



HONORS

Serving the Retired Military Communities of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa & Michigan

FEATURED THIS ISSUE

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HONORS is an annual publication published each summer.

It is distributed to all Army Retired Soldiers in receipt of retired pay, Gray-Area Retirees, and Army surviving spouses residing in Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa, and the 32 northern-most counties of Illinois. HONORS is available on the Fort McCoy website, <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>. Select menu, "For Soldiers," and "Retirement Services Office" to view the most current edition. Feel free to share this site with fellow Service Members and their Families.

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A Message of Appreciation to Our Veterans

In this newsletter, I want to express my most sincere thanks to every Veteran in our region. Service is often described in simple terms, but it is a complex and noble concept. It is a commitment defined by significant sacrifice, a unique bond of family, and an unwavering devotion to duty. At Fort McCoy, we do not just recognize your service, we value the immense weight of the experiences that come with it and extend our deepest gratitude for your commitment to safeguarding our freedom.

As a community rooted in military tradition, we are profoundly grateful to all who have worn the uniform. You belong to the 1% of brave Americans who stepped forward, took the oath, and dedicated years of your lives to ensuring the freedoms we enjoy today. Your legacy is the foundation upon which our current readiness is built.

Fort McCoy has long been a cornerstone of military readiness, training thousands of service members annually. However, our mission extends far beyond the training gates. We are dedicated to supporting those who served through a robust range of resources:

- Recognition & Connection: Annual Retiree Appreciation Days, Veteran recognition events, and reunions for Vietnam-era Veterans.
- Essential Services: Streamlined ID card services, legal assistance, and religious support.

- Strengthening Community: Meaningful volunteer opportunities that allow Veterans to continue leading and giving back.

We believe that no one who wore the uniform should be without a place to call home. To reinforce this, Fort McCoy is proud to partner with local community organizations to enhance our housing outreach and support programs. By combining our resources with dedicated community partners, we are working harder than ever to provide stable environments where our heroes can thrive.

We are constantly striving to expand our outreach, ensuring every Veteran and family member feels valued and supported. Whether through training support, community events, or expanded resources, Fort McCoy remains steadfast in serving those who served us.

Thank you for your service and your resilience. Together, we will continue to build a stronger community that honors our shared values of courage, resilience, and gratitude.

**Colonel Sheyla Baez Ramirez;
Commander, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin**



POET'S CORNER

Rocking – Anne Bagley



It snows once
but below zero through days and nights
until I no longer feel the cold.
Our village brittle, dark,
cars warming up along Main Street
when the Packers lose
and the bars empty.
My niece rocks her baby
by the window
watching the trucks and cars drive off.
So much uncertainty ahead,
and I am awake
long past time to sleep.

But in the end
it is not the past or future,
not the crunch of ice beneath my feet
or a dark cold Wisconsin night
that cloaks my journey.
It is family, the game,
the pizza we ate and soda
and the rhythm of a young woman
rocking her baby
that reaches beyond the walls, streets,
bluffs and river,
out into the sky
where hope never rests
and stars light our path.

- Anne Bagley

To learn more click [here](#)



Dear Reader;

Greetings and Welcome to the 2026 edition of the Fort McCoy HONORS Newsletter.

Retirement Services Officer Mr. Nicholas Gimson remains committed to being your primary resource. It is a great honor for this team to continue this newsletter, and your comments and feedback on this newsletter are still valued and encouraged. As the Editor of this newsletter, I have retained the Poet's page, updated the Garrison Commander's page with our Commander Colonel Sheyla Baez Ramirez, and I'm opening a new feature titled **"Where Are They Now?"** where we will highlight the second careers and life paths of our retired Soldiers. If you would like to be featured, send your bio, story, and photo(s) to: USAG-FMWI-MPD.Retirements.Separations@army.mil

To continue to receive the Honors Newsletter, Dear Reader, you will need to have a current email address on file with either DEERS or DFAS.

I thank you for your service, and your time, and I hope you find the content of this edition to be nothing short of the standard we set last year.

Chris Thompson

Editor, Honors Newsletter
Fort McCoy, WI 54656



DISCLAIMER

Articles for the Honors do not necessarily reflect the position of the Department of the Army, or Fort McCoy, WI. The material in this newsletter was provided by a number of sources. Sources and materials are checked to be as accurate as possible at the time of printing.

The Soldier for Life - Retirement Services Office (SFL-RSO) publishes the Retirement Services Newsletter in accordance with Army Regulation 600-8-7, Retirement Services Program.

The SFL-RSO is located in building 2187, Fort McCoy, WI. While it is recommended that you contact the office for an appointment prior to visiting, walk-ins are welcome. The toll-free phone number is locally 502-898-3716. Emails can be sent to: usarmy.mccoy.id-readiness.mbx.dhr-rso@army.mil.



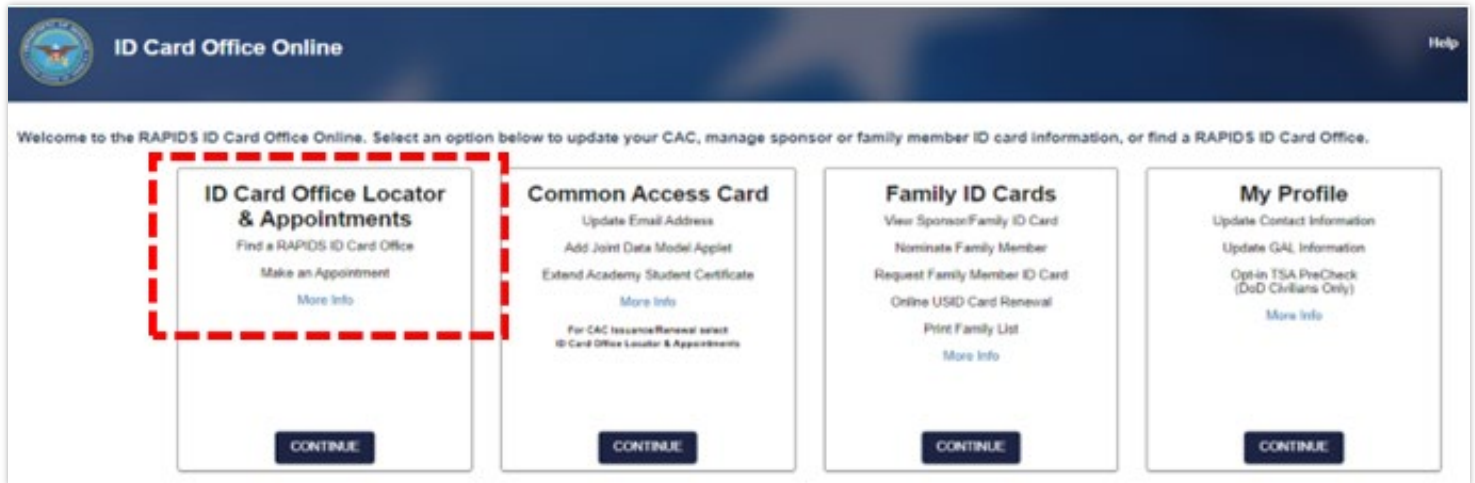
ID CARD OFFICE ONLINE IS OPEN



Book your appointment online with the booking tool!

