



January 2015



Veteran Newsletter



Are you or a loved one thinking about long-term care?

Have you thought about the Ohio Veterans Homes?

Located in Sandusky and Georgetown, the Homes provide a high-quality level of care at a reasonable cost to families.

Find out more on [page 6](#).

Welcome to the Ohio Department of Veterans Service e-newsletter! The newsletter is a key source of information about issues of interest to our community of veterans in Ohio.

We thank you for your service to our country. Because you're a veteran, you've earned a number of benefits that you may not be aware of. Most of these benefits originate at the federal level with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Based on the time you served, you may be eligible for compensation for injuries, health care, educational assistance, home loans or many other benefits. There are also a number of state benefits available to Ohio veterans, to include the Ohio Veterans Bonus as well as direct financial assistance from the county to veterans in need.

The place to find out what you've earned and to apply is your County Veterans Service Office. You can locate yours in the interactive map on our department home page, www.ohiovet.gov, by calling 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838), or by downloading our free mobile app at <http://dvs.ohio.gov/HOME/Welcome>.

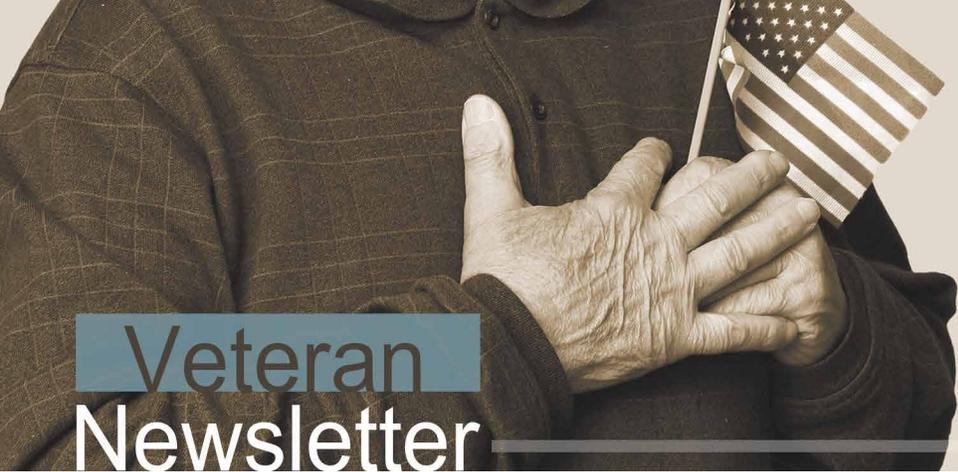
We will continue to provide you this newsletter each month. We hope it's of value to you and your family.

Looking Back at 2014...

Every new year brings new challenges. But as the Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) looks back at the past year, it's fair to say that 2014 marked a number of significant achievements on behalf of the men and women who have served our country.

ODVS Director Tim Gorrell took note of this in a year-end message to county veterans service offices and the veterans' service organizations

Have questions about veterans benefits? Call 1-877-OHIOVET (1-877-644-6838)



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that make up Ohio's Veterans Advisory Committee. He recognized the solid support of Governor Kasich and his administration to improve conditions for veterans in Ohio, an effort that the legislators of the Ohio General Assembly have also embraced in a bi-partisan fashion.

Director Gorrell's message highlighted some of the significant achievements in 2014 to make Ohio the best place for veterans to live, work, thrive and call home.

These include:

- House Bill 488 guaranteed that veterans will be able to get a professional license and academic credit for their military training and experience.

