

Warrior Support News

For National Guard Soldiers and Airmen

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USEFUL LINKS:

National Guard Bureau:
ngb.army.mil

Office of Reserve Affairs:
defenseink.mil/ra

Find VA facilities:
va.gov/directory / 877.222.vets

For OIF/OEF Vets:
seamlesstransition.va.gov

Benefits Info:
yba.va.gov / 800.827.1000

Get a copy of your DD214:
vetrecs.archives.gov

Veterans Employment & Training:
dol.gov/vets

Employment info:
vetjobs.com

Education Benefits:
gibill.va.gov / 888.442.4551

Jobs, schools, pay:
militaryconnection.com

Wounded Warrior Website:
aw2portal.com / 800.237.1336

For quality of life info/resources:
militaryhomefront.dod.mil

For transition services:
turbotap.org

For redeployment info:
afterdeployment.org

TO SUBSCRIBE TO THIS NEWSLETTER:

Email warriorsupport@ng.army.mil

New Year's Resolution

Do you smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco? Is quitting tobacco one of your New Year's resolutions for 2009? If yes, then the new Department of Defense and TRICARE sponsored website www.ucanquit2.org has online tools to help you achieve this healthy goal. You probably already know that smoking or chewing negatively affects your health and endurance and can cause many types of cancer, but did you know that there is a link between Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and tobacco use? Service members with PTSD are very likely to start using tobacco products or increase their smoking or chewing to help themselves feel better. This self-medicating is not very useful because in the long run, it can make you feel worse after the effects of nicotine wear off. Tobacco use intensifies feelings of depression, anxiety, stress and hopelessness. Visit the website to learn more about this important connection.

Did you know that quitters with a support network are 10 times more successful at quitting than those who try to quit alone? This website gives you the support network you need to accomplish your mission. There is information for friends and family who are interested in coaching you through this task and the interactive website is full of helpful tips and engages you and your friends and family members. No registration is required to read all the useful information. You can access the one-on-one real-time chat, find information on over the counter products and prescription medicine (gum, patch, inhaler, spray, lozenge) to assist you with quitting, read and post on the blog and message board, develop a step by step plan to quit, find support programs in your state or territory, listen to podcasts, sign up for RSS feeds or email updates, play games, take quizzes, and use the calculator tool to find out how much cash you would have if you weren't spending it on your tobacco habit.

Quit tobacco - Make Everyone Proud encourages you to start the New Year right!

Ringling in the New Ear!

As many Guard and Reserve members know, ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and hearing loss are very common disabilities of veterans. Recently, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that tinnitus and hearing loss are being researched in Portland, Oregon at the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR). According to the VA, hearing loss is the most common veteran disability with tinnitus ranking second. Almost 70,000 diagnoses of tinnitus have been made and it is the number one service-connected condition for OIF and OEF veterans. VA is conducting research on more than 30 hearing loss and tinnitus projects, including the connection between Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and hearing loss. For more information on tinnitus, visit the VA [audiology webpage](http://audiology.webpage).

For additional information on hearing problems, visit the Military Audiology Association www.militaryaudiology.org, www.hearingreview.com and the [American Tinnitus Association](http://AmericanTinnitusAssociation).

NATIONAL CRISIS HOTLINE AVAILABLE TO ANYONE 24/7/365 ---
1.800.273.TALK (8255)

TRICARE Reserve Select - Premium Decrease

As of the first day of the new year, the cost for premiums to be enrolled in TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) will be cut 44% for Guard and Reserve member only coverage and 29% for Guard and Reserve family coverage. In other words, the new monthly payments will be reduced from \$81.00 to \$47.51 for Guard and Reserve members, and the new monthly payments for family coverage will be dropped from \$253.00 to \$180.17. TRS is a health plan available to Guard and Reserve members when they are not on active duty. You do not need to wait for special enrollment dates - open enrollment is available year round.

In order to be eligible for TRS, you must be a member of the Selected Reserve or the Ready Reserve, and not eligible or enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program. It is important that all your information be current in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Once enrolled, covered services include annual eye exams, behavioral health care, emergency and urgent care, immunizations and health screenings, maternity care, and prescription drug coverage. There are annual outpatient deductibles, co-pays and a catastrophic cap of \$1,000.

When you are called to active duty service for more than 30 days, you and your family become eligible for non-premium cost TRICARE plans (such as TRICARE Prime) and your TRS coverage is automatically terminated. Once your active duty service ends, your eligibility for non-premium TRICARE plans ends as well. You then have 60 days to reenroll in TRS if you want to continue uninterrupted health care coverage.

If a National Guard or Reserve member is covered by TRS on the day of his or her death, eligible surviving family members may purchase or continue TRS coverage for an additional six months from the date of the member's death. Survivors are responsible for paying the appropriate monthly premiums.

For more information about TRS or other TRICARE plans, contact your Transition Assistance Advisor (see below) or visit www.tricare.mil/reserve/reserveselect.

National Resource Directory

In November, after working with the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense introduced the National Resource Directory (NRD). The NRD is an online searchable database for wounded, ill and injured Service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers and is full of helpful information with more than 10,000 services and resources. The NRD is broken down into the following sections: Benefits and Compensation; Education, Training and Employment; Family and Caregiver Support; Health; Housing and Transportation; and Services and Resources. It provides federal, state and community resources, along with useful checklists, FAQs, and links to peer support groups. New links will be added on a continual basis. You can find information on medical and non-medical services and resources across the United States to assist you in attaining your personal and professional objectives during reintegration and recovery to community living.

This new website is located at www.nationalresourcedirectory.org.

Find Your Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA)

In every state and territory, a Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) is waiting to help you navigate through the maze of entitlements and benefits you have earned as a result of your military service. Your TAA is the statewide point of contact to assist you in accessing Veterans Affairs benefits and healthcare services. Each TAA also provides assistance in obtaining entitlements through the TRICARE Military Health System and access to community resources.

Have you contacted the Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) in your state or territory to help guide you through the benefits and entitlements due you or would you like to learn more about them? Call 703.607.0180 or go to www.taapmo.com/TAAPProgram.htm or email warriorsupport@ng.army.mil to locate the TAA in your state.