To book a new or renewal appointment online for an ID Card, visit the online tool:

<https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/>



Click on: “ID Card Office Locator & Appointments” Enter “Fort McCoy or 54656”; Select Location #2 – “Ft McCoy or 54656” (Installation ID Card Facility).

After you select our Location (or even our site ID: 102072), you will see a button at the bottom of the page to “Schedule Appointment” click on that button. Available appointments will be visible in the calendar on your screen.

Click on an available date (by scrolling up or down) and then chose an open appointment time that fits your schedule. Once you have done that you will see a confirmation of your appointment to include date and time.

What to Bring to Your ID Card Appointment

Two (2) Forms of valid state or federal identification are required for all adults (18 years or older; one must be a photo ID). Identification documents may include a military ID Card; driver’s license or passport. Children 10 years and older require one (1) form of identification. Sponsor must be present for all transactions or Family Member must have current verified DD Form 1172-2.





LETTER FROM THE RSO & RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS

Welcome to the 2026 edition of the Fort McCoy HONORS newsletter.

This fiscal year has certainly been eventful. From navigating the longest government shutdown to adapting to new ways of conducting business, it has been a year of significant change. The Army also transitioned to digital-only delivery for the Army *ECHOES* newsletter, and some of you may have experienced delays in receiving your 1099 tax forms if your MyPay account became inactive. While there were a few bumps along the way, we have successfully made it through.

If you need to reset your MyPay account and DFAS has advised you to visit a Trusted Agent, we can help. To find the Trusted Agent nearest you, please follow this link:

<https://corpweb1.dfas.mil/askDFAS/custTASOLoad.do?currentUser.currentRequestNonce=422fc33a-d872-4518-ad29-069efccbfebe&isStateSearch=true&pgModId=2>

Please keep in mind that resetting your account requires an in-person visit to a Trusted Agent. Because these representatives are only available at select locations in each state, you may need to plan for some travel time.

As always, thank you and your families for your continued service to our great nation.



- Nick Gimson

Retirement Services

Fort McCoy, WI 54656

Retiree Appreciation Days

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
13-Aug-2026	American Legion Post #403 Van Meter, IA	19-Sep-2026	43156 Wagner St Building 164 Selfridge Air NG, MI 48045
11-Sep-2026	Building 905 Fort McCoy, WI	25-Sep-2026	Building 56 Rock Island, IL 61299



MILITARY INSTALLATIONS in the Midwest - CONTACT

Fort McCoy, Wisconsin

The following extensions begin 502-898-xxxx

Post Operator	2222
Army Community Service	3505
Auto Skills Center	3013
Commissary	3542
Legal Office	8751
Leisure Travel Services	3011
McCOY'S Community Club	2065
MWR Car Wash	3213
Pine View Campground	3517
Post Exchange	4343
Recreation Center	3213
Rumpel Fitness Center	2290
Ski Chalet	2260

Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan www.detroitarsenalfmwr.com

The following extensions begin 586-239-xxxx

(unless otherwise indicated)

Post Operator	586-307-4011
Base Exchange	0960
Benefit Mulligan's Dining/Catering	2337
Commissary	5570
FMWR	586-282-0992
Golf Course	4653
Health Benefit Advisor	586-282-5273
Legal Office	4078
Retiree Activity Office	5580

Great Lakes Naval Station, Illinois

The following extensions begin with 847-688-xxxx

(unless otherwise indicated)

Base Operator	3500
Base Exchange	847-578-6104
Commissary	2644
Information/Tickets/Travel	3537
Legal Office	3805
Marina/Rental Center	5417
MWR	2110
RV Park	6675
Samuel Adams Brew Club	6946
Willow Glen Golf Course	4593

Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois

www.rianmwr.com

The following extensions begin 309-782-xxxx

(unless otherwise indicated)

Post Operator	6001
Army Community Service	0829
Auto Skills Center	8631
Cannon Falls Driving Range	0090
Commissary	4614
Fitness Center	6787
Health Benefit Adviser	0800
Legal Office	1443
Leisure Travel Services	5890
Outdoor Recreation	8630
Post Exchange	309-788-4940



Army Retirement Services

<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

Army Echoes Newsletter

<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/echoes/latest.pdf>

Navy Retirement Services

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/Culture-Resilience/Retired-Activities/>

Navy Shift Colors Newsletter

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Media-Center/Publications/Shift-Colors/>

Coast Guard Retirement Services

<https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/gp/#guides>

Coast Guard Evening Colors Newsletter

<https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=070-16&category=us-coast-guard>

Marines Corps Community Services

<https://www.usmc-mccs.org/>

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis Newsletter

<https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/Portals/61/Docs/MMSR-6/VOL%2068%20NO%201%20JAN-MAR%202024.pdf?ver=Nq8WHpeVos4uiuXQntpB8A%3d%3d>

Air Forces Retirement Services

<https://www.retirees.af.mil/>

Air Force Afterburner Newsletter

www.retirees.af.mil/library/afterburner

Army Emergency Relief (AER)

<https://www.armyemergencyrelief.org/>

Army & Air Force Exchange Service

www.shopmyexchange.com

Army Retired Pin & Decal

www.shopmyexchange.com - type Army Retired in the search box

Burial & Memorial Benefits (VA National Cemetery Administration)

www.cem.va.gov

Combat Related Special Compensation (CRSC) - (DFAS)

<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/crsc.html>

Concurrent Retired Disability Pay (CRDP) - (DFAS)

<https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/crdp.html>

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)

www.benefeds.com



Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)

www.dfas.mil

eBenefits

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>

Express Scripts (Mail Order Pharmacy)

www.express-scripts.com

Federal Long Term Care Insurance

www.ltcfeds.com

Fort McCoy Homepage

<https://home.army.mil/mccoy>

Life Insurance (SGLI, TSGLI, VGLI)

www.benefits.va.gov/insurance

Military Service and Social Security (*Social Security Administration*)

<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10017.pdf>

Military Eyeglasses

<https://www.med.navy.mil/Naval-Medical-Readiness-Logistics-Command/Naval-Ophthalmic-Readiness-Activity/Ordering/How-to-Order-Retiree/>

Military Funeral Honors (*Military One Source*)

www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/tools/military-funeral-honors-directory/

Military Living Publications

www.militaryliving.com

Military OneSource—financial, legal, health & wellness assistance and much more

www.militaryonesource.mil

Military Personnel Records Request

www.archives.gov

My Army Benefits

<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/>

My Air Force Benefits

www.myairforcebenefits.us.af.mil/

RAPIDS Site Locator (DEERS Enrollment & ID Card Issuing Facilities)

idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/

Social Security Administration (SSA)

www.ssa.gov

Space Available Travel (Space-A)

www.amc.af.mil/AMC-Travel-Site/

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

www.tsp.gov

TRICARE

tricare.mil

U.S. Army Human Resource Command Fort Knox (HRC)

www.hrc.army.mil

U.S. Department of Veterans Administration (VA)

www.va.gov



Military Retiree Area Councils serve as a vital link for the military Retiree community. The councils provide an avenue for suggestions and recommendations on military matters to reach the proper level in the chain of command. The councils also plan and execute Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) to provide up-to-date information about benefits and entitlements to the military retired community. The RADs are open to all Retirees from all branches of service. The Fort McCoy Soldier For Life – Retirement Services Office currently supports eight military Retiree area councils, which are subordinate to the Fort McCoy Retiree military main council. Council members serve as “eyes and ears” of the community regarding military-Retiree-related issues. Through the area councils, members are able to voice concerns through their respective chains of command to the Fort McCoy Garrison Commander.

