



NAVIGATING THROUGH BENEFITS

FACILITATORS:

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Workshop Report

Veterans Services...

- A joint proclamation by the Charlotte City Council and Mecklenburg County Commission, issued in June 1949, established the Veterans Service Office.
 - **Mission:** To provide direct, in-depth, quality assistance to veterans of the military service, their widows, orphans or survivors, which could grant them initial -- or preserve existing benefit entitlement(s) from the US Department of Veterans Affairs. This assistance gives them a route to independent, self-sufficient living without public assistance from the County.
- **Veterans Services differs from Veterans Affairs**
 - [Veterans Services](#) is a Mecklenburg County Agency that advocates for veterans and helps to prepare claims. This local department has no approving authority.
 - [Veterans Affairs](#), however, is a Federal agency that adjudicates claims and is an approving authority.
- **Who is a Veteran?**
 - Prior to September 8, 1980, a person must have served at least 90 days active duty.
 - After September 8, 1980, a person must have served a minimum of 2 years active duty, unless medically discharged.
 - Service must be other than dishonorable.
 - In most cases, Reserve and Guard members must serve under federal activation for a specified period.
- **Benefits:** Disability compensation, [Disability](#) pension, Education funding, Home loans with no down payment, Medical benefits, Transportation to medical facilities, Life insurance, Burial benefits and [Widows pension](#).
 - Benefits are not subject to federal/state taxes;
 - Benefits are affected by: Retirement pay, disability severance pay, separation incentive pay (SSB/VS), National Guard & Reserve Pay.
- The State Home Program is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the States to construct or acquire nursing home, domiciliary and/or adult day health care facilities.
 - Hospital care may be included when provided in conjunction with nursing home or domiciliary care.
 - VA provides per diem payments to States for the care of eligible veterans in State homes (owned and operated by a State).

- VA assures Congress that State homes provide quality care through inspections, audits, and reconciliation of records conducted by the VA medical center of jurisdiction.
- Mecklenburg County Veterans Services contact information:
 - 704-336-2102
 - 700 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28202
 - [Website](#)

Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)...

- Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) is a consumer information division of the North Carolina Department of Insurance. SHIIP aims to:
 - Assists people with Medicare, Medicare Part D, Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage, and long-term care insurance questions;
 - Help citizens recognize and prevent Medicare billing errors and possible fraud and abuse through our NCSMP Program
- SHIIP provides education and assistance to North Carolina in three ways:
 - By operating a toll-free consumer information phone line Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm;
 - By training volunteers, including senior citizens, to counsel Medicare beneficiaries within their community about Medicare, Medicare Part D, Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage and long-term care insurance
 - By creating educational materials for consumers' use including the [Medicare Supplement Comparison Guide](#) on the website.
- There are more than 100 different insurance companies that sell Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage, long-term care insurance and other medical insurance products to people in North Carolina.
 - Because there are so many companies, and because the Medicare system is so complex, SHIIP was created to act as an objective information service for people with Medicare.
 - Trained SHIIP volunteers are available in all 100 counties of North Carolina.
 - If you are in Mecklenburg County and need to schedule an appointment with a SHIIP Volunteer Counselor, contact one of the following listings:
 - [Tyvola Road Senior Center](#) (704-522-6222)
 - [Shepherd's Center](#) (704-365-1995)
- North Carolina Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) contact information:
 - 1-800-443-9354 or (919) 807-6900
 - [Website](#)

Social Security Administration...

- Times have changed and many tasks that once had to be completed in-person can now be completed in the comfort of your own home either online or by calling the Social Security Administration's (SSA) toll-free 800 number.
- **What you can do online if you are *not* already receiving benefits:** Apply for benefits, find out if you qualify for benefits, estimate your future benefits.
- **What you can do online if you already *are* receiving benefits:** Change your address or telephone number, get a replacement Medicare card, request a Proof of Income letter, get a Form 1099 / 1042S Social Security Benefit Statement.
- **Best Reasons for calling the toll-free 800 number:** To start direct deposit, replace a lost or stolen Social Security card, change your address, ask about an overdue check, get a Social

Security Statement, verify benefits, ask about Medicare, make an appointment to file a claim, or ask general questions.

- **Social Security Administration contact information:**
 - 1-800-772-1213
 - [Website](#)

RESOURCES

- HANDOUT: Mecklenburg County Veterans Services [PowerPoint presentation](#)
- HANDOUT: [SHIP Combo Form](#)