



Coast Guard

National Retiree Help Desk



National Retiree Council **Annual Meeting 2026**

National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD)

Purpose: To respond to inquiries from the world-wide Coast Guard military retiree community, “connecting” individuals seeking help with appropriate information sources.

Sponsored by: CG-WMM-23, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources / Office of Military Personnel Policy / Retiree Services Program

Coordinated by:

- **CAPT Robert Warakomsky USCG (Ret) [VA]**
- **LCDR David Du Pont USCG (Ret) [MD]**
- **CWO Jeff Rosenberg USCG (Ret) [AL]**
- + **CAPT David Bernstein USCG (Ret) [MD] – former CACGRC Co-Chair**

Origin: Established by CACGRC in 2006.

Reference: COMDTINST 1800.5I (dtd 20 Jun 2024)



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NRHD Logistics

- **Toll-free phone number and Gmail**
 - **833-224-6743**
 - **NRHDesk@gmail.com**
- **Volunteers**
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**
 - **updated June 2024**
- **Training**
- **Phone/email statistics compiled periodically**



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The Volunteer Watchstanders (13 current)

- Ben Stoppe [VA] (2006)
- Tracy Royce [FL] (2010)
- David Bernstein [DC] (2011)
- Collin Lau [CA] (2016)
- Jan Walker [MD] (2016)
- Kathy Tiongson [VA] (2018)
- Holly Boehme [WA] (2018)
- Al Peek [VA] (2018)
- Rafael Ortiz [NV] (2019)
- Tom Faircloth [TN] (2019)
- Bill Killion [TX] (2019)
- Jeff Rosenberg [AL] (2022)
- Jody Turner [MD] (2024)



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Volunteer Watchstanders // Items of note

- 40 individuals stood watches since inception
- 21 volunteers served 25+ weeks
- Longest serving // Ben Stoppe [VA] (plank owner) // Aug 2006 w/ 65 vol weeks
- Highest # watch weeks // Tracy Royce [FL] // Dec 2010 w/ 94 vol weeks
- Others of note
 - Jim Koshar [VA] (2006 - 2015) – 83 wks
 - Marc Fagenbaum & Dan Rogers [FL] (2009 - 2016) – 65 wks
 - Tim Flanagan [MD] (2009 - 2019) – 55 wks
 - David Bernstein [DC] (active) – 62 wks
 - Bob Warakomsky [VA] (plank owner) (2006-2010) – 49 wks
 - Kathy Tiongson [VA] (active) – 38 wks
 - Dave Du Pont [MD] (plank owner) (2006-2009) – 40 wks
- In TOTAL – **1,200+ wks of vol service**



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The Statistics

- For the period 07/14/2025 – 07/06/2026 [[past year's #s](#)]
- 386 queries (fm 52 weekly reports) [[466](#)]
 - ~ 90% via phone
 - ~ 10% via email
- Avg ~7 queries per week [[~9](#)]
- Peak week – 24 queries [[19](#)] (week of 11/03/2025)
- Low week – 0 queries [[1](#)] (week of 12/22/2025)



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The Query Topics

- Top 12 topics (percentage) [[with past year's %s](#)]
 - Retiree/Annuitant Pay & Benefits (referred to PPC) – 23% [[23%](#)]
 - Retiree Records / DD-214s – 10% [[8%](#)]
 - 1099 Forms – 8% [[10%](#)]
 - Retiree & Dependent ID Cards – 7% [[6%](#)]
 - Decedent Affairs – 6% [[7%](#)]
 - Other Subjects – 5% [[12%](#)]
 - Reserve Retirement – 5% [[5%](#)]
 - Change Address – 4% [[6%](#)]
 - Survivor Benefit Plan – 4% [[4%](#)]
 - VA Benefits – 4% [[3%](#)]
 - Direct Access – 3% [[4%](#)]
 - LBL & Newsletters – 3% [[3%](#)]

