



# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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[Mid-CitiesMedical.com](https://Mid-CitiesMedical.com)



## VA to expand caregiver program for legacy Veterans

**VA News** – Great news for Veteran families and caregivers. The VA is extending eligibility for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) through September 2028 for certain Veterans.

This extension means legacy participants, applicants, and their caregivers will remain eligible for three more years, supporting around 15,000 caregivers with continued access to vital services, offering added stability and peace of mind.

Part of VA's Caregiver Support Program, PCAFC supports family caregivers of eligible Veterans seriously injured in the line of duty with:

- Monthly stipends
- Education and training
- Respite care
- Mental health counseling
- Travel reimbursement
- CHAMPVA health coverage (if eligible)

To learn more about CSP, contact your local team or reach out to the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274.

## Need help with VA health care travel costs?

VA News – If you're eligible, VA may reimburse you for travel expenses like mileage, tolls, parking, and pre-approved meals and lodging (up to 50% of the government rate). Your caregiver may be eligible for reimbursement, too.

The Beneficiary Travel Program covers mileage and common carrier reimbursement and special mode transportation (when authorized). You may be eligible if you:

- Have a 30% or higher service-connected rating
- Are traveling for a service-connected condition
- Are attending a compensation or pension exam
- Receive a VA pension or have income below the VA pension limit
- Have vision impairment, spinal cord injury, multiple amputations, or are in a VA rehab program

The fastest and easiest way to get reimbursed is by filing a travel claim online. **NOTE:** Be sure to submit receipts for processing. Visit the VA's beneficiary travel webpage to check your eligibility and submit a claim.



## Advanced Travel Notice Requirements

Due to a growing number of patients neglecting the required two-week notification for travel, we want to reiterate the importance of timely communication. This policy is essential to ensure proper coordination and to avoid service disruptions.

Failure to provide at least 14 days' notice may result in the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) declining to cover transportation costs. In such cases, patients will be responsible for:

- Coordinating and paying for their own oxygen services
- Arranging any necessary services at their end destination
- Covering all associated travel costs until VAMC coordination is reestablished

**NOTE:** To ensure availability and proper coordination, we strongly recommend submitting your request at least 14 days in advance, with 30 days' notice being ideal.

This policy applies not only to outbound travel but also to return trips. Patients planning to return to the area should contact us between 14 to 30 days prior to travel to ensure their request is documented, necessary paperwork is completed, and their name is added to the appropriate branch's route.

While we make every effort to accommodate all patients, Mid-Cities Medical cannot guarantee services for requests made with short or no notice. Early planning is key to ensuring smooth coordination and uninterrupted care.



## Fire Safety Goes Beyond “Just Smoking”

As patients using oxygen, it is crucial to remain aware of potential fire hazards. While oxygen itself is not flammable, it acts as an accelerant. This means that when combined with heat or an open flame and a fuel source such as clothing, skin, or hair, it can lead to a fire. Like gasoline on a woodpile, oxygen increases the risk of combustion, but a fire will not start unless heat, flames, or sparks are introduced.

As you move around your home and community, it's essential to recognize heat sources that could pose a danger to you, your family, and others. Always remember that anything that generates heat, has an open flame, or produces sparks presents a fire risk for you. Stay alert for potential fire hazards such as gas or propane appliances, barbecue grills and fire pits, candles, incense burners, cooking equipment with heating elements, matches, lighters, and various tools.

Patients and caregivers often emphasize “Smoking” when considering oxygen safety, but it's important to think beyond cigarettes and vape pens. Instead, focus on identifying heat sources by asking, “What’s hot?” “What’s dangerous?” and “What could ignite my oxygen?” Always prioritize oxygen safety by turning off your oxygen, staying at least 25 feet away from your equipment, and waiting 15 minutes before engaging with any source of fire, heat, or open flame. **Your life, health, and safety should always be your top priority.**



## Holiday Calendar



### AUGUST

- 7th Purple Heart Day
- 14th National Navajo Code Talkers Day
- 19th National Aviation Day
- 21st National Senior Citizens Day
- 26th Women's Equality Day
- 27th Lyndon B. Johnson Day (TX)

1st Tuesday runs 08-29-25

*\*Mercedes only*

1st Monday runs 08-04-25

1st Tuesday runs 08-05-25

1st Wednesday runs 08-29-25

*\*Redlands only*

3rd Wednesday runs 08-20-25

3rd Thursday runs 08-21-25

4th Thursday AND 4th Friday runs 08-28-25



### SEPTEMBER

- 1st Labor Day – **OFFICE CLOSED**
- 9th California Admission Day (CA)
- 11th Patriot Day
- 18th Air Force Birthday
- 19th National POW/MIA Recognition Day
- 26th American Indian Heritage Day
- 28th Gold Star Mother's Day

2nd Monday runs 09-08-25

3rd Monday runs 09-15-25

*\*Mercedes only*

1st Tuesday runs 09-02-25

1st Monday runs 09-03-25

2nd Monday runs 09-29-25

4th Monday runs 09-22-25

1st Monday runs 09-29-25

*\*Redlands only*

3rd Wednesday runs 09-17-25

3rd Thursday runs 09-15-25

4th Thursday runs 09-25-25

4th Friday runs 09-26-25



# Important Health Contact Numbers


**EMERGENCY**  
**DIAL 9-1-1**

**EMERGENCY SITUATION**  
**DIAL 7-1-1**  
*Use if you have a TTY and cannot obtain emergency services.*

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**  
**DIAL 2-1-1**

**NON-EMERGENCY OR DOWN EQUIPMENT**  
Phone: TEXAS (888) 450-6676  
Phone: AZ & CA (833) 986-4267

**YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING**  
Phone: (800) QUIT-NOW  
Website: [www.SmokeFree.gov](http://www.SmokeFree.gov)  
[www.BeTobaccoFree.gov](http://www.BeTobaccoFree.gov)

