



# THE SITREP

*The Situation Report is provided by the Isanti County Veterans Services Department*

*As we move further into the world of technology and instant access to information, Isanti County's Veterans Services Department found it necessary to provide the community with a regularly published source of information regarding Veterans in our community.*

## DEAR READERS:

There have been some big changes to our office. As you may know, Monica Broten retired from the Isanti County Veterans Services office in November 2018 after 12 years of dedication to local Veterans. Thank you to all that came for the celebration! Congratulations and best wishes on your next adventure Monica!



## ISANTI COUNTY NEWS:

Isanti County will be honoring the sacrifices of all Purple Heart recipients during the Isanti County Board Meeting on April 17th, 2019, which begins at 9:00a.m. A proclamation will be signed by Mike Warring, Board Chair, designating Isanti County as a Purple Heart County. All are invited to attend to show their appreciation for the sacrifices made by Purple Heart recipients defending our freedoms. Then, be on the lookout this spring for designated parking spots at the Government Center for Purple Heart recipients!

The Veterans Memorial Park in Cambridge, MN is progressing and will be erected in 2019! Stop by our office for a brochure, or call (763) 645-1145 for more information on how to pay tribute to and memorialize a Veteran on the Wall of Honor in Cambridge, MN.

Isanti County has updated its website! Check out the new look at <https://www.co.isanti.mn.us/>. Make sure to check back often as new items are popping up! There's even rumor of a county social media site!

## MN VETERAN NEWS:

Minnesota Veterans Day on the Hill will be held on Wednesday, March 20th, beginning at 11:30am with a luncheon, followed by a rally at 1:30pm at the Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda (75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55155) This event is hosted by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers, the Minnesota Commanders' Task Force, and the United Veterans Legislative Council of Minnesota.

Nominations are being accepted for 2019 Minnesota Women Veteran of the Year Award for residents of Anoka, Isanti, and Sherburne Counties. Folks are invited to nominate outstanding female veterans who have honorably served in the United States Military and have displayed leadership within their civilian community. Nomination forms can be found at [http://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2019-02-23-nomination-form\\_tcm1066-363150.pdf](http://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2019-02-23-nomination-form_tcm1066-363150.pdf) and are due February 28th, 2019. Submit nominations via email to [womenveteransinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:womenveteransinitiative@gmail.com) or mail to Women Veterans Initiative, Minnesota Humanities Center, 987 Ivy Avenue East, St. Paul, MN 55106.

Isanti County Government Center  
555 18th Ave SW  
Cambridge, MN 55008  
<https://www.co.isanti.mn.us/>

Isanti County Veterans Services Department  
Dan Meyer, Director  
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*“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”*  
*President Abraham Lincoln’s 2nd Inaugural Address, March 4th, 1865*

## VA NEWS:

### The Appeals Process is changing!

The Appeals Modernization Act was signed into law in 2017 and will be fully implemented by February 19th, 2019. Its purpose is to help Veterans experience a more transparent claims decision-review process, by “transforming a complex appeals process into one that is simple, timely and provides greater choice to Veterans who disagree with a VA decision,” according to a VA news release dated Jan 17th, 2019.

Many of you have heard of RAMP (Rapid Appeals Modernization Program), which was an early-access opportunity for those with an existing appeal to use the new program to request one of the following three lane options:

1. Higher-level Review - And entirely new review of the claim by an experienced adjudicator
2. Supplemental Claim - An opportunity to submit additional evidence
3. Direct Appeal to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals - Review by the BVA in Washington, DC.

As of February 19th, 2019, the traditional appeals process will no longer be an option and you will instead select one of the above lanes to appeal your VA rating decision. Contact our office for assistance with your appeal.

### The Mission Act

The next milestone is the March 3, 2019 report regarding access standards to Congress.