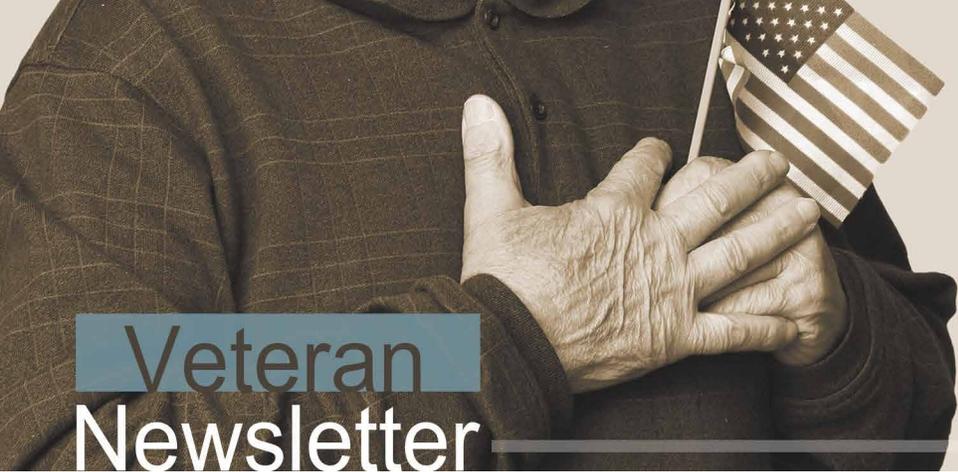
- As part of that same bill, student veterans in Ohio are getting the support they need on campuses across the state - and veterans organizations are stepping up to organize posts on campus to bring student veterans together.

- Private and public employers all across Ohio have heeded the call to hire veterans, helping to bring the veteran unemployment rate in Ohio down to 6.8 percent at the end of last year (the last full year measured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), a significant drop from 10.7 percent in 2011.



- Since its launch in 2010, the Ohio Veterans Bonus has paid out over \$69.1 million to over 85,000 veterans and family members of the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan eras.

- Service officers in the counties and in veterans organizations are working with veterans to put together fully-developed, ready-to-rate claims; these are claims that are prepared with all of the relevant documentation submitted when the claim is first filed. In 2014, 84 percent of claims submitted to the VA by the counties were fully-developed.



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- Ohio paved the way with the Department of Defense to be the first state to receive access to the Defense Personnel Records Image retrieval System (DPRIS), which has been invaluable in preparing claims; veterans in states across the nation are now benefiting from Ohio's lead.

- The work of everyone in the veterans' community has resulted in unprecedented spending by the VA in Ohio - over \$6.6 billion total in the federal fiscal year 2013 (1 Oct. 2012-30 Sept. 2013). More than \$1.8 billion of that is going directly to compensation and pension, which is in itself an increase of more than \$500 million from 2010.

"We've accomplished much, but we all know there is much more to do," Director Gorrell said in his message. "We're thankful grateful for your partnership, and we're looking forward to building on this record of achievement in the years ahead."

ODVS will continue to press on all fronts as an advocate for Ohio's veterans. And we'll continue to let you know what's been accomplished in the pages of this newsletter.

New Year, and Continuing Employment Information for Veterans...

The forecast for veteran employment in Ohio in 2015 is a positive one. The state is enhancing the available resources to make the job search easier, and private and public employers are increasing opportunities for veterans. As we do each month in this section, we'll bring you the latest updates and job search tips. Keep reading, and also be sure to "like" our [ODVS Facebook page](#), where we share information on major regional hiring in the state.



OhioMeansJobs Means Jobs for Ohio Veterans: The best job-search resource in the is the easiest to access and continues to be enhanced to make it even more valuable to use. Go to OhioMeansJobs.com (<https://jobseeker.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/>), the state's primary employment web site, and select "Individuals." Then click on the "Veteran" icon of PVT Owen, the cardinal-in-camo. This takes you to a second page designed just for veterans (<http://www.ohiomeansveteranjobs.com/>) where you can register and create a resume at the "Explore It" tab. This page provides you the tools to translate your military job skills



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into civilian terms, put those skills and civilianized terms into a resume, and then to rate the resume you've created to see how effective it is. If need be, you can update it prior to posting it. From this page, you can also view the jobs that most closely match your skills. But there's an added bonus here for veterans – OhioMeansJobs.com automatically posts veterans' resumes first for any job that matches the qualifications they've stated in their resume. This means that employers who register on the site will see veterans' resumes before they see anyone else's. The resume should be reviewed every month and electronically "updated" – which is a simple key stroke, whether any additional information is added or not – to keep it refreshed and at the head of the line for jobs.