**HOW TO STAY SAFE WHILE USING OXYGEN IN THE HOME**

**VETERANS CRISIS LINE**  
**DIAL 9-8-8**  
Email: [ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net](mailto:ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net)

**VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM**  
Phone: (855) 260-3274  
Website: [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
Website: <https://tinyurl.com/52uvkwu9>

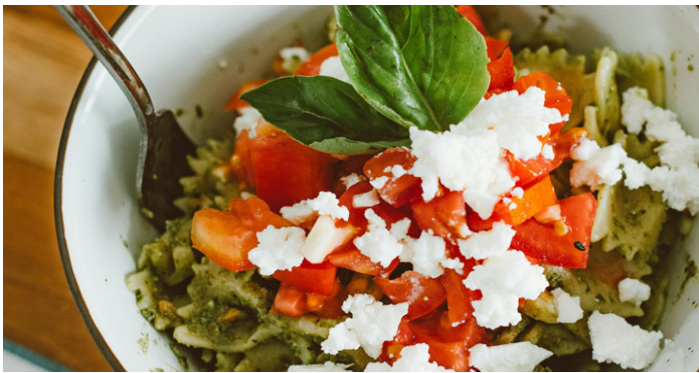
**REPORT ABUSE. BREAK THE SILENCE.**  
Phone: (800) 252-5400

**SPEAK-UP CAMPAIGN**  
Website: <https://tinyurl.com/5n68nt29>  
*Rights patients have if they feel they are being discriminated*

## Pesto Pasta Caprese Salad

Rotini pasta, pesto, grape tomatoes, fresh mozzarella balls, and fresh basil is a delicious twist on the traditional Italian salad.

Prep Time: 10 mins      Total Time: 20 mins  
Cook Time: 10 mins      Servings: 6



- 1 ½ cups rotini pasta
- 3 tablespoons pesto, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ¼ teaspoon granulated garlic
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ cup halved grape tomatoes
- ½ cup small (pearlini) fresh mozzarella balls
- 2 leaves fresh basil leaves, finely shredded

**Step 1** – Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil; cook the rotini at a boil until tender yet firm to the bite, about 8 minutes; drain.

**Step 2** – Mix pesto, olive oil, salt, granulated garlic, and black pepper in a bowl; add rotini. Toss to coat. Fold in tomatoes, mozzarella, and fresh basil.

## Word Search

American  
association  
brotherhood  
carpenters  
day  
developed  
first

founder  
general  
government  
holiday  
joiners  
labor  
local

machinists  
Monday  
movement  
municipal  
ordinances  
public  
puzzle

secretary  
September  
word  
years

N	R	M	U	Y	Z	H	M	N	N	L	B	R	Y	Z	L	B	T	Q	X	M	W	N	M
E	D	G	B	S	E	N	C	N	A	I	D	R	O	P	N	M	S	D	C	H	W	L	C
D	O	V	M	K	S	T	X	S	C	A	R	P	E	N	T	E	R	S	O	S	S	L	P
T	H	Q	C	R	E	G	P	Z	C	K	F	W	L	F	W	F	E	X	H	T	O	U	M
N	G	C	Q	Z	C	S	Q	C	K	V	D	A	H	G	S	K	L	E	M	Y	Y	W	U
E	E	A	J	O	R	H	H	C	V	Z	B	X	D	X	R	E	Z	N	T	F	S	V	N
M	R	O	Y	D	E	H	N	H	C	O	E	R	Z	R	A	C	Z	L	H	G	I	T	I
N	I	B	X	A	A	X	A	O	R	J	O	O	S	G	E	Z	U	G	A	Z	F	K	C
R	U	W	U	B	R	W	V	Z	A	W	V	L	O	O	Y	R	P	V	Z	B	L	F	I
E	G	Y	W	C	Y	J	N	M	R	S	J	P	R	L	C	Z	B	P	R	O	I	T	P
V	C	D	D	D	O	M	O	H	R	Y	S	J	J	Z	M	F	Z	O	C	H	O	G	A
O	M	H	L	I	Z	V	J	D	A	L	Y	O	S	Z	J	P	T	A	T	F	R	C	L
G	K	W	N	L	E	L	F	D	W	M	F	V	C	F	O	H	L	Q	H	H	D	V	D
D	M	E	A	M	D	A	V	J	E	Y	G	O	A	I	E	C	S	Y	M	A	V	F	J
X	R	S	E	Z	T	R	O	C	P	K	A	P	U	R	A	A	Z	A	A	Q	S	Y	O
S	F	N	S	O	B	E	K	K	C	Y	U	D	H	N	M	T	C	B	Y	T	B	A	E
O	T	A	E	C	J	N	C	C	A	B	W	O	N	H	D	H	I	G	S	Q	C	D	M
W	L	C	P	P	A	E	E	T	L	I	O	F	S	O	I	E	S	O	G	L	M	I	E
S	F	I	T	W	T	G	A	I	E	D	L	H	G	N	M	W	R	T	N	I	R	L	T
M	G	R	E	T	Q	I	C	I	O	M	I	P	I	L	R	E	X	L	R	Q	R	O	Y
S	O	E	M	J	D	G	D	O	Y	C	N	S	D	E	P	O	L	E	V	E	D	H	Y
X	Y	M	B	Y	Q	U	E	K	D	O	T	W	H	O	L	I	G	Z	O	L	F	W	R
O	G	A	E	A	B	R	F	N	D	S	M	M	Z	E	E	Z	D	U	D	U	W	H	P
L	I	P	R	D	B	Z	S	T	S	R	I	F	O	G	F	X	X	I	J	Y	T	F	G