

Retired Soldier Bulletin

September 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

1 – RAD 2023

2 – Survivor Assistance Guide

2 – Fort Bliss Directory of frequently called numbers

3 – From the Desk of the RSO

3 – Fort Bliss Thrift Shop

3 – Freedom Crossing at Fort Bliss

4 – Army Echoes

4 – Post Retirement Handbook

Soldier For Life Retirement Services Office (SFL-RSO)

Located at 503B Pershing Road, Rooms 123 and 125, the SFL-RSO provides the following retirement services:

- Post and Pre-Retirement Survivor Benefit Plan Counseling
- Assist and advise retirees and annuitants with pay related issues such as:
 - ✓ Change of Address
 - ✓ Change of Direct Deposit
 - ✓ Change of Beneficiary for Arrears of Pay
 - ✓ Federal Income Tax Withholding
 - ✓ State Income Tax Withholding
 - ✓ Assistance to Surviving Spouses
- Information/guidance regarding the Uniformed Services Former Spouse's Protection Act (USFSPA)
- Information/guidance with Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) and Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP)
- Guidance in obtaining copies of lost documents (i.e., DD Form 214, retirement orders and medical/dental records) and re-issuance of military awards
- Information/referrals on a myriad of entitlements including DEERS/ID Cards, Veterans Affairs (VA), TRICARE (Medical/Dental), Social Security Medicare and other local benefits
- Publish annual Retired Soldier Bulletin for Retired Soldiers and their survivors
- Publish Survivor Assistance Guide (SAG)
- Conduct Annual Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) activities
- Provide limited free Notarial Services

RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY 2023

Mark your calendars! This year's Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) will take place 12-13 October. Golf Scramble will be at the Underwood Golf Complex on Thursday, 12 October beginning at 0800. The ID Card/DEERS and Legal Assistance offices will offer walk-in basis services that Thursday and Friday as well – no appointment necessary! Flyers with more information will be distributed throughout the installation and various Veteran Service Organizations beginning in August.



Don't miss out on the RAD Main Event scheduled for Friday, October 13, 2023, 0800-1400 at the Centennial Club Banquet and Conference Center. Last year was something special. If you missed it, the NCO Academy performed their Echoes Through Time! We'll have our usual array of participants from different Veteran Services Organizations as well as

the mini–Health Fair that William Beaumont Army Medical Center consistently conducts every RAD. Guest speaker will be Froylan “Froy” Garza, Executive Director/CEO of the El Paso VA Health Care System (EPVHCS).

SURVIVOR ASSISTANCE

When a Retired Soldier dies the Next of Kin (NoK) should immediately contact this office so that we can brief the NoK of all benefits they may be entitled to and the many agencies that need to be notified in order to make those benefits happen. Of particular importance is the Defense Finance and Accounting Service - Cleveland (DFAS-CL). This stops the Retired Pay of the deceased Retired Soldier. If it is not stopped, this could result in family members being indebted to the government, causing delays in getting other benefits started – such as the Arrears of Pay and Survivor Benefit Plan. We have developed a Survivor Assistance Guide to inform Retired Soldiers and their Families about the process in preparing well ahead of time for a Retired Soldier’s passing. For further Information or to find out how you can obtain a copy of this guidebook, please contact the SFL-RSO. The Survivor Assistance Guide will also be available at the RAD.

FORT BLISS FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS

Soldier for Life - Retirement Services Office (915) 568-5204/569-6233	Fort Bliss Rod and Gun Club (915) 568-2983
Soldier For Life - Transition Assistance Program (915) 568-3870/568-7996	Army Emergency Relief (AER) (915) 568-4706
Commissary (DECA) (915) 568-3121	Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) (915) 568-5970
ID Card/DEERS (915) 569-6036	Legal Assistance (JAG) (915) 568-7141
Military Lodging (915) 565-7777	FMWR Activities (915) 568-3500
Pharmacy –WBAMC (915) 742-1200 Refill	Freedom Crossing (AAFES) (915) 562-7200
Army Community Service (915) 569-4227	American Red Cross 24 Hour Line (877) 272-7337
Veterans Administration - El Paso (915) 564-6100	TRICARE—West (844) 866-9378
Fort Bliss National Cemetery (915) 564-0201	Fort Bliss and Old Ironsides Museums (915) 568-5412

FROM THE DESK OF THE RSO

It's hard to believe another year has come and gone. Seems like just yesterday I was preparing the 2022 Fort Bliss Retired Soldier Bulletin. What's that? You didn't receive yours in the mail? Most Retired Soldiers have not received any since 2019 due to the failure of what we called the Retiree Address Finder (RAF). The RAF was the system that we used to obtain all of your addresses for mailing purposes. Even though we have published this bulletin yearly, it was only available to those who came in and picked one up or requested it via email or mailing. It was pushed out to several of the borderland's Veteran Service Organizations. This year it will be mailed to all Army Retired Soldiers or their Surviving Spouses who reside in our area of responsibility – all of New Mexico and West Texas. Unfortunately, Army G1 is still working on being able to include our sister services; therefore they were not able to be included. So if you have friends from any of our other branches of service who would like to receive a copy of this newsletter, please encourage them to call or email us requesting their copy. Or you can direct them to the **Fort Bliss RSO website** to download their own copy of the latest newsletter.

