

# Veterans Legal Initiative News

*Providing pro bono legal services to U.S. Veterans in 14 counties*

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## **Coalition to Provide Legal Services to Veterans in 14-County Area**

*First Clinic September 24 at VFW Post 4709 in Conroe*

(Houston, Texas – September 1, 2011) Veterans in 14 counties in southeast Texas will have increased access to legal services through a new coalition of bar associations and legal communities beginning in September. The Houston Bar Foundation, the Jefferson County Bar Foundation and Fort Bend Lawyers Care have been awarded grants from the Texas Access to Justice Foundation to recruit and train attorney volunteers and to set up Saturday legal clinics where veterans can get legal advice and, if eligible, pro bono representation.

**The first clinic in the expanded program will be held from 9:00 a.m. until noon on Saturday, September 24, 2011 at VFW Post 4709, 1303 West Semands, Conroe, TX 77301. No appointment is necessary.** The Montgomery County Bar Association and The Woodlands Bar Association are assisting with the September 24 clinic.

The Veterans Legal Initiative will serve a veteran population of approximately 350,000 in Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Grimes, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, Montgomery, Orange, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller counties. Jefferson County will assist veterans in Chambers, Hardin, Jefferson, Liberty and Orange counties; Fort Bend Lawyers Care will assist veterans in Fort Bend County; and the Houston Bar Foundation (HBF) will assist those in the remaining counties. Other bar associations and legal groups in the 14 counties will partner in providing volunteers and facilities for the legal clinics.

The Veterans Legal Initiative will expand services already provided by the three grantees, including the HBF's weekly Friday afternoon clinics at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center and Saturday clinics in Jefferson and Fort Bend counties. A schedule of Saturday clinics throughout the 14-county area will be posted on websites early this fall and information will be distributed to veterans' organizations, social service agencies and other groups that serve veterans.

No appointment will be necessary to attend one of the clinics. Any veteran, or spouse of a deceased veteran, can receive advice and counsel from a volunteer attorney in any area of law, including family, wills and probate, consumer, real estate and tax law, as well as disability and veterans benefits. Veterans who need ongoing legal representation and who qualify for legal aid will be assigned a pro bono attorney to handle their case.

For more information on the Veterans Legal Initiative, contact the Houston Bar Association at 713-759-1133, the Jefferson County Bar Association at 409-835-8647 or Fort Bend Lawyers Care at 281-239-0015.

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