

VOLUME 45 | NUMBER 2 | SPRING 2026

THE VOICE

Of The Enlisted



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Dean Sorell, 1921 – 2004

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Submissions

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For copy and photos (with captions, please) the deadline is the 15th day, two months prior to magazine release. Next deadline is June 15th, 2026.

Advertising

By their appearance, ads must not imply or infer any kind of TREA representation, warranty, or endorsement. For ad rates and a media kit, please email us at editor@trea.org or call 303-752-0660. Postmaster Send address changes to VOICE Magazine – 12200 E. Briarwood Ave, Suite 170 – Centennial, CO 80112. I will look through the options for the back page, but if you have something in mind – let me know.

The TREA Successes is "What has TREA done for me".

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Justin G. Jump, TREA National President



Still Standing Together: A Call to Renew Support and Loyalty

There was a time when support and loyalty were not choices. They were commitments we lived by every day. In uniform, we did not hesitate. We did not wait to be asked. We showed up for the mission and for each other.

That did not end when our service did. It is who we are.

This organization was built on that same spirit. It was built on camaraderie, trust, and the unspoken understanding that no veteran stands alone. But we need to be honest. That spirit is only as strong as the effort we put into it today.

We are in a different chapter of life now. Demands have changed. Time feels shorter. It is easy to step back, to assume someone else will carry the load, to believe our presence will not make a difference. But it does.

Every empty seat at a meeting matters. Every missed opportunity to connect matters. Every time we pull back, we lose a part of what once made us strong. And we are stronger than that.

This is not about obligation. It is about continuing the mission. The mission to support one another. The mission to ensure that every veteran who walks through our doors finds connection, respect, and purpose. The mission to leave something meaningful for those who come after us. That mission does not carry itself. It requires action.

So I am asking you to step forward. Show up. Reach out to a fellow veteran. Bring someone with you. Give what you can. Your time, your energy, your support.

When you do, you strengthen this organization. You strengthen the bond we all depend on. We have answered the call before. We know what it means to stand together under pressure, to carry one another forward, to finish what we started. That has not changed.

I am committed to this organization. I am committed to you. Now I am asking you to stand with me. Not out of obligation, but out of pride, respect, and the same loyalty we once depended on.

The question is not whether this organization can continue. The question is: Will we rise together and carry it forward, or will we leave it for someone else to save?



Justin G. Jump
National President
UNITED WE STAND



A SEASON FOR PATIENCE AND COMPASSION

A message for inspiration

In every stage of life, there are seasons—some filled with energy and activity, and others marked by slowing down, reflection, and change. Many of us now find ourselves in a quieter season, one that calls for a different kind of strength: patience and compassion.

Scripture reminds us in Colossians 3:12, “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” These are not just words—they are a guide for how we continue to care for one another.

Patience is not simply waiting, it is understanding that each of us is walking a different path, at a different pace. Some may be dealing with health challenges, loss, or the weight of years gone by. Others may feel disconnected or unsure of where they fit anymore. Patience reminds us to give one another grace in these moments.

Compassion goes hand in hand with that patience. It asks us to look beyond ourselves and to notice when a fellow member may need encouragement, a kind word, or simply to be remembered. A phone call, a handshake, or a few minutes of conversation can mean more than we realize.

As a community of veterans, we have shared experiences that bind us together in ways few others understand. That bond does not fade with time—but it does require care. Patience with one another, and compassion for where each person is today, can help restore connections that may have grown distant.

I encourage each of us to take a small step—reach out, listen, and extend kindness without expectation. These simple acts reflect the very best of who we have always been.

Even in this season, we are not alone. We are still part of one another’s story and we can make a difference on how their story ends.

Honor Those Who Matter Most with our new ‘Wall of Honor’

We invite you to take part in a meaningful tribute by honoring a loved one through a special donation to support our mission. Whether it’s a family member, friend, or fellow service member, your contribution allows their name and legacy to be recognized on our **Wall of Honor**.

This tribute is more than a donation — it’s a lasting expression of gratitude, remembrance, and respect. Each name represents a story, a sacrifice, and a connection that continues to inspire our community.

Join us in celebrating those who have made a difference in your life while helping us continue to serve those who have given so much. Together, we can ensure their legacy lives on.

Reach out to Debbie at treahq@trea.org to learn more on how you can be a part of “A lasting tribute to those who have shaped our lives.”