Website? "Where's this website," I hear you asking? It's super easy to get to now. Go to the main Fort Bliss website at <https://www.home.army.mil/bliss/>, then under TOP LINKS you'll see RETIREMENT SERVICES OFFICE. ←Click on that and you're there! You'll see our walk-in hours, phone numbers, both "Pre" and "Post" Retirement Services that we offer, as well as a link to the most current newsletter. Shout out to our Public Affairs office for putting this together for us.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to extend to you my personal invitation to this year's Retiree Appreciation Day. Like last year it will be a 2-day event; unlike last year it will be conducted on a Thursday and Friday. So mark your calendars for both days or just one. October 12 and 13. October 12 will be our Golf Scramble, sponsored by Airstream this year – NO COST TO YOU! But make those reservations before all the sponsored slots fill up. Call or email us for more information. October 13 will be at the Centennial Banquet and Conference Center. Breakfast will be served from 0800-0900 with music accompanied by the 1AD Band, followed by a short presentation keynote address from the Froy Garza, Director and CEO of the El Paso VA Healthcare System. Finally, stay for the health fair, Veteran Service Organization display tables, and job fair (for you younger Retired Soldiers).

Walter Basil
Retirement Services Officer
Fort Bliss, TX

FORT BLISS THRIFT SHOP

Located on the corner of Custer and Chaffee on Fort Bliss, Fort Bliss Thrift Shop is open from 9:30am-3:30pm Tuesday through Saturday. You may contact them at (915) 562-5451 or thriftshop@thefbsa.org. It is the pride and joy of the Fort Bliss Spouses' Association (FBSA) which has been around since the 1940s. They are committed to offering affordable items to our Soldiers and Fort Bliss Community, including our Retired Soldiers and their families. The FBSA uses the proceeds from the thrift shop to provide community non-profits with grants and their members and their local family members with merit-based scholarships. The Fort Bliss Thrift Shop not only welcomes shoppers, but volunteers are also accepted.

Donations

There is a red donation bin located in the rear of the Thrift Shop facing Custer and the Youthplex. We accept most items for donation however, please refrain from donating damaged, incomplete, soiled items and/or undergarments. Please drop off large donations (such as couches or furniture) during store hours.

They do not accept the following: car seats, bicycle helmets, tires, undergarments, socks, printers, computers, bed pillows, and tube TVs. They do not have the ability to dispose of large or unserviceable items. Please do not leave your bulk trash at their donation areas.



ARE YOU SUBSCRIBED TO THE ARMY ECHOES?

To be sure you have the latest Army Echoes, please visit:

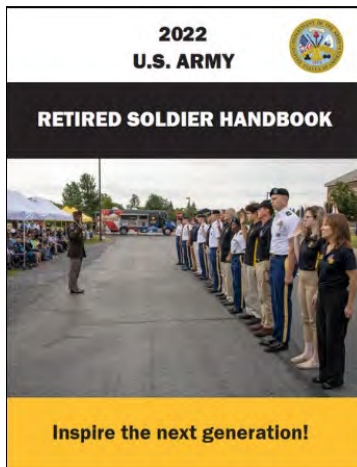
<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/army-echoes> and follow the instructions on how to subscribe, as well as download the latest electronic version on the App Store and Google Play.

GET THE LATEST RETIRED SOLDIER HANDBOOK

The Retired Soldier Handbook is available to download at:

<https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/post-retirement>. A complete listing of benefits and where to get them or get more information on them is always available – even overseas military installation privileges information can always be found in the latest version of this handbook. Don't delay, get yours today and stay up to-date on the following subjects and more.

- Records and Files / Employment Restrictions
- Military Status / Taxation of Retired Pay
- Medical Care / Retirement Homes
- Retired Pay and Special Compensations
- Social Security / Veterans Affairs Benefits
- Burial and Funeral Honors / Preparing Survivors
- Uniform Services Former Spouses' Protection Act



OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Headquarters, Fort Bliss

Soldier for Life - Retirement Services Office

ATTN: AMIM-BLH-MSR

503B Pershing Road

Fort Bliss, TX 79916-6812

Firstname Lastname

Street Address

City, State zip

The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of public business as required by the law of the Department. Articles published in this bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Department of the Army, or the Commander, Headquarters, 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss, Texas. This bulletin is published and made available to eligible Retired personnel, Spouses and Survivors. Inquiries or comments should be directed to the Soldier for Life - Retirement Services Office, 503 Pershing Road, Fort Bliss, TX 79916-6816.