The John S. McCain III, Daniel K. Akaka, and Samuel R. Johnson VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018, Public Law 115-182, (the VA MISSION Act) creates a new 38 U.S.C. 1703B that contains requirements for VA to facilitate the establishment and use of access standards. Section 1703B(c) specifically requires VA to consult with all pertinent Federal entities, entities in the private sector, and other nongovernmental entities in establishing access standards. This notice and request for information serves as one of the means for VA to consult with these groups and entities. VA held a public hearing on Friday, July 13, 2018, to provide these groups and entities an opportunity to provide additional information. VA will use the comments it received to help determine the access standards in compliance with the VA MISSION Act. VA will then submit a report, no later than **March 3, 2019**, as required by section 1703B(d)(1), detailing the access standards to the appropriate committees of Congress. The access standards will ultimately be published in the Federal Register and will be made available on a VA internet website. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/06/29/2018-13952/notice-of-request-for-information-regarding-health-care-access-standards>

## DID YOU KNOW?

Once you’re enrolled in the VA Health Care System, you don’t need a referral from your primary care physician to make an appointment in Audiology (Hearing), Podiatry (Feet), or Ophthalmology (Eyes) at the VA Medical Centers! Just call one of the numbers below and ask for the appropriate clinic to make an appointment!

Minneapolis VAMC Call Center: (612) 467-1100 or toll-free (866) 414-5058

St. Cloud VAMC Call Center: (320) 252-1670 or toll-free (800) 247-1739



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*"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."*

*President John F. Kennedy's Thanksgiving Day Proclamation 3560, November 4th, 1963*

## LEGAL RESOURCES:

The next Free Drop-In Legal Clinic with Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) will be held on February 5th, 9:00am-2:00pm at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. For more information, swing by our office or call the MACV VetLaw Program at (651) 200-4750.

Free Legal Advice Clinic, sponsored by the Central MN Legal Services and the 10th Judicial Court, is held on the 2nd Monday of every month, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm on the second floor of the Isanti County Gov't Center. Pre-registration is suggested but not required. Call the Volunteer Attorney Coordinator, Jessica Mastellar, at (320) 257-4873 or toll-free at (800) 622-7773 to register or for more information.

## MORAL, WELFARE & RECREATION:

The next VA Health Care Enrollment Fair will be held on February 12th, 2019 from 1pm to 4pm at the Isanti VFW's Rum River Event Center, located at 410 Railroad Ave. SE, Isanti, MN. You should bring a copy of your DD-214 Discharge Document and 2018 Gross Household Income to apply.

Check out the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' website provides an easy way to find out what outdoor recreation benefits you've already earned. Go to <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/licenses/military> Under the Licenses, Permits & Regulations tab, select Military Personnel Benefits, then answer 3 easy questions related to your residency and your current military or Veteran status.

Don't forget that all active US Military personnel and Veterans with a service-connected disability are allowed a free annual Minnesota state park permit. If you're still serving, you'll need to bring a copy of your military orders and your military ID to the park. If you're a Veteran, bring a copy of your determination letter and a photo ID to the park, and let the attendant know your military status when you arrive.

Effective in 2020, recipients of the Medal of Honor or Purple Heart, all service-connected disabled veterans, and family caregivers will be eligible to use MWR retail and lodging facilities! Read more at: <https://militarybenefits.info/morale-welfare-and-recreation-mwr-benefits/>

## LOCAL VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS & MEETING TIMES:

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| American Legion Post 290 - Cambridge, MN               | 6pm, 2nd Tuesday of the month   |
| Isanti County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon - Cambridge, MN | 7pm, 3rd Thursday of the month  |
| Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1731 - Braham, MN        | 7pm, 2nd Thursday of the month  |
| Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2735 - Cambridge, MN     | 7pm, 3rd Monday of the month    |
| Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 684 - Isanti, MN   | 7pm, 1st Wednesday of the month |

Addresses for these meetings can be found at the following Isanti County website:

<https://www.co.isanti.mn.us/BusinessDirectoryII.aspx?lngBusinessCategoryID=28>