Area councils are located in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Although these councils are sponsored by Fort McCoy, membership is open to Retirees from all services. Please feel free to contact any council if you have issues to discuss or if you are interested in serving as a member.

Area councils rely on the military Retiree community to be effective. New members are always welcome. Military Retiree area councils sponsored by Fort McCoy are listed below with contact numbers for the respective chairperson or Retiree Activity Office (RAO):

COUNCIL CONTACT

Des Moines Area Council	515-571-0120
Lower Michigan Area Council	586-239-5580
Rock Island Area Council	319-883-3370
Wisconsin Area Council	920-629-0978



MyArmyBenefits

Our nation comes together every November 11 to reflect and appreciate our veterans during Veterans Day. It's a day we recognize and celebrate the contributions and sacrifices of our nation's veterans. Although November 11 is one day,

MyArmyBenefits

(<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/>) has benefit information year-round that can assist veterans, Retired Soldiers, and their Families in learning about the benefits they are eligible for and how to access them.

Many Soldiers know their benefits while they are in the service but may not know that as veterans, there are a variety of federal and state benefits available to them and their Families, which can be found in the MyArmyBenefits Benefit Library

(<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library>). Within the Benefit Library, each fact sheet explains the benefit, who is eligible for it based on duty status, and benefit highlights and resources.

One of the many fact sheets for veterans is Social Security Disability, or (SSDI)

(<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Social-Security-Disability>).

This fact sheet includes information on the disability and medical criteria for The Social Security Administration disability benefits.

Another benefit eligible veterans and Families should check out is the Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance Program

([https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Survivors-and-Dependents-Education-Assistance-Program-\(DEA\)?serv=120](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Survivors-and-Dependents-Education-Assistance-Program-(DEA)?serv=120)) This benefit offers education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of veterans who are permanently and completely disabled due to a service-related condition, or of

those who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition.

This program offers 36 months of education assistance per dependent and for those that qualified on or after August 1, 2023, there is no time limit on when the benefit must be used.

State and Territory benefits are also included in the MyArmyBenefits Benefit Library (<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/State/Territory-Benefits>). Any veteran, spouse, or Family member can click on their state in the State/Territory Benefit Library and view all the state/territory administered benefits available to them. State and Territory fact sheets can inform veterans about state taxes, veteran state employment benefits, education benefits, and more that are specific to each state.

One example of a state specific benefit is the Florida Hometown Heroes Program (<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/State/Territory-Benefits/Florida#Miscellaneous>), which offers down payment, closing cost, and lower first mortgage rate assistance to eligible veterans when purchasing a home in Florida. The program is available to veterans who received a discharge other than dishonorable and are purchasing a primary residence.

As you go about the business of life, remember that veterans, as well as their Families, can receive benefit information year-round with MyArmyBenefits

(<https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/>). Be sure to follow MyArmyBenefits on social media (<https://www.instagram.com/myarmybenefits/>) to stay up to date on new benefits and benefit updates.



Lifetime Passes Available For Veterans and Gold Star Families!



News Release Date: November 8, 2022

Contact: NewsMedia@nps.gov

WASHINGTON — Today, the Biden-Harris Administration announced that starting on Veterans Day (Nov. 11), veterans of the U.S. Armed Services and Gold Star Families can obtain a free lifetime pass to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and forests.

“We have a sacred obligation to America’s veterans. This new lifetime pass is a small demonstration of our nation’s gratitude and support for those who have selflessly served in the U.S. Armed Forces,” said Secretary Deb Haaland, whose father served during the Vietnam War. “I’m proud the Department of the Interior can provide veterans and Gold Star Families opportunities for recreation, education and enjoyment from our country’s treasured lands.”

“Our national forests and grasslands represent so much of the beauty of the nation our brave service members have sacrificed so much for,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Though they can never be fully repaid, by connecting the families of the fallen and those who served with these iconic places, we can, in a small way, say thank you.”

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and our federal teammates are proud to honor our veterans with free lifetime access to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas across the nation,” said Lieutenant General (LTG) Scott Spellmon, Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“This is a small token of appreciation for veterans who have bravely dedicated their lives to defending our freedom.”

“This pass conveys our immense gratitude and respect for those who have given so much,” said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. “As a veteran, I know firsthand the many sacrifices that members of the Armed Forces and their families have made in service to our country, and I am thrilled that Gold Star Families and military veterans can now enjoy lifetime access to national parks and other public lands.

Each lifetime pass covers entrance fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle (or passholder and up to three adults at sites that charge per person) at national parks and national wildlife refuges, as well as standard amenity fees at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Veterans can present one of the four forms of acceptable ID (Department of War ID Card, Veteran Health ID (VHIC), Veteran ID Card, or veteran’s designation on a state-issued US driver’s license or ID card) at participating federal recreation areas that normally charge an entrance fee. Gold Star Families obtain information, self-certify they qualify, and download a voucher on NPS.gov.

The Alexander Lofgran Veterans in Parks Act, passed in December 2021, authorized free lifetime access to federal lands to veterans and Gold Star Families. The new lifetime pass for veterans and Gold Star Families is in addition to the free annual Military Pass, which has been available to active duty servicemembers and their families since Armed Forces Day, May 19, 2012.

Federal recreational land management agencies offer additional lifetime passes, including a Senior Pass for US citizens or permanent residents over age 62 and an Access Pass for US citizens or permanent residents with a permanent disability. More information is available on NPS.gov.

The Interior Department and other federal land agencies also offer fee-free entrance days for everyone throughout the year to mark days of celebration and commemoration, including the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., National Public Lands Day, and Veterans Day.



**Claim
Yours
[here](#)**

SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN (SBP) TIDBIT

The **SBP** allows military Retirees to provide a portion of their retired pay to their designated beneficiaries. Retired service members pay about 60 percent of the SBP cost, and the government pays the remainder. The retired service member is considered “paid up” when he/she has made 360 payments and has reached age 70. The SBP annuity (payout) is 55 percent of the military Retiree’s elected pay base amount.

To read more, visit the Army’s Soldier for Life Survivor Benefit Plan page [here](#).



Did You Know?

The Department of War (DoW) is responsible for providing military funeral honors. “Honoring Those Who Served” is the title of the DoW program for providing dignified military funeral honors to Veterans who have defended our nation.