WASHINGTON UPDATE

President Justin Jump

Executive Summary

Congress has returned to a familiar pattern in 2026, with strong bipartisan rhetorical support for service members and Veterans, but uneven progress in moving high-priority bills to enactment. For TREA, the biggest unfinished business remains the Major Richard Star Act, which still has substantial bipartisan support but has not yet advanced beyond committee referral in either chamber. At the same time, several House and Senate Veterans' Affairs measures moved in 2025 and now await further Senate action, including bills on community care, women veterans' cancer care coordination, telehealth prescribing authority, and Service Dog access.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is also back at the center of the policy conversation. Recent VA activity has focused on faster benefits processing, accelerated deployment of the Federal Electronic Health Record at Michigan sites, expanded community care scheduling tools, an infrastructure modernization plan, and the Administration's FY27 budget request. At the same time, VA workforce and labor-management controversies continue to draw scrutiny from Congress and stakeholders.

On the defense side, the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is in its formative stage. As of April 22, 2026, Congress is conducting posture and budget hearings, not final floor action. That means TREA still has an opportunity to influence the measure on core enlisted quality-of-life priorities, reserve component health care parity, and military family support.

119th Congress, Second Session

The Major Richard Star Act remains TREA's top unfinished priority. The Senate bill, S. 1032, was introduced on March 13, 2025, by Senator Richard Blumenthal and referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee the same day. The House companion, H.R. 2102, was introduced on March 14, 2025, by Representative Gus Bilirakis, referred to the House Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs Committees, and then referred on April 4, 2025, to the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. After several coalition pushes and press conferences on Capitol Hill, neither bill has moved beyond referral, which means the measure remains alive but stalled.

That status matters. The bill would end the offset that forces many combat-injured medical retirees to waive a dollar of retired pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation. The issue continues to attract bipartisan support and broad backing across the military and Veterans community, but support alone has not produced a formal vote. As such, TREA's advocacy messaging will continue in 2026 to ensure this is not a continual messaging bill, it is a mature and well-understood equity fix that needs committee and leadership action. With the FY27 NDAA process just beginning, TREA will continue pressing for inclusion in a defense authorization or related year-end vehicle rather than waiting for stand-alone floor time that may never occur.

In the Senate, S. 275, The ACCESS Act, was introduced on January 28, 2025, received a hearing on March 11, 2025, and on July 30, 2025, was ordered reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. In the House, H.R. 740 was introduced on January 28, 2025, referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, and on July 23, 2025, was ordered reported, as amended, by voice vote. Even so, the bill has not reached final passage. TREA can accurately describe the measure as a LIVE bipartisan community-care reform proposal that has cleared important committee hurdles but still needs floor action. The substance remains significant, codifying community care access standards, tightening notice requirements, and requiring clearer explanations when care is delayed, denied, or redirected.



WASHINGTON UPDATE (CONT.)

President Justin Jump

Other TREA Priority Measures

- **GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732):** Introduced February 27, 2025, and referred to the House Veterans' Affairs and Judiciary Committees; latest action is March 27, 2025 referral to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.
- **Military Spouse Hiring Act (H.R. 2033 / S. 1027):** Reintroduced in March 2025. H.R. 2033 was referred to House Ways and Means on March 11, 2025, and S. 1027 was referred to Senate Finance on March 13, 2025. The proposal remains pending in the tax-writing committees.
- **Service Dogs Assisting Veterans Act / SAVES Act (H.R. 2605; S. 1441):** The House bill was introduced April 2, 2025 and, after committee action, was placed on the Union Calendar on September 26, 2025. The Senate companion was introduced April 10, 2025 and later reported by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee in early 2026, indicating continued bipartisan momentum.
- **Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act (H.R. 1107):** Reported by House Veterans' Affairs on July 29, 2025, passed the House by voice vote on September 15, 2025, and was received in the Senate and referred to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on September 16, 2025.
- **Women Veterans Cancer Care Coordination Act (H.R. 1860):** Reported by House Veterans' Affairs on July 29, 2025, passed the House by voice vote on September 15, 2025, and was received in the Senate and referred to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on September 16, 2025.
- **TRICARE Reserve parity / Service member Healthcare Freedom Act (H.R. 3547 / S. 1861):** The current legislative vehicle is the Servicemember Healthcare Freedom Act of 2025, which would accelerate access to TRICARE Reserve Select for reservists and National Guard members who are also federal employees. The House bill was introduced May 21, 2025 and referred to House Armed Services; the Senate companion was introduced May 22, 2025 and referred to Senate Armed Services.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA's recent public messaging has centered on access, execution, and modernization. On April 15, 2026, the Department announced major improvements in benefits processing, citing reduced processing times for disability claims as well as pension and survivor benefits. That announcement is politically and operationally significant because it gives supporters of the Department a concrete performance argument while also raising expectations that gains must be sustained.

