

Hi - My name is Blake Hyfield and I am proud to serve in the capacity of Post Service Officer for VFW Post 1614 in La Crescenta CA. I am a U.S. Army veteran having served in Vietnam with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade in '69-'70. I am also a volunteer at the VA Sepulveda Outpatient facility in North Hills.

As a Post Service Officer, I welcome questions about the VA, about VA disability benefits and other types of VA benefits, and offer any assistance I can give with these things. If anyone does wish to apply for VA benefits, here are some basic things to consider.

**INTENT TO FILE** - There is no longer an informal claim, it has been replaced by the Intent to File. If you are going to file a claim and need some time to gather your medical evidence then file an Intent to File on VA Form 21-0966. You can mail it, fax it to the intake center in Janesville, or submit it to the VARO. Once received by the VA you will have up to one year to file the claim. Two other ways to "file" intent to file is to start a claim on EBenefits or a VSO starts a claim using the Stakeholders Enterprise System. We can usually assist you in submitting this if we represent you. Both representation and Intent to file can be accomplished in a face-to-face meeting at your convenience.

**REPRESENTATION AND THE POWER OF ATTORNEY** - I can assist you with your claim/appeal only if the VFW represents you before the VA. There is no charge for representation and you do not have to be a member of the VFW. Representation is accomplished by completing a VA Form 21-22 which is then signed by an Accredited Service Officer. You may also appoint a Service Organization if you have a Prime EBenefits account. These are placed online for our review and acceptance. The advantage of EBenefits is that once we accept the POA we can see all your files stored at the VA.

**CONTACT INFORMATION** - You can contact me directly by calling the Post at (818) 541-1336, or sending an email to the Post at [post1614@gmail.com](mailto:post1614@gmail.com). Your call or email will be returned with 24 hours.