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NEWSROOM

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

MEETINGS AND AGENDAS

E-NEWSLETTER

EVENT CALENDAR

April 5, 2013

MEDIA NOTE: Interviews with representatives of organizations providing veterans services will be available from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Health Department location, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota.

Media contact: Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058;
Dianne_Shipley@doh.state.fl.us

Project contact: Chip Taylor 941-366-2224, ext. 184, cell 941-356-5734;
ctaylor@jfcs-cares.org

2013 Veterans 'Stand Down' event planned for April 20

The 2013 Veterans Stand Down event will take place from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 20. Registration for the event and most of the services for veterans will be available at the Sarasota County Health and Human Services (Health Department) building, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota. Other services will be offered at the Payne Park Auditorium, a short walk away.

There is no cost to those who attend. Event organizers say that the Stand Down is a way for veterans not connected to the system to readily access available services 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 will have representatives on hand to provide referrals for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Additionally, legal services and employment assistance services will be available, along with free health screenings at mobile medical units that will be accessible in the nearby parking lot. These include the Sarasota County Health Department's Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit and the Hedges Health Mart Pharmacy's Community Awareness Resources & Education Services (CARES) Mobile Unit.

Veterans should bring their ID (VA card or DD-214 form), if available.

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. Non-perishable food items, personal care items and VA surplus items such as blankets also will be provided. The Salvation Army will provide food and refreshments.

"Veterans are an essential part of our community. Unfortunately, the transition from active duty to everyday civilian life can be overwhelming," said Chip Taylor, director of the Operation Military Assistance Program (OMAP), a federally funded program initiated by Jewish Family & Children's Service of Sarasota-Manatee Inc. to assist veterans with obtaining or maintaining permanent housing. "The city of Sarasota will be a partnering organization this year, meaning that we will have participation from all levels of government – federal, state, county and city – as well as the nonprofit sector. This will help ensure that homeless veterans know about all the benefits and services they may be qualified to receive."

Partner organizations for this event include Jewish Family & Children's Service of Sarasota-Manatee Inc., Florida Veterans for Common Sense, VA Bay Pines Healthcare Services, The Salvation Army-Sarasota Command, All Faiths Food Bank, Manatee Technical Institute, the city of Sarasota, Hedges Health Mart Pharmacy, the Sarasota County Health Department and Sarasota County government. In addition to the city of Sarasota, new partnering organizations this year are Goodwill Manasota, the Florida Department of Children and Families, and National Veterans Homeless Support Inc.

For more information, visit <http://www.jfcs-cares.org/> or call 941-366-2224.

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