VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

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May 25 – May 31, 2024

STAFF ACTIVITY

- NS Staff had a significant meeting with representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States (TECRO). We discussed the newly elected government's vision for the future, underlining the importance of international relations in our veterans' initiatives. We also explored opportunities for the new representative of TECRO to address members of The American Legion during the upcoming National Convention.

- NS Staff accompanied the National Vice Commander and the National Vice President of the Auxiliary to Arlington National Cemetery for the Memorial Day wreath-laying ceremony, which the Department of Defense hosted. This solemn event was a testament to our commitment to honoring the sacrifices of our fallen heroes.

- NS Staff coordinated the logistics for a meeting between the National Commander and the Chairman of the Korean Veterans Association, following up on the National Commander's previous trip to Korea.

- NS Staff is currently assisting a Legionnaire in obtaining recognition for his uncle, who was killed during World War II.

- NS Staff met with the Legislative Division to discuss current and future initiatives concerning "Bill Reviews and Letters of Support." During the meeting, we reviewed the status of ongoing legislative efforts, identified key bills requiring our attention, and outlined a strategic plan for drafting and disseminating letters of support. This collaborative effort ensures that our legislative priorities are effectively communicated and advocated for in the coming months.

- NS Staff is currently accompanying the National Commander on his European trip, a journey of great importance for our international engagements. They have successfully completed their visit to NATO/SHAPE and visited servicemembers in Spain. During their time in Spain, they received a command-level briefing, providing us with invaluable insights into our forces' operations and conditions. This firsthand knowledge will guide our future initiatives and ensure our continued support for our servicemembers.

- NS Staff preparations have commenced for the upcoming National Convention. This includes drafting and sending invitation letters to five distinguished speakers. These letters are being carefully composed to ensure clarity and professionalism, outlining the event details and emphasizing the significance of their participation. The goal is to secure their commitment and enhance the convention's overall impact with their valuable contributions.

- NS Staff participated in the "*STAR ACT*" working group hosted by The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). The discussion focused on the Major Richard Star Act, which aims to allow combat-injured veterans to receive both their earned retirement pay and their disability compensation without offset.

- NS Staff participated in a Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC) meeting hosted by the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House. The discussion focused on the approval and voting process for the Veterans Day poster.

- NS Staff thoroughly reviewed the American Legion resolution concerning the awards for the Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year, which will be presented at the National Convention. This review included an examination of the nomination criteria, selection process, and the resolution's alignment with our organizational goals and values. The purpose is to ensure that the awards accurately reflect the outstanding service and dedication of the recipients, thereby maintaining the integrity and prestige of these honors.

POW/MIA

May 30, 2024

- As of May 31, 2024, no new servicemembers were identified or repatriated for the week of May 25 to May 31.

DPAA has identified/repatriated 70 service members this year.

PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)

- Processed request: Ammo – 3720; Rifles – 0; Clips – 25; Static Displays – 0
- Participants: Posts – 3; Departments – 3

The American Legion JROTC/ROTC Program

- Military Excellence – 0
- Scholastic Excellence – 0
- Departments – 0

TIP OF THE WEEK

Q&A: How TRICARE Covers Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

You may know someone who uses a wheelchair or walker to help increase their mobility. But did you know that these items are just a few of many that TRICARE may cover as durable medical equipment? Read below to learn more about how TRICARE covers DME.

Q: What does TRICARE consider DME?

A: TRICARE defines DME as an item that can withstand repeated use, serves a medical purpose, and generally isn't useful to someone who isn't sick or injured. Common examples of DME include, but aren't limited to:

- Mobility aids, such as walkers and wheelchairs
- Glucose monitors
- Infusion pumps
- Breast pumps and breastfeeding supplies

Q: When does TRICARE cover DME?

A: TRICARE covers DME only when prescribed by a provider. The DME must:

- Improve, restore, or maintain the function of a body part, or help prevent your condition from getting worse
- Maximize your ability to function (consistent with your medical needs)
- Provide the right level of performance and quality for your condition

TRICARE covers breast pumps and breastfeeding supplies as DME at no cost for new and expecting parents. TRICARE also covers DME customization or attachments, if your provider decides these are medically necessary or appropriate for your condition. For example, TRICARE may cover a car lift for a wheelchair user. Your regional contractor will decide to rent or purchase your DME based on the equipment's cost and your condition.

Q: Does TRICARE cover DME repairs, replacements, and maintenance?

A: If you own DME that needs repairs, TRICARE may cover the repairs. TRICARE covers DME replacement in the following cases:

- There's a change to your physical condition.
- The DME is damaged.
- The DME no longer works and can't be fixed.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says it no longer meets safety standards.

If you need replacement DME, you'll need a new prescription from your TRICARE-authorized provider. You may also need supporting documentation. TRICARE only covers regular maintenance, such as testing or cleaning the machine, when the manufacturer requires an authorized technician to service the DME.

Q: How does TRICARE For Life cover DME?

A: If you have TRICARE For Life coverage, you must follow Medicare's rules for getting DME. This doesn't apply if you live overseas (not including U.S. territories). Check out Medicare.gov

for more information about DME coverage, including where to find DME equipment and suppliers.

Q: What kind of equipment doesn't TRICARE cover?

A: TRICARE doesn't cover equipment if:

- It has deluxe, unnecessary features that increase its cost.
- It doesn't serve a solely medical purpose, like humidifiers or smart watches.
- You could get the same equipment from a military hospital or clinic, if you're enrolled at one.
- You're a patient in a facility that provides the equipment as part of its typical services at no extra cost.
- It's an exact duplicate of an item you already own and will only serve as a backup.

Note: TRICARE may cover items that aren't exact duplicates. For example, TRICARE may cover a portable oxygen machine as a backup for a stationary oxygen machine.

Q: What will I pay for DME under TRICARE?

A: Copayments and cost-shares for DME vary depending on your TRICARE plan and sponsor's status. Typically, network providers and suppliers will cost you less out of pocket than non-network providers and suppliers. Use the TRICARE Compare Cost Tool to check your potential DME costs.