



HAWAII VETERAN

STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Introducing our New Office of Veterans' Services Director John P. Alamodin

We would like to welcome and introduce our new Office of Veterans' Services (OVS) Director Major John P. Alamodin. He started on June 16, 2024, and oversees a staff of 27. OVS is a division in the State of Hawaii, Dept. Of Defense.

On Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 1500 Major Alamodin was promoted to Lieutenant

Colonel by Colonel Janet Lundberg, State Surgeon, Office of the State Surgeon, Hawaii Army National Guard.

He comes to the state from the Good Samaritan Society – Pohai Nani where he served as the Senior Dir. since 2022. Some of the previous positions he held were as Clinic Dir. for the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Child and

Family Service, as the Deputy Dir. for the Ka Hale A Ke Ola Homeless Resource Centers in Wailuku, a Training and Community Outreach Coordinator for the Lincy Institute



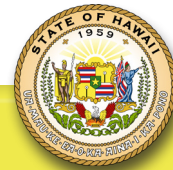
Pictured: COL Janet Lundberg and LTC John P. Alamodin (Photo by Jayme Nagamine)

(UNLV), Senior Social Worker for the Dept. of Veterans Affairs in Dallas, the Dir. of Health, Human Services and Housing for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and Executive Dir. for the King William Charles Lunalilo Home.

Dir. Alamodin is serving as a Lieutenant Colonel, Behavioral Sciences Officer in the Hawaii Army National Guard and served as Commander of the Medical Readiness Detachment 2021-22. He also served as a Behavioral Health Officer in Task Force Medical for the Joint Task Force COVID-19 response effort, and more recently served as a Behavioral Health

Officer in Charge for JTF-50 and Task Force Maui in support of the Maui wildfires emergency response and recovery efforts.

In 2011, Dir. Alamodin was direct commissioned into the Army for active-duty service at Fort Hood,



STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

**459 Patterson Road
E-Wing, Room 1-A103
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522**

**Governor Josh Green
Commander in Chief**

**Major General
Kenneth S. Hara
The Adjutant General**

**Lieutenant Colonel
John P. Alamodin
OVS Director**

**Jayme Nagamine
Editor**

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Texas. He has deployed overseas three times, initially in 2012-13 in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom as a Behavioral Health Officer in Charge with the 44th Medical Brigade. In 2014, he transitioned to the Texas Army

National Guard and deployed in 2017-18 as a Behavioral Health Officer in Charge for the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade in Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Spartan Shield in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Kuwait. Following this deployment, he did an inter-

state transfer to the Hawai'i Army National Guard and returned home. In 2022-23, he deployed again with the Texas Army National Guard with the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade for Joint Task Force Mustang in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Kuwait, and served as Senior Field Grade Behavioral Health Officer in Charge of a Combat Aviation Combined Joint Task Force for 1,500 Soldiers from Texas, Maryland, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New York, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i. Army National Guard units deployed in theater for Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Spartan.



Pictured Hawai'i Army National Guard Medical Readiness Detachment (Photo by Jayme Nagamine)

Please join me in welcoming Director Alamodin.

VA expands access to care and benefits for some former service members who did not receive an honorable or general discharge

VA NEWS

WASHINGTON — The Dept. Of Veterans Affairs posted a final rule amending its regulations regarding character of discharge determinations, expanding access to VA care and benefits for some former service members discharged under other than honorable conditions or by special court-martial.

When former service members with other than honorable discharges and bad conduct discharges (adjudged at special court-martial) apply for VA benefits and services, we carefully review their records to determine if we can provide them the requested

care and benefits. This process helps ensure that VA can provide services to deserving former service members – including certain individuals who faced discrimination, survived sexual assault or harassment, struggled with their mental or physical health, or faced other challenges while serving in the military.

VA's new regulation will expand access to care and benefits for certain former service members by:

Eliminating the regulatory bar for "homosexual acts involving aggravating circumstances or other factors affecting the performance of duty" as a bar to benefits. While

VA had already taken steps to ensure full and fair access to benefits for former service members discharged based on homosexual conduct, gender identity, or HIV status, this move further solidifies VA's commitment to reducing disparity for these groups in the adjudication process.

Creating a "compelling circumstances exception" for certain former service members: For certain former service members discharged for "willful and persistent misconduct" or an "offense involving moral turpitude," VA will now consider

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Director's Message

LTC John P. Alamodin

Ronald P. Han spanned three Governors' administrations and his accomplishments will have an enduring impact in our service to Veterans.

from August 30, 2023 to the start of my appointment. I am truly thankful for the considerable time and effort provided for a thorough orientation.

