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1. **CONTACTS:** To help you obtain information about claims or other needs:

- **VETERANS CRISIS LINE:** Veterans and loved ones can call (800) 273-8255 24/7 and then press 1 with total anonymity to speak to a professional counselor. A Houston Vet Center counselor, **James Bailey**, is available in Don Montoya's office on Thursdays for veterans and their families. Call Don's office at (979) 532-1311 for an appointment to see James Bailey.
- **Dwight Winkler, Interim** Wharton County Veterans Service Officer, 1017 N. Alabama Road, Wharton, TX 77488; (979) 532-1311; don.montoya@co.wharton.tx.us; **OFFICE HOURS:** M, TUES, THUR (Wharton), 8:00a.m.-11:30 & 12:00 noon-4:30 p.m.; FRI (Wharton), 8:00a.m.-11:30 noon by appointment only & 12:00 noon-4:30 p.m. (Administrative time); On WED (El Campo library), 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Mike Harbaugh is at the Wharton office on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 am till 4:30 pm and lunch from 12:00 noon till 12:30 pm.

VVA Chapter 1069 Service Officer Benefits Webpage: <http://www.vva1069.org/vso/vso.html>

Wharton County Service Officer Webpage: <http://www.vva1069.org/wcvso/wcvso.html>

- **Vanessa Hicks-Callaway**, (Congressman **Blake Farenthold's** Veteran Advocate), (361) 894-6446, Vanessa.Hicks-Callaway@mail.house.gov. **NOTE:** Vanessa Hicks-Callaway will work with you on any other government agency.
- **Matt Minor**, (Texas State Representative **Phil Stephenson's** Veteran Advocate), (281) 232-7900, Matt.Minor@house.state.tx.us
- **VA COMPLAINT HOTLINE:** New VA complaint hotline number is (855) 948-2311. Be courteous and be able to answer WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and WHY about "wrong doing at the VA." **WHITE HOUSE VA HOTLINE!!!**
- **NEW VA PHONE NUMBER TO CALL 1-844-698-2311:** This new national toll-free number is a go to source for Veterans and their families who do not know what number to call at the VA. It is identified at the VA as **myVA311**.
- **Texas Veterans Commission (TVC):** To check on a claim when the TVC is your representative for the claim you have submitted call (713) 383-2756, prompt 1.

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2. **WHARTON COUNTY YOUTH FAIR VETERAN'S DAY:** Veteran's Day at the Wharton County Youth Fair will be held Tuesday, April 24th and all veterans and their immediate family will be allowed free entrance to the grounds. Please present military identification at the main gate and sign your name on the sign-in sheet. The Fair encourages everyone to come enjoy the day at the Fair and then join the Fair during Opening Ceremonies prior to the start of the bull riding, in the Johnson Arena for special recognition. (Source: Wharton County Youth Fair)

3. **FREE LEGAL AID:** There is free legal aid at the Wharton County Library one day a month. It is the first Thursday of the month. Please call (979) 849-6464 for additional information. The next few dates are; **April 5, May 3, June 7, July 5, August 2, and September 6, 2018.**

4. **PAYMENT DATES 2018:** VA compensation benefits are paid one month in arrears. This means that benefits for a particular month are paid the first business day of the next month. When the first business day of the month falls on a non-business day or a holiday, VA benefits will be distributed on the last business day prior to the first of the month.

- March 2018 will be paid on **March 30, 2018**
- April 2018 will be paid on May 1, 2018
- May 2018 will be paid on June 1, 2018
- June 2018 will be paid on June 29, 2018
- July 2018 will be paid on August 1, 2018
- August 2018 will be paid on August 31, 2018
- September 2018 will be paid on October 1, 2018
- October, 2018 will be paid November 1, 2018
- November 2018 will be paid November 30, 2018
- December 2018 will be paid December 31, 2018

5. **PAPERWORK, PATIENCE & PERSERVERANCE:** As you file a claim, your VSO or military organization that represents you will help you complete the **PAPERWORK** that is necessary to submit the claim. A veteran needs to have **PATIENCE** as the VA decides eligibility for the claim. If you have not heard (usually by a letter from the VA) in six weeks about the VA being in receipt of your claim and the VA is processing the claim, you should contact the VSO or military organization that represents you to have them contact the VA to determine the status of your claim. **DO NOT GIVE UP!** You need to have **PERSERVERANCE** and continue the claim or appeal until such time that a final decision is made or your representative gives you additional advice about the claim.