran Affairs is including three new cancer types in the list of presumed service-connected disability. The three cancer types are male breast cancer, urethral cancer and paraurethral glands. The conditions are established for eligible Gulf War and post 9-11 Veterans deployed to Afghanistan, Somalia, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Uzbekistan and the entire Southwest Asia theatre of operations which also includes Iraq. Any Veteran who currently has or has previously had one of the listed cancers at any time during or after military service may be entitled to disability compensation benefits; with a retroactive payment of August 10, 2022 (the date that the PACT Act was signed into law.) The VA will review all claims of veterans and survivors who previously filed and were denied for these three conditions.

d). The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that veterans will no longer need to pay co-pays for their first three outpatient mental care and substance use disorder visits each calendar year through 2027. This co-payment exemption will date back from June 27, 2023, and run through December 29, 2027. To be eligible for the exemption, the outpatient visit must be with a mental health professional at the VA or provided through

the VA's network of community care providers. For veterans who have already sought or obtained care, the VA will automatically refund payments for any co-pays paid to the VA on or after June 27, 2023.

e). The June Statistical Report was distributed. 42 total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns. 21 total office visits from Veterans, 1 home visit, 23 outreach events, and 0 training events.

VII. Review and approval of Claims.

VIII. Confirmation of Next Meeting. Next meeting will be on August 19, 2024 at 7:30 a.m.

IX. Adjourn. Eilers made the motion to adjourn, Clark seconded the motion; Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gerrie Torkelson

July Report

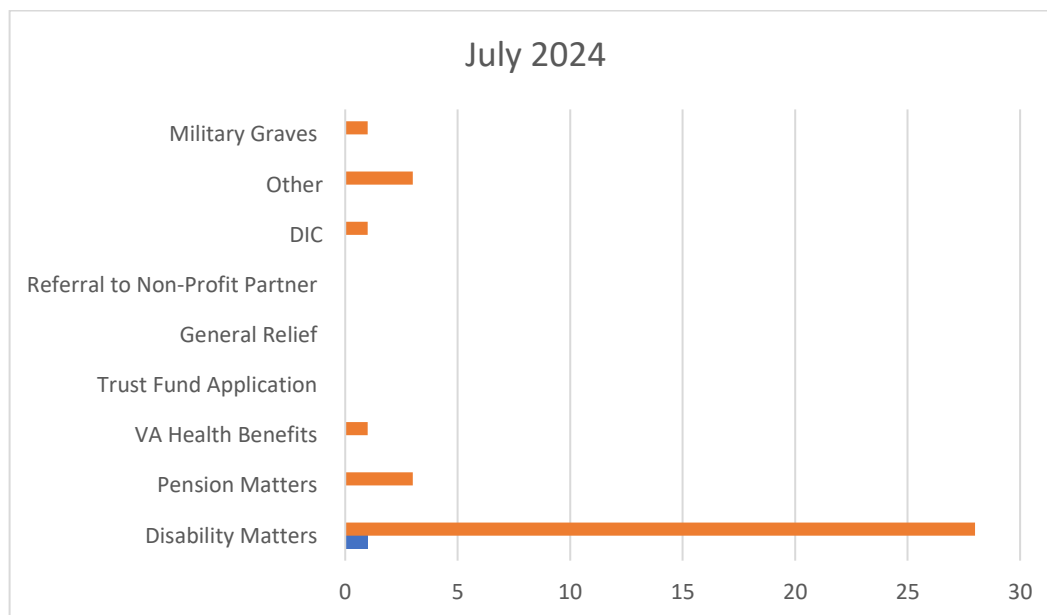
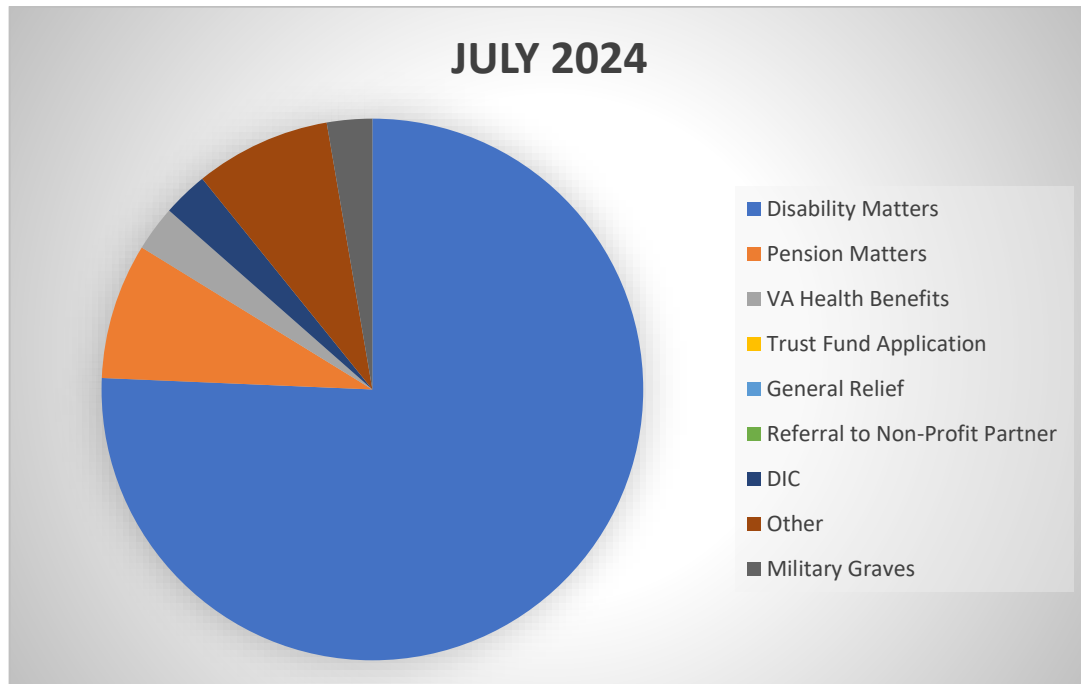
51 total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns.

