



2026 SUMMER RETIREE NEWSLETTER

Retiree Activities Office (RAO)

Travis AFB, California

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DISCLAIMER

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The appearance or mention of commercial products or services is not meant to imply endorsement by the Department of War or the Department of the Air Force.

Articles appearing in this newsletter are gleaned from Department of War, Department of the Air Force, local sources, other installation RAO newsletters, and our retiree population.

No commercial gain is derived for this publication. News items are current as of their use in this newsletter. Please advise of any errors, omissions, or suggestions for improving our newsletter.

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RAO Services

The Travis Retiree Activities Office and David Grant USAF Medical Center's Medical Retiree Activities Office programs would not function without a cadre of active volunteers! Volunteer shortages affect our ability to provide services to the local retiree community.

We are rebuilding volunteer staffing. If you have three to six hours a week you can spare, please consider serving as a volunteer.

We provide services to military retirees, family members, and surviving spouses. Medical Center volunteers work the Pharmacy customer service windows, provide patients with directions to various clinics inside David Grant USAF Medical Center, provide comfort dog services, shuttle medical records from the records section to the clinics, and help the active-duty medical staff.

The Retiree Activities Office in Bldg. 381 assist military retirees, veterans, and their families in making ID Card renewal appointments, reserve, and guard members in applying for retired pay, estate planning, and retiree and annuitant pay issues. We provide referrals and guidance in accessing earned benefits and services.

We look forward to discussing volunteer opportunities with interested candidates.

Final Affairs Review



If it has been sometime since you've gone over your estate plan with your family, we recommend you set a date to go over it with them. It's especially important if you have a foreign-born spouse that you haven't kept in the loop.

Some factors that make it very difficult for foreign-born spouse include:

- No children
- Relatives or children not living nearby.
- Language barriers
- Lack of social support structures

As sponsors we need to take these factors into account regardless of who we're married to. Do you have a close friend, family member, or lawyer that you can trust to act as a conservator or agent to ensure your spouse's best interests are served?

We've worked with clients where the sponsor paid all the bills, handled finances, and kept the spouse in the dark about insurance, annuities, investments, creditors, taxes and other things that put the surviving spouse in a bind once the sponsor dies.

Some of the spouses (mostly foreign born)

assumed that insurance payments, SBP and OPM annuities, and Social Security payments were automatic. They didn't know they needed to apply for those benefits to receive them.

We have final affairs and executor checklist available in our office that can help you with this process. We will be happy to talk with you and your spouse about the steps you need to take in setting up your final affairs plan.

After a retiree dies, the most important thing a spouse can do is contact Casualty Assistance on Travis or our office.

First the retiree's death needs to be reported to DFAS so they can terminate retired pay (it ends the day the retiree passes). DFAS will pro-rate the remainder for the days the retiree was alive in the month he/she died and remits that amount to the designated beneficiary.

The beneficiary will have to submit SF1174 to receive the Arrears of Pay due. Also, a claim for Survivor Benefit Annuities will need to be submitted to receive those payments if the spouse was enrolled in the SBP program.

If the military retiree worked Federal Civil Service, and had a VA rated service disability, the spouse may be entitled to other death benefits.

If the spouse is seeking Disability Indemnity Compensation from the VA, the Death Certificate must clearly state the death was directly caused as a result of the rated service-connected disability for the claim to be approved.

Other things to think about regard property. Taste in furniture and belongings change over the years. What we value, our children and surviving relatives may not.

We had a modest turnout for the May 16th



event. 106 military retirees, spouses and veterans signed in at the registration table for the event. Another 10 to 15 people probably slipped past the registration desk.

Over six months of calls, coordination, and planning went into executing the event and scheduling briefers from organizations that support military retirees and veterans in our area.

We scheduled it for a Saturday to ensure that working age military retirees had an opportunity to attend the event.

Since 2021, attendance at these events ranged from 77 attendees to a high of 200 people.

That said, we need your assistance and feedback. What can we do to make this event more meaningful for you in the future?

What topics would you like covered? Are the timing and scheduling of the events satisfactory? Is the event relevant to you?

If we solicit speakers for this event from Veterans Service Organizations, out-of-State and out of the local area (MOAA/Air Force Enlisted Village, DFAS, LeMay

Foundation, etc.), we need to attract more attendees to these events.