So get the resume ready and post it, then be sure to dress appropriately and professionally for interviews. Be courteous, positive and honest in interviews. It will likely take time and effort, but the odds of the process ending in a job you're happy with continue to get better.

Vet-Friendly Employers:

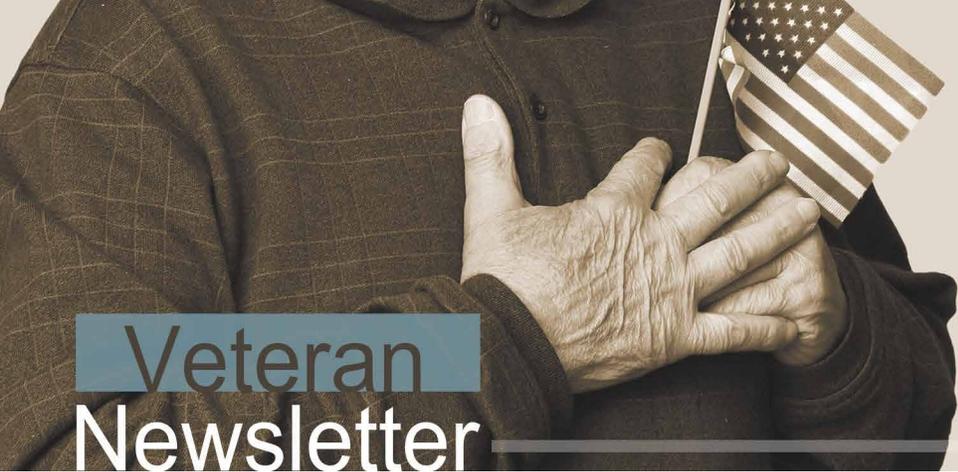
The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has created a registry of veteran-friendly employers. These are Ohio businesses who have voluntarily registered so that they can let veterans across the state know that they are interested in hiring them. This registry is available at:

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/OMJResources/Military-Friendly-Employer-Registry.stm>

A number of national companies with operations in Ohio operations are also actively seeking veterans to hire for many different areas of their businesses. These companies include AEP, Aramark, AT&T, Chase Bank, GE, General Motors, Goodyear, Home Depot, Huntington Bank, PNC Bank, Scotts Miracle Gro, Starbucks, Walmart, Whirlpool, Verizon, and Xerox. Information on current jobs is available on the individual company web sites; go to www.google.com to search by company name and then click on their "employment" or "careers" links, or check out the OhioMeansJobs.com web site.

Many large state employers, such as the Cleveland Clinic and local and regional hospitals and the Waterworks, are also in the market for qualified veterans.

The Ohio insurance industry has 26,000 new jobs to fill by 2020. These new jobs are in a number of different skill sets, and are available in insurance companies all around the state. For more information, see: <http://insurancecareers.org/veterans>



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State agencies are in the market to hire veterans. Open state jobs can be viewed and applied for at: <http://careers.ohio.gov/>

Local communities and counties often hire veterans for a variety of public service jobs. Search “employment” on the web sites of local government offices and agencies where you live.

For a Job Fair, or any Employment Event, Be Prepared for Interviews, & Know Your Skills:

Before you attend any job fair or visit any employer, remember these common tips:

- Have a current resume;
- Have a cover letter that’s geared to the type of job being sought;
- Present a professional appearance, e.g., suit and tie, or dress/skirt or pantsuit.

Of course, following these tips alone won’t land you a job, but they’ll help give you your best chance.

