

# Local veterans can receive benefits such as cell phones, new VA ID card

John Gerheim

Veteran's  
Affairs



**Y**our Lumpkin County Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee is in the process of improving your new veterans' website, making it more user friendly to access answers to a host of questions you might have regarding benefits, military discounts and publications, medical resources and numerous other topics.

We are veterans helping veterans and your website can be retrieved at [www.lumpkincounty.gov/veterans-affairs/](http://www.lumpkincounty.gov/veterans-affairs/)

Should you not be familiar with this local organization, our Mission Statement is "To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to recognize those residents of Lumpkin County who have honorably served our nation; to promote the welfare of the citizens of Lumpkin County, paying particular attention and devotion to the veterans of this county."

Our meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. in the Lumpkin County Administration Building (old courthouse) at 99 Courthouse Hill in Dahlonega. It is an open meeting and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

If you are a U.S. military veteran or know a vet who for some reason needs or wants a cell phone, but it doesn't fit into the current budget, please keep reading. There are several programs that provide mobile phones and minutes service to income-eligible residents as part of the following government-funded assistance programs.

These programs are intended to help individuals stay connected to family members, schools and child care providers, be reachable to potential employers and be able to communicate in case of an emergency.

They provide a free mobile phone and a free monthly allotment of minutes, text messages, and data each month. If you are currently participating in a federal or state assistance program, you are very likely a viable candidate. If not, the company will determine if you qualify based on your income information. It costs nothing to find out, and if you don't have access to a computer with internet, then journey over to the library and use theirs.

To determine if you qualify, access the following companies that indicate they provide services in our area of Georgia:

- LifelineAssistanceProgram.com
- Access Wireless: 888-900-5899
- Life wireless: 888-543-3620
- Safelink wireless: 800-723-3546
- SouthernLINC Wireless: 800-818-5462

As with most products and services, it pays to shop around and determine which one you prefer.

No longer will a veteran need to visit a VA Medical Center or Regional Office to submit a request for a VA photo ID card. Veterans will use [vets.gov](http://vets.gov) to initiate a request and upload required documentation. If eligible, your Veteran photo ID Card will be mailed directly to you. You will need to upload a copy of your driver's license or passport, along with a photo to obtain this card. You will receive your ID card in the mail at no cost to you within about three weeks. This program will begin November 1, 2017.