As I continue military service as a Behavioral Health Officer in the Hawai'i Army National Guard, I hope to bring in expertise that will help Veterans who are still in the Guard and Reserves to access support to continue their service, as well as ensure Veterans that are retired from uniformed service receive entitled benefits.

In our efforts to continue the mission, we will strive to help each Veteran to fully navigate the process to access benefits, which at times can be daunting. We have a great team in all Counties throughout the State, who are deeply committed and passionate to serve and will help every step of the way. Whether it's a simple inquiry or a complex claim, please reach out to us, and we will be there to help. I look forward to the journey ahead.

Aloha kākou,
My name is John P. Alamodin, Director, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the honor to serve our Veteran population throughout Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa to Brigadier General, Retired Bruce E. Oliveira, Civil-Military Programs Director for also performing the duties of the Director of the Office of Veterans' Services

Mahalo nui loa e Mālama Pono.

The work and legacy of Colonel



*Pictured above are some of the staff from the Office of Veterans' Services. 1st Row from left to right, John P. Alamodin, OVS Director, Mrs. Myoung Hara, Major General Kenneth S. Hara, Governor Josh Green M.D., BG (RET) Bruce Oliveira, Interim OVS Director, Melegalenuu Sene-Whitehead and Kimberly Magday
2nd Row from left to right, Lawrence Ilustre, Eric Chapman, Carolyn Visoria, Andrea Barringer, Yolanda Ehere, Jonathan Kimura and Yam Yi Lee
(Photo by Jayme Nagamine)*

**HAWAI'I
VETERAN
NEWSLETTER**

If you would like to receive an emailed copy of the Hawai'i Veteran Newsletter, please contact us at ovs@hawaii.gov.

Please feel free to pass along this newsletter to your friends and family. Mahalo for your continued participation.

New Employees at OVS

TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER ON OAHU

ANDREA BARRINGER
Veterans Services
Counselor

Ms. Barringer was born in Portsmouth, VA, but raised mostly in Moyock, NC, she grew up the second oldest of eight children. The most influential people in her life were her grandfathers, both Vietnam war veterans. Every generation in her family boasts at least three veterans from the time of the revolutionary war. Ms. Barringer joined the Army at 17 years old and she is the first female in her family to serve.



ERIC CHAPMAN
Veterans Services
Counselor

Mr. Chapman is a native to Memphis, Tennessee. He retired as a First Class Petty Officer after 20 years in the Navy 1987-2007, he is the 3rd generation of his family to serve active duty, his grandfathers, mother and son have all served.



LEON JAQUET
Veterans Services
Counselor

Mr. Jaquet comes from Clinton, Tennessee where he served as the Director, Veteran Services for Anderson County for over 16 ½ years. Mr. Jaquet retired from the Navy as a Senior Chief Petty Officer after 24 years of service.



ANTHONY SILVA
Veterans Services
Counselor

Mr. Silva has been a Combat Engineer with the HIARNG for 18 years. He served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and has been a member of HIARNG CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CER-FP) Search & Extraction team since 2007.

DANIEL K. AKAKA VA CLINIC IN KAPOLEI



LAWRENCE ILUSTRE
Office Assistant

Mr. Ilustre was born and raised in the Philippines and moved to the United States in 2017. He worked different types of jobs since he arrived in the islands. This is his first civil service job with the State of Hawai'i and he is grateful to serve the veterans who served the country. Mr. Ilustre has much love and respect for anyone who protects the sovereignty of the land of the free.



SABRINA KEPA`A
Veterans Services
Counselor

Ms. Kepa`a has worked with the state, federal and non-profit organizations for over 20 years to help individuals and families become self-sufficient. During her previous role, she was an advocate assisting veterans with obtaining benefits, employment and permanent housing. Ms. Kepa`a believes every interaction, positive or negative, teaches valuable lessons. Spread kindness, as you never know what others are going through.

New Employees

HAWAII STATE VETERANS CEMETERY IN KANEOHE



DANIEL Y.P. CHUNG
Cemetery Operations
Manager

Mr. Chung is a lifelong resident of Kailua and he is honored to serve the military communities, our fallen heroes and their ohana with the highest degree of respect and dignity. Mr. Chung would like to convey his deepest appreciation to veterans and their ohana for sacrifices made in defending the freedoms that we all enjoy today.