If You’re an Employer Looking for Veterans:

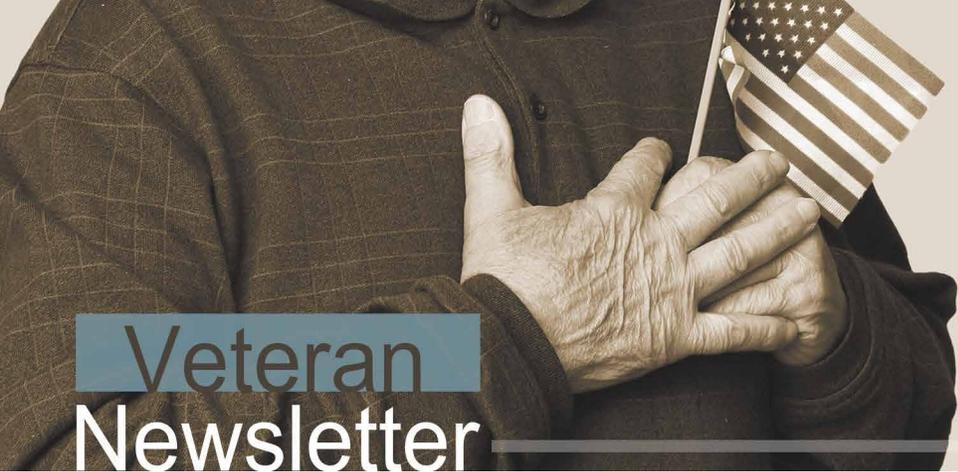
If you’re an employer who wants to hire veterans, it’s a good idea to advertise your business that way. Another way to let veterans know that you’re vet-friendly is to register that way at OhioMeansJobs.com. From the home page, click on “Employers” and then select the “Hiring Veterans” icon designated by the “V” for “Veterans Business Support Center” (<https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/employer/assistance/vetrequest.do>).

This is where a business can register to see veterans’ resumes, learn about available tax credits for hiring them, and also find demographic information on veterans in their area.

In-Person Assistance with a Job Search:

If you prefer to start a face-to-face job search, there’s in-person assistance available throughout Ohio that knows where the local jobs are. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) is in an active partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor to operate centers regionally around the state. Contact information can be found online at: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wia/wiamap.stm>, or by calling 1-888-296-7541 and selecting option 5, for veterans’ information.





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Schools and Companies Offering Job Training:

Job training that could lead to employment in the emerging shale industry and in manufacturing is available throughout Ohio. For example, Stark State College and Eastern Gateway Community College offer training targeted to shale jobs. Cincinnati State College offers training aimed at industrial jobs. Siemens Corporation offers training geared to engineering manufacturing jobs. Find out more at the schools' and company's web sites; conduct your search using www.google.com. Veteran-specific information on higher education is available through the Ohio Board of Regents at:

<https://www.ohiohighered.org/veterans>

Ohio Veterans Homes Provide Great Value for Veterans in Need of Long-Term Care...

Sooner or later, many of us, or are loved ones, will need long-term care in a nursing home setting. For thousands of eligible veterans, one of the best values in Ohio for that care is found at the Ohio Veterans Homes.

The Ohio Veterans Homes are state-operated nursing homes for veterans of wartime service. There are two homes to choose from. The Ohio Veterans Home - Sandusky in Erie County is a 427-bed nursing home facility, and is also in the state. Sandusky also living beds in a domiciliary able to live on their own, services close by. The Georgetown in Brown nursing home care.



the largest nursing home maintains 293 independent setting for those who are but need the structure of Ohio Veterans Home - County offers 189 beds for

Both homes offer the full dementia care, and on-site service. A wide range of including games, crafts, special veterans-themed events, on-site entertainment, and trips to local attractions.

range of care, including medical and pharmacy activities is also available,

To qualify for admission, a veteran must have served during a declared war or military conflict, must have been honorably discharged from the U.S. military and must have been an Ohio resident for at least one



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year during his or her lifetime. The veteran must be infirm or disabled and incapable of earning a living.

