

April 21, 2014



2014 Veterans ‘Stand Down’ event planned for April 26

SARASOTA COUNTY — The Sarasota County Health Department wants local veterans to have easy access to the services, benefits and basic quality of life needs they have earned in service to our country.

The 2014 Veterans “Stand Down” event, which connects veterans to vital services, will take place from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 26, at the William L. Little Health and Human Services Center (Health Department), 2200 Ringling Blvd. in Sarasota. Additional services will be offered at the Payne Park Auditorium, a short walk away. Veterans should bring their ID (VA card or DD-214 form), if available.

There is no cost to attend and bus passes are available in advance by calling 941-366-2224, ext. 146, or attendees will be reimbursed the day of the event with a receipt. The “Stand Down” event is a way for veterans not already receiving services to get access to the many providers and available support in a one-stop setting.

Veterans who attend the “Stand Down” will be able to get help in accessing VA benefits and services. Housing assistance also will be available for homeless veterans. Local organizations providing mental health and substance-abuse treatment, and legal and employment services will have representatives on hand to supply information and referrals. The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (formerly known as Sarasota County Health Department) Health in Motion Mobile Medical Unit will be parked nearby where no-cost blood pressure, blood sugar (diabetes) screenings, and HIV testing, as well as health education will be available. In addition, attendees can get help with finding a primary health care provider.

Because of the significant interest in haircuts last year, there will be a team of barbers, hair stylists and nail technicians from Manatee Technical Institute on hand again. Nonperishable food items, personal-care items and VA surplus items also will be provided. The Salvation Army will provide food and refreshments.

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“We are dedicated to helping veterans within our community,” said Phil Gorelick, vice president of Programs at Jewish Family & Children’s Service (JFCS), including its Operation Military Assistance Program, a federally funded program to assist veterans with obtaining or maintaining permanent housing. “The Stand Down allows us to connect with homeless veterans providing access to resources they may not be aware exist, which supports the process of helping them to become self-sustaining.”

Partner organizations for this event include Jewish Family & Children’s Service of the Suncoast Inc., Florida Veterans for Common Sense, Bay Pines Healthcare Services, The Salvation Army-Sarasota Command, All Faiths Food Bank, Manatee Technical Institute, the City of Sarasota, the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County, and Sarasota County Government. Goodwill Manasota, the Florida Department of Children and Families, and National Veterans Homeless Support Inc. are also partners for this event.

For more information, visit <http://www.JFCS-Cares.org/> or call 941-366-2224, ext. 146.

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MEDIA NOTES:

Interviews with representatives of organizations providing veterans services will be available 8 a.m. - noon at the Health Department location, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota.

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

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Jewish Children’s & Family Service of the Suncoast, Inc. Media Contact:

Phil Gorelick 941-366-2224, ext. 110, pgorelick@JFCS-Cares.org