

STILL SERVING

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92 FSS/RAO, 7 W ARNOLD ST, SUITE C2A, FAIRCHILD AFB, WA 99011

Planning An In-Person Retiree Appreciation Day Event Planned Date of OCT 2022

Hopefully, the current Vaccination Mandate will improve conditions, so we can start in-person services with our Retiree and Surviving Spouse Community.

The Retiree Appreciation Day is hosted by 92d Air Refueling Wing service support agencies. Check the Fairchild Fun website, Retiree Activities Office page, for current information on event planning though out the year: [Retiree Activities - 92d Force Support Squadron - Fairchild Air Force Base \(fairchildfun.com\)](https://fairchildfun.com)

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Michael Knapp, TSgt (Ret), USAF, Fairchild RAO Director

The COVID Pandemic is still having a great effect on everything we do to manage our Military Retirement and Veteran Administration Benefits. Currently, our benefit service providers are cautious with face-to-face contact. Some service providers are teleworking from home and requesting you to manage your benefits online, rather than in-person, a phone call, or through the mail system. This is the new normal for doing business, but this requires you to have internet access with a computer, tablet, or through your cellphone. Do you need assistance with understanding and using the online access? The RAO team is ready to be your temporary guide and educator, contact us today.

You and your dependents still have access to the Commissary and Exchange, and all the Recreational Activities at Fairchild AFB.

Expect face mask requirements at all base locations, no exceptions, even if you have already received the COVID vaccinations. For more information about the fun things to do, connect online at the <https://fairchildfun.com> website. Also, we ask our Retired Military Community to help get the word-out to our Disabled Veteran Brothers and Sisters. They also have access to use these services on base.

The RAO email address is fairchildrao@yahoo.com. Send us your contact information to help us update you on your benefits and Fairchild AFB recreational activities.

If you don't have access to e-mail, please contact the RAO office at 509-247-5359.

Thanks for your Service to our Country!



TRICARE and BENEFEDS, 2021 update

Ref: Tricare Website, <https://tricare.mil>

Fairchild Medical Grp established a local **Patient Advisory Council**. The RAO Director is a team member and your representative for any issues, wherever healthcare is provided. None of your personal information is shared at the meetings. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Give your representatives a call for more information. (Michael Knapp or Rouen Sterling, 509-247-5359)

The current Tricare contractors for prime and select don't have offices at any military installations. Information is available online, as well as reviewing your premium payments and referrals. Use: <https://www.mytricare.com>

It's important to keep your information current at: <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/> .

If you need assistance with your account setup? Call our office at 509-247-5359, we are glad to help you.

Medicare patients should have TRICARE FOR LIFE as their supplement. Review the current guide at: https://www.tricare.mil/-/media/Files/TRICARE/Publications/Handbooks/TF_L_HBK.ashx .

Dental and Vision healthcare is a separate program and online registration is at: <https://benefeds.com> . The military retiree member will setup a BENEFEDS account and once approved, gives access to select the insurances offered via your zip code region. Every year the marketplace insurance enrollment period is during Nov/Dec. Our office offers enrollment assistance by appointment at 509-247-5359.





Defense Finance and Accounting Service, DFAS

Ref: DFAS Retiree Information Website

The My-Pay online portal provides you access to your retiree pay information, to manage your deductions, allotments, and bank deposit information. Connect at: <https://mypay.dfas.mil/> If you have trouble with the online account setup, use the contact information provided, so the DFAS personnel can talk you through setting up your account.

The DFAS general customer information website is at: <http://www.dfas.mil/RetiredMilitary/> Contains important information for Military Retirees of all branches, and also includes Guard and Reserve; this includes the Survivor Benefit and Annuitant program (SBP). (Fairchild AFB also has a Casualty and SBP representative on Fairchild AFB, contact the office at 509-247-4488.)

The DFAS Retiree Newsletter is posted at this site and is a great article to review every year. This will keep you up-to-date on current and future changes affecting your military retirement pay, to minimize unexpected surprises that can affect your account.

