

FLORIDA VETERAN HEALTH HEROES



2017



MISSION

TO PROTECT, PROMOTE AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL PEOPLE IN FLORIDA THROUGH INTEGRATED STATE, COUNTY AND COMMUNITY EFFORTS.

VISION

TO BE THE HEALTHIEST STATE IN THE NATION.

VALUES

INNOVATION

WE SEARCH FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS AND MANAGE RESOURCES WISELY.

COLLABORATION

WE USE TEAMWORK TO ACHIEVE COMMON GOALS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS.

ACCOUNTABILITY

WE PERFORM WITH INTEGRITY AND RESPECT.

RESPONSIVENESS

WE ACHIEVE OUR MISSION BY SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS AND ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS.

EXCELLENCE

WE PROMOTE QUALITY OUTCOMES THROUGH LEARNING AND CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT.



VETERANS SPECIAL TRIBUTE

Special Tribute From Dr. Philip

The Florida Department of Health is committed to serving members of the United States Armed Forces, veterans and their families. The Department is proud that over 1.5 million veterans call Florida home, and our continued goal is to make Florida the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.

Military veterans and their families face many challenges. The Department can play a part in supporting our military veterans by offering several licensure support services to qualified military families. One service the Department offers is the Florida Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response process (VALOR), which provides expedited licensing for honorably discharged veterans and their spouses seeking licensure in most health care professions. Veterans and spouses who apply through the VALOR process receive a waiver of most licensing fees.

We also offer additional armed forces licensure support, including an opportunity for physicians to receive a temporary certificate to practice in areas of critical need, renewal exemptions for active duty service members holding a health care license in Florida, and temporary licensure for spouses of active duty service members who possess a valid license in another state, the District of Columbia, or any possession or territory of the United States. Through these programs, we are creating a veteran-friendly regulatory environment that encourages veterans and their spouses to choose Florida for their health care practice after active duty.

I am proud to recognize some of Florida's veterans who protected the health of others while serving our nation in our third edition of Florida Veteran Health Heroes. We are thankful for their honorable service to the people of Florida and the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Celeste Philip".

Celeste Philip, MD, MPH
State Surgeon General and Secretary

OUR HEROES



DONALD “DON” ERBES, DMD

Dr. Donald “Don” Erbes always knew he wanted to be in the military because his father served in World War II. In 1965, he graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and enlisted in the Army. He was deployed to Vietnam and served as an airborne ranger infantry officer.

Even though Dr. Erbes loved serving and made lifelong friends in the Army, he knew his family was worried about his safety and welfare. After he received his third Purple Heart and recovered from wounds he received in Vietnam, he requested a reassignment to spend his remaining military career stateside.

Dr. Erbes was assigned to a post teaching ROTC at Ohio State University (OSU). He also provided career counseling to sophomores at OSU, which made him reflect on his own career path. His life’s dream was to be an Army officer, so he felt lost after leaving the military.

In 1970, at the end of his military career, Dr. Erbes took a job with AT&T in Texas. He decided that corporate America wasn’t for him, so he chose to return to school to become a dentist. In 1976, he graduated from dental school at Baylor University and moved his family to Florida to open his private practice.

Dr. Erbes contributed 40 years of selfless service to the dental profession through his private practice and community involvement. He founded an indigent care dental program in Alachua County and served in leadership roles at many area organizations, including the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, the Gainesville Economic Development Council, Gainesville United Way and the Gainesville Sunrise Rotary Club. He also taught at the University of Florida (UF) College of Dentistry and was an active member of the Florida Dental Association (FDA). As a former FDA liaison to the Florida Board of Dentistry, he contributed to the development of legislation to help military veterans and their families become licensed in the dental profession.

Dr. Erbes has received many awards for serving his profession and the people of Florida, including the Award for 10 Years of Excellence in Teaching and Service to UF College of Dentistry in 1992, the 2006 FDA Leadership Award, the 2011 FDA Service Award, the 2012 FDA Dentist of the Year Award and the 2015 FDA Schwartz Lifetime Achievement Award.

OUR HEROES



COLONEL DIANE FLETCHER, RN

Colonel Diane Fletcher was interested in the field of nursing from a young age. She began her career as an assistant charge nurse at the West Georgia Medical Center in LaGrange, Georgia. Colonel Fletcher's parents were both in the military, so she chose to continue the tradition by joining the United States Air Force (USAF).

Colonel Fletcher began her military career in 1983 at the USAF Hospital at Reese Air Force Base in Texas. Since then, she has served the USAF in several positions around the world. For much of her career, Colonel Fletcher served as a flight nurse. While stationed at Fort Dix in New Jersey, she served as the Aeromedical Evacuation Mission Support branch chief and directed the efforts of the largest Air Mobility Command Battlelab.