Upon the Family’s request, Public Law 106-65 requires that every eligible Veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony, to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps. The law defines a military funeral honors detail as consisting of two or more uniformed military persons, with at least one being a member of the Veteran’s parent service of the armed forces. The DoW program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans’ Family. However, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration cemetery staff can also assist with arranging military funeral honors at VA national cemeteries. Veteran organizations may assist in providing military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at a national cemetery are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home. The Department of War began the implementation plan for providing military funeral honors for eligible Veterans as enacted in Section 578 of Public Law 106-65 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2000 on Jan. 1, 2000.

While many cemeteries have similar eligibility requirements for burial options for Veterans and their Families, some require state residency and some services, particularly for Family members, may require a fee.

Questions or comments concerning the DoW military funeral honors program may be sent to the address list-ed below. The military funeral honors website is located at Militaryonesource.mil. This website also offers more detailed information on the “Honoring Those Who Served” program.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy) 4000 Defense Pentagon, Room 5A726 Washington, DC 20380

For more information, please contact your local funeral home director or local county Veterans Service Office, or click [here](#).

DFAS HELPFUL TIPS & TOOLS FOR RETIREES NEW TO RETIRED PAY

By Defense Finance and Accounting Service

Pay Schedule

Retired pay is paid monthly, on the first day of the month, unless that day is a weekend or holiday. In that case, it is paid on the last business day of the prior month. For example, if May 1 is a Sunday, payday will be Friday, April 29. See www.dfas.mil/rapaycal.

Our goal is to pay your first retired pay on the first business day of month following your retirement date. However, we can only do that if we receive a complete retirement package, including a correct, signed DD Form 2656.

Retiree Account Statements

You are used to seeing a Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) when it's (almost) payday. Once you begin receiving retired pay, you will see a Retiree Account Statement (RAS), which is the equivalent of an LES for those receiving military retired pay.

Your Retiree Account Statements will be available to view and download from myPay when your first retired pay is issued and then each month a few days prior to payday.

When your retired pay account is established initially, and your first payment issued, DFAS will mail you a welcome letter with a breakdown of your pay and deductions. However, depending on your first pay date, you may see your pay deposited in your bank account before your postal mail letter gets there. You may also see your first RAS in myPay before you get your postal mail letter.

After that first RAS, if you set the preferences in your account to receive statements via postal mail, you will only receive a mailed monthly RAS if your pay changes. You will also receive a mailed RAS each January with your tax statement. However, your pay statements are available each month in myPay to view and download.

Tax Statements

After you start receiving retired pay, your annual tax statement will be an IRS 1099-R instead of a W-2. Your annual 1099-R will be available in myPay to view and download, usually in mid-to-late December.

If you have the preferences in your account set to receive statements via postal mail, those statements are mailed no later than January 31 of each year, along with your December RAS.

Military Retired Pay Taxation Tips

Military retired pay is paid for many different reasons under many different laws. There are differences in the types of pay a military retiree might receive and the tax laws that apply to them. Whether a portion or all of an individual's military retired pay is subject to federal income taxes depends on his/her individual circumstances.



A military retiree can either use myPay or send an IRS Form W-4 to change the amount DFAS withholds for federal income taxes from their military retired pay.

An individual's choice to have no withholding for federal taxes does not impact whether the individual's military retired pay is actually subject to federal income taxes. Ultimately, the IRS will determine the amount of taxes owed on the military retired pay.

Please note: the IRS requires any individual claiming exemption from federal withholding to provide a new Form W-4 at the beginning of each tax year certifying their exemption from withholding.

DFAS cannot provide tax advice. Please consult a tax professional or the IRS.

Please see our webpage regarding taxation of retired pay: www.dfas.mil/retpaytax.

Retired & Annuitant Pay News

Keep up with the latest news and announcements on the Retired & Annuitant Pay main webpage, plus quick links, and how-to's for myPay at www.dfas.mil/rapay.

Forms Library

Need a form? The retiree and annuitant Forms library provides quick links to download forms, Form Wizards, and other helpful form tools at www.dfas.mil/raforms.

Tools to Make Forms Easier to Fill Out and Submit

DFAS is rolling out new tools to help retirees and annuitants fill out and submit forms easily and correctly. The tools include helpful PDF Form Wizards, how-to checklists, and how-to videos.

The Form Wizards "take the form out of the form" by asking a series of questions and filling in your answers in the appropriate areas of the form. The how-to checklists and how-to videos provide quick tips and walk-throughs of the forms to help you fill them out correctly and easily.



DFAS Why You Should Attend a Retiree Appreciation Day

Retiree Appreciation Days, also called **RADs**, are a great way for retirees to get information regarding your military retired pay. These events are hosted by the branch of service's Retirement Service Office or Retirement Activities Office. Organizations that offer services to military retirees are invited to speak at the events and/or to provide information and answer questions for retirees virtually or in-person. You will often find speakers from the branch itself, the base or post hosting the event, the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS), the Department of Veteran's Affairs, TriCare, and many other organizations who serve retirees. Each event is slightly different depending on which organizations can attend; please check with the hosting office for a list of speakers and attendees.

DFAS presents on the best ways to manage your retired pay, new projects that we are working on to help retirees, and any new legislation that may impact military retirees. We can also answer more individualized questions one-on-one following our briefing. If there is a RAD close to where you live, we highly encourage you to attend. When you do, please say "hello" to the DFAS representative and let them know you saw this article. And while we won't be there to hand out DFAS-branded frisbees, we know you'll walk away better informed about your retired pay and encouraged by all the exciting things we are working on to serve you better.

Here is a list of the upcoming events. Hope to see you there.

Retiree Appreciation Day Events 2026

Date: **13 August 2026**
Location: **American Legion Post #403
Van Meter, IA**

Date: **11 September 2026**
Location: **Building 905
Fort McCoy, WI**

Date: **19 September 2026**
Location: **43156 Wagner St. Building 164
Selfridge Air NG, MI 48045**

Date: **25 September 2026**
Location: **Building 56
Rock Island, IL 61299**





Ambassadors in Blue: The Legacy of the USAF Thunderbirds

Born in 1953 at Luke Air Force Base, the Thunderbirds were created to showcase the dawn of the jet age. Originally flying the **F-84G Thunderjet**, the team served as a vital bridge between the military and a public still wary of the new, whistling jet technology. By 1956, they moved to their permanent home at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, and made history by adopting the **F-100 Super Sabre**, becoming the first aerobatic team to perform at supersonic speeds.

As air superiority evolved, so did the fleet. The team transitioned from the bare-metal finish of the 1950s to the iconic stark white paint scheme in 1969 with the arrival of the massive F-4E Phantom II. During the 1970s fuel crisis, they proved their adaptability by switching to the nimble, fuel-efficient **T-38 Talon trainer**, ensuring the mission continued despite global economic constraints.