Click the 'Managing Your Retirement' tab, for instructions to directly manage the most relevant pay processes, such as: Change of Address, Retiree Account Statement, Your Taxes and more.

ID Card Services Appointments available for Retirees

Ref: DEERs ID renewal service and online appointment system

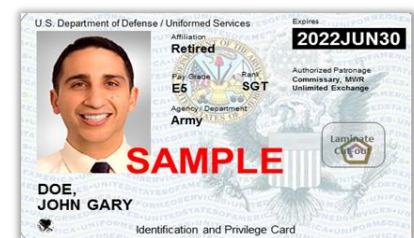
Walk-in service during COVID is available, face mask must be worn, no exceptions. To stream-line your visit and reduce your customer service wait time, request an appointment through the online website at: <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco> Click the 'ID Card Office Locator & Appointments' tab. Search for the Fairchild ID Card Center by the base zip code: 99011. Select Fairchild and pick the day on the calendar and book your appointment time. Your email address is required so you will receive a reminder notice. If the booking is unsuccessful or displays an error message during the confirmation process? Please start over, simply may be a case of someone picking the same day and time as you are, while online. In that case, you will have to request a different time for the day.

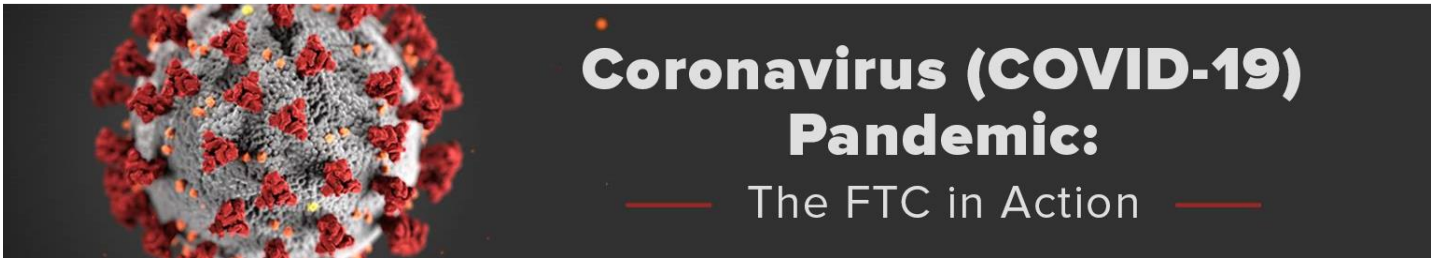
If you are traveling a long distance, it is advised for you to call 509-247-9292 to verify the DEERS computers are operational before you leave. Follow the voice prompts for DEERS. Could save you a wasted trip if the computers are down.

Don't have a computer? Call our office at 509-247-5359 to assist you.

Important step: After arriving to sign-in for service, ensure you **check the appointment box**. This informs the ID Card Center personnel that you have an appointment. (To be seen right away.)

Some retirees are disabled to the point that a caregiver is needed to assist them. Ask the ID Center personnel about the **Agent Letter Process**, to assign a person access to the base, to help you pick up items, for instance your medications at the base Pharmacy.





CORONAVIRUS SCAM WARNING

Ref: Federal Trade Commission Informational Website

The COVID Pandemic affects us all and the emerging additional threat of scams in this area must be taken seriously. Always challenge information, anytime you receive **unrequested contact** via your phone, email, United States Postal Service, or other social media sites. As elder Retirees, we are constant targets for scammers, who are trying to take advantage and steal our financial well-being that we've worked hard to acquire our entire life.

Visit the FTC website: [Coronavirus Advice for Consumers | Federal Trade Commission \(ftc.gov\)](https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus)

The COVID vaccines are provided at no cost to you! Don't post your proof of COVID vaccination on social media! Always request information about the vaccine from your medical provider! These warnings and more are available at the FTC website.

If you have the unfortunate experience of being scammed and it is successful or unsuccessful, then please report the incident to the FTC on the website. The more information we provide, the more we help this government agency combat these threats.

At our RAO Office, you can also report any local possible scams affecting Fairchild AFB and our Retiree and Surviving Spouse Community, 509-247-5359. We can help by working with base professionals to get to the truth, so you can take the correct action when these scammers come-a-calling.