VA's electronic health record modernization (EHRM) effort also reentered an active deployment phase in 2026. On April 11, 2026, VA went LIVE with the Federal EHRM at Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Detroit, and Saginaw, Michigan. VA has described this as the first wave of 13 planned deployments in 2026, following the Department's March 2025 announcement that 9 additional sites would be named for rollout during the year. For TREA members, the key point is that EHRM is no longer just a paused or future-tense initiative, it is again producing visible field activity, which will invite renewed congressional oversight on patient safety, clinician workflow, and interoperability.

Community care administration remains another major area of activity. In March 2026, VA announced that technology to accelerate community care appointment scheduling had been deployed across all VA



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facilities, with further expansion planned during 2026. This development is relevant to the ACCESS Act debate because it gives Congress and stakeholders a LIVE example of VA trying to improve scheduling performance administratively even as lawmakers debate whether access standards and notice requirements should be codified in statute. VA infrastructure spending also remains a major headline. In January 2026, VA announced that it would invest nearly \$4.8 billion in fiscal year 2026 to modernize, repair, and improve health care facilities through the Non-Recurring Maintenance program, which the Department described as an all time high. This gives advocates a tangible data point that modernization is not limited to IT systems and also extends to bricks-and-mortar patient care infrastructure.

The FY27 VA budget request, released in April 2026, asks for \$131.9 billion in discretionary funding and \$282.6 billion in mandatory benefits funding. VA's Budget, in brief, says the mandatory request includes \$257.2 billion for Compensation and Pension and projects a workforce of 443,327 full-time equivalent employees using all funding sources. These figures will frame the appropriations debate and help determine whether VA can sustain benefits delivery gains while continuing EHRM deployment, infrastructure upgrades, toxic exposure implementation, and community care obligations.

The most balanced bottom line for TREA members is this - VA has real positive developments to highlight in 2026, especially on claims processing, EHRM deployments, and infrastructure, but those gains are unfolding alongside budget pressure, workforce controversy, and likely continued congressional oversight.

FY 2027 NDAA Outlook

As of April 22, 2026, the FY27 NDAA is not yet a finished legislative product. Congress is still in the hearing and requirements-building phase. The Senate Armed Services Committee has been holding posture and budget-review hearings tied specifically to the Defense Authorization Request for FY27 and the Future Years Defense Program, including hearings on strategic commands, Indo-Pacific posture, nuclear programs, missile defense, and upcoming special operations and cyber issues. The House Armed Services Committee held a Member Day hearing on April 15, 2026, to gather priorities for the FY27 NDAA and has continued a series of subcommittee hearings on readiness, intelligence, missile defense, and related matters.

The Administration's FY27 defense request is unusually large. White House budget materials released in April, 2026 lay out a proposed \$1.5 trillion in total defense budgetary spending, including roughly \$1.1 trillion in base discretionary resources and a large increase tied to the Administration's broader defense buildup. That topline will shape every downstream NDAA negotiation, but it does not guarantee support for TREA priorities. In fact, large toplines often intensify competition over offsets, force structure, readiness accounts, family programs, and compensation provisions. For TREA, the practical implication is that the FY27 NDAA remains the best available vehicle for several unfinished military quality-of-life and retired-pay issues, including the Major Richard Star Act and reserve component health care reforms. The advocacy window is open now, while authorizers are still deciding what belongs in the bill. Once committee markups are complete, the opportunity narrows quickly.

As such, TREA will maintain a disciplined message during the NDAA season, emphasizing enlisted quality-of-life and family affordability, ensuring combat-injured retirees will not be forced to finance



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earned disability compensation with forfeited retired pay, and reserve component and Guard families will receive practical fixes on health care access, transition, and benefits parity if Congress is serious about total-force readiness.

Looking Ahead

TREA enters the remainder of 2026 with a strong case to make on both Veterans and defense policy. We can point to real momentum on some committee-reported Veterans bills, genuine signs of operational progress at VA, and an early-stage FY27 NDAA process that still offers room to shape outcomes. But the central lesson of this Congress so far is clear, in that bipartisan support is helpful, yet not sufficient. Legislative success will depend on sustained pressure for floor time, package inclusion, and leadership attention.