In 1983, the Thunderbirds returned to a frontline fighter with the **F-16 Fighting Falcon**, the platform they still fly today. The F-16's fly-by-wire precision allows for the signature "Diamond" and "Delta" formations that have now been seen in more than 60 countries.

Beyond the spectacle, the Thunderbirds remain a self-contained squadron of 130 personnel, representing the "Total Force" of the Air Force. For over 70 years, these "Ambassadors in Blue" have served as a symbol of American ingenuity and a primary bridge for recruiting and international diplomacy.



To learn more about the Air Force Thunderbirds, visit their website [here](#)



2026-2027 Schedule

Thunderbirds 2026 Air Show Schedule:

- June 13-14: Ocean City, Maryland
- June 20-21: Niagara Falls ARS, New York
- June 27-28: Hill AFB, Utah
- July 11-12: Duluth, Minnesota
- July 18-19: Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- August 1-2: Montgomery, New York
- August 8-9: Rochester, New York
- August 15-16: Chicago, Illinois
- August 22-23: Terre Haute, Indiana
- August 29-30: Grissom ARB, Indiana
- September 5-7: Branson, Missouri
- September 12-13: Owensboro, Kentucky
- September 19-20: Roswell, New Mexico
- September 26-27: Salinas, California
- October 3-4: Huntington Beach, California
- October 10-11: Sacramento, California
- October 17-18: NAS Jacksonville, Florida
- October 24-25: Wichita, Kansas
- October 31-November 1: Houston, Texas



Preliminary 2027 Air Show Schedule:

- March 20-21: Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona
- March 27-28: March ARB, California
- April 3-4: Nellis AFB, Nevada
- April 10-11: Eglin AFB, Florida
- April 17-18: Cocoa Beach, Florida
- April 24-25: Augusta, Georgia
- May 1-2: JB Langley-Eustis, Virginia
- May 8-9: Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina
- May 15-16: Wantagh, New York
- May 22-23: Westover ARB, Massachusetts
- May 27: U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado
- June 12-13: Scott AFB, Illinois
- June 19-20: Ocean City, Maryland
- June 26-27: Dayton, Ohio
- June 30-July 4: Battle Creek, Michigan

To learn more, click [here](#)



Power on the Prairie: The 2026 Sioux Falls Airshow

Aviation enthusiasts across the Midwest are marking their calendars for the return of "Power on the Prairie," the premier aerial event in South Dakota. Taking place on July 18 and 19, 2026, the Sioux Falls Airshow will transform Joe Foss Field and the South Dakota Air National Guard base into a hub of thundering jets and historical tributes. The Headliner: USAF Thunderbirds. The highlight of the 2026 show is the return of the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. Flying their iconic red, white, and blue F-16 Fighting Falcons, the Thunderbirds are known for their precision formation flying and high-speed solo passes. The team is scheduled to perform during the peak afternoon slot on both Saturday and Sunday. Historic Warbirds & Modern Might in addition to the modern jet maneuvers, "Power on the Prairie" features an impressive lineup of "Warbirds" that honor the legacy of military aviation: B-29 "Doc": One of only two flying Superfortresses in the world. (Note: Ride flights are often available in the days leading up to the main show). P-51 Mustang & B-25 Mitchell: Icons of WWII air superiority. MiG-17: A chance to see Cold War-era jet technology in action. F-16 Viper (SD Air National Guard): Local favorites representing the "Lobos" of the 114th Fighter Wing.

Schedule and Access:

The Sioux Falls Airshow is traditionally a free event open to the public, emphasizing community outreach and military appreciation.

Time Event Detail

8:30 AM Gates Open: Arrival and static display viewing

11:00 AM Aerial Performances Begin:
Civilian and solo acts

2:30 PM Main Feature: USAF Thunderbirds
Demonstration

4:00 PM Performances Conclude:
Final static tours

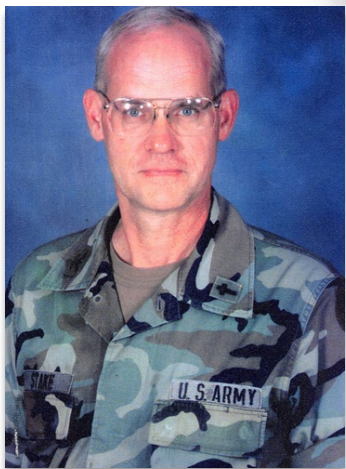
5:00 PM Gates Close

To learn more about the Sioux Falls Air Show, click [here](#)



Where Are They Now?

John Stake (CH) Colonel, Retired



I was ordained in 1971 in the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and in 1975 was called and served as an Army Chaplain until my military retirement in 2002. I retired from active church call in 2009 and was rostered on the retired clergy roster of the Lutheran Churches in Ministry for Christ (LCMC). I am an active member of both Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Tomah, Wisconsin, and Adams County VFW Post 6279.

Since my ordination and 27 years' service as an Army Chaplain, I understand my call in life to be that of Lutheran pastor. And I love it and the many people who call upon my ministry. Addressing the subject of retirement, my advice is to continue doing what seems best for you, widen venues for yourself and your family, and seek opportunities to serve others and your community.

In 2002 my wife Margaret and I retired to our home in Wisconsin. We were both raised in Chicago, and in 1979 purchased a cottage across the driveway from Margaret's parents. We retired there with our daughter Kirsten and grandson Ryan Baxter. Margaret and Kirsten both found employment. My calling as a pastor furnished my initial employment and place for family church attendance. Ryan was five years away from beginning school at Immanuel Lutheran School in Wisconsin Rapids. This coincided with Kirsten's attendance at Midstate Technical College located near Ryan's school.

I found my retirement preparation classes from the Army very helpful, notably the assistance offered at Fort McCoy, our Adams County Veterans Assistance Office, and the local Adams VFW Post 6279. My questions about finances, medical facilities, shopping and other needs were all met. Multiple travels and transfers in our Army life had also prepared us for retirement. Our local church communities also provided wonderful support during transition times.

Our biggest challenge was medical. Margaret and Kirsten both developed chronic heart conditions which worsened, despite the best efforts of our medical facilities available to treat them. We were spared COVID illnesses, but Margaret died in August 2019, and Kirsten in March 2021. Our church, and community resources also met our needs, solemn though they were.

Ryan finished Grade School and High School (with honors) in Wisconsin Rapids. He chose to enlist in the Army Active Reserve his senior year of High School. Part of his Army enlistment bonus was 120 credit hours to attend college in the State of Wisconsin. Ryan selected and attended four years of college at University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point and found that much of his Army Basic and Advance training curriculum could be converted to hours of college credit.

Continued Page 23>



Where Are They Now? (Cont.)

John Stake (CH) Colonel, Retired

After graduation in 2024, Ryan received a scholarship to UW-Madison in Finance, Banking and Accounting. He completed his six years of Army active reserve duty, and now pursues his graduate school goals, which include becoming a Certified Public Account (CPA), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and financial advisor. After graduate school, Ryan wishes to remain closer to home for a while and look after his aging grandfather.

