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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 Michael Harbaugh's office on Thursdays for veterans and their families. Call Michael's office at (979) 532-1311 for an appointment to see James Bailey.

**Michael Harbaugh** Wharton County Veterans Service Officer, 1017 N. Alabama Road, Wharton, TX 77488; (979) 532-1311; mike.harbaugh@co.wharton.tx.us; **OFFICE HOURS:** M, TUES, THUR (Wharton), 8:00a.m.-12:00noon & 12:30-4:30 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.

**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](mailto: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.

### **(2) TVC 2018 EDITION STATE VETERANS BENEFITS BOOKLET**

The following chart below summarizes the benefits, services, and information presented in the [Texas Veterans Commission 2018 State Veterans Benefits booklet](#).

PAGE(S)	DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS/SERVICES/INFORMATION
3	Service connected compensation (Vets with 30% or higher rating may be eligible for increased compensation for dependents)
3	Non service connected compensation
4	Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
5	Death Pension (Also known as Survivor Death Pension)
5-7	Burial Benefits (Honors, markers, flags, cemeteries)
7	Vocational Rehabilitation
8	Appeals Assistance
9	Medical Care eligibility, Health registries (Agent Orange Registry)
10	Veterans Employment Services

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13-20	Veterans Education Program
21	Veterans Entrepreneur Program
22-25	Fund for Veterans' Assistance, Health Care Advocacy, Mental Health, Women Veterans
26	Texas Veterans Land Board (Loans for land, home, home improvement)
27-28	Vehicle license plates/hunting & fishing licenses/property tax exemption/state parks/life insurance
29-34	Other Veteran Service Agencies Information

The information described above can also be found on the VVA Chapter 1069 web site under Dwight Winkler's handouts from 2015-2018. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the web page.

### **(3) AARP NEWS – MANY CONFUSED OVER NEW MEDICARE CARDS**

The following article comes from AARP's June 2018 News Bulletin, Vol. 59

Despite publicity efforts, 60 percent don't know IDs are free, AARP survey reveals

As Medicare begins to mail new ID cards to its 60 million members, more than three-quarters of them know little or nothing about the initiative to use newly assigned ID numbers in place of their Social Security number (SSN) as their identification, a new AARP survey reveals.

In addition, 6 in 10 believe they might have to pay for the new card (they don't), according to the survey. That belief could make them vulnerable to scam artists.

In April, individuals new to Medicare began receiving the updated card, which displays a unique combination of 11 letters and numbers, rather than a beneficiary's SSN. Replacing cards for current beneficiaries is a yearlong process that began in May. To learn more about when your card will arrive, go to [Medicare.gov/NewCard](https://www.medicare.gov/NewCard).

"The new Medicare cards are a step forward for fraud prevention, but con artists are working overtime on new ways to scam seniors", says Nancy LeaMond, AARP's chief advocacy and engagement officer.

Scammers posing as Medicare representatives are already calling beneficiaries demanding a processing fee. Other fraudsters are telling beneficiaries that they are owed a refund from transactions on their old card and then asking for bank account information to process the reimbursement. Medicare will never ask an enrollee for a bank account number, and no refunds are owed.

AARP's Fraud Watch Network provides more prevention tips and advice on many types of scams, including those involving card replacements. Consumers can also sign up for "Watchdog Alert" emails to get regular updates on new scams.