



Retiree Activities Office

Yokota AB, Japan

Newsletter

Volunteers Assisting the Retiree Community

Vol. 7, Issue 3

December 2021

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.

Social Security Announces a 5.9% Benefit Increase for 2022:



Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 5.9 percent in 2022.

The 5.9 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits

payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2022. Increased payments to approximately 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2021. (Note: some people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits). The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2022 are announced. Final 2022 benefit amounts will be communicated to beneficiaries in December through the mailed COLA notice and *my Social Security's* Message Center. (Source: SSA.gov)

This COLA increase of 5.9% will also be reflected in other government pensions such as military retired pay, SBP, VA and OPM.

DFAS News:

News for Military Reserve and Guard Gray

Area Retirees: DFAS created a new kind of myPay account especially for Military Gray Area Retirees! This account will help you stay connected to important news and updates between the time you retire from Service and the date you're eligible to receive retired pay.

Find out how to log on and update your contact information so you never miss a message: <https://www.dfas.mil/grayarea>
(Source: www.dfas.mil)



Keeping you DFAS Account Updated:

Did you know that if you don't update information in your retired pay

account, it could cause problems for your loved ones? Especially when it comes to the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP).

Informing DFAS about life-changing events promptly is one way to make sure your dependents are taken care of. Promptly notifying DFAS ensures the correct premiums are billed and your loved ones will not face challenges in receiving their SBP annuity payments.

Below are two examples of common life events and the deadlines for changing your SBP coverage:

At retirement, you're single with no children. After retirement, you marry or have a child. Notify DFAS within ONE YEAR by sending them a DD Form 2656-6 and a copy of the marriage or birth certificate if you want SBP coverage.

You divorce and elect former spouse coverage. Your former spouse passes away and you later re-marry. Notify us within ONE YEAR of your re-marriage by sending us a DD Form 2656-6 and a copy of your new marriage certificate if you want SBP coverage for your new spouse.

Find out more about changing SBP coverage: <https://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/provide/sbp/change>.
(Source: *dfas.mil*)

Get an Early Start to Tax Season:

The 2021 tax season will be here before you know it. The first step in preparing for tax season is to make sure you have an active myPay account and your mailing address is up-to-date. If you do not have a myPay account, now is the perfect time to get started. Accessing your 1099-R through your MyPay account is the quickest to get it.



If you or someone you know needs help with creating or accessing a MyPay account the staff at

VA Overseas Military Services



Coordinators

(OMSCs): At the RAO we often receive inquiries from veterans living here as to the availability of certain VA benefits in Japan. Not being experts on the VA

benefit system we usually refer them to the OMSCs.

VA Overseas Military Coordinators are available to assist transitioning Service members, U.S. Veterans living or working overseas, and their families and dependents with VA benefits.

Prior to the Covid pandemic the OMSCs were making regular monthly visits to the Yokota Airman & Family Readiness Center (AFRC), and were seeing veterans face-to-face on an appointment basis. These visits were put on hold, and no firm date when they will resume.

The OMSCs are still in country to give assistance and can be reached via email at:

Yokota/Tokyo Area (Yokosuka, Japan)

omscjapanyo.vbavaco@va.gov

The Yokota AFRC also has a listing of specific OMSCs by name and contact information. The AFRC can be reached at: DSN 225-8725, or from off base at: 042-552-2510, ext. 58725

Medical Group Updates:



Closure Dates: The 374 MDG has announced the following closings during the month of December 2021.

Thursday, 16 December -

For monthly training

Thursday & Friday 23 & 24 December - Christmas Holiday

Friday 31 December - New Years Eve

Routine appointment and services will not be available during this time.

The Urgent Care Clinic and Inpatient Unit will remain OPEN for all urgent and emergent healthcare.

Covid Vaccinations: COVID vaccine appointments are open to all 18 and older beneficiaries on the below day(s):
(Must book an appointment using links below, no walk-ins)

When: 9 Dec 21 @ 0800-1100 (Moderna: 1st, 2nd & booster)

Where: Immunization Clinic

When: 9 Dec 21 @ 1300-1600 (Pfizer: 1st, 2nd & booster)

Where: Immunization Clinic

When: 14 Dec 21

Where: Taiyo Community Center
Pfizer (12 and older): 0800-0915
Moderna: 0945-1130
Janssen: 1145
Pediatric Pfizer: 1300-1700
Pfizer appointments: <https://informatics-stage.health.mil/YokotaCOVIDApp>
Moderna appointments: <https://informatics-stage.health.mil/Yokota1COVIDApp>
Janssen appointments: <https://informatics-stage.health.mil/Yokota2COVIDApp>
Pediatric Pfizer appointments: <https://informatics-stage.health.mil/Yokota3COVIDApp/>
14 December will be the last COVID Vaccine offering for 2021. Appointments will resume in January 2022.
(Source: AFMS - Yokota 374 Medical Group Facebook page)

Getting Ready for Tax

Season: The RAO made a call to the 374 AW Legal Office and was informed that they will again be offering free income tax preparation service.



No other information as to when they will open and the hours of operation is available at this time. The RAO will get the word out as soon as we know.

This is a free service manned by volunteers that has been available to all eligible ID Card holders in the past. Military retirees and surviving spouses have benefited from having their taxes prepared and filed for free.

Yokota Military Retiree Association

(YMRA): Beginning in 2022, the YMRA will be holding quarterly meetings. The meeting venue is still at the Yokota Enlisted Club, with a start time of 0900. The meetings will be held on Saturday, on the following dates: January 15th, April 2nd, July 2nd, October 1st. Mark your calendars. If there are any changes to this schedule we will notify by e-mail.

It's been the pleasure of the RAO staff to have assisted the retiree community this past year; we look forward to doing it again in the coming year.

Manuel DePaiva - Director
Rodney "Rod" Bradish - Staff member
Anthony "Tony" Cohns - Staff member
Lloyd Jack - Staff member

RAO Contact Information:

Located: Building 535 (A&FRC), room 108

Office Hours:

Monday 0900 - 1200

Tuesday 1200 – 1500

Wednesday 0900 – 1200

Thursday 0900 – 1200

Friday 0900 - 1200

Closed U.S. Holidays and Base FamilyDays

The above hours are subject to change based on the availability of our volunteers. If you plan on scheduling a visit to our office on a particular day its best to call our telephone number or drop us an e-mail to confirm someone will be there to assist you.

Telephone: DSN 225-8324, from off-base 042-552-2510, extension 58324

Voice mail: Leave a message with your contact information and we will get back to you.

E-mail: yokota.rao@us.af.mil

Facebook: go to www.facebook.com and search for Retiree Activities Office Yokota Air Base. We keep this page up-to-date with information we feel is relevant to the retiree community.

