

## **VETERANS CORNER**

### ***New and Material Evidence***

A veteran may reopen a finally adjudicated claim by submitting new and material evidence. New evidence means existing evidence not previously submitted to the VA. Material evidence means existing evidence that, by itself or when considered with previous evidence, relates to an unestablished fact necessary to substantiate the claim. New and material evidence can be neither cumulative nor redundant of the evidence of record and must raise a reasonable possibility of substantiating the claim. New and material evidence received prior to the expiration of the appeal period, or prior to the appeal decision if a timely appeal has been filed, will be considered as having been filed in connection with the claim which was pending at the beginning of the appeal period.

Once a decision is made, if VA receives or associates relevant official service department records that existed and had not been associated with the claim when VA first decided the claim, VA will reconsider the claim. These records may include service records that are related to a claimed in-service event, injury, or disease; additional service records forwarded by the Department of Defense or the service department to VA any time after VA's original request for service records; or declassified records that could not have been obtained because the records were classified when VA decided the claim. This does not apply to records that VA could not have obtained when it decided the claim because the records did not exist, or because the veteran failed to provide sufficient information for VA to identify and obtain the records.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran I.D. cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at [www.countyofkings.com](http://www.countyofkings.com).

**Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 852-2669; or e-mail [joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us](mailto:joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us).**