Throughout her career, Colonel Fletcher has worked as a member of the aeromedical evacuation team on U.S., European and intra-theater flights. One of her most unforgettable and touching career moments is when she served a wounded soldier while returning from an aeromedical evacuation. When the flight landed, the soldier thanked Colonel Fletcher for her care and handed her a Two-Star General's coin that he had received for his military service.

In the final years of Colonel Fletcher's career, she served as the Chair of the International Expeditionary Education and Training Department at the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. There, she directed a multidisciplinary department and performed as the 711th Human Performance Wing Chief Nurse and nursing advisor. She was able to train aspiring military medical staff and serve as a mentor and career counselor to 35 nurses in four different states.

Colonel Fletcher has continued to serve the military community in her role as Assistant Chief Nurse at the Tallahassee Veterans' Affairs Outpatient Clinic, which supports 18 counties in Florida, Georgia and Alabama. She manages registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, telehealth licensed practical nurses, health technicians and registered dietitians. She enjoys working in this role and appreciates the opportunity to serve her fellow veterans.

OUR HEROES



JAIME LUIS TORRES II, MD

Dr. Jaime Luis Torres II grew up in a military family, traveling the world and witnessing the health disparities of people living in impoverished nations. These experiences shaped his desire to become a medical doctor and help those in need. He followed in his father's footsteps by joining the United States Army in 1998. There, he followed his dream to attend medical school, later graduating from Weill Medical College of Cornell University with a Doctorate of Medicine in 2002.

In 2004, Dr. Torres was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. During his deployment in which he held the rank of captain, Dr. Torres was entrusted with the medical care of over 3,000 soldiers. He also served in the infantry and volunteered to go on various combat missions. After finishing his three-year tour of duty with the 25th Infantry Division, he completed his residency in Internal Medicine and was promoted to the rank of major.

Following his residency, he provided medical care to wounded warriors at the Schofield Barracks Warrior Transition Unit in Hawaii. In 2009, he was deployed again as the Brigade Flight Surgeon of the 10th Mountain Combat Aviation Brigade in Fort Drum, New York. In 2010, he began another 12-month combat deployment in Afghanistan. Dr. Torres served the remaining years of his military career as the SACEUR Flight Surgeon at SHAPE Healthcare Facility in Belgium.

In 2015, Dr. Torres left Belgium and transitioned into civilian private practice. He decided to live in Florida and obtained licensure through the Department of Health's Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) process. Currently, Dr. Torres practices medicine at Access Health Care Physicians, LLC in Beverly Hills, Florida. His practice focuses on providing high quality health care, and his clinic recently received accreditation as a Patient-Centered Medical Home through the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

OUR HEROES



CHARLES D. LLANO, DDS

Dr. Charles D. Llano, DDS, has a passion for serving others as a health care professional. In 1974, he earned a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Tennessee Dental College in Memphis. He also served as an officer in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, achieving the rank of Captain (06) in the Dental Ready Reserve Branch.

In 1976, Dr. Llano moved to Florida and established his dental practice. He has served the dental profession and the community at large with distinction for the past 41 years. He serves on the attending staff of the Lakeland Regional Medical Center and helps children and young adults with facial deformities through his participation with the Central Florida Cleft Palate Team.

Dr. Llano is a Fellow of both the American College of Dentists and the Academy of General Dentistry, and has achieved Master status in the American Dental Society of Anesthesiology College of Sedation in Dentistry. He is a past president of the Florida Dental Society of Anesthesiology, the Polk County Dental Association and the West Coast District Dental Association. He also has served as a consultant and examiner to the Florida Board of Dentistry.

In June of this year, Dr. Llano was honored with a special recognition award from the Florida Dental Association for his many years of distinguished service to the dental profession and to community.

As a testament to his passion for serving those in need, Dr. Llano recently participated in an all-volunteer effort to airlift food, water and other necessities to the Florida Keys in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. Dr. Llano, a licensed pilot with his own single-engine aircraft, and other pilots from across the country volunteered with AERObridge, a nonprofit organization that coordinates relief flights to disaster-ravaged areas.

OUR HEROES



FRANCISCO M. GRANDA, DMD, MS, MD

Dr. Francisco M. Granda, DMD, MS, MD has made service to his country and his profession a lifetime endeavor. He served in the United States Air Force for over 25 years and retired with the rank of Colonel. During his active duty service, Dr. Granda was awarded numerous medals for meritorious achievement. He is a Gulf War veteran.

Dr. Granda completed his residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at the Air Force Hospital, Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery and possesses both dental and medical degrees, as well as a Master of Science degree in pharmacology. He has served the dental profession for over 41 years, and is licensed in Florida and Texas.