The Oct 2021 Fairchild Retiree Appreciation Day was a Virtual Event this year. The online series of videos from the active duty and civil service personnel who provide service for our Retiree Benefits is available for your viewing at: <https://www.fairchildfun.com/retiree-activities>

All the professionals are ready to safely help you, while adjusting to the new normal for business with the current COVID Pandemic.

These personal set of videos, gives the Retiree an easy way to get most of your benefit questions answered simply from viewing each presenter's content. If you have further questions, please call our office at 509-247-5359. Our team is ready to research and provide answers for your issues.

COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019

Retirees Asking: Where to get Information on military installations dealing with the Pandemic??

Since the virus problems started, from 2019 to present day, a lot of different and sometimes confusing information is out there?? Mandatory Masking Requirements??? Covid Vaccination Mandate for Federal Employees and Active-Duty Personnel???? How does this all affect the RETIREES??????

The current Air Force COVID informational website is: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(af.mil\)](https://www.af.mil/COVID)

Please visit this Air Force website rather than falling prey to all the internet dis-information that is out there, appearing to be factual when it's NOT!

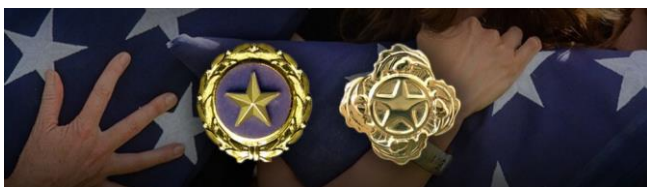
In short, our office receives calls and finger-pointing, and all of us serving at Fairchild AFB are aware of your frustrations.

Before you get frustrated, please visit this COVID information site regularly, and as always you can give us a call at 509-247-5359. Our team is glad to keep you apprised of how the Fairchild Wing is providing safe and continued support for our local Retiree and Surviving Spouse Community.

Your local RAO, Still Serving all of our Military Retired, Brothers and Sisters



UNITED STATES MILITARY



Remember Military Surviving Spouses.

Honor the legacy of their Husbands and Wives who gave their lives in service to our nation.

A Personal Story:

It's never easy to discuss the death of the most important person to touch my life. Yet too, the overwhelming grief on such a loss -- intermixed with the frustration of navigating a world of military-red-tape when as so much I never needed to interface in such ways before was overwhelming to say the least.

My life was bettered when I received a postcard reaching out from the Retiree Activity Center with a simple message that they can help navigate that unknown world. This, my lovely person -- is that post card, from me -- to you.

Don't isolate nor despair. I found volunteering with the R.A.O. helped me navigate that world and at the same time get my life moving forward again. What's more, I was able to rectify those difficulties that I was experiencing with my own accounts, benefits and features of being a surviving spouse. While I wasn't personally a military member - I'm now accepted as one of them through the multitudes of others I've helped. I encourage the surviving spouse to reach out - and while volunteering isn't a requirement, the bonus for getting life moving forward in positive ways was a major stress reliever. I am personally sending this invite to you -- move your life forward and reach out. Learn what benefits one can receive and what facilities are available. I'll always be available to help with all the considerable depth of my abilities.

Rouén,

Presidential Gold Star Spouse and Assistant Director

Fairchild Retiree Activities Office

Written Under the Authority of the Director of the Fairchild AFB Retiree Activities Office, Newsletter Publisher

DISCLAIMER: The Still Serving Newsletter is an unofficial publication written, edited and published by the Fairchild AFB Retiree Activities Office for the convenience of the retiree population which includes: **retirees, their spouses and dependent family members.** Neither the editor, nor the RAO staff, can guarantee the accuracy of information received from outside sources. The editor reserves the right to reduce the length of material to fit the space available. Any Comments, please send mail to 92 FSS/RAO, 7 W Arnold St, Suite C-2A, Fairchild AFB, WA 99011 or call (509) 247-5359. Michael Knapp, TSgt (RET), USAF, Editor (Fairchild RAO Director)