



**NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

# WASHINGTON WEEKLY



February 1, 2013

[f Post on Facebook](#)

## **The VFW Helps Vets Recoup \$3.7 Billion**

In 2012, the VFW's nationwide force of 1,200 service officers helped 125,000 veterans recoup more than \$3.7 billion in earned compensation and pension from the VA, providing further proof that all eligible veterans and transitioning military members should seek help from an accredited service officer before they file a VA disability claim. "No wounded, ill or injured veteran should ever complete the detailed 12-page VA claims form without the professional, free assistance of an accredited veterans' service officer," said VFW National Commander John Hamilton. "It literally means the difference between receiving VA benefits or not." [Read more.](#)

## **Why the Veterans' Tuition Bill is Important**

Last week, the House Veterans Affairs' Committee Chairman Jeff Miller (R-FL) and Ranking Member Mike Michaud (D-ME) introduced HR 357, a bill to ensure veterans attending public institutions of higher learning on the GI Bill can attend at the same rate as in-state residents. The Post-9/11 GI Bill was passed in 2008 with the intention of allowing Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans to go to college for free at the public school of their choice. In its current form, veterans are entitled to receive up to the full cost of in-state tuition and fees to attend a public college or university. Unfortunately, student-veterans attending public schools in 40 states cannot necessarily attend at the in-state rate because they do not satisfy the state's residency requirements for college tuition purposes. The VFW believes all public schools must offer a reasonably-priced education to incoming student-veterans, many of whom do not satisfy residency requirements because of military duty. [Learn more](#) about the issue and how the VFW plans to address it.

## **Tricare Pharmacy Co-Payment Increases Begin**

Tricare pharmacy co-pay increases are effective today, February 1st. The FY 2013 National Defense Bill required Tricare to increase co-payments on brand-name and non-formulary medications that are not filled at military treatment centers. There is **no increase** on generic

medications and many co-pays vary based on class of drug and where the prescriptions are filled. For example, the co-pay for generic medications remains \$5 when filled at a network pharmacy, and a 30-day supply of brand-name medication filled at a retail pharmacy goes from \$12 to \$17. Beneficiaries using Tricare Home delivery will pay \$13 for brand-name drugs; however, home delivery is for a 90-day supply. The greatest change in co-pays applies to non-formulary medications: a \$25 dollar co-pay increases to \$44 at retail pharmacies and is \$43 through the home delivery system. For 2014 and forward, co-payment increases are tied to annual cost-of-living adjustments. For more about the pharmacy changes, [click here](#).

### **VA Releases New Report on Suicide Data**

Earlier today, VA released a comprehensive report on veterans who die by suicide. The report included individual state data, not collected in the past, for veterans who have not used VA health care services. VA plans to use the data to strengthen their suicide prevention activities. The report issued today is the most comprehensive study of veteran suicide rates ever undertaken by VA. In 2010, Secretary Shinseki engaged governors of all 50 states, requesting their support in helping to collect suicide statistics. With assistance from state partners providing comprehensive data, VA hopes to assess the effectiveness of its suicide prevention programs and identify specific populations that need targeted interventions. This new information will allow VA to better identify where those Veterans at risk may be located and improve the Department's ability to target specific suicide interventions and outreach activities in order to reach Veterans early and proactively. For more information about the report, [click here](#). For information on VA's suicide prevention and their hotline number, [click here](#).

As always, we want to share your advocacy stories on the [VFW Capitol Hill blog](#). To share your stories, either fill out our [online form](#), or simply email photos and stories directly to [vfwac@vfw.org](mailto:vfwac@vfw.org).

If you no longer wish to receive e-mail from us, please [click here](#).

Was this *Washington Weekly* forwarded to you by a friend? [Sign up](#) to get your own free issue each week.

—



[Find a Post](#) | [Contribute](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Tell A Friend](#)  
© 2001 - 2013. All rights reserved.