

COVID-19: update on changes to Veterans UK Services

Please be reassured that all Armed Forces Pensions, War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme regular payments will continue to be made as usual into your nominated account. We are also maintaining urgent welfare support for Service leavers, veterans and their families via the Veterans Welfare Service (VWS), Defence Transition Services (DTS) and Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans (IPC4V).

The latest position on changes to our services as restrictions begin to ease are as follows:

Veterans UK Helpline: 0808 1914 218

Our teams are working hard taking calls from in the office and at home, Mon – Fri 8am to 4pm, so this may mean you hear some background noise. Thank you for your patience and apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

We are currently able to provide the following services over the phone:

- reporting a bereavement
- Veterans Welfare Service (VWS), Defence Transition Services (DTS) and Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans (IPC4V) assistance
- updating bank account details or address for War Pension Scheme or Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments.

If your call is not for one of these reasons, please continue to use our email service via Veterans-UK@mod.gov.uk.

If you require to speak to someone because you are in need of urgent emotional support then please call the Samaritans directly on 116123, alternatively you can call 0808 1914 218 and listen to the options to be transferred where a Samaritan adviser may be able to assist you.

We have now re-commenced office-based processing and we are doing all we can to move cases forward as quickly as we can. General enquiries are taking a little longer than normal, please bear with us. However, should your enquiry be urgent please contact us on our Helpline number above.

Re-joining the Armed Forces

Veterans seeking information about re-joining the Armed Forces during this period can find details on the [Royal Navy Rejoiner page](#), [Regular Army Rejoiner page](#) and the [RAF Rejoiner Page](#).

Veterans Welfare Service Support (VWS), Defence Transition Services(DTS) and Integrated Personal Commissioning For Veterans (IPC4V)

To protect our staff and the veterans, Service leavers and families we support we have decided to suspend, except in the most exceptional circumstances, all face-to-face meetings with clients whilst national COVID restrictions are in place. This will be reviewed in due course, once all national COVID restrictions are lifted and a decision will be made about how we can continue to provide a quality service to our clients while protecting our staff. Urgent advice, information and support is still available via our helpline service (see above) and, for less urgent enquiries, via email to Veterans-UK@mod.gov.uk. Please quote your name, national insurance or reference number and contact details and we will be in touch as quickly as we can. See also "Guidance for Service Personnel with imminent discharge dates" below.

VWS/DTS customers can also reach us by emailing the welfare centre nearest to where you live:

Centurion (London, SE and SW England): veterans-uk-vws-south@mod.gov.uk

Kidderminster (South and Central Wales, Midlands and East England): veterans-uk-vws-wales-mid@mod.gov.uk

Norcross VWC (NW England, Yorkshire and Humber, North Wales and IOM): veterans-uk-vws-north@mod.gov.uk

Glasgow (Scotland, NE England, NI and ROI): veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.gov.uk

DTS customers can also reach us by emailing DBSVets-DTS-Central@mod.gov.uk.

War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS)

Please be reassured that all War Pension, War Widows Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments will continue to be made as usual into your nominated account.

Although in March 2020, we had to pause casework, including new claims and appeals against previous claim decisions, because such work cannot be delivered remotely, we are now back in the office at full capacity processing all of our case load. Staff are working hard on the recovery of our service delivery that was unfortunately impacted by COVID-19. We wish to reassure those still affected that we are doing all we can to continue to move cases forward as soon as possible. We continue to ensure that no-one will fall out of payment during this time. If you experience a problem with your payments or have an urgent question, please call our helpline service or email Veterans-UK@mod.gov.uk and we will reply as quickly as possible.

War Pension Scheme: Mesothelioma

To protect our staff and veterans, we have decided to suspend, except in the most exceptional circumstances, all face-to-face meetings with clients. However, advice, information and support is still available via our helpline service and email.

Every effort will be made to ensure that procedures are followed to ensure that timely informed choice discussions about [lump sum payments](#) are held with those who have been diagnosed with Mesothelioma, where an intention to claim is made.

Medical Examinations: War Pensions and AFCS

With effect from 17 March 2020, all planned medical examinations in relation to compensation scheme claims were cancelled. We are currently unable to recommence examinations, but an ongoing [pilot scheme](#) launched in August 2020 which changes the way we gather medical evidence for War Pensions Scheme claims and reviews is enabling us to continue our processing of cases.

We won't be issuing requests for medical board examinations or Hospital Case notes, instead we will be issuing a Primary Care Factual report and a supplementary Self-Assessment Form directly to the claimant. A letter will explain everything and provide instructions to follow so the claimant can complete the relevant forms before returning them to us.

Appeal Tribunal Hearings

With effect from 26 May 2020 the tribunals across the UK began to conduct some appeal hearings remotely. This involved all parties joining using the telephone or a video connection. For the most up to date information regarding your appeal hearing and how it may take place now and, in the future, please visit the relevant tribunal services website from the links below.

[HMCTS weekly operational summary on courts and tribunals during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak.](#)

[Scottish Courts and Tribunals Coronavirus \(COVID-19\).](#)

[Department of Justice Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Continuity Arrangements.](#)

Armed Forces Pensions

Please be reassured that all Armed Forces Pensions payments will continue to be made as usual into your nominated account.

Pension enquiries can still be answered by calling the JPA Enquiry Centre on 0800 085 3600 during the hours of 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday.

All other work is being maintained, although our timescales may be longer than usual.

Guidance for service personnel with imminent discharge dates:

Service personnel and their families who expect to face significant challenges as they prepare to leave the military should seek guidance and support from their Chain of Command in the first instance. Defence Transition Services may also be able to help. Please visit [Help for service leavers from Defence Transition Services](#) for how you may be able to get more support and extra help from Defence Transition Services when leaving the Armed Forces.

Medals

The MOD Medal Office has resumed operations. Regrettably, due to COVID-19 restrictions, there are delays in accessing pre-1980 hardcopy Service documents across MOD sites, which is impacting our normal timescales for processing applications. However, we continue to prioritize cases involving death in service and for veterans over 90 or who are terminally ill. If you are wanting to apply to obtain a medal entitlement or a physical medal(s) for either yourself, or a relative please follow the guidance on the [medals GOV.UK page](#). We will then deal with your application as soon as possible. We acknowledge that this may be frustrating. Please be assured that our officials are endeavouring to action all enquiries and applications as soon as feasible. Your patience and understanding during this challenging time are appreciated.

General information on medals can still be obtained by calling the JPA Enquiry Centre on 0800 085 3600 during the hours of 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday, or via DBS-Medals@mod.gov.uk.