Accordingly, TREA will continue concentrating its Washington strategy on three parallel tracks, which is to secure a viable legislative vehicle for the Major Richard Star Act, push for Senate follow-through on House passed and committee approved Veterans' bills, and inserting enlisted quality-of-life and reserve component priorities into the FY27 NDAA.

Communications

TREA continues to expand outreach using the VOICE, Facebook, LinkedIn, and X to mobilize members, amplify legislative campaigns, and share timely updates on VA developments and congressional action. Members are encouraged to subscribe and engage to maximize our impact.



TREA GIVES is a part of the King Soopers/City Market community Rewards Program. You can make TREA GIVES your community partner and King Soopers/City Market will send us a quarterly checks based off the total spent from all of our community partners. The best part is - It costs you nothing!

For King Soopers – go to <http://www.kingsoopers.com>

For City Market – go to <http://citymarket.com>

Once logged into the website, search for TREA GIVES or enter HU416 (this is our unique code with king Soopers/City Market), then click Enroll. If you are a new user, you will need to create an account which requires some basic information and a valid email address and a loyalty card.



ANSWERING THE CALL AGAIN: WHY TREA GIVES MATTERS NOW MORE THAN EVER

Deb Oelschig, Chair

For many of us, service was never just a chapter in life, it was a lifelong commitment to something greater than ourselves. We learned early that no one succeeds alone—and no one is left behind.

But today, there are veterans—our fellow members—quietly facing challenges they never expected. Some are struggling to put food on the table. Others are navigating financial hardship. Some need support that goes beyond what they can manage alone.

That is why TREA GIVES exists.

TREA GIVES is not charity. It is a continuation of our promise to take care of our own.

Through this mission, lives are being changed every day:

- Service dogs are placed with veterans who depend on them for stability and independence.
- The Halt the Hunger program provides food cards to veterans and their families facing food insecurity.
- Emergency financial assistance offers critical help when life takes an unexpected turn.
- Free financial counseling helps restore stability, dignity, and a path forward. Recently, we had the privilege of attending a service dog sponsorship gala, where the impact of this work was not just described, it was seen and felt. Watching a veteran with their service dog is a powerful reminder that these are not just programs, they are lifelines. Confidence returns. Independence is restored. Lives are changed.

And we are not stopping there.

TREA GIVES is actively working toward a partnership with a national organization to help ensure that military and veteran children have access to healthy meals at school. While details are still being finalized, the need is clear—and the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the next generation is within reach.

But none of this happens without support.

There is no outside entity sustaining this mission. It depends on us—on our willingness to step forward once again. Every contribution, no matter the size, becomes part of something larger: a meal for a veteran, a second chance in a moment of crisis, a service dog that changes a life, or a future where no military child goes without.

We have answered the call before.

The question is - will we answer it again?

Now is the time to stand up, to give what we can, and to ensure that TREA GIVES continues its mission—today and for the generations that follow.

Because taking care of our own was never just something we did. It is who we are.

AUXILIARY



TO OUR AUXILIARY FAMILIES,

Can you believe how quickly time is moving? With Daylight Saving Time here, everything seems to be moving even faster. Midterms are right around the corner. They will be held Wednesday–Thursday, May 13–14, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA) Chapter #3, 1599 Dayton Street - Aurora, Colorado 80010. All Auxiliary members are welcome, we truly hope to see you there.

If you are interested in participating in an in-person business meeting, please take a moment to visit the TREA homepage to complete the survey titled: “Are You Interested in Attending the 2026 Annual Membership Meeting?” Your responses will help determine whether the meeting will be held in person or virtually. Please remem-

ber, this is your organization, and your voice truly matters and helps guide our direction.

Future Events

Scholarship Applications (2026–2027)

Scholarship applications are now available on the TREA Auxiliary website

Deadline: Thursday, June 1, 2026

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to President Audrey H. McCray at mccraya@aol.com

National Auxiliary WEF Benevolent Program

Auxiliary members of The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA) who meet the following criteria may be eligible for one-time financial assistance:

- Must be a member in good standing (dues are current)
- Spouse must be deceased (widow or widower)
- Currently experiencing financial hardship

Support may include, but is not limited to:

