



Retiree Activities Office

Yokota AB, Japan

Newsletter

Volunteers Assisting the Retiree Community

Vol. 8, Issue 1

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This is a publication of the Yokota Retiree Activities Office (RAO). The information published here has been obtained from official U.S. Government sources and no use of copyrighted material has deliberately been made. Our goal is to provide information that we feel benefits the local military retiree community (military retirees and their spouses, and surviving spouses). While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information herein, no absolute guarantee of accuracy or currency can be given nor should be assumed.



Military Health System (MHS) GENESIS: What is MHS GENESIS and how will it affect the military retiree community? It's the new electronic health record for the Military Health System (MHS), that will support the provision and coordination of care for all TRICARE (i.e., service members, retirees, and family members) beneficiaries worldwide. This system has deployed in phases to medical treatment facilities worldwide and overseas locations are the last to implement MHS GENESIS. Full deployment of MHS GENESIS at Yokota AB will occur on October 28, 2023.

I'm sure that a many of our retirees are familiar with and have used TRICARE Online, Relay Health and the TRICARE Patient Portal to make appointments, request pharmacy refills, and communicate with their Primary Care Provider. The MHS GENESIS Patient Portal will replace these systems.

During the recent MHS GENESIS Town hall meeting held at the Officer's club I brought up the fact that many of our older retirees and surviving spouses do not use the current TRICARE online and the TRICARE Patient Portal to make appointments or request refills prescriptions. The telephone appointment line and Pharmacy refill lines are not being replaced, and patients can still use these to conduct business like they always have.

The transition will impact Yokota medical staff as they train and adjust to the new system. During the transition period, patients should anticipate appointment delays and limited availability for the first 2-4 weeks to routing medical services to include:

- decreased total number of available appointments.
- increased wait times for routine appointments
- increased wait times at support clinics such as the pharmacy, radiology, and laboratory.

It's recommended to schedule any pending appointments and refill routine medications at the pharmacy to last 30 days post the October 28, 2023, deployment date. Check out the links below for more information.

[https://www.health.mil/Search-Results?query=MHS GENESIS](https://www.health.mil/Search-Results?query=MHS%20GENESIS)

<https://yokota.tricare.mil/Getting-Care/Appointments-Referrals/MHS-GENESIS/>

Social Security Benefits and Assistance (SSA). Are you planning on applying for Social Security Benefits soon? If so, the Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo is the primary point of contact for all Social Security related matters for Japan. You can direct all inquiries related to Social Security and Social Security Benefits to the FBU using one of the three methods listed below:

[Online inquiry form](#)

Fax: (03) 3224-5144

Phone: (03) 3224-5000 (Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am to 12 noon) (The Embassy is closed on U.S. and Japanese national holidays)

Some facts you should know:

The earliest a person can start receiving retirement benefits is age 62. You would be getting a reduced benefit. If you wait to start collecting when you reach what Social Security calls Full Retirement Age (FRA) you would get 100% of whatever benefit you are entitled to. [full retirement age](#). You could also wait to start collecting after your FRA



If you have questions or need assistance, you can always stop by the RAO, and we will be happy to help you.



Flu Shots Are Now Available: The 2023 Flu Vaccine Campaign has already started here at Yokota. Flu shots are still available via mass vaccine lines. No appointment is required. This seasonal flu shot is still available for all Active Duty, and eligible beneficiaries 6 months and older at the following places and times.

Main Chapel: 3 Oct

Taiyo (West Side): 29 Sep, 4 Oct, and 5 Oct

At both locations the shots will be available from 0800 to 1700 hours.



Don't Forget to Give Your DFAS Retired Pay

Account a Regular Checkup: Keeping your account current will ensure that DFAS can get in touch with you if there is information you need to know about your retired pay and help make sure that outdated information doesn't cause problems for you or your beneficiaries down the road. Make a yearly plan to check your account.

1. Is your mailing address current? DFAS gets a lot of returned mail. If you have moved and haven't told them they won't know how to get a hold of you. Log into your myPay account and check "Correspondence Address" under "Pay Changes". Or check your mailing address on your Retiree Account Statement

2. Is your e-mail address in myPay current? Make sure you have an email address in myPay and that it is current. Email is the easiest and fastest way to communicate. It only takes a minute to check your email address in myPay. At the top of the myPay account menu, select "Personal Settings" and then in the side menu on the left select "Email Address" to view the email address(es) on file with DFAS. Make sure you indicate the primary email address you want DFAS to use.

3. Are your allotments correct? Review your allotments at least once a year. Look under “Pay Changes” for “Allotments” in the menu on the left side of your myPay account. Check each allotment and the allotment amounts. Keep in mind that some allotments cannot be changed using myPay. These include allotments that are paid via paper check, those for your federal benefits, such as FEDVIP, TRICARE and NSGLI, and those that are not voluntary allotments.

4. Is your income tax withholding correct? You can update withholding information in your myPay account. Click on “Federal Withholding” or “State Withholding” under “Pay Changes” in the menu of the left. You may also mail or fax a new IRS Form W-4P to request changes.

5. Have you had any major life changes? If you get married, lose a spouse, or have a child, that change can affect your account. Changes may need to be made to your Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) information or your Arrears of Pay beneficiary. To make changes to your SBP coverage, please send DFAS a copy of the official documentation (marriage license, divorce decree, death certificate or birth certificate, along with the request to update your account.

6. Is your Arrears of Pay beneficiary correct? Retirees should choose a beneficiary for any arrears of retired pay that may be due when they pass away. Make sure your designation is current and confirm that the beneficiary’s address is up to date. You can check this information by clicking on the “Beneficiary for Arrears” link under “Pay Changes” in the menu on the left side of your account in myPay.

7. Are your Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage and beneficiary correct? The SBP section of your Retiree Account Statement (RAS), available in myPay has SBP information if you participate in SBP. The most important information for you to check is type of coverage, and date of birth of your spouse or other beneficiary (if applicable). If you divorced since retiring, check your SBP for participation status. Under the law SBP coverage for a spouse ends with a divorce. Coverage for a former spouse does not continue after the divorce unless certain actions are taken. The link below has more information on this.

<https://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/provide/sbp/coverage/Spouse-or-Former-Spouse-SBP-Coverage-RAS/>

Yokota Military Retiree Association (YMRA): The next bi-monthly meeting of the YMRA will be held on Saturday 7 October 2023 at 0900 in the Spectrum lounge of the Yokota Enlisted club. This meeting is open to all military retirees, their spouses and surviving spouses of military retirees. The business side of things starts at 0900. If you want to join us for breakfast prior to the meeting, order by 0830 hours. This is a great time to meet and socialize with other members of the military retiree community.

Retiree Activities Office (RAO) Contact Information: Thanks to an influx of volunteer over the past few months, our current hours of operation have been expanded. We are now open Monday through Friday from 0900 – 1500. Closed on U.S. Federal Holidays and Family Days.

Location: Yokota AB, building 535 (MFRC), room 108

Telephone: DSN: 225-8324: From off base/mobile phone: 042-552-2510 ext. 58324. If you call and no one is here, please leave a voice message and someone will get back to you.

Email: Yokota.rao@us.af.mil

Our current volunteers:

Monday: 0900-1200 Manny DePaiva, 1200-1500 Matt Brinker

Tuesday: 0900-1200 Steve Town, 1200-1500 Rod Bradish

Wednesday: 0900-1200 Tony Cohns, 1200-1500 Eric Warner

Thursday: 0900-1200 Lloyd Jack, 1200-1500 Gary Dezell

Friday: 0900-1200 Manny DePaiva, 1200-1500 Marin Watkins