I'll be 83 in June 2026, and my biggest change has been the passing of my wife Margaret, my only child Kirsten, my parents and many of their generation. I have family in Illinois, New Jersey, and Georgia, and we keep in touch with each other by occasional visitations and communication.

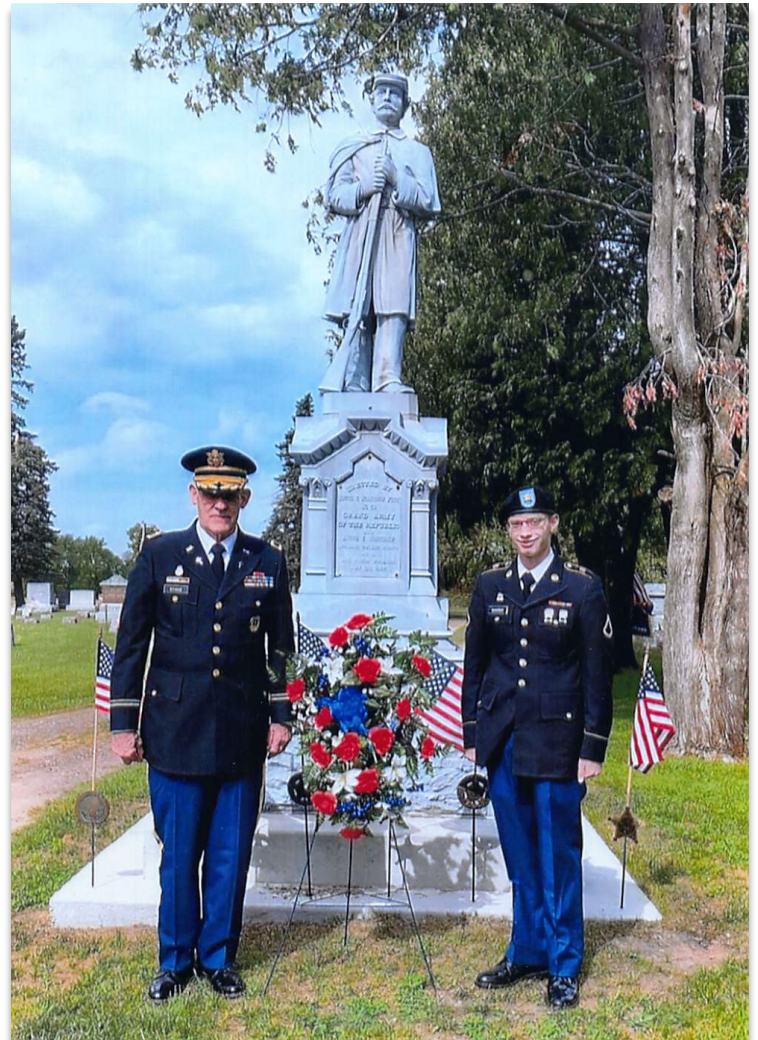
I have good health, thanks to past military and present Veteran medical resources, and the Mayo systems which provide excellent, affordable, and dependable health care. Upon occasion, I supply preach, work on-call with my local funeral home, and engage in other pastoral activities.

Between my pension, Social Security, savings, investments, and appropriate financial habits, I have fiscal stability. The cottage Margaret and I purchased in 1979 became the house for Margaret, Kirsten and her son Ryan when I was remotely deployed to Army South in Puerto Rico in 1999-2001. Upon retirement from the Army in 2002 from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, after the 9/11 terror attack, our Adams Friendship residence became our home.

I have inherited the one-eyed family cat, Lily; a medium-hair, black-and- white tuxedo cat, which Kirsten had street-rescued. I often kitty-sit Ryan's lovely gray short-haired cat Ash. Unfortunately, they don't get along with each other. And I would be remiss if I didn't share my hobby - I regularly play banjo in a bluegrass band, in venues where folks with similar interests gather.

My final thoughts are these. Maintain the "good habits" which you have and keep life interesting for yourself. Stay connected with family and friends. Reflect occasionally on your past life journeys. Ryan remarked today that he is very happy with the schools he attended. When asked, "In what way?" He responded, "Don't let your schooling interfere with your education."

Find something artistic to explore and pursue that which you enjoy. Be like Abraham in the Bible, who in Genesis 12:2 was "Blessed to be a blessing." Honor your religious commitment to God and love your neighbor as yourself. God bless your retirement.



How can you use your former military career to improve the morale of your kids, grandkids, fellow retirees from units you served in, yourself, and me?

Now that you are retired, you may want to put aside those memories from your military career, but wait, other individuals would beg to differ. These people are your kids, otherwise known as a source of worry and expenses, who sometimes do not understand or listen to you. Well, there is good news. As your kids age and begin to look and sound like you and affect your mannerisms, they often want to know about your previous life in the military. They usually regret not having listened to you more carefully in the past when you were leaving and returning from drill, AT, and deployment.

In addition, your kid's kids usually want to know about your military career. I, Ward Zischke, 88th Readiness Division Historian, know this due to the calls and emails I get from people asking for help to finding more about mom or dad's or grandparents' military career after death, Alzheimer's, or a stroke and this very difficult if not impossible if they do not have some basic information. Please help them and me by reviewing your military electronic and hardcopy military records and selecting the documents explaining what units you were in and when.

Supplement these documents with a written narrative of your career. After you have done this, take the time to brief your kids about what these records mean and give them copies while you keep a file for yourself. It would be much better if you could get them to record this briefing in audio or video format.

Besides creating the document files and briefing for your kids, take the time to reconnect with former Soldiers from the units you served in by attending unit reunions. These reunions are wonderful for reconnecting with former friends and discovering how much those jerks you didn't like have changed for the better. Yes, this does happen; think of your high school reunions. Unit reunions are also a great place to share copies of photos and documents. In addition to dealing with documents, there is the question of physical items from your military career, such as uniforms, equipment, TMs, and training aids such as GTA cards. Take the time to document when and where you used these items. With uniforms, this is as easy as writing this information on paper and putting it in the pocket. For other items, you can use paper tags with string. The story you include with the item is called provenance. Including the provenance (story of the items use) makes the item more meaningful for your kids if they want to keep it and for museums if they don't. Use a pencil to record this information so the ink does not smear on the item or fade.

Completing any of these steps will help your offspring understand what you did and, eventually, me as I work to capture and preserve the history of the Army Reserve. My contact information is (502) 898-0320, and I am located in Fort McCoy, WI, even though the phone number makes it appear that I am in Fort Knox. My email is ward.e.zischke.civ@army.mil. I assist Army Reserve units in 19 states with their historical programs and can help retirees properly dispose of the items mentioned above and unit reunions.



Army Legal Assistance Program

/ Estate Planning Services

Among the benefits of serving and retiring from the Armed Forces is that they gain access to the Army's Legal Assistance Program under Army Regulation 27-3.

Active Duty retirees and Reserve or National Guard retirees who are receiving retiree pay are eligible for Legal Assistance services. Additionally, their dependents, and surviving dependents are also eligible for services. Here at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin the legal assistance program is part of the Installation Legal Office currently located in Building 2171 on South 8th Avenue, just a short ways West of the Main Gate entrance.

