

Veteran Updates

News and updates on Veterans issues from the San Francisco VA Medical Center • June 2012

San Francisco Veterans Justice Clinic – First of its Kind in VA!

Did you know, at any given time, of all people in prison nationwide, 9.3 percent are Veterans?

In California, a disproportionate percentage of Veterans (30-50 percent) are in the justice system, per Christina Kim, NP, SFVAMC staff nurse practitioner.

“California has the highest prison rate in the nation, 30,000+, and Veterans

in the justice system are in the thousands,” she said.

Good news is, 82 percent of these incarcerated Veterans are eligible for VA services.

To help these Veterans get the services they need, the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) initiative was created as part of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs’ vision for ending homelessness among Veterans within five years.

VJO’s purpose is to educate the legal system, law enforcement, and jails on unique issues facing today’s Veterans, such as post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain



injuries, military sexual trauma, and suicide.

To locally support VJO efforts, we opened the very first VA Justice Clinic based out of our San Francisco VA Downtown Clinic. The clinic is staffed by Eric Hung, MD, psychiatrist and Associate Chief of Mental Health for Community Based Outpatient Clinics for SFVAMC; nurse practitioner Christina Kim; and VJO social worker Elizabeth Brett.

“We wanted to create a clinic with wrap-around services—social work, mental health, and medical services—for Veterans

coming out of county jail,” said Hung. “Our purpose is to ensure no Veteran falls through the cracks. We help clients gain access to services with a goal to divert them from the criminal justice system. We offer treatment vs. containment.”

“Our Justice Clinic allows us to be a ‘one-stop shopping’ referral source for

Veterans within the criminal justice system,” said Hung. “We initiate treatment services and provide a liaison between the VA and local police, sheriff’s department, probation, parole, and any of the justice courts.”

“We also teach life skill classes,” said Kim. “Our Veteran clients have no idea how society works. We’re their first point of contact after release. We engage them, work with them where they’re at, and help them with their reintegration.” For more information about the Veterans Justice Clinic, please call (415) 489-3306.

City College of SF: Want to Go Back to School?

Here are some helpful hints for Veterans planning on enrolling at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) for the Fall 2012 semester. As a Veteran you are eligible for priority registration at CCSF which is held June 25 for the Fall 2012 semester. You must submit a copy of your DD214 (Member 4 copy) to: CCSF's Veterans Educational Benefits Office located at 50 Phelan Ave, Cloud Hall, Room 333, San Francisco, CA 94112. Tel. (415) 239-3486 or email: veterans@ccsf.edu.

If you are interested in receiving GI Bill Educational Benefits at CCSF here are the steps to follow:

- 1) Call the national GI Bill Office to see what benefits you may be eligible for (888-GI BILL).
- 2) Apply for VA Educational Benefits online at www.gibill.va.gov.

- 3) Apply for Admissions at CCSF at www.ccsf.edu.
- 4) Schedule an appointment with a Veteran Academic Counselor by calling (415) 239-3486.
- 5) Complete Math and English Placement Tests at CCSF unless you are eligible for a waiver. For details call the Admissions Office at (415) 239-3285 or Veterans Educational Benefits Office (415) 239-3486.
- 6) Complete the CCSF orientation online or in person.
- 7) Submit to the Veterans Educational Benefits Office:
 - a. Copy of your DD214 (Member 4 copy)
 - b. Copy of your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) or a copy of your GI Bill Benefits Application, pending receipt of your COE.
 - c. Official copies of any transcripts including SMART transcripts.

- 8) After meeting with a Veteran Academic Counselor you should register for classes that are on your educational plan.
- 9) AFTER you have registered for classes you need to request certification (each semester) in order to receive your educational benefits. Please note that certification can take up to 3 weeks from time of request, especially during peak times.

If you have any questions, please contact the CCSF Veterans Educational Benefits Office.



American Legion Town Hall Meeting

Each year, American Legion System Worth Saving Task Force members conduct a series of site visits to VA facilities across the country. They will be visiting the San Francisco VA Medical Center on June 7. As part of their visit, American Legion staff will hold a town hall meeting on June 6 at 6 p.m. at the War Memorial Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., Room 207, San Francisco. If you're interested in attending, please RSVP at jgeorge@legion.org or call (202) 263-5769.

Please take the patient satisfaction survey before you attend the meeting at www.legion.org/systemworthsaving/survey.

Resources

National VA Numbers

Education
(888) 442-4551

Headstones & Markers
(800) 697-6947

Health Care
(877) 222-8387

Life Insurance
(800) 669-8477

Special Health Issues
(800) 749-8387

VA Benefits
(800) 827-1000

Fee Basis Department Name & Address Change

Our "Fee Basis Department" is now called "Non-VA Care Program" and the office and staff have relocated to 901 Market Street, Suite 390E, San Francisco. Please use the address below for mailing any correspondence or claims.

Non-VA Care Program - SFVAMC
901 Market St., Suite 390E
San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: (415) 750-2019

