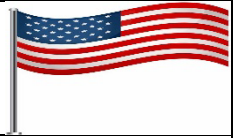


# VET NEWS



**AUGLAIZE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**

Vol. 31  
Issue 6

Phone: 419-739-6750  
Fax: 419-739-6751

JAN-MAR 2025

## **VA Secretary Doug Collins addresses Veterans' benefits**

In a recent video message from his desk at the VA Central Office, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins addressed media concerns that Veterans' benefits might be targeted for cuts. "I'm the Secretary of VA, and I'm telling you right now, that's not happening ... the reality, is, Veterans benefits aren't getting cut," Collins said. "In fact, we are actually giving and improving services." He went on to emphasize that the Veterans Benefits Administration is clearing cases faster than ever and that VA remains mission-focused by doing what it is supposed to do. Listen to the VA Secretary's message.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4H7oL5LFIE>

## **VA's Home Loan Benefit**

VA offers a home loan benefit and other housing programs to help you buy, build, repair, retain or adapt a home for your own personal occupancy. Find out more at

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/index.asp> or  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hremEhtUyno>

## **Understanding Identity Theft**

Identity theft occurs when someone steals personal information—such as Social Security Numbers (SSNs), bank account details, medical records and account numbers, or credit card information to commit fraud. This can lead to unauthorized purchases, drained bank accounts, and even fraudulent claims for benefits in your name. Identity theft can have severe consequences, impacting not only financial stability but also access to VA benefits. Learn now to protect your data.

<https://news.va.gov/137961/protecting-your-benefits-data-from-fraudsters/>

## **Veterans' burial allowance and transportation benefits**

Find out how to get Veterans burial allowances (sometimes called "Veterans death benefits") to help cover burial, funeral, and transportation costs. You may be eligible for Veterans burial allowances if you are paying for the burial and funeral costs and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another government agency or the Veteran's employer. You must also meet all of these requirements. See requirements at.

<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/>

## Commemorative Urn and Plaque

The urn and plaque are two memorial items that commemorate a Veteran whose cremated remains have not been interred. A "commemorative urn" is used to hold the remains of a deceased cremated Veteran and a "commemorative plaque" is designed to hang on a wall. Claimants may request either the urn or the plaque to honor the Veteran's service according to their preference. It is important to note that if a family chooses an urn or a plaque to commemorate a Veteran, VA is prohibited by law from interring that Veteran's remains in a VA national cemetery or from providing a headstone, marker or medallion for placement in any cemetery. Families should be certain of their choice. If the family chooses to receive an urn or a plaque to commemorate their Veteran, their decision cannot be undone. The law does not provide a method to restore these benefits. To be eligible, the Veteran (or service member who died on active duty) must have served in the Armed Forces on or after April 6, 1917; the Veteran must be eligible for a headstone or marker under 38 U.S.C. § 2306(d), and the Veteran's remains must have been cremated — with no portion of the remains interred at any location. For more information.

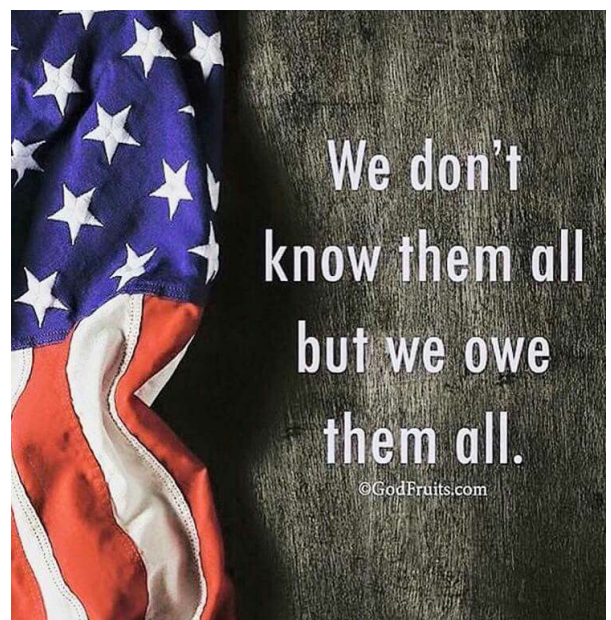
<https://www.cem.va.gov/urn-plaque/index.asp>



**Text 838255**

### How It Works

1. **Available 24/7; Dial 988 then Press 1, chat live, or text 838255.**
2. **A caring, qualified responder will listen and help.**
3. **Your call is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.**
4. **Support does not end with your conversation. Our responders connect you with resources that can help when you're in distress.**



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**VA Healthcare  
Lima Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic**

The Lima CBOC provides many services outside of primary care to Veterans who qualify for VA healthcare. Eligible Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare can work through their primary care manager to schedule specialty care.

