

VVA CHAPTER 1069 BENEFITS PRESENTATION 6/8/2016 – PAGE 1

1. CONTACT INFORMATION:

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- **Vanessa Hicks-Callaway** (Congressman Blake Farenthold's Veteran Advocate), (361) 894-6446, her e-mail is Vanessa.Hicks-Callaway@mail.house.gov.
- **NEW: Matt Minor** (Texas State Representative Phil Stephenson's Veteran Advocate), (281) 232-7900, his e-mail is Matt.Minor@house.state.tx.us, his Wharton office is 1603 North Richmond Road, Wharton, TX 77488.
- **NEW: VA INQUIRY ROUTING & INFORMATION SYSTEM (IRIS):** The website is; <https://iris.custhelp.com>. See explanation of services below.

2. VA INQUIRY ROUTING & INFORMATION SYSTEM (IRIS): This website has several services;

1. The location of a VA facility
2. Toll free VA telephone numbers
3. VA education benefits
4. Information about the *eBenefits* website
5. Frequently asked questions (887)
6. ASK A QUESTION. At this prompt, go to "ASK A QUESTION" and click on it. Follow the instructions and "You should receive a response within 5 business days". Include as much information as you can in reference to your claim number, social security number, telephone number(s), etc.

3. 24/7 VETERANS CRISIS LINE (VCL): Veterans can call the national suicide prevention hotline number, 1-800-273-8255, and then "PRESS 1" to reach a highly skilled responder trained in suicide prevention and crisis intervention. Since the VCL began in 2007 through June 2015, the VCL has answered over 1.86 million calls from Veterans, family members, and others concerned about a Veteran.

4. VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM PRIORITIES GROUPS: The VA administers a patient enrollment system that is based on priority groups to ensure health care benefits are readily available to enrolled veterans. There are eight priority groups with PRIORITY GROUP THREE being the third highest priority (Veterans with VA-rated service connected disabilities of 10% or 20% disabling, former POW's, Purple Heart recipients, Medal of Honor recipients). Some benefits for Priority Three include certification of eligibility for a home loan guaranty, home loan guaranty fee exemption, VA Priority Three medical treatment card, Service Disabled Veterans insurance (must file within 2 years from date of service connection), and clothing allowance for veterans who wear a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance.

5. POTPOURRI OF INFORMATION: In Colorado County, there are 253 veterans receiving VA disability compensation or pensions from the VA. Of these 62 are 10-20%, 40 are 30-40%, 43 are 50-60%, 57 are 70-90% and 24 are 100%. Twenty-seven receive a veterans pension (VVA 10/8/2014).