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## Deadline for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay Extended

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay (RSLSP) has been **extended to March 4, 2011**, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program guidelines.

The deadline extension is included in the continuing resolution signed by President Obama today, providing funding for federal government operations through March 4, 2011.

"There was a surge of applicants as we approached our earlier deadline, but there may still be more out there who have yet to apply," said Lernes Hebert, director, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management. "We are pleased that this extension was included in the continuing resolution which will give those remaining the opportunity to apply as we continue to work through the current applications."

The RSLSP was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss Authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service in order to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When RSLSP began on Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for this benefit. Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts over the past 14 months. Outreach efforts including direct mail, engaging military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets, will continue through March 4, 2011.

To apply for more information, or to gather more information on RSLSP, including submission requirements and service-specific links, go to <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>.

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## VA Urges Veterans to Sign Up for Direct Deposits

Treasury Publishes Final Regulation to Phase Out Paper Checks by 2013

WASHINGTON (Dec. 21, 2010)- The Department of the Treasury announced a new rule that will extend the safety and convenience of electronic payments to millions of Americans and phase out paper checks for federal benefits by **March 1, 2013**. Officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) urge Veterans to sign up for electronic payment of their benefits.

"Receiving VA benefits electronically will increase the security, convenience and reliability of these vital payments," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "VA encourages

**Warren County Veterans Service Officer's Report for February 2011**  
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Veterans who are now receiving their benefits in paper checks to set up direct deposits before the deadline."

On March 1, 2013, VA will stop issuing paper checks. People who do not have electronic payments for their federal benefits by that time will receive their funds via a pre-paid debit card. Called the Direct Express card, it is issued by Comerica Bank as the financial agent of the U.S. Treasury.

Another deadline affects people receiving VA's compensation or pensions for the first time after May 1, 2011. Those people will automatically receive the benefits electronically.

Anyone already receiving federal benefit payments electronically will be unaffected by the changes. To learn more about the federal government's switch to direct deposit - or to change VA benefits to direct deposit --visit [www.GoDirect.org](http://www.GoDirect.org). Information about the federal government's "Go Direct" campaign is also available at 1-800-333-1795.

Along with payments for VA benefit, the change will also affect recipients of payments from Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Railroad Retirement Board, or Office of Personnel Management.

For more information about VA benefits and programs, go to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)  
<<http://www.va.gov/>> or call toll free 1-800-827-1000

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**\*File for the Alternative Tax Exemption if you haven't already done so with your Town Assessor\***  
**DEADLINE IS March 1<sup>st</sup>.**

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