

White House names November as veterans and military families month

By: [Leo Shane III](#)



President Donald Trump speaks in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Aug. 3, 2017, during a Veterans Affairs telehealth event. (Evan Vucci/AP)

WASHINGTON — White House officials on Wednesday declared November as National Veterans and Military Families Month, calling it citizens’ “patriotic duty” to honor their sacrifices for more than just a day.

In a closed ceremony, President Donald Trump touted the move as the latest signal of his administration’s commitment to veterans issues. Presidential proclamations around Veterans Day focusing on military service and family support are common, but administration officials billed the extension of those thoughts to the entire month as a significant move.

[Editor’s Note: *Military Times Veterans Month* launched Nov. 1 for the second year in a row. Read [our coverage here.](#)]

The decision also formally launched a month-long blitz of veterans themed events from the Department of Veterans Affairs, where administration officials will discuss progress in reforming that part of the federal bureaucracy.

“As veterans and military families attend these events, they will see the reforms and improvements that we have made at the VA,” Trump’s proclamation states. “Over the last nine months, we have made important changes that enable better service for our veterans.

Those include new laws involving VA whistleblowers and department firing rules, new transparency initiatives on hospital wait times, and ongoing efforts to expand medical appointments outside of veterans clinics.

In remarks to reporters after the White House event, VA Secretary David Shulkin acknowledged more work has yet to be done.

“The Department of Veterans Affairs has multiple issues that span back multiple years across multiple administrations,” he said. “These aren’t going to be quick solutions. So our approach is to be open about what the problems are.”

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But he said the month-long celebration will be an opportunity to highlight those challenges and successes.

“Every day of the month there will be an event celebrating our veterans and service members,” he said. “We’re going to be announcing new ID cards for veterans across the country. We’re going to be introducing the 24/7 White House veterans hotline the president talked about in his campaign.”

VA events scheduled for the month also include several collaborations with NFL teams to visit with veterans, a series of programs on suicide prevention during the week of Nov. 13, the National World War I Memorial groundbreaking on Nov. 9, and remarks from Shulkin at the annual Arlington National Cemetery ceremony on Nov. 11.

Wednesday’s ceremonial signing came just minutes after Trump signed into law new legislation to overturn a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau rule on class-action lawsuits and arbitration mandates, a proposal that numerous veterans groups had protested because of its potential impact on veterans and troops who may not be able to pursue lawsuits on their own.

A full list of planned November veterans’ events is available [through VA’s web site](#).

About this Author



About [Leo Shane III](#)

Leo covers Congress, Veterans Affairs and the White House for Military Times. He has covered Washington, D.C. since 2004, focusing on military personnel and veterans policies.