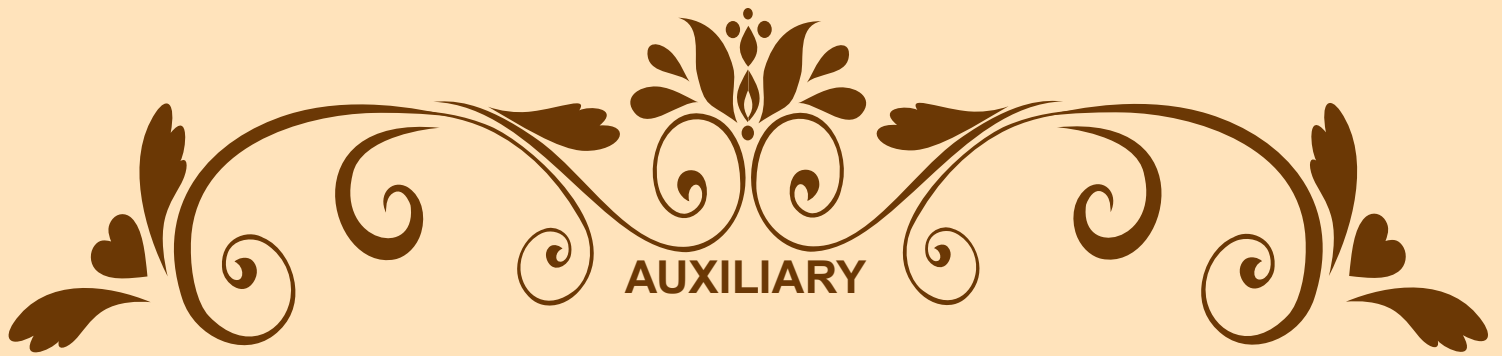
- Hearing aids
- Dental care
- Vision care
- Medical supplies and equipment
- Other qualifying hardship situations

For more information, please contact PNP Renee Keener at renee1635@gmail.com

Auxiliary Points of Contact

For your convenience, here are key points of contact:

Membership: If you know a spouse, widow, or widower of an honorably discharged enlisted service member (retired, active duty, National Guard, or Reserve), please feel free to share this opportunity with them, they may be eligible for membership. Contact Director Rose Milon at rose.milon@aol.com



Bylaws: Director Ruby Smoots - ruby.smoots@comcast.net Reta Ward wardreta@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Peggy Carlson – 328plc@gmail.com

Vice President: Vacant

All Committees: Contact President Audrey H. McCray at mccraya@aol.com
If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to the President directly at 303-921-2548 or via email at mccraya@aol.com. You may also contact any member of the Board, we are here to support you every step of the way.

Be blessed and take care,
Audrey H. McCray, President

UNITED WE STAND



SAVE THE DATE

**TREA's Annual Membership Meeting
Newport, Rhode Island**

There are moments each year that remind us why we stay connected—why this organization still matters. Our Annual Membership Meeting is one of those moments.



This year, we are planning to gather on September 19th in Newport, Rhode Island, and we hope you will consider being part of it.

While details are still coming together, the purpose remains the same: to bring our members together, to share where we are headed as an organization, and to spend time with the people who understand our shared experiences like no one else can.

This meeting is more than an agenda and updates—it is an opportunity. An opportunity to reconnect with long-time friends. An opportunity to spend time with the Board and engage in meaningful conversation about the future of our organization.

And an opportunity to simply be together in a place rich with history and camaraderie.

Organizations like ours are becoming fewer and farther in between. Across the country, long-standing membership groups are struggling to stay active and engaged. And yet, TREA has remained strong for 63 years—because of you.

Because of your commitment, your participation, and your belief in what this organization represents.

We would like to be here 20 years from now. That future depends on continued connection, involvement, and the willingness to show up—especially at moments like this.

We know that travel and schedules can make attending a commitment, which is why we are reaching out early. At this stage, we are simply asking you to consider joining us and, if possible, let us know your level of interest.

If you think you may attend, we encourage you to share a soft RSVP. Please email TREAHQ@trea.org to express your interest and receive personal updates as additional details become available.

If you have ever thought about becoming more involved, this is a great place to start. If you have been away for a while, consider this your invitation to return. And if you have attended before, you already know the value of being in the room.

So we ask a simple question:

Will you join us in Newport?

Your presence matters. Your voice matters. And your participation helps ensure that TREA continues to move forward—strong not just today, but for years to come.

More details will follow soon. For now, please mark your calendar and consider being part of this important gathering.

We look forward to standing together again.