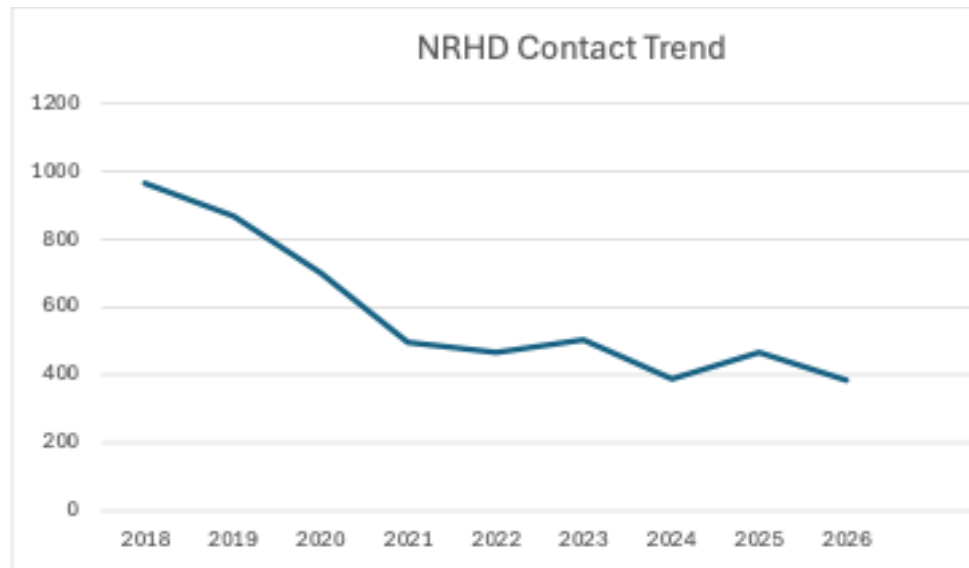
Note: Does not total to 100% due to other small unlisted topics.



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The Trend

- For 2018 to 2026
 - Compiled mid-year for the NRC Annual Meeting
 - 52-week periods (except 2018 is 48-wks)





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Notes

- **Contact Numbers Trending Down**
 - Good news. Trend maybe due to enhanced CG outreach to retirees and self-help features of applications, such as Direct Access.
- **When faced with unusual or challenging situations, watchstanders appreciate the strong support that Bob Hinds provides.**



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Summary

- **NRHD Operating Successfully for 20 Years**
- **Undoubtedly Fills a Need – “the canary in the coal mine”**
 - **Early detection of national problems**
- **About 390 Requests for Support Annually**
- **Participation by Volunteer Watchstanders Nationwide**
- **NRHD Coordination – Broadening Participation**



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Summary (cont.)

- **Seeking New Volunteers**, please contact either—
 - Bob Warakomsky at bopakom@verizon.net
 - Dave Du Pont at ddupont7377@gmail.com
 - Jeff Rosenberg at cg.rrc.pns@gmail.com
- Thank you to RRCs for supporting this effort and to all those that volunteer



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Unusual/Noteworthy Queries handled by watchstanders

- Retiree claimed the CG failed to withhold her state income tax from her pay for 25 years. Consequently, she said that the state was going to repossess her house. [07/28/2025]
- Grandson of a woman who served as a SPAR during World War II was seeking additional information about her service. She enlisted in New York on June 13, 1944, and completed her initial training at the SPAR indoctrination facility located at the Palm Beach Biltmore Hotel in Florida. [09/01/2025]
- Retiree has been paying his ex-wife's SBP despite the divorce decree that required her to pay it. PPC cannot make the correction to the retiree's pay without a court order because the error was made more than 10 years ago. [01/05/2025]



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Unusual/Noteworthy Queries handled by watchstanders (cont.)

- Retiree requests documentation about an IQ test he took 50 years ago when he was in boot camp. [02/09/2026]
- Retiree has not received his pay for 6 months. He had been receiving it as a check, so in September 2025 he filed a request for electronic payment to his bank account. By February 2026, he still had not received any response from PPC despite making multiple phone calls. [02/16/2026]
- The son of a retiree called the Help Desk in May 2026 to report that his father hasn't received his pay in 2026. [05/11/2026]