Dr. Granda divides his time between his private practice in oral surgery in Miami and his position as Adjunct Associate Professor and Chair of Oral Surgery at the University of Florida College of Dentistry, Hialeah Campus. There he lectures on multiple topics related to oral & maxillofacial surgery. He is also an American Heart Association-certified instructor of Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) training.

Dr. Granda has served as an expert witness/reviewer for the Florida Department of Health for many years. He also performs anesthesia inspections for the department's Board of Dentistry.

Dr. Granda holds memberships in the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and the American College of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

ARMED FORCES

Health Care Licensing Support Services

The Florida Department of Health is committed to honoring veterans, members of the military and their families. We are sensitive to the many challenges military families face when required to relocate and are dedicated to easing their financial burden.

Florida Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response Process (VALOR)

If you are a military veteran, or the spouse of an active duty service member seeking licensure in most health care professions, Florida now offers expedited licensure processing. To qualify, you must apply for the license either six months before or after your honorable discharge from the United States Armed Forces or while your spouse is actively serving in the United States Armed Forces. There is no application fee, licensure fee or unlicensed activity fee for veterans and spouses of active duty service members who qualify for this type of license.

Military Veteran Fee Waiver

If you are a military veteran, you may be eligible for a waiver of the initial application and licensure fees for all health care professions. Your application must be submitted within 60 months of discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. The initial license fee, initial application fee and initial unlicensed activity fee will be waived for veterans returning from service. This waiver does not include examination fees.

Reimbursement for Veterans' Professional Examination Costs

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs will reimburse eligible applicants for the cost of licensing and certification examinations, not to exceed \$2,000 per test. These licensing and certification examinations must be generally deemed necessary to pursue a trade or profession. Please see <http://www.fdva.org/saa/LiCert.asp> for potential reimbursement for examination costs.

Temporary Certificate to Practice in an Area of Critical Need

If you are an active duty member or military veteran who served at least 10 years in the United States Armed Forces, you may be eligible to practice in an area of critical need. This certificate limits you to practicing in designated areas of critical need, and it is only available to physicians who have a license in another jurisdiction of the United States. There is no application fee for physicians seeking this certificate. This certificate is limited to physicians who will not receive compensation for their service.

Military Platform - Temporary Certificate for Active Duty Military Health Care Practitioners

Persons serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and serving in the United States Public Health Service may be eligible for licensure under the Military Platform. The Military Platform is a military training agreement with a non-military health care provider that allows active duty health care practitioners the opportunity to treat patients admitted to non-military facilities, while also allowing them to develop and maintain the technical skills necessary to meet present and future health care needs of the U.S. Armed Forces. To qualify, applicants must be an active duty service member and hold a valid license as a health care professional in another state, the District of Columbia and/or any possession or territory of the United States. The license is valid for six months, but is renewable with proof of continuing military orders for active duty assignment and evidence of continuation as a military platform participant.

RENEWAL

Licensure Renewal Provisions

You may be able to keep your license in good standing and be exempted from certain license renewal provisions if you meet the following criteria:

- You are an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States
- You hold a Florida health care practitioner license in good standing with your profession's administrative board or the Department at the time of your enlistment
- You were entitled to practice or engage in your profession prior to joining the Armed Forces

If you meet these criteria, your license will be kept in good standing without you having to register, pay renewal fees, or perform any other license maintenance act. This provision extends through the duration of your active duty service and for a period of six months after discharge, provided you are not actively engaged in your licensed profession in the private sector for profit.

Spouses of members of the Armed Forces of the United States who hold a Florida health care practitioner license in good standing may also be exempted from license renewal provisions, but only in cases of absence from the state because of his/her spouse's active duty assignment.

Initial Licensure Fee Waiver for Military Spouses

If you are the spouse of a military veteran, you may be eligible for a waiver of the initial application and licensure fees for most health care professions. To qualify, your application must be submitted within 60 months after your spouse's honorable discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. The initial license fee, initial application fee, and initial unlicensed activity fee will be waived for you, provided you apply for licensure within 60 months after your spouse is discharged from any branch of the United States Armed Forces. This waiver does not include examination fees.

Temporary License for Military Spouses

As the spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, you may be eligible to receive a temporary license to practice your health care profession in Florida. To qualify, your spouse must be on active duty and assigned to a duty station in Florida. In addition, you must hold a valid license as a health care professional in another state, the District of Columbia, and/or any United States territory or possession. The license is valid for one year.

The purpose of the temporary license is to allow you the opportunity to work in your respective profession while your spouse is assigned to a duty station in Florida. If you desire to practice beyond the expiration of the temporary license, you should begin the regular licensing application process as soon as possible.

To apply for a license or learn more about licensing options for veterans, active duty military members and their families, visit <http://flhealthsource.gov/valor>.

