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## **MDOT MVA, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Opens Veterans Service Office in Gaithersburg**

*Agency partnership has produced five offices statewide to assist veterans and their families*

**GLEN BURNIE, MD (March 17, 2021)** – The Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) and the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) have partnered to open a new Veterans Service Office at the Gaithersburg MDOT MVA Branch office to help veterans and their dependents apply for benefits and receive vital services. Montgomery County is home to approximately 37,000 veterans, the fourth largest veteran population in Maryland.

“We are thrilled to help thousands of veterans and their families get access to these essential benefits,” said MDOT MVA Administrator Chrissy Nizer. “We look forward to exploring new opportunities to further our one-stop government shop approach and provide all Maryland residents, especially our veterans, with convenient and efficient services.”

The Gaithersburg branch marks the fifth office created through a partnership that began in October 2019 with the opening of a Veteran Service Office in the Glen Burnie MDOT MVA Branch. Since then, offices have opened at the Salisbury branch in March 2020, the Hagerstown branch in June 2020 and the Bel Air branch in October 2020. The offices have a fulltime veteran’s benefits specialist available to assist veterans and families applying for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

“Our MDOT MVA staff is dedicated to providing outstanding customer service, and that commitment is built on a foundation of convenience and efficiency,” MDOT Secretary Greg Slater said. “Through this partnership with the Department of Veteran Affairs, we’re showing just a small portion of our gratitude to Maryland’s veterans by making it easier for them to get the services and benefits they deserve.”

The office located in the Gaithersburg branch at 15 Metropolitan Grove Road is the only Veterans Service Office in Montgomery County. The previous office was closed last year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Overall, MDVA operates Veterans Service Offices in 12 communities across Maryland.

“I am pleased to see the newest co-located veterans service office open in Gaithersburg,” said MDVA Secretary George Owings. “The expanding partnership with the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration continues to increase visibility and enables us to serve more veterans in Montgomery County.”

The MDVA Service and Benefits Program helps men and women who served in the uniformed services of the United States, as well as their dependents and survivors, obtain benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Department of Defense, the State of Maryland and other agencies. Between July 2020 through January 2021, MDVA served more than 11,000 veterans at MDOT MVA facilities.

MDOT MVA honors veterans in many ways, including offering a “Veterans Status” designation to their driver’s license or identification card, which indicates they are eligible for state veteran benefits. MDOT MVA has issued more than 125,000 drivers licenses and IDs with a veteran designation. With the launch of the Customer Connect IT system modernization project in July, veterans who qualify as permanently disabled receive free registration with any plate type, including the more than 100 types of specialty license plates honoring veterans and their families. For more information, visit the MDOT MVA Veterans and Military page [here](#).

Additionally, a new law that went into effect last year allocates \$10 from the sale of certain license plates to the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund, a non-emergency, temporary financial assistance program administered by the Maryland Veteran’s Administration. Eligible plates include those recognizing individually earned combat-related armed services medals, honorably discharged veterans and recipients of U.S. Department of Defense Gold Star status, which is awarded to a surviving spouse, parent or next of kin of a United States armed forces member who lost his or her life in combat.

To learn more about the Gaithersburg veteran’s office or to meet with a veteran’s benefits specialist, call 301-987-8412 or 301-987-8413.

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