There has to be a return on the investment of time, effort, and planning by the Retiree Activities Office and the Wing Staff for these events to continue. So please, let us know what you want and need.

The Retiree Appreciation Day event is conducted to benefit you and to keep you informed about changes to the benefits and services available to you in retirement.

It is also a vehicle for keeping you informed about Travis' role promoting, projecting, and protecting the Nation's security interest.

We hope to see you at next year's event!

From the RAO Desk



The Travis Retiree Activities Office is closed on Federal Holidays and AMC Pass Days.

AMC Pass Day

4 Sep 2026

Labor Day....

7 Sep 2026

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EVENTS

The Travis Retiree Activities Office will be minimally staffed from 10 September through 20 September 2026. If you need help with an issue, please call 707-424-3904 before coming to the office to ensure a volunteer is available to help you when you arrive.

We currently have four active volunteers on staff, so we need additional volunteers. We also need someone to take over as the Retiree Activities Office Director. If you are fully retired, have base access, and can spare three to six hours per week of your time as a volunteer counselor, we could use your help.

If we can't keep the office staffed, it will eventually close. Retirees, spouses, and annuitants needing assistance with issues will lose a source of assistance and information when it's most needed.

FEDVIP open season is just around the corner. If you need a dental and vision insurance plan, recommend you visit the ***BENEFEDS.COM*** website and start looking at what's available. *It will give you some time to compare plans, look at prices, and services and pick a plan that fits your budget and meets your family's needs* Open season starts on 9 November 2026 and ends on 14 December 2026. *This notice is a little early, but it is meant to give you a headstart on making an informed decision.*

Retiree/Annuitant Pay Account Review

It's July and tax year 2026 is half way



over. Now is a good time to access your DFAS Retiree Pay Account Profile to make sure everything

is current and up-to-date.

During the tax season that just recently ended, we had many retirees visit our office that had not received their 1099Rs.

Many dropped in during late March when DFAS was saturated with calls and incoming faxes. Most of this could have been avoided had they checked their account profiles and updated their profile information.

Some received their statements in the mail in previous years, but for some reason they didn't get them in January 2026 for Tax Year 2025.

If you have a myPay account, please update your password when they send you a notification to update it and access your account on a regular basis.

If you have moved, changed your email address, divorced, had a spouse pass away, adopted a child, or wanted to increase or decrease your tax withholding, update these in the system. These actions can all be done quickly through myPay.

Retirees or annuitant spouses that don't own computers or that are unable to get

internet services may request these changes by sending a letter to the DFAS Retiree and Annuitant Pay Sections.

We have letter templates in our office we will give you if you need help putting together the request. Be advised, it takes longer for DFAS to process these than it does when a retiree does it through myPay.

If you haven't received your 1099R for Tax Year 2027 by the second week of February 2027, please visit our office. We can assist you in requesting a hard copy.



Do you have an urgent need to replace or renew an ID card?

The 349th AMW ID/DEERS Office located at 531 Waldron Street, building 239, Bay E on Travis, and services walk-ins. Walk-in hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8 am – 10:30 am and 12 pm – 1 pm. On Wednesdays, they service walk-ins from 8 am – 11 am. Their office is closed on Federal holidays. If you want to make an appointment or you need more information, you may call them at 707-424-2345/2346.



The Travis AFB Retiree Activities Office needs volunteers to staff the office. There are currently five active volunteers on staff.

Most of us are in our mid to late 70s. We need an influx of new volunteers to keep the office operating due to medical appointments/issues, resignations, and moves out of the area.

We are looking for retirees, their spouses, and self-sponsored or former spouses as volunteers. Candidates must be fully retired and have base access.

We are also looking for a mid-grade, fully retired field officer or Senior NCO (SMSgt/CMSgt) to take over as RAO Director. A resume needs to be submitted to 60AMW/CC. Please call 707-424-3904 for details.

Volunteers should possess good people skills and have intermediate computer skills. If you can use word processing, spreadsheet, web browser software, and know how to use and manage email, that's golden.

If you've got social media experience – you host your own website or Facebook page, we will bow at your feet.

We need someone to administer and moderate our Facebook page when the time comes.

