

A Message Concerning COVID-19 and KCVAO Continuity of Operations

The KCVAO is dedicated to serving communities across the state. Staff continue to closely monitor local, state and federal mandates concerning the spread and management of the COVID-19 virus. Our agency follows mandates and guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Veterans Administration. As a state agency, we continue to operate under the Department of Administration workplace guidance.

Specifics to our programs are outlined below. We appreciate the continued support and understanding as we work to balance providing services within the framework established for these unprecedented times.

We continue to request that you do not leave a voicemail because we may not be able to remotely access voicemails and the limitations on the number of voicemails will be exceeded in a short time. Rather, we ask that you send an email as identified further in this document.

Updates will continue to be provided through Social Media. Our agency Facebook page is www.facebook.com/kansasvets. We strive to keep this document current; however, given this changing environment it is possible that local, state or federal mandates will take precedence.

CURRENT STATUS (6/19/2020)

Kansas Soldiers' Home (KSH) at Fort Dodge

The majority of the facility remains closed to the public. The museum, Sutler's Store and all other non-essential buildings are still closed. Access is limited to emergency personnel, medical staff, and essential deliveries only.

The Veteran Service Representatives are working remotely, and their offices remain closed at KSH. Services remain available with some conditions. For further information, refer to the **Veteran Services Field Offices** section below.

The facility is working on a phased re-opening plan in compliance with recommendations and requirements by our regulatory agencies. Details will be released once the plan is finalized and implemented.

As mandated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), visitation remains restricted to the public. Entrance to the facility is limited and everyone entering will be screened, will be required to adhere to social distancing requirements. **Any staff or essential visitors who have had illness or fever within the last 72 hours or believe they have had direct exposure to the COVID-19 virus will not be permitted entry into the facility.**

All resident group activities and outings continue to be suspended. The Kansas Soldiers' Home (KSH) knows that these limitations ultimately put a strain on you and your loved ones. The KSH continues to have SKYPE availability on each unit so that you can video chat with your loved one. In order to SKYPE you must have SKYPE availability on your cellular device and/or computer.

Questions should be directed to 620.227.2121. You may also monitor our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/kansassoldiers.home. Emails may also be sent to david.smith@ksh.state.ks.us.

Kansas Veterans' Home at Winfield

As mandated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), visitation is currently restricted and closed to the public. Access is limited to emergency personnel, medical staff, and essential deliveries only. Entrance to the facility is limited and everyone entering will be screened, will be required to adhere to social distancing requirements. **Any staff or essential visitors who have had illness or fever within the last 72 hours or believe they have had direct exposure to the COVID-19 virus will not be permitted entry into the facility.**

All resident group activities and outings have been suspended. The Kansas Veterans' Home (KVH) knows that these limitations ultimately put a strain on you and your loved ones. The KVH continues to have SKYPE availability on each unit so that you can video chat with your loved one. In order to SKYPE you must have SKYPE availability on your cellular device and/or computer.

The facility is working on a phased re-opening plan in compliance with recommendations and requirements by our regulatory agencies. Details will be released once the plan is finalized and implemented.

Questions should be directed to 620.221.9479. You may also monitor our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/KVHWFKS. Emails may also be sent to kpeelee@kcva.org.

State Veterans Cemeteries (Fort Dodge, WaKeeney, Winfield and Fort Riley)

All four State Veterans' Cemetery offices are open to receive customers and visitors. Kansas State Veteran Cemeteries will allow gravesite services with a limit of 100 people, following the State of Kansas and the National Cemetery Administration guidelines. This limit will not include the Cemetery staff, Honor Guards, or Ministers. We will follow the State of Kansas guidelines in phases for gathering limits.

Honors will be provided as available. Each Branch of Service, local Service Organization Honor Guards, and the Kansas National Guard will have their own restrictions and guidelines that will be followed. The order of service may change to accommodate those guidelines. If honor guards are not available, Taps will continue to be played for every veteran.

Social distancing guidelines will continue to be followed. Funeral services will be conducted under the shelter. Those planning to attend gravesite services are asked to arrive at the shelter no more than 15 minutes prior to scheduled service and depart immediately following the service to keep as minimal contact as possible. Families and Ministers will not be allowed at the gravesite until burial is complete. Once burial is complete, family is welcome to come back to visit the gravesite.

Staff has begun contacting next of kin of those interred during direct burials to schedule a service, if desired.

Individuals and funeral homes requesting services or have a need to schedule burials should stop by or call the cemetery of choice at the numbers listed below.

Fort Dodge 620.682.7564

WaKeeney 785.743.5685

Winfield 620.705.6300

Fort Riley 785.717.3050

Heidi Goff, Assistant Cemetery Director 785.639.1972

Emails may also be sent to Heidi.goff@ks.gov

Eric Rohleder, Cemetery Director 785.296.3976
Emails may also be sent to Eric.rohleder@ks.gov

Veteran Services Field Offices

Our Veteran Services Representatives at all field office locations will continue to telework through June 26. Field offices are projected to open on July 1, 2020 with the ability to schedule in person appointments except for the Ft Dodge Field Office which will continue to telework until further notice. Email addresses, phone numbers, and locations for each office are found on our agency website at www.kcva.ks.gov. Itinerant travel and outreach services remain suspended. Please be patient when visiting our field offices as added precautionary measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of all veterans and family members.

On July 1, 2020 all fax capabilities at the field offices will be restored. You may check the KCVAO website for fax numbers at each location. Please continue to use the central office fax number, 785.296.1462, the week of June 22 through the 26.

Our main office staffing is currently at full strength. Please contact 785.296.3976 if you require assistance with any of your state or federal veteran benefits. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

State Approving Agency

SAA personnel continue to telework for most approving agency duties. Certain on-site school visits will take place as required after July 1, 2020. You may contact Brigitte and Joel at their normal phone numbers and emails listed on our website at www.keva.ks.gov.

Fiscal Services

Fiscal services continue to provide full services with essential services being the priority. Staff assigned to Central Office continue to primarily telework and may be contacted through normal business contact. Fiscal staff in our state veteran nursing homes will be on-site however; offices will be closed to the public and strict social distancing and infection control protocols will be in place for staff. The Governor has been very clear in her communication that those who can work from home should, and fiscal services will continue to identify ways to utilize telework where and when possible.

Human Resources / Jobs at KCVAO

Human Resources Offices continues to be closed to the public. We are posting available positions. These are typically positions tied directly to patient care and/or COVID-19. Job vacancies are listed at www.jobs.ks.gov with an on-line process to apply. Our agency webpage provides contact information for all HR offices. Applicants must call for information and assistance.

06/19/2020