

Message From Commissioner Rogers

Good morning Tennessee Veterans and Families,

Spring is really starting to show off, and I'm grateful for the lift in spirit it has given me. Step outside, open a window and call, text, or go old school and write a friend. My teenager wrote several letters and she received several in return and was thrilled. What a nice discovery for our Instagram generation! There is not enough praise for Tennessee's medical personnel, first responders, utility workers, restaurants, grocery, hardware, and pharmacy employees and the army of delivery personnel at work and so many others. We are hopeful for recovery as soon as possible for those that have had their jobs and livelihoods put on hold. Tennesseans are resourceful and resilient and have always pushed through the major storms of the past - all wars from the Revolutionary through to present day, through the Great Depression, through other pandemics such as the Asian flu of the 50's and now, COVID-19. This will mark a tough time in history, from which our Great Nation, and Tennessee will recover and prevail, with many lessons learned, that will serve to make us stronger.

Know that Tennessee government, and the Department of Veteran Services is adapting to the fluid state of the current situation in order to continue providing services to you. Below is the latest information on how to contact our service officers across the state.

Updates for Benefits Applications Support:

- In order to limit exposure risk for Veterans and TDVS Employees, we are processing claims remotely. Please call 615-741-2345 if you had a previously scheduled office appointment or need to start a claim or have questions for one of our veteran service officers. Many of our service officers are having to work remotely out of their offices due to loss of access at the medical centers, increased base restrictions, and campus closures. We don't want you to make an unnecessary in-person trip. Requests can be handled by phone and/or electronically. For office contact information [go here](#) or call our customer service representative at: **615-741-2345**.

Update for Board Veterans Appeals Hearings:

- The [Board of Veterans' Appeals](#) has suspended all travel board, video and Central Office hearings through at least May 1, 2020.
- If you have questions regarding a previously scheduled hearing, please contact our department inquiry line at **615-741-2345** so we can assist you.

Update for State Cemetery Interments:

- Currently all Tennessee State Cemeteries are open during normal operating hours for gravesite visitors.
- We are continuing with direct burial operations at this time; however, the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services is committed to fulfilling the right of every veteran to receive their final honors. When COVID restrictions are lifted, we invite every family that has had to postpone their committal or memorial service, to reschedule their service with us.

For the latest updates from the state regarding COVID-19, you can visit our website at www.TN.gov/veteran the sliding display can link you to vital updates from the Governor's office and the COVID-19 Unified Command as well as links to the TN Department of Health, COVID-19 Small Business Resources, a listing of all Remote COVID-19 Assessment Sites and much more.

Veterans, COVID-19 presents us with a different challenge. Isolation and social distancing are tough – we are used to camaraderie. So again, I encourage everyone to connect with others – friends, family, and of course our department if you need assistance. There are many resources out there if you need to reach out beyond friends and family. If you feel as if you are in crisis, please don't hesitate to call the Veteran Crisis Line at **1 (800) 273-8255** there are caring folks ready to help get you through the challenges you are facing.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Rogers".

Courtney Rogers | Commissioner
Tennessee Department of Veterans Services
WRS Tennessee Tower, 13th Floor
312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue, Nashville, TN 37243
o. 615-741-1959
courtney.rogers@tn.gov
tn.gov/veteran
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