CANDIDATES FOR TREA NATIONAL BOARD POSITIONS

Now is the time to start thinking about how you can support and be a part of TREA's future. We will be holding elections in September of 2026 to fill the new National Board. Every position is up for election/re-election: President, 1st Vice, 2nd Vice, Treasurer, and 2 Directors. All positions are two year terms. The National Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of TREA as a whole and ensures legal and ethical compliance. The National Board provides governance, approves the annual budget and ensures that the organization has sufficient resources to fulfill its mission. The National board is accountable for the overall success and financial health of TREA.

If you are interested in running for a TREA national office, please make sure to familiarize yourself with TREA Bylaws, Article V - National Officers, Article VI – Duties of National Officers, and Article IX – Nominations and Elections. Here are the eligibility requirements from Article 9 section 2 of our Bylaws. (www.trea.org).

To be eligible for election, candidates must be regular TREA members. Spouse members are not eligible to run for National positions. To submit your resume for a Board position by mail or email, use TREA Form 100-3, Resume for Elected Office. (There is a link on our homepage - www.trea.org, or you can reach out to TREA Headquarters and request that a form be sent to you). The deadline for resumes is June 10, 2026. (the previous issue stated that the deadline was June 15th - it is not. It is June 10th). This is a hard deadline; any resume received after 5 PM on June 10, 2026, will not be accepted.

Additionally, the following criteria must be met for each position:

President - Must be a TREA member in good standing for at least three consecutive years. Must be a current member of the National Board of Directors.

Vice Presidents - Must have been a TREA member in good standing for at least two consecutive years.
Treasurer - Shall have accounting knowledge and an understanding of computer concepts, or an associate or higher degree in business or management.

Directors - Must have been a TREA member in good standing for at least one year.

All candidates – Candidates shall ensure their membership status will not expire during the term of office and 30 days for the position they are seeking. If their membership expires during the term of office, they need to renew their membership before submitting their resume. Eligibility requires confirmation that the applicant has not been convicted of a felony within 2 years of the date of application. If previously convicted of a felony, all restitution and/or societal debt has been paid more than 2 years ago. A background check may be performed.



**John I. Adams,
TSCL Chairman**

The Senior Citizens League (TSCL) is an affiliate of TREA: The Enlisted Association (TREA), governed by TREA members and consists of hundreds of thousands of active senior citizens concerned about the protection of their Social Security and Medicare benefits.

WHY MEDICARE AND TRICARE FOR LIFE PROGRAMS SHOULD COVER DENTAL, HEARING, AND VISION

By John I. Adams, Chairman, TSCL

For millions of older Americans and veterans, healthcare coverage remains incomplete in ways that directly affect daily life. Programs like Medicare and military retiree health systems such as TRICARE play a critical role in delivering care, but fall short of providing dental, hearing, and vision coverage. These gaps are not minor; they impact overall health, independence, and quality of life.

Dental, hearing, and vision care are sometimes treated as optional or secondary, but science says otherwise. Poor oral health has been linked to serious conditions, including heart disease, diabetes complications, and infections. Untreated hearing loss is associated with cognitive decline, social isolation, and increased risk of dementia. Vision impairment raises the likelihood of falls, injuries, and loss of independence. In other words, these are not stand-alone issues; they are integral to whole-person health.

The consequences are predictable. Seniors delay treatment, skip preventive care, or live with avoidable impairments. A retired service member who cannot afford hearing aids may withdraw from family and community. An older adult without dental care may face nutritional problems or a worsening of chronic illness. These are not just personal hardships, they often lead to higher long-term healthcare costs as preventable issues escalate into serious medical conditions.

Preventive care is far less expensive than emergency treatment. A routine dental visit costs far less than hospitalization for an infection. Providing hearing aids can reduce risks associated with cognitive decline and accidents. Corrective vision care can prevent falls that lead to costly injuries and long-term care needs. In each case, early intervention saves money while improving lives.

TREA's President and Treasurer recently visited Capitol Hill to meet with congressional offices and discuss the importance of expanding these healthcare programs to include hearing, vision, and dental coverage. During these conversations, they emphasized how gaps in these essential services can impact seniors' overall health, independence, and quality of life. They urged lawmakers to consider solutions that better meet the needs of today's retirees.

Closing these coverage gaps in Medicare and military retiree healthcare is not simply an added benefit; it is a necessary step toward more effective and financially sustainable healthcare systems.



