



# TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

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## News Release

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### **Federal Government Shutdown Begins to Impact Texas Veterans Commission**

**TEXAS** –Now in its second week, the federal government shutdown has begun to impact one of the three programs at the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) that receive federal support or funding: the Claims Representation and Counseling program.

The TVC Claims Representation and Counseling staff, including the State Strike Force and Fully Developed Claims Teams, are located in 39 offices throughout the state including the two U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Offices, VA Medical Centers, VA Clinics, and military installations/county offices, but the staff located in the Waco and Houston VA Regional Offices and at Fort Hood are impacted by the closures that began Monday as a result of the federal shutdown.

The TVC Claims Counselors located at the Waco and Houston Regional Offices are still able to come to the office and work on claims and appeal cases that are already in the system, but those counselors will not be able to see Veterans at the regional offices. Working together with the VA, TVC has placed temporary TVC Claims staff at the VA Hospital in Waco and Houston for Veterans who need to see a TVC Claims Counselor in person for help with their claim. The TVC Claims staff at Ford Hood has been temporarily relocated to the Killen Heights Vet Center in Harker Heights.

“Even though we may be affected by the federal government shutdown while Congress continues to negotiate a resolution, TVC will continue our mission to serve the Veterans of Texas,” said Thomas Palladino, Executive Director of TVC. “Texas Veterans deserve to maintain the highest quality of life and well-being through our program areas, and we are working with our federal partners to ensure that our services continue unimpeded.”

TVC will continue operations to provide the highest level of service possible to Veterans in Texas, but if the shutdown continues through the end of October, two other TVC

programs will be further impacted: Veterans Employment Services and Veterans Education.

Program Impact:

#### Veterans Employment Services

The TVC Veterans Employment Representatives (VERs) are located in Texas Workforce Centers across the state and are funded through a federal grant that will not be impacted during the month of October. As such, TVC is relying on the guidance from the Department of Labor (DOL) that it can continue to operate under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. However, TVC will be operating Veterans Employment Services on funds that have already been provided, and those funds will be exhausted by the end of October.

Also the Texas Workforce Commission has indicated there are sufficient state and federal funds to allow workforce services to continue through the end of October in the offices where TVC VERs are located.

#### Veterans Education Program

Veterans Education functions as the State Approval Agency and is under contract with the VA to determine those programs of education and training within the state which may be approved for Veterans training and for which eligible Veterans and their families may receive GI Bill educational benefits.

Though there is no immediate impact on the Veterans Education Program, the shutdown has the potential to create backlogs in processing school and program approvals that are submitted to the VA for review and database entry, which may delay payments to both Veterans and institutions.

For more information on the services provided by the Texas Veterans Commission, please visit [www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov).

#### Texas Veterans Commission

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to Veterans and their families in the areas of disability claims assistance, employment services, education benefits and grant funding. Over 200 skilled counselors in 75 cities provide one-on-one guidance to Veterans and their families to ensure they receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled. For more information, go to [www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov).

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