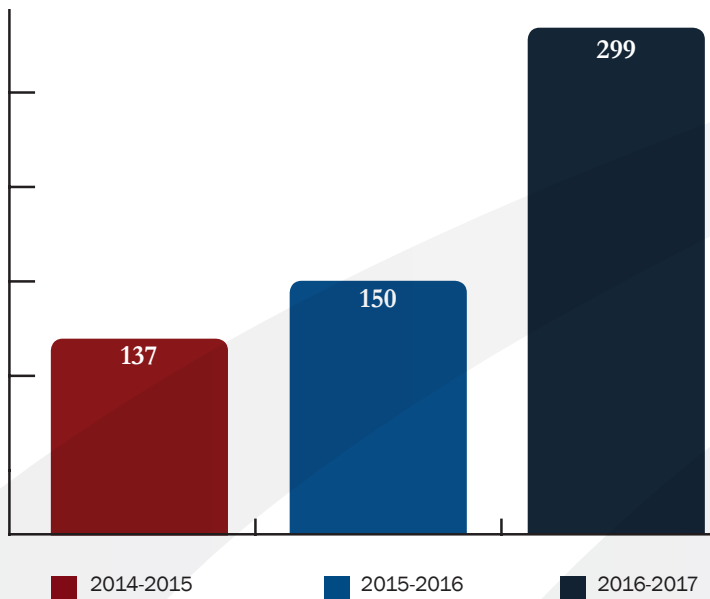
OUR COMMITMENT

The Division of Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) seeks to create a veteran-friendly regulatory environment to encourage military service members to choose Florida for their health care practice after active duty. A fee waiver program began in fiscal year 2013-2014 to ease the financial burden of applying for licensure. Participation has steadily grown over the years.

With the beginning of fiscal year 2016-2017, Florida lawmakers expanded the eligibility criteria of the Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) process to include spouses of active duty service members seeking licensure in most health care professions. During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, 299 military veterans and spouses were licensed through VALOR.

VALOR expedites the licensure process and is designed to issue licenses for all qualified initial applicants within one day. MQA is committed to helping ease the transition of military health professionals into civilian life, and seeks to encourage them to practice in Florida by making the licensure process one that reflects our gratitude for their service.

VALOR Applications Approved for Military Spouses and Honorably Discharged Veterans Fiscal Years 2016 to 2017



MILITARY AND VETERAN RESOURCES

The Department is pleased to provide the following information related to resources available for military members, veterans, and their families.

Employment/Business:

Employ Florida Vets

<https://veteran.employflorida.com/>

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

www.esgr.mil

Florida State Veterans' Homes Recruitment

<http://floridavets.org/were-looking-for-you/>

<http://floridavets.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Were-looking-for-you-tri-fold-brochure.pdf>

Florida Veterans' Business Assistance

www.floridasbdc.com

www.fptac.org

Benefits:

Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide

<http://www.bluetoad.com/publication?i=371864>

eBenefits: Gateway to Benefit Information

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>

Post-9/11 GI Bill and Veteran Education Benefits

www.gibill.va.gov

Florida Military-Friendly Guide

<https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/wp-content/uploads/2017-Military-Friendly-Guide.pdf>

Veterans' Resources:

Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Military and Veterans Assistance Program (MVAP)

www.myfloridalegal.com/MVAP

Florida Department of Financial Services -- Financial Frontlines Program

<http://www.myfloridacfo.com/YMM/FinancialFrontlines/>

Florida Department of Financial Services -- Small Business Program

<http://www.myfloridacfo.com/YMM/smallBusiness/Default.aspx>

Locate Military Records

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/>

Women Veterans:

Homeless Women Veterans

http://www.va.gov/homeless/for_women_veterans.asp

VA Center for Women Veterans

<http://www.va.gov/womenvet/>

VA Hotline on Health Care and Benefits for Women Veterans

1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636)

Women Veterans Health Care

<http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/>

Agencies, Departments, and Organizations:

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA)

<http://floridavets.org>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

www.va.gov

Florida Department of Military Affairs

<http://dma.myflorida.com/>

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Operation Outdoor Freedom

www.operationoutdoorfreedom.com

Florida Defense Alliance

<http://www.floridadefense.org/>

Florida Defense Support Task Force

<http://www.enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf>

Florida Veterans Foundation

www.FloridaVeteransFoundation.org

Veterans Florida

<http://www.veteransflorida.org/>

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Office of Service Members' Affairs

www.consumerfinance.gov/servicemembers

General Information:

MyFlorida.com

<http://www.myflorida.com/>

Returning Service Members

<http://www.oefoif.va.gov/>

Florida Military License Plates

<http://www.flhsmv.gov/specialtytags/miltags.html>

