

Director's report 2018

Veterans Service Center

Rick Ringlein

Director

Lancaster County Veterans Service Officer

Under the direction and guidance of the Veterans Service Committee is the Director of the Lancaster County veterans' service office; supervises a four person staff and oversees the day to day operations of the office. Makes sure said staff is well trained and that all agency members make a professional impression on those they come in contact with; be it clients, other county agencies, other service offices, state agencies and federal agencies. In conjunction with the finance department develops and maintains the agency's budget. We serve a population of more than 20,000 veterans and dependents. As the senior service officer I review and make determinations regarding the eligibility of persons applying for Veterans' benefits at the county, state and federal level and assist veterans and their dependents in the application process for those benefits

Primary Duties and Responsibilities:

As agency director, on a daily basis I supervise all administrative matters in Veterans Service Office, including personnel, budget preparation and general ledger monitoring of the county veterans aid fund. I am also the senior service officer and I meet with clients and process their claims for benefits. As the Senior Veterans Service Officer I perform administrative work in advising armed forces veterans and their dependents of benefits available under federal, state, and local laws. My work involves legal representation of clients in assisting them in determining eligibility for veteran's benefits. I assist in completing and submitting required forms, obtaining necessary legal documents, medical reports and other data as required by law or in support of claim.

I file and process veterans' service-connected and non-service-connected disability claims; claims for state and federal benefits. I ensure that all paperwork is completed and submitted properly.

I counsel veterans on issues they may be facing and direct or refer them to the appropriate professional services.

I assist clients in securing Department of Veteran Affairs education benefits at the federal and state levels.

I assist clients in applying for admission to the Nebraska Veterans Home system.

I assist surviving spouses in securing Department of Veteran Affairs death and burial benefits.

I advise veterans on the VA guaranteed home loan program and assist them in obtaining Certificates of Eligibility.

I assist veterans and dependents in obtaining missing or replacement military awards.

I assist veterans and dependents with applications to correct errors in military records.

I assist veterans with military discharge upgrade applications.

I attend community events and share information on the various veteran programs in the county and make oral presentations to groups, as requested, on topics pertaining to veterans' affairs.

The employees of the Lancaster County Veterans Service Office are committed to "Care for Those Who Shall Have Borne the Battle". The Service Center is a county agency required by state statute and funded by the county. Our mission is to provide assistance and support to veterans residing in Lancaster County, their spouses, surviving spouses, family members, and dependent children through the pursuance of veterans' benefits at the County, State, and Federal level. This is accomplished by:

Putting Veterans and their families first as they were the first in defending our country,

Providing assistance and counseling to veterans and their families,

Initiating and completing claims to be submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office, Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs VA Medical Clinic or appropriate office as required with accuracy and professionalism,

Being available to best provide services to veterans,

Providing an office of competent and well educated staff,

Identifying and supporting academic opportunities for education and training,

Developing and promoting professionalism among fellow Service Officers,

Serving as a trusted and respected partner in collaboration with other agencies when assisting veterans.

The Veterans Service Center continues to provide top notch service to the more than 20,000 veterans and dependents in Lancaster County.

The four member staff of service-connected disabled veterans has a combined 44 years of experience working with veterans.

New office location has been a real hit for our clients and parking has never been an issue.

New office is more than likely the nicest veterans' service office in the state.



New office waiting room with military branch flags



Entry to waiting room.

New computers are much appreciated by the staff.

Challenges will be replacing retiring personnel in the near future, hard to replace experienced employees.

Whole staff enjoys helping their fellow veterans and families by improving their lives on a daily basis.