



Phillip R. Crandall, Director  
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

## news release

---

November 5, 2014

### Veterans Day is every day at Veterans Service Office

Humboldt County will join the nation in celebrating Veterans Day on Tuesday, Nov. 11. It's an important opportunity to thank local vets for their service to the country.

For the Veterans Service Office (VSO) of the Department of Health & Human Services, commemorating the day is also another chance to remind local vets about the services to which they are entitled. The Eureka office is often the initial contact for veterans seeking services. Working out of the Humboldt County Courthouse, those VSO efforts are year-round and tireless.

Most vets make a seamless transition back into civilian life, but many combat veterans experience alienation, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), up to 20 percent of returning Iraq and Afghanistan war vets will experience PTSD. The VSO is prepared to reach out.

Having served their country, all veterans deserve access to lifelong resources and services. At the VSO, it's about serving those who've served.

"Our goal is to reach out to every veteran and eligible dependent," says Veterans Service Officer Rená Maveeta. "We enjoy reconnecting with our veterans regularly." A veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, Maveeta has overseen since 2008 a staff devoted to assisting veterans, regardless of age, with federal, state and local programs. Those can include compensation claims, survivors' benefits, requests for military records, home loans as well as medical and education benefits.

Humboldt County has an estimated 12,000 veterans. Work at the VSO often entails one-on-one benefits counseling with veterans and a typical month can run up to 2,000 contacts via email, phone or in person. While most of the business is done in office, VSO staff travel periodically to Orleans, Orick and Redway. "We are passionate about serving all of our Humboldt County veterans and through our outreach we have been able to assist veterans and

dependents that might not contact us otherwise,” says Veterans Service Representative Kristy Gierak.

State and federal laws affecting veterans change frequently and helping local vets negotiate new rules is a big part of the VSO staff’s day job.

Additionally, the VSO is able to help guide vets through local resources and remains in close communication with Humboldt State University’s Veteran Enrollment & Transition Services, College of the Redwoods’ Veterans Resource Center, the Employment Development Department, the Eureka VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic and the Eureka Vets Center. Veterans may not be aware that they qualify for CAL-VET home loans and college tuition waivers. Their dependents may be eligible for tuition waivers, as well.

“We are very dedicated to helping every veteran we,” says VSO Office Assistant Andrea Wrisley

For more information, contact the Humboldt County Veterans Service Office at 825 Fifth St., Room 310, Eureka, or call 445-7611. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are available.

-###-

*Follow us on Twitter: @HumCoDHHS*