

Windom, Robert A. (FOH)

From: DC METRO AREA BRANCH OF COA [COA@LIST.NIH.GOV] on behalf of Julian Canizares [jcanizaresjr@GMAIL.COM]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 7:46 PM
To: COA@LIST.NIH.GOV
Subject: [COA-DC-BRANCH] Smart Brief - Benefits Available to PHS Officers
Attachments: Health Care Reform.doc; State Tax Example.doc

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA METROPOLITAN AREA BR



To members of the D.C. Metropolitan Area Branch,

This Smart Brief is a journal style email message intended to help keep you informed about various uniformed service benefits available to PHS officers. Please note that some offers may only apply to Armed Forces members; however, these Smart Briefs will help promote awareness and push toward including the common language of "Uniformed Services" in more legislation and benefits packages.

For the current posting, please forward any questions or comments to LCDR Robert Windom at robert.windom@foh.hhs.gov. We also welcome any hot topics or special discounts that you wish to share with your fellow officers. Thank you.

.....

Current Posting

- 1. Health Care Reform Act**
- 2. Tax Deadline Fast Approaching, April 15**
- 3. Military Special Offers**
- 4. MWR Information, Tickets and Travel (ITT) Summer Ticket Sales**
- 5. Blue Angels Airshow Dates**

6. D.C. Area Six Flags Offers Military Discount

Previously Posted

1. **Uniformed Services Tax Benefits**
 2. **Filing State Income Taxes When You're in the Military**
 3. **Military Discounts at Local Establishments**
 4. **Broadway In the Beltway – Improved Process to Purchase Discount Theater Tickets Online**
 5. **Military Appreciation Night Every Monday at The Melting Pot (Gaithersburg, MD)**
 6. **GI Bill Transferability H.R. 3657***
-

Current Posting

1. Health Care Reform Act

The recently passed Health Care Reform legislation will affect military and VA beneficiaries in many ways. The impact of these changes is still unknown. However, the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA – www.moaa.org) highlighted several major regulations. Please see attached. Also, please see “**Real Transformation for the PHS Commissioned Corps**” at <http://www.coausphs.org/>

2. Tax Deadline Fast Approaching, April 15

Your 2009 income tax return is due on Apr 15, unless you file for an extension. If you need an extension of time to file, complete Form 4868. Filing the form gives you until Oct. 15 to file your return. To avoid a penalty, however, be sure to pay any tax that is due on April 15.

Military members may have more than one option for filing their state taxes, depending on their situation. First, you need to understand these two terms used by the military:

Home of Record. Your home of record is the state recorded by the military as your home when you were enlisted, appointed, commissioned, inducted or ordered in a tour of active duty.

State of Legal Residency. Your state of legal residency (SLR) is your "home of record," unless you changed it to another state. Military members often mistakenly think that changing the state on their paycheck records changes their SLR. To change the SLR, a DD Form 2058 must be submitted to your local finance officer and accepted. For information on requirements for valid changes when filing Form 2058, check out this Fact Sheet on Legal Residence posted by the U.S. Air Force.

From a tax standpoint, your SLR is considered your "domicile" or "resident" state as long as you are on active duty. Even if you are stationed in another state, you're still considered a resident of your SLR.

IMPORTANT: A new law affects where the spouses of military service members can file state income taxes. For more information, see Military Spouse Residency Relief Act and State Taxes.

Please see attached State Tax Example

3. Military Special Offers

The below link provides a listing of establishments that offer military discounts. Always call the establishment to be sure they participate in the program. Also, never be afraid to ask a store if they offer a discount, even if one is not advertised. You may be pleasantly surprised. http://www.afcrossroads.com/popups/special_offers.cfm

4. MWR Information, Tickets and Travel (ITT) Summer Ticket Sales

Remember that your local military installation ITT Office can offer discount tickets on a wide range of summer events and activities.

Events include, but not limited to:

Auto Racing Tickets: Daytona Int'l Speedway, Dover Int'l Speedway, Richmond Int'l Speedway, MD Int'l Raceway

Baseball Tickets - Washington Nationals & Baltimore Orioles, Orioles Military

Appreciation Picnics - 5/1 & 9/19, prices TBD

Basketball Tickets - Washington Mystics, Washington Wizards

Bethesda Theater

Busch Gardens FEARFEST Picnic - October 2; prices TBD

Hippodrome (France-Merrick Performing Arts Center), Baltimore (see information on Event Usher tickets)

Hershey Park Military Salute Picnic - July 23; prices TBD

Kennedy Center, Washington DC
Kings Dominion Military Salute Picnic June 26; prices TBD

Lyric Opera House
1st Mariner Arena, Baltimore

Maryland Science Center

Toby's Dinner Theater (Baltimore and Columbia: Friday & Saturday Shows)

Warner Theatre, Washington DC

Wolf Trap, Vienna VA

5. Blue Angels Airshow Dates

May 15-16, 2010. Andrews Air Force Base, MD. See Navy pilots demonstrate their flight skills with aerial maneuvers. Note: USAF Thunderbirds will not be performing locally this year, but you can see them in Ocean City, Maryland on June 5-6.

May 26 and 28, 2010. Annapolis, Maryland. Enjoy the annual Navy air show performed over the Severn River in honor of the U.S. Naval Academy's graduation.