THE CORRECT ORDER OF THE MILITARY FLAGS FOR YOUR DISPLAY



Military flags hold a special place in American's hearts. They are a symbol of sacrifice, valor, and national pride. Knowing the proper order of military flags is crucial for any flag display, whether you're a military veteran, family member, or patriotic citizen. In this article, you will learn the correct order of military flags so you can honor the brave service men and women who dedicate their lives to preserving our country's freedom.

How to Determine Order of Military Flags

On October 31, 1977, the U.S. Department of Defense released Directive 1005.8, which states the correct order of military flags when on display. The rules in this directive apply to any time the flags from all of the military branches are carried horizontally during a parade or flown atop a flagpole. The order of precedence is determined by the branches' "birthday" with a few exceptions. Continue reading to learn how to properly order the military flags in your display!

The Order of the Military Flags

Let's take a closer look at the order of military flags, as outlined in the Department of Defense Directive 1005.8.

1. The United States



The American flag holds a position of utmost importance in flag displays. It represents the U.S. Government, which is the highest authority in the nation. According to the U.S. Flag Code, no other flag should fly above the American flag.



2. The POW/MIA Flag

In the line of procession, the POW/MIA flag flies third, beside the state flag and in front of the Army flag. This ensign honors the brave service people who gave everything defending America's freedom.



3. Your State Flag

All **state flags** should fly to the audience's right of the U.S. flag. This order represents its authoritative status right below the U.S. government



4. The Army - June 14, 1775

The United States Army was the first branch of the military, founded by the Second Continental Congress in 1775. Its original job was to protect citizens in the thirteen colonies from the British, and it has continued to be a beacon of enduring strength and freedom. The Army flag flies after the POW/MIA flag in the line of precedence.



5. The Marine Corps - November 10, 1775

The Marine Corps is the second oldest branch of the armed forces, founded by the Continental Congress in 1775 as a specialized force to serve as landing forces within the country's fleet. In 1834, they became a part of the U.S. Navy to aid in their operations. While operating under the Department of the Navy, the Marines perform and-based and amphibious duties, executing over 300 foreign shore landings since 1775.





6. The Navy - October 13, 1775

The Navy was formed in 1775 under the command of Esek Hopkins with 60 ships, an impressive feat for the Revolutionary era. The branch was designed to eliminate British warships in their home waters. Their success led to the surrender of British forces in multiple cities, including Savannah, Charleston, and Wilmington. Currently, the Navy is the second largest branch, with around 336,978 active-duty military personnel.



7. The Air Force - September 18, 1947

For over 150 years, the U.S. had only three branches of the military until the DoD established the Air Force in 1947. Originally an offshoot of the Army Signal Corps, it was adopted as a separate branch by the National Security Act of 1947. The Air Force is responsible for transporting the president, rapid global mobility, intelligence, air superiority, reconnaissance, surveillance, command, and control.



8. The Space Force - December 20, 2019

The U.S. Space Force is the newest addition to the branches of military service. It is responsible for managing space launches and protecting the U.S. and its allies in space. Discover the newest military flag, the Space Force flag.



9. The Coast Guard – August 4, 1790

The Coast Guard flag is typically displayed last in the military flag flying order even though it is older than the U.S. Air Force and its respective offshoot, the Space Force. This is because the Coast Guard falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security during peacetime. During wartime, this changes, and the Coast Guard operates the Department of Defense. During war, the Coast Guard flag flies between the Navy and the Air Force, matching the date of origin or birthday rule.





Frequently Asked Questions - Military Flag Flying Order

Why does the Marine Corps flag fly before the Navy's?

The order of precedence dictates that the flags fly according to their date of origin. While technically the Navy was established before the Marine Corps, forming in October 13, 1775, they have not been consistently operating since then, having disbanded at the end of the Revolutionary War before reforming in 1794. The murkiness around Navy's exact founding is why the Marine Corps flies before the Navy.

Where does the National Guard fly on the flag flying order?

All National Guard and reserve flags fly after the Coast Guard, as outlined in the DOD directive 1005.8. The official order is as follows:

1. The Army National Guard
2. Army Reserves
3. Marine Corps Reserves
4. Naval Reserve
5. Air National Guard
6. Air Force Reserve
7. Coast Guard Reserve
8. Other training organizations of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard, in that order.

Can civilians fly military flags in their homes?

Yes, citizens can fly military flags in their homes to show their support. Just note that some military flag designs, like one version of the Space Force, are only meant for government use and can only be purchased by .gov websites.



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Please note that TREA is not responsible for or involved in any planning or organizing of these events. We simply post the information as a courtesy to the reunion planner and as a perk for our members. Please reach out to the listed contact for each reunion listed.