Services provided at the Lima VA Clinic include:

Primary Care

Specialty Care Services

Mental Health Services

Audiology – Ear Care

Podiatry – Foot Care

Optometry – Vision Care

Laboratory Services

Social Work

Telehealth

750 West High Street, Suite 350

Lima, Ohio 45801

419-229-3300

Monday – Friday 7:30am – 4:00pm

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**Please call our office to schedule an appointment to verify your eligibility and get enrolled; not all Veterans will qualify for VA healthcare.**

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**Financial Assistance**

If you are, or know, a Veteran or Widow of a Veteran who is struggling with monthly expenses, call the office to set up an appointment for financial assistance. We can help with mortgage/rent, utilities, and food.

There are residency and other requirements you will be screened for to verify you are eligible to receive assistance through the Auglaize County Veterans Service Commission. As well, as documents that you will need to bring to the appointment with you.

All financial assistance candidates are interviewed, a debt to income ratio is completed, and if warranted, the case is presented to the Veterans Service Commission Board for decision at the regular monthly meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month.

**The Veterans Service Commission Board makes all decisions regarding financial assistance.**

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**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**



January 2025- 1

February 2025- 2

March 2025-0

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## VA TRANSPORTATION

January-March 2025

Veterans to Dayton VA – 44  
Veterans to Cincinnati/Ft. Thomas – 1  
Veterans to Wright-Patterson – 8  
Veterans to Columbus – 15  
Dependents – 1

**Total Trips – 68**

Veterans to Lima Area – 85  
Veterans to St. Mary's – 3  
Veterans to Wapakoneta – 1  
Dependents – 1

**Total Trips – 89**

Transportation requests **must** be made through the Veterans Service Commission Office at (419)739-6750. After hours/weekend, instructions are on the voicemail message.

### **VA SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS ONLY**

**(Includes Community Cares appointments.)**

Please call our office as soon as you know your next appointment time, so we can schedule your ride.

A Veteran's dependent may also ride the van, as long as there is room on the van.



**Auglaize County Veterans  
Service Commission Office**  
Located at:  
**209 S. Blackhoof St., Rm 202  
Wapakoneta, Ohio 45895**

**Monday – Friday 8:00 - 4:30**

**BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

**Phone (419) 739-6750**

**Fax (419) 739-6751**

### **MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

**VSC Board meets every  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month in the  
Veterans Service Commission Office  
@ 5:00p.m., unless otherwise posted.**

### **Commissioners**

**Ron Zenz, AMVETS**

**Mike Borges, VVA**

**Jeanne Goodes, VFW**

**John Schwarck, DAV**

**Michael Suchland, AL**

### **Staff**

**Robert Wiss - Director/CVSO**

[rwiss@auglaizecounty.org](mailto:rwiss@auglaizecounty.org)

**Preston Keith - Veteran Service Officer**

[preston.keith@auglaizecounty.org](mailto:preston.keith@auglaizecounty.org)

**Joe Vires, Jr - Veteran Service Officer**

[joe.vires@auglaizecounty.org](mailto:joe.vires@auglaizecounty.org)

**Joni King - Admin/Benefits Counselor**

[jking@auglaizecounty.org](mailto:jking@auglaizecounty.org)

### **Van Drivers**

**Ace Ambos**

**Robert Jones, Jr**

**Greg Maines**

**Gary MCELroy**

**Terza Engle**

**Geoffrey Ulrey**

***“This country will not be a good place  
for any of us to live in unless we make  
it a good place for all of us to live in.”***

***– Theodore Roosevelt***