



2026 WINTER 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 Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

Articles appearing in this newsletter are gleaned from Department of Defense, 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.

2026 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance



Travis Credit Union will begin offering free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance on February 7th, 2026.

The assistance will be offered at their primary office located on One Travis Way, in Vacaville. As of this posting:

- Sat- 10AM – 4 PM
- Tue- 10AM – 3 PM
- Wed-10 AM -3 PM

Appointments are required. You may call 707- 799-6355 or use the appointments application at www.MyFreeTaxes.org to make an appointment. Recommend downloading a copy of IRS publication 3676-B to see which documents you need to bring with you to the appointment.

Travis Credit Union will end providing free tax assistance service for tax year 2025 on April 11th, 2026.

The VITA Program was instituted to help taxpayers earning up to \$57,000, taxpayers with disabilities, and taxpayers possessing limited English-speaking skills.

If you have complex tax issues, are heavily invested in the stock market, and real estate, we recommend you seek the services of a CPA or tax law firm.

Publication 3676-B (mentioned earlier) covers the services VITA provides and will not provide.

Need Tax Assistance – Don't live near Travis?

The Internal Revenue Services' website, irs.gov, features a VITA Locator tool that allows taxpayers that need help in completing and filing their taxes.

The tool will generate a list of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Sites staffed by volunteers who have been trained to assist with the preparation of simple tax returns.

To access the tool, type in <https://freetaxassistanc.forirs.gov/s/sitelocator> in your browser's search bar. It will bring up the locator tool on your computer or tablet.

Next, enter your zip code and the number of miles you are willing to drive to get help with your taxes. If you need tax assistance in a specific language, you can select the language in the drop-down box. Then press the enter key on your keyboard or on your touch screen.

The application will list every location that provides free tax assistance within your driving range.

The results displayed will give you the basic information for each office. To get more detailed information about the office you want to use (appointments necessary, documents to bring, etc.) click on the Provider's display name. They all start with FTH (Free Tax Help).

Obtaining an Agent Letter



Retirees or self-sponsored spouses that need assistance with shopping, transportation to medical appointments on base, or help picking up their medical prescriptions can appoint an agent to help them with these tasks.

Retirees and self-sponsored spouses that need an agent will need a letter from their primary care provider (PCM) who must be a medical doctor. The letter must state the retiree/self-sponsored spouse has a medical condition that requires them to have an assistant to help them with these tasks. Under HIPPA requirements, the letter **should not** say exactly what the medical condition or illness is.

After the retiree/self-sponsored spouse receives the letter from their PCM, they may come to the 60 FSS ID/DEERS Section for the issue of an Agent Pass Memorandum.

If the retiree/self-sponsored spouse is ambulatory, he/she should accompany their agent to the ID/DEERS section.

If they aren't, the agent needs to bring the retiree/self-sponsored spouse's ID Card in with the PCM's letter.

The person that will serve as agent and that is bringing those documents in for issue of the Agent Memorandum must stop at the Base Visitors Center to obtain a Visitors Pass.

He/she will need to present two forms of Real ID Compliant Identification, current driver's license, auto registration, and proof of auto insurance. Call the Base Visitors Center at 707-424-1462 for more information

The 60th FSS DEERS/ID customer service representatives check the retiree/self-sponsored dependent's ID card and then issue an Agent Memorandum

After the memorandum is issued, take it and the retiree or self-sponsored spouse's ID card to Pass and Registration on the second floor of building 381.

Pass and Registration Center clerks review the documents and issues an Agent pass that is good for one year. It will have to be renewed annually.

From the RAO Desk



The Travis Retiree Activities Office is closed for Federal Holidays and AMC Family Days.

Presidents Day

12 -16 February 2026

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EVENTS

Hard Copy Form 1099Rs should be in retiree and annuitant s mailboxes by 2/15/2026
Travis Credit Union begins VITA Service – 7 February 2026

The McClellan Park Satellite Retiree Activities Office officially closed 12/15/2026. Volunteer shortages and the lack of local retiree support in the Sacramento area led to the closure. Military Retirees, SBP Annuitant Spouses, and non-sponsored family members needing assistance with benefits, services, or end-of-life/reports of death will need to contact the Travis AFB or Beale AFB Retiree Activities Office.

2025-2026 Retiree Appreciation Day

The 60th AMW will host a consolidated 2025/2026 Retiree Appreciation Day event on Saturday, 16 May 2026 from 8 AM until 3 PM. The event will be held at the Travis Aviation Museum located at 461 Burgan Blvd. This is a rescheduling of the event we planned in October 2025. That event was canceled due to the Federal budget impasse in October. We will post event updates in future newsletters and on our Facebook page.

Defense Accounting and Finance Updates

If you have a myPay account and haven't logged in for a while, it might be time to update your password and verify your retiree account profile.

DFAS posted updated Retiree Account Statements reflecting the increase in 2026 retirement pay and tax year 2025 1099-Rs. Both documents are available for download.

It's important to review your profile information every time you move, change your telephone number, or your email address. DFAS uses this information to contact you if there are any changes in your retirement accounts or the military retirement pay/spousal annuitant pay system.

If you forget your myPay password and you try to reset it using their reset function, they will either text or email you a pin number to the email address or phone number you have on file.

If the phone number or email address on file were changed and you didn't update your account profile, you won't get the pin and you'll be frustrated. Waiting times in the phone queue can be long.

Retirees and Survivor Benefit Annuitants that receive hard copy 1099's should get those in the mail no later than mid-February. If the forms are received by that time, contact DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 to request a hard copy sent by mail.