- THE 864th ENGINEER BATTALION ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Oct 7-11, 2026 in Huntsville, AL.
For more information contact: 864ebaa.secretary@gmail.com
- USS SAM HOUSTON (SSBN/SSN 609)
Oct 22-24, 2026
Location: Little Rock, Ark.
Contact: Howard Dobson - Phone: 302-545-8463 - Email:howardvaldobson@verizon.net
Website: www.USSSamHouston.org
- USS HOLLISTER
Sept 16-19, 2026
Hotel: Marriot Metaire @ Lakeway - 838 N. Causeway Blvd - Metaire, LA 70002
Call: 1-504-836-5253 - Ask for Hollister Group - \$135.00 per night + tax
Rate good 3 days prior and 3 days post reservations
Contact: Casey Orr 319-651-9426
- 106th INFANTRY DIVISION, 79TH ANNUAL REUNION
Sept 16 – 20, 2026
Savannah, GA
Holiday Inn & Suites Savannah/Pooler - 100 Outlet Pkwy - Pooler, GA 31322 - (912) 450-9800
Contact: Randall Wood, Adjutant - (765) 346-0690
Deadline: August 16, 2026
Check the website or CUB publication for information and registration packet as they become available. <http://www.106thinfdivassn.org>
- THE 27th INFANTRY REGIMENT (THE WOLFHOUSES) HISTORICAL SOCIETY
August 16 – 23, 2026
Covington, KY – across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, OH
Embassy Suites Cincinnati Rivercenter Covington Hotel Group tours and socials which include spouses and family members; Annual Banquet and Auction
Contact: Dave and Wanda Shepherd, (859) 445-2281, shepd227@gmail.com
Website and Registration form: <https://www.wolfhoundpack.org>
Details and special hotel rates available at website



MEMORIAL DAY: MORE THAN A LONG WEEKEND

Each year, on the final Monday in May, Americans pause—if only briefly—to mark Memorial Day. For many, it signals the unofficial start of summer: backyard barbecues, road trips, and time with family. But for the military community, and for the families who have borne the cost of service, Memorial Day carries a far deeper weight. It is a day of remembrance, reflection, and responsibility.

Memorial Day was born from the ashes of the Civil War, originally known as “Decoration Day,” when communities gathered to honor fallen soldiers by decorating their graves with flowers. Over time, the observance evolved into a national day of remembrance for all U.S. service members who have died in military service. Yet, despite its long history, the meaning of Memorial Day can sometimes feel overshadowed by the rhythms of modern life.

For military families, there is no confusion about its purpose. It is a day that brings names, faces, and memories into sharp focus. It is a day when empty chairs at the table feel heavier, when folded flags are held a little tighter, and when the phrase “ultimate sacrifice” becomes painfully real. Behind every name etched on a memorial is a story—of courage, of commitment, and of a life lived in service to something greater than self.

Memorial Day also challenges us to consider what remembrance truly means. It is not only about honoring the past—it is about how we live in the present. To remember is to acknowledge the freedoms we enjoy and the price that was paid for them. It is to support the families left behind, to care for veterans who carry visible and invisible wounds, and to foster a culture that values service and sacrifice. One of the most powerful traditions associated with Memorial Day is the National Moment of Remembrance, observed at 3:00 p.m. local time. In that minute, Americans are encouraged to pause, wherever they are, to reflect on those who gave their lives in service. It is a simple act, but one that unites the country in shared gratitude. In a world that often moves too quickly, that minute offers a rare opportunity to be still and to remember.

For younger generations, many of whom have grown up during a time of an all-volunteer force, Memorial Day can feel distant. The responsibility falls, in part, to you, and to me, to keep these stories alive. By sharing the experiences of service members and their families, we ensure that remembrance is not abstract, but personal and enduring.

As we gather this Memorial Day—whether at a formal ceremony, a local parade, or around a backyard table—there is space for both remembrance and community. Celebration and reflection are not mutually exclusive, but they must be held in balance. Enjoying the freedoms secured by those who served is, in itself, a form of tribute—so long as we do not forget why those freedoms exist. Memorial Day asks something of each of us. Not grand gestures, but mindful ones: to learn a name, to hear a story, to support a Gold Star family, or simply to pause and reflect. In doing so, we honor not only the fallen, but the values they stood for.

Because remembrance is not just about looking back—it is about carrying forward a legacy that must never be forgotten.



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