

**Please Keep Your Microphone
Muted Until the Q&A Sections**





COVID-19 Legislative Updates

DAV National Legislative Team
April 15, 2020

WELCOME!

Joy Ilem

National Legislative Director



- ✓ Opening Remarks
- ✓ Engagement with Congress & VA during COVID-19 crisis

Joy Ilem, National Legislative Director

**Public Law 116-127, 2nd COVID-19 response bill
was enacted on March 18th**

- ✓ VA was provided \$60 million to help cover
Coronavirus testing and treatment costs.

Joy Ilem, National Legislative Director

✓ **Public Law 116-136, 3rd COVID-19 response bill (CARES Act) was enacted on March 27th**

Nearly \$20 billion for VA.

Staff will discuss individual provisions

Three COVID-19 Legislative Responses:

Adrian Atizado
Deputy National Legislative
Director

- 1. P.L. 116-123, Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020**



Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

2. P.L. 116-127, Families First Coronavirus Response Act, March 18th

- ✓ VA Appropriations: \$60 million
- ✓ General VA Provision: No COVID-19 testing copayments

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. P.L. 116-136, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or the CARES Act:

- ✓ VA Appropriations: \$19.57 Billion
- ✓ General VA Provision: 14 provisions

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. CARES Act for VA COVID-19 response:

- ✓ \$15.1 billion for VA medical care
- ✓ \$2.1 billion for VA community care

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. CARES Act for VA COVID-19 response:

- ✓ For Veteran Directed Care program, temporarily waives in-person home visit to enroll and permits telephone/telehealth visits as an alternative.

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. CARES Act for VA COVID-19 response:

- ✓ Requires VA to provide personal protective equipment to VA and community-based workers that provide care to veterans in their home.

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. CARES Act for VA COVID-19 response:

- ✓ Ensures the 2020 Economic Impact Payments veterans receive under the CARES Act shall not be treated as income to avoid a loss or reduction of *any* VA benefit.

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

3. CARES Act for VA COVID-19 response:

- ✓ Increases flexibility for vulnerable veterans with limb loss, allowing them to seek prosthetic assistance at community providers instead of VA.

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

VA Community Care Program Update:

- ✓ Changes to access standards

Electronic Health Record Modernization Update:

- ✓ Scheduling Package delayed
- ✓ EHR timeline uncertain

Adrian Atizado, Deputy National Legislative Director

Status of 4th COVID-19 Package:

- ✓ Discussions are ongoing
- ✓ Timeline uncertain



Questions for Adrian

VHA and COVID-19

Joy Ilem

National Legislative Director



- ✓ VA's 4th Mission
- ✓ Veterans a Priority
- ✓ Non-Urgent elective procedures cancelled

Joy Ilem, National Legislative Director

VHA & CVOID-19

- ✓ New Staff Hires
- ✓ Expanded Capacity
- ✓ Testing
- ✓ Telehealth
- ✓ VA Mail Order Pharmacy

Joy Ilem, National Legislative Director

✓ PREVENTS

Current Roll-out and Updates

Questions for Joy



CARES Act/3rd COVID-19 Package

- ✓ \$150 million to assist State Veterans Homes in their response to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
- ✓ Updates

Peter Dickinson
Senior Executive Advisor



Peter Dickinson, Senior Executive Advisor

- ✓ Economic Impact Payments to veterans and survivors with no income and no tax returns.
 - April 2nd Joint VSO Letter to Secs VA and Treasury

www.irs.gov/coronavirus

Peter Dickinson, Senior Executive Advisor

- ✓ Economic Impact Payments will NOT be counted as income for those receiving NSC Pension, Survivors Pension
- ✓ www.irs.gov/coronavirus



Questions for Peter

CARES Act/3rd COVID-19 Package

Shane Liermann

Deputy National Legislative

Director for Benefits



- ✓ \$13 million to ensure VA can provide earned benefits by enhancing telework capabilities for the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

COVID-19 Impact on Claims and Benefits

✓ Debt Management Center

- DMC suspend debt collections on NEW debts
- Request waiver of debt collections for existing debts-COVID-19 related

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

Debt Management Center

1-800-827-0648

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

COVID-19 Impact on Claims and Benefits

✓ Date of Receipt Issues

- VA will accept “post mark” as date of receipt
- Federal Register will publish rule change

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

COVID-19 Impact on Claims and Benefits

- ✓ Time Sensitive forms/claims
 - After time limit has expired, must file form with a separate note that this is late due to COVID-19 and requesting waiver

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

COVID-19 Impact on Claims and Benefits



VA C&P Exams

- Cancelling all in-person exams—will not rate cases based on veterans not appearing to exams during this time
- Contract Exam Office-Possible Tele-exams with vendors

Shane Liermann, Deputy for Benefits

COVID-19 Impact on Claims and Benefits

✓ **Hearings**

- Cancelled Board of Veterans Appeals
 - Increase Tele-hearings
- DROs—tele-hearings
 - Informal or Formal

Questions for Shane



Education Legislation

Jeremy Villanueva
Assistant National
Legislative Director

- ✓ S. 3503, Stand alone legislation that was introduced on March 16th and became Public-Law 116-128 on March 21st.



Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director

S.3503

- ✓ This bill authorizes the VA to keep the housing allowance the same for those who were forced to start distance learning due to the COVID pandemic.
- ✓ Good through December 21, 2020

Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director
**HR 6322, the “Student Veteran Coronavirus
Response Act of 2020”**

- ✓ Extends the timelines for those who are utilizing VA education benefits and are currently enrolled in courses through the Coronavirus pandemic

Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director
**HR 6322, the “Student Veteran Coronavirus
Response Act of 2020”**

- ✓ Passed by the House March 31
- ✓ Recently failed UC in the Senate

Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director

CARES Act/3rd COVID-19 Package

- ✓ Paycheck Protection Program
 - Makes available low interest loans to small businesses

Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director

CARES Act/3rd COVID-19 Package

- ✓ Paycheck Protection Program
 - Loan can be forgiven for expenses used to pay for mortgage payments, payroll costs, etc. as long as the business does not change their payroll before June 30, 2020.

Jeremy Villanueva, Assistant Legislative Director

CARES Act/3rd COVID-19 Package

✓ **Paycheck Protection Program**

- Some problems during roll out

✓ **4th COVID-19 Package**

- Looking to have a \$250 billion plus up for Payroll Protection program.



Questions for Jeremy

Contact Information

Joy J. Ilem

National Legislative Director
jilem@dav.org

Adrian M. Atizado

Deputy National Legislative Director
aatizado@dav.org

Shane Liermann

Deputy National Legislative Director
for Benefits
sliermann@dav.org

Jeremy Villanueva

Assistant National Legislative Director
jvillanueva@dav.org

Marquis Barefield

Assistant National Legislative Director
mbarefield@dav.org

Peter Dickinson

Senior Executive Advisor
pdickinson@dav.org



**THANK
YOU**