

Statement on USPS delays from DAV National Commander Stephen “Butch” Whitehead

Over the past several weeks, DAV has heard an increasing number of credible reports in the media and directly from affected veterans about delays in receiving critical medicines from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Mail Order Pharmacy.

The VA has now confirmed to us that the United States Postal Service (USPS), which is responsible for delivering about 90% of all VA mail order prescriptions, has indeed been delayed in delivering these critical medications by an average of almost 25% over the past year, with many locations experiencing much more significant delays. To help mitigate these postal delays, the VA has been forced to switch to alternative delivery services in a number of areas across the country and is taking other actions to expedite processing and delivery of prescriptions.

It is simply unacceptable that America’s veterans, particularly those who were injured or made ill in defense of this country, should face the prospect of not receiving necessary medications in a timely manner considering such delays can be the difference between health and sickness, or even worse.

Moreover, millions of veterans also rely on the post office to deliver claims decisions, hearing notifications and other critical messages from the VA, all of which must be timely to ensure veterans receive the benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

Fast and reliable mail delivery is especially important for veterans who live in rural areas or otherwise have difficulty

accessing VA health care, pharmacy or benefits in person.

We call on the Administration and Congress to immediately take whatever actions are necessary to ensure that the USPS has all the funding necessary to deliver critical prescriptions and mail to America's veterans without delay and without interruption.

Whatever the long-term future of the USPS may be, reducing or delaying mail operations during a national health emergency is not an option. Our nation's veterans, particularly those disabled by their service, deserve nothing less than high-quality and timely health care and benefits no matter their geographic location, and for the foreseeable future that requires a fully functioning United States Postal Service.