

# STATE SERVICE OFFICE



**Derek Giffin**  
*State Service Officer*

2122 West Taylor St.  
Room 105  
Chicago, IL 60612

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The State of Illinois VFW Department Service Office is headquartered at the VA Regional Office in Chicago, IL. The Department Service Office is organized under the authority of the Department By-Laws and provides services under the supervision of the Department Veterans Service Committee. All Service Officers employed by the VFW of Illinois are members of the VFW. All Service Officers and Claims Consultants are accredited by the VA through the VFW and perform their duties in accordance with the National Policy and Procedure Manual of the VFW National Veterans Service.

The mission of the Department Service Office is to assist all veterans of Illinois, their dependents, and their survivors in the pursuit of all benefits administered by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to which they may be entitled. This mission is pursued through the development of supportive relationships with County Veteran Assistance Commission (VAC) Offices, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) Offices, VA Social Workers, and a state-wide network of volunteer VFW Post and District Service Officers. From these sources claims for benefits are received, prepared, and submitted to the VA.

The Department Service Office is under the direction of the Department Service Officer, Derek Giffin, an Iraq veteran. Currently, the Service Office staff includes four Assistant Department Service Officers, two working in Chicago, one stationed at the Marion VAMC, and one stationed at the Danville VAMC. An ADSO from the Chicago office provides representative services to Hines VAMC every Thursday. Field service coverage is also provided at various locations as indicated in the schedule listed below. The Regional Office staff includes two Claims Consultants and one clerical support staff member.

Activities of the Service Office staff include case management of claims submitted to the VA from all state-wide sources to include representation for appeals pending at the Board of Veterans Appeals. Staff members provide training to Post and District Service Officers and participate in training seminars for IDVA and VAC staff and local volunteers. The staff also provides guest speakers on issues pertaining to VA benefits to VFW Posts and Districts, local civic groups, military Reserve and National Guard units, and college student organizations upon request.

The hours of operation and contact information for the Department Service Office are listed below. Members with questions about existing claims or requesting information about VA benefits are encouraged to contact the Department Service Office during hours of operation or by e-mail.

## Department Service Office Contact Information

VFW Service Office  
2122 West Taylor St. Room 105  
Chicago, IL 60612  
Phone: 312-980-4284  
Fax: 312-980-4680

Email: [derek.giffin@va.gov](mailto:derek.giffin@va.gov)  
Website link: [www.vfwilserviceoffice.com](http://www.vfwilserviceoffice.com)

Office Telephone Hours  
Monday thru Friday  
8:00 am to 3:30 pm

Office Walk-In Hours  
Monday through Thursday  
9:00 am to 11:30 am  
12:30 pm to 3:00 pm

**VFW Service Office Staff**

Derek Giffin, State Service Officer  
U.S. Army, Iraq derek.giffin@va.gov

Charles Johnson,  
Assistant Department Service Officer, Chicago  
U.S. Army, Iraq  
charles.johnson5@va.gov

Russell Meredith,  
Assistant Department Service Officer, Chicago  
U.S. Navy, Iraq  
russell.meredith@va.gov

Maria Phillips,  
Claims Consultant/Service Officer, Chicago  
USMC  
maria.phillips@va.gov

Gregory Strong,  
Assistant Department Service Officer,  
Marion VAMC  
U.S. Army, Iraq  
gregory.strong3@va.gov

Sean Conner,  
Assistant Department Service Officer,  
Illiana Health Care System, Danville VAMC  
USMC, Iraq  
sean.conner@va.gov

Grabiela Salgado,  
Claims Consultant, Chicago  
grabiela.salgado@va.gov

Edith Giles, Receptionist, Chicago  
U.S. Navy  
edith.giles@va.gov

**Field Office/ Outreach Locations**

Russell Meredith  
Hines VA Medical Center  
Bldg 1, Room D109  
Phone: 708-202-2562  
Each Thursday, 8:00 am to 3:30 pm  
(call the Chicago office to verify)

Derek Giffin  
Judd Kendall Post 3873  
every first Tuesday of the month  
(10:00 am to 2:00 pm)  
908 Jackson Ave.  
Naperville, IL 60540

Benjamin O. Davis Post 311  
every 2nd Wednesday of the  
month (9:00 am to 3:00 pm)  
22341 Governors Hwy.  
Richton Park, IL 60471

Chicago Heights Vet Center  
every 4th Wednesday of the  
month (9:00 am to 3:00 pm)  
1010 Dixie Hwy.  
Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Gregory Strong  
Marion VA Medical Center  
Room 103  
2401 W. Main St  
Marion, IL 62959  
Phone: 618-997-5311 ext. 58230  
FAX: 618-997-8219  
Monday, Wednesday to Friday,  
8:00 am - 3:00 pm

O'Fallon VFW Post 805  
223 West 1st St.  
O'Fallon, IL 62269  
618-624-6575  
1st Tuesday only  
8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Sean Conner  
Illiana Health Care System,  
Danville VAMC  
Bldg 98, Room 1012  
1900 E. Main St  
Danville, IL 61832  
Phone: 217-554-4502  
FAX: 217-554-4361  
Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Mattoon VA CBOC:  
First Tuesday of every month  
501 Lake Land Blvd., Mattoon IL  
from 0800-1500

Bloomington VA CBOC:  
Second Tuesday of every month  
207 Hamilton Road, Bloomington IL  
from 0800-1500

Peoria VA CBOC:  
Third Tuesday of every month  
7717 N Orange Prairie Rd., Peoria  
IL from 0800-1500

Decatur VA CBOC:  
Third Wednesday of every month  
792 North Sunnyside Road,  
Decatur IL from 0800-1500

Springfield VA CBOC:  
Fourth Tuesday of every month  
5850 South 6th St., Springfield IL  
from 0800-1500