6. D.C. Area Six Flags Offers Military Discount

Members of the military community can get a 65 percent discount on park admission to Six Flags America in Bowie, Md., for the first three Saturdays and Sundays in April.

Instead of paying the regular \$49.99 admission, military families will pay \$18. Tickets are available only at Morale, Welfare and Recreation Information, Tickets, and Tours offices on military installations in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area. (The Air Force refers to its MWR division as Air Force Services.) Anyone who is eligible to buy tickets at MWR ticket offices is eligible for the discounted Six Flags America tickets, according to Julia Filz, spokeswoman for the Bowie Six Flags America.

Benefits Committee Note

The Benefits Committee is dedicated to researching offers, incentives, and legislative

topics with the purpose of increasing awareness of benefits and services available to USPHS Commissioned Corps Officers, retirees, and family members. We strongly feel that sharing this valuable information will lead to increased morale and improved quality of life for our PHS community. We hope that you have enjoyed these Smart Brief publications and we want to continue sharing topics of interest and opening dialogue with you. Please note that Smart Briefs are sent out once a month; look for future editions around the 2nd Monday of each month. For your convenience, a link has been created on the DC COA website that will allow you to access past Smart Brief editions.

DC COA Smart Briefs

Thank you for your support,

**LCDR Julian Canizares, Chair, DC COA Benefits Committee &
USPHS Liaison with the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
Montgomery County, MD Chapter
CDR Lou Ann Rector
CDR Melissa Meredith
LCDR Robert Windom
LCDR Eduardo Lim
LT Kimberly Love
LTJG Tracy Tilghman**

Visit the DC COA Website at

<http://dccoa.org>

Please consider adding your home email address to the Branch listserve.

http://dccoa.org/membership/List_Serv.htm

=====Instructions for Leaving the Listserv===== If you are do not wish to receive information from the District of Columbia Metropolitan Branch of the Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS (DC-COA)you can unsubscribe in either of two ways: (1)Send e-mail to LISTSERV@LIST.NIH.GOV with the following text in the body of the message: unsubscribe COA (2) Go to : <http://list.nih.gov/archives/coa.html> and select "Join or leave the list"

Health Care Reform – How Will it Affect You?

The recently passed Health Care Reform legislation will affect military and VA beneficiaries in many ways. The impact of these changes are still unknown, however we have highlighted several major regulations below.

Effects on TRICARE and VA care:

- New legislation will not roll TRICARE into a massive government healthcare program. Legislation has been written to deem TRICARE and VA coverage as “qualifying coverage” (still awaiting passage of this legislation on the Senate side). Under the new legislation, people without qualifying coverage will have to pay a penalty.
- TRICARE will not end in 2014.
- There is nothing in the legislation that will change any existing TRICARE fees.

Effects on TRICARE for Life and Medicare:

- Money from Medicare savings will be used to fund the expansion of health insurance coverage to those who do not have it now.
- There are some changes to the provider that will affect payments to providers.

Effects on Physical, Speech, and Occupational Therapy:

- New legislation will allow an exemption to the \$1860 cap for outpatient physical, speech, and occupational therapy until December 31, 2010.

Coverage on children until the age of 26:

- TRICARE is expected to adopt the new health care policy of allowing adult children to stay on their parent’s healthcare plan until age 26 if their employers don’t offer insurance.
- This policy could take anywhere from 12-24 months to be adopted by TRICARE
- TRICARE currently offers coverage to people and children that lose TRICARE eligibility because of separation or age. (Continued Health Care Benefit Program)

For more information please visit the MOAA website:

http://www.moaa.org/lac/lac_issues/lac_issues_major/lac_issues_major_hc/lac_issues_major_hc_reformfaq.htm

An example

Consider the example of Joe, who lived in South Carolina and joined the military there in 2000. With Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders, he now is stationed in Maryland and lives in Virginia.

Does Joe file a state tax return? If so, which state? South Carolina, Maryland and/or Virginia?

We know that Joe is considered a South Carolina resident (that's his "home of record" and his SLR.) South Carolina says that Joe must continue to file a South Carolina income tax return regardless where he is stationed.

Each state decides whether service members must file a return when they are stationed outside the state. If Joe's "home of record" was in a certain state, he might be required to file a return, then deduct all of his active duty income and pay little or no tax. Some "home-of-record" states, like South Carolina, will tax Joe on his income even if he is stationed outside of his "home of record."

When California is a "home of record" and the active military is stationed outside of California, the service member is considered a nonresident of California. For guidance about filing in a state other than your "state of legal residence," see that state's individual website found at [State Tax Websites](#).

Does Virginia or Maryland expect a tax return from Joe?

The Service member Civil Relief Act states that an active duty member is not considered a resident of a state unless it is his SLR. Joe would only file a Virginia or a Maryland return if he had a second, nonmilitary job in that state. If he's working at Home Depot in Virginia on the weekends, he would file as a Virginia nonresident and only report income from that W-2. He would not report any other type of income. If Joe is married and his wife works in a civilian job in Virginia she might have to file a state tax return in Virginia. However, if she qualifies under the 2009 Military Spouses Residency Relief Act, she might be able to claim California as her state of legal residence, along with her husband, and also be exempt from filing a state return.