As for the services available, the Legal Assistance program authorizes aid in several categories of cases including Family Law, Estate Planning, Real Property, Consumer Transactions, Torts, and Taxes, as well as notarizing signatures on legal documents. By far the most often utilized and most helpful to Retirees is Estate Planning. The most common items prepared are Wills and Powers of Attorney and Advanced Medical Directives.

Wills are the quintessential estate planning document and are in essence a set of instructions on what should be done with all your assets, personal property and real estate, that is not otherwise provided for by other means. This is commonly known as the Probate Estate. Property and assets can be given before death, sometimes with consequences for Estate Taxes, though rarely, or with respect to being able to qualify for Medicaid assistance for nursing home care. Other means of gifting might include Transfer on Death instruction on an account or for real property and designating beneficiaries for life insurance and retirement accounts. Currently at Fort McCoy we can prepare for every state except Louisiana unless the Legal Assistance Attorney is also a member of the Louisiana State Bar because that state follows the Napoleonic Legal Code unlike the other 49 States. Puerto Rico also has special rules for executing Wills and may require assistance from a Military Attorney or Judge Advocate based there.

Powers of Attorney are authorizations for other people to act in your place on either broad list of things as in a General Power of Attorney, or in a narrow and more limited scope for Special Powers of Attorney. Discussing your needs with a Legal Assistance Attorney can help clarify which type may be best suited for you. Additionally, either type may be limited to a certain time frame, or to only become active upon certain events, or a later separate written authorization. A subset of Powers of Attorney includes Medical Powers of Attorney which allow an authorized agent to make medical decisions for you including for end of life or terminal care when you are no longer able to make such decisions.

Finally, Advanced Medical Directives, often known as a 'Living will' are similar to Healthcare Powers of Attorney but are simply about laying out one's wishes and preferences for medical care, especially for end-of-life treatment in cases where one is incapacitated and unable to make their own decisions for care. Often these are useful to allow one to pass away with dignity and not be kept indefinitely on life support and providing family members with peace of mind knowing that one's wishes are being fulfilled.

All these services can be provided currently at Fort McCoy, and most other Military Installations. If you would like to discuss these matters, other services and legal questions or to request an Estate Planning Worksheet, or to schedule an appointment please contact our office at: 502-898-2165. The legal assistance office is open for walk in services on Tuesdays 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. and by appointment Monday – Friday 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.



Greetings to the esteemed military retirees and your families.

It is with great honor and a humble heart that I introduce myself to a community that has given so much in service to our nation. My name is Chaplain (Major) Walter McCall, and I have recently been appointed as the new Garrison Chaplain here at Fort McCoy. My wife of 31 years, Jacquelyn, our three children, Isaiah, Ariella, and Isabella, and I are thrilled to be a part of this historic and vibrant community. I look forward to building a strong, supportive, and spiritually enriching environment for all of you.

As a nation, we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to our retirees. You are the shoulders upon which the current generation of service members stands. Your legacy of courage, dedication, and sacrifice has paved the way for the freedoms we enjoy today. In my new role, I am deeply committed to providing unwavering religious support not only to the active Service Members and DA Civilians but also to you, our cherished retirees, and your families. My door is always open, and my primary mission is to serve you.

A Little About Your New Chaplain

I come to you from Hackensack, New Jersey, with over two decades of pastoral and military experience. Ordained by the House of Restoration Ministries and endorsed by the Coalition of Spirit-Filled Churches, my journey has been a blessed one, filled with diverse opportunities to serve. My pastoral journey has included serving as an Associate Pastor in New York City, a Youth Pastor in Orange, New Jersey, and a Prison Chaplain in Newark. These experiences have instilled in me a profound appreciation for the power of faith to transform lives and build resilient communities.

My military career, which began with my commission in 2008, has been equally rewarding. I have had the privilege of serving in various capacities, from a Chaplain Candidate at Fort Dix to deploying in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Enduring Freedom. My time as the Theater Gateway Chaplain in Kuwait and as a Battalion Chaplain supporting teams in Iraq, Jordan, and Syria has given me a firsthand understanding of the unique challenges and triumphs of military life. These experiences have forged in me an unshakeable commitment to the spiritual and emotional well-being of our military family. I am here to walk alongside you, offering guidance, support, and offer a listening ear whenever you may need it.



SSG Conor Techentien
Religious Affairs NCOIC



Ms. Dale Gibson
Religious Support Assistant



CH (MAJ) Walter McCall
Garrison Chaplain

An Invitation to Worship and Fellowship

A strong community is built on fellowship and shared faith. Here at Fort McCoy, we offer a variety of worship services and opportunities for connection. **I extend a personal invitation to you and your families to join us.** Regardless of your background or where you are on your spiritual journey, you and your families are welcome here.

Our weekly services are as follows:

- **Roman Catholic Service:** Sundays, 0915-1015, at Chapel 10 (BLDG 1759)
- **Collective Christian Protestant Service:** Sundays, 1100-1200, at Chapel 1 (BLDG 2672)
- **Fellowship Meal:** All are invited to join us for a meal and conversation on Sundays from 1000-1200 at the RSO Office (BLDG 2675). It's a wonderful time to connect with old friends and make new ones.
- **All Other Faith Groups:** We are committed to supporting all faith traditions. For information on services for other faith groups, please contact the Religious Support Office (RSO) at (502) 898-3528.

Accommodation can be made at the RSO Annex (BLDG 1757).



Garrison Chaplain's Message (Continued)

Garrison Ministry Team

The Fort McCoy Religious Support Office is here to serve you. If you are interested in worship services, pastoral care and counseling, Bible studies, or in exploring your faith, we are here for you! Stop by anytime!

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS
Monday thru Friday 0800-1630



CH (MAJ) Walter McCall
Garrison Chaplain



SSG Conor
Techentien
Religious Affairs
NCOIC



Ms. Dale Gibson
Religious Support Assistant



Roman Catholic Mass
Chapel 10
1759 South F Street
0915 Sunday

Protestant Worship Service
Chapel 1
2672 South F Street
1100 Sunday

Low Density Faith
1757 South F Street
Upon Request

**TOTAL FORCE TRAINING CENTER
FORT MCCOY, WISCONSIN**



**United States
Army**

**RELIGIOUS
SUPPORT
OFFICE**



**LOVING
SERVING
NURTURING**

2675 South F Street
Fort McCoy, WI 54656

Phone: 502.898.3528
On Call: 608.630.6073

usarmy.mccoy.id-wh.mbx.rso@army.mil
[https://home.army.mil/mccoy/about/Garrison/
religious-support-office](https://home.army.mil/mccoy/about/Garrison/religious-support-office)

Updated: 13 April 2026



Garrison Chaplain's Message (Continued)

MISSION, VISION, PRINCIPLES

MISSION

Assist commanders in ensuring the free exercise of religion for all personnel at Fort McCoy, integrating Fort McCoy Unit Ministry Teams to provide robust and diverse religious support to personnel and families.

