

Veterans Group

For more information, go to nalc.org/veterans.



Resources for veterans' mental health

Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr.'s column on page 53 in this issue deals with mental health resources for letter carriers. Veterans have additional resources available to them. Information about those resources can be found below.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

From its home page, va.gov, scroll down a bit until you reach the "Top Pages" section, then hover over to "Get mental health care" and click there. This takes you to va.gov/healthcare/health-needs-conditions/mental-health. This page gives you a starting point to assist you with frequently asked questions.

One example you will find in scrolling through those questions is: "Can I speak to a fellow veteran who's been through this before?"

Yes. The BeThere peer assistance program, in partnership with Military OneSource, offers support to service members (including National Guard soldiers and reservists), their families, and transition-

ing veterans up to 365 days after separation or retirement. Through this program, you can talk privately with peer coaches who are veterans, service members or military spouses.

Military OneSource

To talk with a peer coach, call Military OneSource's free, confidential peer support services at 800-342-9647. This service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Veterans Crisis Line and Military Crisis Line

Another resource is the Veterans Crisis Line and Military Crisis Line (live chat at veteranscrisisline.net). Are you a veteran in crisis or concerned about one? Call 988, then press 1. Text to 838255. Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are veterans themselves. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.

Join the NALC Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.

Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for their military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at nalc.org/veterans.

Medical evidence and OWCP (continued)

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- A medical rationale for the opinion that the accepted claim should be expanded to include the other diagnosed conditions. This is very important, and it should include a discussion of the pathological or other medical relationship between the diagnosis and the injury or conditions of employment, as well as an explanation of how any test results formed a basis for the opinion. The physician also should provide a detailed case history of the injury and an expla-

nation of why the other condition was not initially diagnosed.

If your claim needs expansion, it is important that your physician understands what's outlined above. Most physicians don't focus on the cause of injury. Their concern is with therapeutic care. Because of FECA provisions, however, OWCP focuses almost entirely on the cause of the claimed condition. This difference in approach can result in claims failing to be properly expanded.