25 total office visits from Veterans.

0 home visits

7 outreach events

0 training event



VA & State Updates:

VA Warns about Business and Job Scams

The Department of Veteran Affairs consistently issues warnings about common scams that target veterans, and the newest scams relate to business and/or job opportunities. According to the Federal Trade Commission, scammers use methods - very similar to real employers (i.e. online advertisements) that promise to offer a job when they are collecting personal information and money. Some the scams offer opportunities to work from home while making thousands of dollars a month and later have been found to be a trick to having individuals pay for training, certifications and starter kits. There have been reports of unauthorized charges on credit cards and/or individuals unintentionally involved in a check scam. Common red flags to consider:

- Job opportunity sounds too good to be true.
- Offering a wage that is higher than what is typical for such a job.
- The company sends you a large check and requests you make a large purchase (i.e. equipment) on their behalf.
- Charging a fee to help with the application process.

Best practices for any person to follow would include:

- Research the company and/or the person who is hiring you before doing anything.
- Avoid interviews that are conducted through texting apps or telegrams.
- Do not provide personal information (i.e. banking, identification information, SSN) during an interview.

VA Dental Care

The VA has specific eligibility criteria for dental care. Some or all dental care needs made be provided by the VA. However, it is best to understand the eligibility requirements (which involves several factors) and how to access care.

Primary eligibility categories are as follows:

Service-Connected Dental Disability – Veterans with a service-connected compensable dental disability or condition (at least a 10% rating) are eligible for any needed dental care.

Service-Connected Dental Condition – Veteran with a service-connected non-compensable dental condition or disability (0% rating) resulting from combat wounds or service trauma are eligible for necessary dental care.

Former Prisoner of War – Veteran who were former POWs are eligible for any needed dental care.

Receiving VA Compensation – Veteran rated as 100% disabled due to a service-connected condition or receiving the 100% rating due to individual unemployability are eligible for any needed dental care.

VA Health Care – Veterans enrolled in VA health care and receiving services under the VA Homeless Program for sixty (60) consecutive days or more may receive a one-time course of dental care to achieve employment, relieve pain, or treat a modifiable medical condition.

To access dental care through the VA, the Veteran would need to be enrolled in VA Health Care. I Veteran may check their eligibility and complete an application online; by phone at 1 877-222-8387; or my mail (VA Application is VA Form 10-10EZ); or in person by taking their completed VA Form 10-10EZ to a local VA medical center. Eligibility for dental benefits may require additional forms or documentation specific to Veteran's dental

care needs. However, once enrolled in VA Health Care after dental eligibility has been established, a Veteran may contact the local VA medical center or their dental clinic to schedule an appointment.

For Veterans who do not meet eligibility criteria, may consider securing dental coverage through the VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP). VADIP is comprised of several dental insurance providers that offer reduced-cost dental insurance plans. Securing coverage through VADIP may supplement some dental needs that may be covered under VA Health.