If you are a military retiree, listen for the Retiree Pay Option and press that

number on your cell phone, for SBP recipients, listen for the Annuitant Pay Section Option and press it on your cell phone.

DFAS published the Winter Edition of their Retiree Newsletter and it's available for download on the Retiree/Annuitants Section of the main web page.

To access it, click on the Retiree/Annuitants tab on the main web page. When the Retiree/Annuitants section opens, scroll halfway down the page and click on the link to download the pdf version.

Their newsletter covers the latest updates to the retired pay system in great detail along with information on upgrades to their processes. It's a great way to stay informed.

RAOs - What do they do?



Periodically, we have retirees or active duty pop in and ask us what we do.

That's a good question!

There's the Ivory Tower answer – we serve as an intermediary between the local Air Force Base's Active Duty, the military retired population, and local community (which is true). But I think the best answer is we are here to help and assist retirees, their spouses, and veterans with their problems.

The Travis Retiree Activities Office serves and shares a potential customer base of about 66,000 military retirees and their spouses in Northern California with Beale AFB (*based on numbers in the DOD Actuary's California report by Congressional District published in 2023)

The top issues we handle are retired pay maintenance, ID Card appointments, and reserve/guard retired pay online applications.

The greatest users of our services are retirees or spouses in their late seventies and older who don't own computers or internet connected devices. We assist them with a lot of telephone and fax calls to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Indianapolis.

During tax season, we provide retirees with information about free tax

preparation sites using the IRS's VITA Locator Tool.

We make ID card renewal appointments for retirees and their spouses or refer them for walk-in service when available.

We also assist retirees and spouses with the following changes to their retired pay and annuity pay account profiles:

- Account and routing number changes!
- Address and Phone number changes.
- Email address changes.
- Password resets
- SBP annuitant account suspensions
- Form 1099R requests.

Other area support:

- Space A Flight information
- Base Lodging Contact Information
- Base Entry Requirements Information
- Base Legal Service Information
- Agent Letter process

Our office maintains and moderates a Facebook page, a Military Retiree/Veterans Group page, and manages a military retiree, veterans and spouses, email group. We use these tools to send out information about changes to benefits and services to the group.

We continue to serve and assist the active duty by taking on some of the administrative customer service load.

Real ID Compliant Identification

Here are a few things that came up during the February RAO collaboration video conference call.

The new DOD Next Generation ID Card is Real ID compliant and should get a retiree or dependent spouse through TSA security at the airport,

However, it is recommended that you carry a second form of Real ID compliant Identification with you when traveling through an airport.

One of the RAO Directors had no problems going through TSA Security through her local airport; however, when she tried checking through TSA Security at Newark, their card reader would not recognize the DOD ID Card.

Fortunately, she had another form of Real ID identification with her that allowed her to proceed.

The issue was Newark used older card reading systems with software that hadn't been updated. So, it might be prudent to obtain a Real ID compliant driver's license, U.S. Passport, or U.S. passport card as a backup just in case something like this happens.

Turning 65

Military retirees and spouses that reach the age of 65 are required to have their ID Card reissued and DEERS status updated due to Medicare eligibility and enrollment.

Please note that if you renew your card shortly before you turn 65, it will not be issued with an indefinite expiration date.

However, you can come in a few months later with a new appointment or as a walk in and get it replaced with a new ID card with an indefinite expiration date.

If you wait until a day after you turn 65 your old ID card will have expired and that puts you in another Catch 22 situation.

You will have to stop at the Visitors Center, bring in two forms of Real ID compliant Identification, DD form 214, retirement orders, and other support documentation to get your retiree ID card reissued. Until someone in DOD decides it needs to be changed It's one of those regulatory requirements that we need to live with.

During the meeting it was brought up that some installations were confiscating ID cards at the gates that reflected indefinite expiration dates if the cards flagged as terminated in DBIDS when the Gate Guards ran the cards through scanners. This is rare, but it can happen. Clerical and systems errors happen.

Keep copies of your retirement orders, DD Form 214s, and Marriage Licenses/Certificates/Official Birth Certificates in a safe deposit box. You never know when you might need them.

US Passport Renewals



Has time elapsed since you've traveled outside the country on a vacation?

It might be time to look at your U.S. Passports and see if its time to renew them.

A passport can be renewed by mail if the following conditions are met:

- The old passport is undamaged.
- It was issued in the last 15 years.
- It was issued when you were 16 years old or older.
- It's currently in your possession.

You will need to complete a DS Form 82 and mail it and the following items to the address listed on the form:

- Your most recent US Passport
- One passport photo (2"x2")
- Passport fees (by check or money order)
- Option (for Expedited service) Additional \$60.00.

If you don't meet the conditions listed above, you must apply for a passport in person. You will have to complete a DS-11. Here are some of the reasons you may have to go on this route:

- Your passport was lost, damaged, or stolen.
- It was issued more than 15 years ago.
- It was issued to you when you were younger than 16 years old.

If you need assistance you can apply at post offices, some libraries, county clerk offices,

and passport agencies (for urgent travel).

Routine passport renewal applications take 6 to 8 weeks to process. Expedited passport renewal applications should take 2 to 3 weeks to process.

Renewal applications through passport agencies by appointment are usually processed same-day or within 72 hours.

The fee schedule for passport renewals is:

- Passport Book Renewal: \$130.00
- Passport Card: \$30.00
- Expedited: +60.00
- Optional: 1-2 - day return shipping

Please note that you can't wear eyeglasses when taking your passport photos and the passport photos must be 2 in. x 2 in. color photos when submitted.

If you need the location of local post offices that can assist you with passport applications, please give us a call. We have a list available.

***This article was written with the assistance of Microsoft Co-Pilot AI.*

