

For Immediate Release



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American Veterans Organization Cancels Convention *AMVETS National Convention Canceled Due to COVID-19*

LANHAM, Md. (May 11, 2020) – The United States’ most inclusive veterans service organization, which represents the interests of 18 million-plus American Veterans, has canceled its 76th National Convention today.

With its members’ safety and well-being in mind, AMVETS (American Veterans) canceled its annual meeting over public-health concerns, ongoing restrictions and uncertainties related to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Thousands of AMVETS’ national representatives were scheduled to meet in mid-August in Springfield, Ill. AMVETS has held this gathering annually, in different locations each year, since 1944.

“A large number of our members are categorized by CDC guidelines as being in high-risk groups. Their health and safety must always be our first priority,” AMVETS National Commander Jan Brown said.

Illinois has emergency orders in place to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, restricting public gatherings and mandating social distancing.

“We do not know what August will look like in terms of restrictions and infection rates,” Commander Brown said. “With that uncertainty still present, we reached a point that made impossible continuing the business end of planning.”

AMVETS National Executive Committee (NEC) unanimously approved a motion to cancel the annual national convention of veterans and their families for the first time in history.

While limited business and traditions will be held electronically, important activities, including election of national officers, will need to be put on hold for the year.

Local, state, and national AMVETS services will continue nationwide. That includes free assistance for veterans and their families filing disability claims, obtaining healthcare, finding gainful employment, conducting “Buddy Checks,” holding blood drives, delivering meals and volunteerism.

“Veterans serving veterans’ remains who we are and what we do,” AMVETS National Executive Director Joe Chenelly said. “With the nation in crisis, our members have voted to set our largest meeting aside for the year to focus solely on working around the country to best meet veterans’ most urgent needs, while still providing advocacy in Washington and state houses from coast to coast.”

Terms of current national officers, including National Commander Brown, are extended until a national convention may be safely held in 2021. Nationally appointed commission and committee chairpersons for AMVETS will also remain in their positions.

AMVETS, which is also known as *American Veterans*, is the nation’s most inclusive Congressionally-chartered veterans service organization, open to all who have served in the United States military and their families. We are veterans serving veterans since 1944. amvets.org

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