VISION

Seeing Soldiers, Civilians and their Families inspired to love God deeply, serve others intentionally, and nurture each other fully at Fort McCoy and within their local communities.

PRINCIPLES

Nurture the Living
Care for the Wounded
Honor the Fallen



The U.S. Army Chaplaincy

Army Chaplains and Religious Affairs Specialists have performed their duties from military installations to deployed combat units to service schools to military hospitals and beyond. They are always present with their Soldiers in war and in peace.

These men and women have served in more than 270 major wars and combat engagements. Approximately 25,000 Army Chaplains have served as religious and spiritual leaders for 25 million Soldiers and their Families since 29 July 1775.

Nearly 300 Army Chaplains have laid down their lives in battle. Six have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Their love of God, Country, and the American Warrior has been a beacon of light and a message of hope for all those who have served our nation.

Currently, over 2,900 Chaplains are serving the Total Army representing over 130 different religious organizations.

Tithes and Offering can be done online at: <https://os56.army.mil/give/>



Services Provided To You and Your Family

The Fort McCoy Garrison Religious Support Office (RSO) provides diverse opportunities, events, and settings to connect with God and with each other while providing ways to explore and grow in your faith. In addition to a 24-Hour Emergency On-Call Duty Chaplain, other services and support include:

Daily Support

Prayer, Spiritual Guidance, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Religious Materials, Operation Helping Hand.

Weekly Support Sundays

Catholic Mass—0915 (Bldg. 1759)
Protestant Worship—1100 (Bldg. 2672)
Fellowship Meal —1000-1200 (Bldg. 2675)

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

Women of the Chapel (WOC)
1800-1915—South Post Housing
Community Center

Wednesdays

Prayer Service
1630-1700—Chapel (Bldg. 2672)

Seasonal Support

Center Shot Ministry, Weddings, Memorial Services, Retreats, Prayer Luncheon, Bible Study, Change of Commands, Ceremonies and Military Balls.



Army Echoes and Casualty Assistance Checklist

Army Echoes Mobile App Updated



Have you missed an issue of Army Echoes? The current and past issues, dating back to 1997, are available on the Army Echoes app. Download the free app:
 Apple Store Link: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/u-s-army-echoes/id890635050>
 Google Play Link: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=mil.Army>

RETIRED SOLDIER CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST



If you died tomorrow, would your loved ones know what to do? Would they know where all the important documents and accounts (physical and online) are and how to access them? Would they know if you want to be buried in uniform and whether or not they will receive the Survivor Benefit Plan annuity?

Filling out the Retired Soldier Casualty Assistance Checklist

(https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/static/Post/Retired_Soldier_Casualty_Assistance_Checklist.pdf) found in a printable PDF format at the Army Retirement Services website (<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement>), can help ease their burden during the difficult time.

Don't wait until it's too late to discuss. Start filling it out now, keep it updated, and make sure your loved ones know where to find it.

LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS

Will: _____

DD214: _____

Current retired pay statement: _____

Marriage certificate: _____

Deeds and real property settlements: _____

Death certificate: _____

Birth certificate and baptism papers: _____

Retirement Orders and/or 28-year letter: _____

Safe deposit box: _____

Tax returns: _____

Social Security Cards: _____

Investment papers (IRA, Mutual Funds, etc.): _____

Medical and dental records: _____

Real estate deeds: _____

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

How to report the death of a Retired Soldier: Contact the Department of the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations (Division 83MAGC) anytime by calling (800) 833-3333. You will be immediately referred to a local Casualty Assistance Center (CAC), who will report the death to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) to stop retired pay and initiate the various benefits process. If you create accounts and the full-time expense is not available, call your Retirement Services Office (RSO) (see link below). When reporting the death, please provide as much of the following information as you have: - Full name - Disability Rating Copy of death certificate - Social security number and/or service number - Circumstances surrounding the death - Next of kin (NOK) information - Retired rank - Retirement date - Date and place of birth

For additional information, please refer to the "RC" page at <https://www.dfas.army.mil/TAG2/Reporting/2016/2016death>

Retirement Services Office: Listed in every copy of Army Echoes and at <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

Your family must report your death to the following agencies:

- DFAS (Retired Account) Pay: 1-800-421-1586, <https://www.dfas.mil/retirement/>
- Social Security Administration (SSA) at 1-800-772-1233, <https://www.ssa.gov>
- VA (VA receipt of compensation or agreement from the VA, call VA at 1-800-427-3895, <http://www.va.gov>)
- VA (VA life insurance policyholder call Veterans Group Life Insurance Office at 1-800-693-8477, <https://www.benefits.va.gov/BOVA/RANCE/nyhgh.asp>)

Utilities (cards): 1-800-528-8122, www.dfas.mil/ret

National Cemetery Subduing Office: 800-331-1117

For more information on retirement topics, visit the Army Retirement Services website at <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

This pamphlet was prepared by the Army Retirement Services Office and may be reprinted by Army Retirement Services Offices. It is ungraded.

RETIRED SOLDIER CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST

RETIRED SOLDIER INFORMATION

Name: _____

Social Security number: _____

Date of birth: _____

Date of retirement: _____

Retired rank: _____

SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN

Enrolled in SBP or RSBP (check one) SBP RSBP (check one) (Application)

Electron Category: _____

Did you die covered? YES NO (Check one)

YES CLAIM

Eligible to draw VA disability compensation? YES NO

Willing to let Security? YES NO

Organ donor: YES NO

SPOUSE INFORMATION

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Social Security number: _____

Date of marriage: _____

Place (City, County, State): _____

CHILDREN INFORMATION

Name/Date of birth: _____

Name/Date of birth: _____

Name/Date of birth: _____

Incapable of self support? YES NO

If yes, Name/Date of birth: _____

LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES

Policy #: _____

Company: _____

Amount: _____

Beneficiary: _____

Agent phone/email: _____

Policy #: _____

Company: _____

Amount: _____

Beneficiary: _____

Agent phone/email: _____

INVESTMENTS

Account # Type: _____

Issuer: _____

Account # Type: _____

Issuer: _____

Account # Type: _____

Issuer: _____

BANK ACCOUNTS

Bank Name: _____

Phone/website: _____

Account # Type: _____

Account # Type: _____

Account # Type: _____

Issuer: _____

CREDIT

Name/Account #: _____

Phone/email: _____

Name/Account #: _____

Phone/email: _____

BURIAL INFORMATION

Would like to be: Buried Cremated

Who should be notified of your death:

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Name/location of cemetery where you want to be buried or have your ashes interred: _____

Do you want to be buried in your uniform? YES NO

Do you wish a funeral? YES NO

If YES, where? _____

Do you have a preference of funeral home? YES NO

If YES, which one? _____

Do you want a military honor guard? YES NO

Do you have a pre-paid eligibility letter for burial at a VA National Cemetery? YES NO

If Yes, where is it located? _____

Help your family today by filling out this tri-fold and making sure your family knows where to find it.