KALEOLANIA A. PARK
Office Assistant

Mrs. Park is a local girl born and raised here on O`ahu. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, cleaning, crafting, doing puzzles and learning about the origins of people, places, and things. Mrs. Park was the receptionist at Hawaiian Memorial Park Cemetery and Funeral Services and has grown a passion for working in death care and assisting grieving families.

MAUI OVS LOCATION



CHERYL GUZIKOWSKI
Veterans Services
Counselor
Maui OVS

Ms. Guzikowski joined the Maui team in April 2022. She is passionate about reducing the stigma of mental health care treatment and previously coordinated a medical clinic for the houseless on O`ahu. Veterans in her family served in WWII, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and Afghanistan. She is humbled by the opportunity to serve the Maui County Veteran community.

**COMING SOON A
SPECIAL AUGUST
HAWAII VETERAN
NEWSLETTER TO
COMMEMORATE
OUR PAST OVS
DIRECTOR RONALD
P. HAN**

VA expands access to care and benefits

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and determine if a compelling circumstances exception will permit VA to nonetheless provide care and services. Under this exception, VA will consider the former service member's length and character of service, mental and cognitive impairment, physical health, combat-related hardship, whether the person was the survivor of sexual abuse/assault or discrimination, and more. This new exception creates a new path for VA to provide benefits and services to deserving former service members.

Opening the door for previously denied service members to reapply: Because of these changes, former service members previously found ineligible for VA services may now be eligible for benefits and are encouraged to re-apply.

VA encourages former service members with other than honorable discharges and bad conduct discharges (adjudged at special court-martial) to apply for VA care and benefits today. Over the past 10 years, VA's eligibility determination rate for these former service members has been 75% – meaning that VA provided care or benefits to 75% of them (57,000+ former service members).

“We encourage former service members with other than honorable discharges to apply for VA care and benefits today,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “Although VA cannot change your discharge status, we want to provide you with any health care or benefits we can – and we will work with you every step of the way to do exactly that.”

“Too often, former service members believe that they cannot come to VA due to their discharge status – but the truth is that many former service members who were not discharged honorably can get health care or benefits from VA,” said Under Secretary for Benefits, Josh Jacobs. “When you apply – as with all VA benefits – we will do everything in our power to get to yes.”

VA has conducted extensive outreach to service members with other than honorable and bad conduct discharges adjudged at special court-martial in recent years, increasing the number who applied for VA care or benefits from approximately 1,700 in 2012 to more than 10,000 in 2023.

The VA character of discharge determination does not change the Armed Forces' characterization of service and has no effect on the former Service member's military discharge status. VA's determination is for VA benefits and services eligibility purposes only.

Any discharge characterized as “honorable” or “general – under honorable conditions” satisfies the character of discharge requirement for basic eligibility for most VA benefits. Former service members who did not receive those discharges are not automatically disqualified from receiving VA care or benefits. However, barring a ruling of insanity, VA does not provide benefits to service members who are discharged with a “dishonorable discharge;” service members who were discharged for desertion, mutiny, going AWOL for 180 continuous days, or espionage; or service members discharged by sentence of a general court martial, discharged in lieu of trial, discharged as a “resignation by an officer for the good of the service,” or discharged as a conscientious objector. VA does apply a compelling circumstances exception for AWOL when appropriate.

Learn more about former service members applying for benefits and character of discharge.

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT RECORD SAFEGUARD IT.

CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY

ANY ALTERA AREAS REA

1. NAME (Last, First, Middle)

2. DEPARTMENT, COMPONENT AND BRANCH

3. SOCIAL

4.a. GRADE, RATE OR RANK 4.b. PAY GRADE

5. DATE OF BIRTH (YYMMDD)

6. RESERVE OBLIG. TI

7.a. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE DUTY

7.b. HOME OF RECORD AT TIME OF ENTRY (City and state address if known)

8.a. LAST DUTY ASSIGNMENT AND MAJOR COMMAND

8.b. STATION WHERE SEPARATED

9. COMMAND TO WHICH TRANSFERRED

10. SGJL COVERAGE

11. PRIMARY SPECIALTY (List number, title and years and months in specialty. List additional specialty numbers and titles involving periods of one or more years.)

12. RECORD OF SERVICE

a. Date Entered AD This Period

b. Separation Date This Period

c. Net Active Service This Period

d. Total Prior Active Service

e. Total Prior Inactive Service

f. Foreign Service

g. Sea Service

h. Effective Date of Pay Grade

DECORATIONS, MEDALS, BADGES, CITATIONS AND CAMPAIGN RIBBONS AWARDED OR AUTHORIZED (All periods of service)

MILITARY EDUCATION (Course title, number of weeks, and ...)