Much of the cost for a veteran’s stay at the Homes is funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs (the VA), although each resident is charged a monthly assessment fee based on their ability to pay. The Ohio Veterans Homes consistently rate high in inspections conducted by the VA, as well as in surveys of resident and family satisfaction conducted by the Ohio Department of Health.

The Ohio Veterans Home – Sandusky opened its doors in 1888, when the first residents were veterans of the Civil War. The Ohio Veterans Home – Georgetown is much more recent, having been in operation since 2003. The Homes’ motto is “Serving Those Who’ve Served,” and the staff at each facility is fully committed to the well-being of all residents. Their guiding principle is to provide a high-quality of care and living in a setting where veterans are valued.

Find out more at: http://dvs.ohio.gov/VETERANS_HOMES

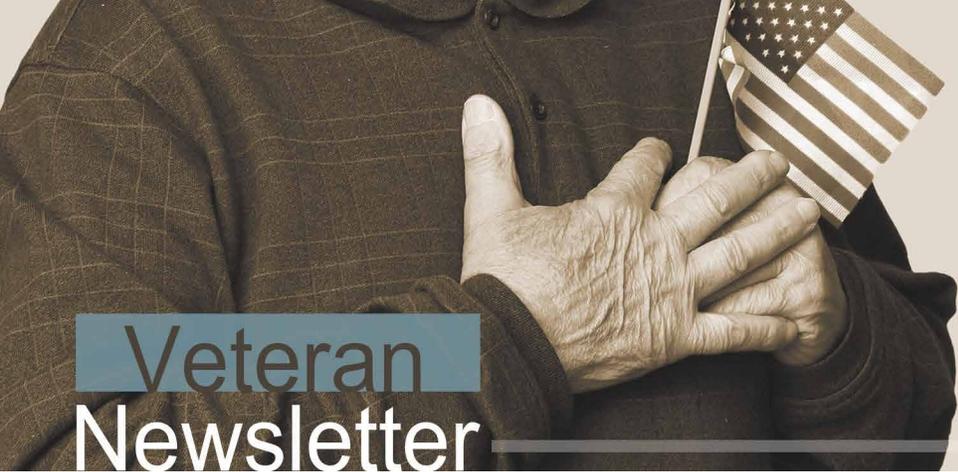
Combat Action Badge May Be Retroactive to Prior Conflicts...



The Department of Defense is studying the issue of making award of the Combat Action Badge retroactive to Dec. 7, 1941. That could open the door for thousands of Army soldiers who served in combat in World War II and later conflicts – but who did not qualify for other combat badges – to be recognized for their service under fire.

The proposal, originated by Florida Congressman Richard Nugent, originally was an amendment to the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, but did not make it into the final version approved by the U.S. Senate. However, Congress included the directive to the Pentagon in a “joint explanatory statement” it attached to the Act, which is the Pentagon’s budget bill for the year. The statement instructed the Department of Defense to include the issue of the Combat Action Badge in its ongoing review of military awards programs that was ordered last year by outgoing Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel.

Currently, the Combat Action Badge is awarded to Army soldiers who, after Sept. 18, 2001, performed duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay was authorized, who were personally



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present and actively engaged or were engaged by the enemy, and performed satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement. The Combat Action Badge recognizes the combat service of soldiers serving in military occupational specialties that do not qualify for award of the Combat Infantryman Badge or Combat Medical Badge.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services will continue to follow and report on this issue.

Ring in 2015...

We move full-force this month into 2015. The new year brings all of us a renewed sense of purpose and an increased focus on goals. Some personal resolutions may not survive the month, but in our jobs, our families and our day-to-lives, the change of the calendar also gives us a hope that no matter what circumstances we're in, we have the opportunity to work to make them better. If we look in the mirror at each of us, we'll no doubt see things we'd like to change – and with the hope a new year brings, there's no time like the present.



We hope that 2015 is a year of happiness, good fortune, and good health for each one of you and your families.

Happy New Year!