Most of the information we provide is contained in our RAO Handbooks which are Indexed off so it's easy to find information and answers if you can read an index.

We will train you to use the copier, printers, scanners, and fax machines in the office.

We also provide training in the use of Microsoft Co-pilot to produce letter templates for clients who want to send request letters to make changes to their retiree and annuitant pay accounts with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

If you can spare 3 to 6 hours of your time per week, we can use your help and so can your fellow retirees, veterans and spouses.

If you are interested in volunteering in our office, please call 707-424-3904 or email raotravis@yahoo.com.

You may also visit us on Travis at Bldg. 381, Room E-118. We are right across the hall from the 60th FSS ID/DEERS shop. We'd enjoy talking with you!

FEDVIP Insurance Carrier Info

The FEDVIP Dental and Vision Insurance Program is managed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and not the Department of War.

Open Season for selecting a Dental and Vision Insurance provider begins Monday, 9 November 2026 and ends Tuesday, 14 December 2026,

Retirees and annuitants that need dental and vision insurance will have to enroll in plans during this period to be covered for the year unless they have a life qualifying event that changes their status. We will cover that in the fall newsletter.

If a retiree or annuitant needs both dental and vision insurance, they do an enrollment in a dental plan and an enrollment in a vision plan, which means two different monthly premium payments.

Retirees and annuitants that have internet service can visit OPM's website and download copies of each dental and vision Insurance carrier's brochure that explains what services its plan covers.

To obtain plan and pricing information, retirees will need to have a login.gov account setup with **BENEFEDS.COM**. Once, that's established you login, follow the screen prompts to login to pull down plan and pricing information.

OPM's list of FEDVIP Dental Insurance Carriers for 2026 are:

- Aetna Dental
- Blue Cross Blue Shield FEP Dental
- Delta Dental Federal Dental Program
- GEHA Connection Dental Federal
- Dominion National I
- Emblem Health Dental
- Humana Dental
- The MetLife Federal Dental Plan
- Triple-S-Salud
- United Concordia Dental
- United Healthcare Dental Program

Vision insurance carriers are:

- Aetna Vision Preferred
- Blue Cross Blue Shield FEP Vision
- The MetLife Vision Plan

BENEFEDS.COM normally publishes a page that lists each plan's cost depending upon the level of service and care you want for you and your family members.

We will not recommend any particular carrier for retirees or annuitants to use. It is up to the retiree or annuitant to look at the services each carrier provides, what they charge, and whether their monthly premiums fit into the household budget. We only serve as guides to retirees and annuitants so they can get the information they need to make an informed decision.

Later this season, we will take a screenshot of the plans and cost breakdown sheet and post them to our Facebook page. Retirees and annuitants may also come in and pick up a copy for reference.

Denied Base Entry at the Gates



Here's a scenario that might happen. It's been two months since you visited Travis Air Force Base from the Modesto area to make a Commissary and BX run. The Gate Guard scans your card.

It's the new NextGen ID Card and you replaced the old blue legacy card over two years ago and never had a problem entering the base before.

The guard scans the card, and the system rejects it and the guard turns you around and sends you to the visitor's center to get a visitors pass (provided you've got another form of real ID compliant identification, current auto registration, and driver's license.

In some cases, they might even confiscate the ID card depending on the information that comes back through the card reader.

What caused this to happen? Usually, it's not the guard, nor is it the card reader. It's probably an instance of data corruption or error in data input through the DEERS system.

The data stored in the barcode on the back of your ID card is read by the card reader, the information stored in the barcode is compared to the data stored on a server that was input through a DEERS/ ID Card workstation. If it matches and other conditions are green the guard waves you through.

Sometimes data on the server end gets corrupted and the card may come back as revoked, expired, DEERS record mismatch, sponsor relationship invalid.

What causes this to happen? It could be a number of things. Data entry error, a power surge during data input, disk sector or block damage during disk operations, a lightning strike near the building the server is housed in.

Most data centers have robust backup security and protection in place, but nothing is 100 percent guaranteed. In the latest case we ran into, a patch was issued that fixed the problem.

The patch fixed a block of cards that had the information stored in their barcodes encoded incorrectly, the patch fixed the issue.

When it can't be fixed, they will have you get an appointment to get a new ID card issued.