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VA Begins Transition to Simpler Online Sign-in Experience for Veterans' Account Access

DECEMBER 11TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

VA Begins Transition to Simpler Online Sign-in Experience for Veterans' Account Access

**VA Begins Transition to Simpler Online Sign-in Experience for
Veterans' Account Access**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced plans to start transitioning Veterans, over the next year, to a more modern, streamlined online login process to access benefit and health care services. This is a step in VA and the Biden-Harris Administration's comprehensive efforts to safeguard and protect Veteran data and that of their beneficiaries.

With VA's support through consistent outreach and training, Veterans will transition to one of two sign-in options to access VA.gov, VA mobile applications, and other VA online services: Login.gov or ID.me accounts. Veterans can begin this transition now by visiting www.va.gov/sign-in-changes to learn how to create a verified Login.gov or ID.me account. The process takes about 10 minutes.

Veterans and other beneficiaries will no longer be able to use usernames and passwords for My HealtheVet after Jan. 31, 2025, or DS Logon after Sept. 30, 2025.

After these deadlines, Veterans who have not yet transitioned will still be able to access their data and resume managing their benefits and services online once they have created

their new account.

“Modern accounts like Login.gov or ID.me enhance the existing security and safety of online interactions, offering a robust defense against unauthorized access and identity theft,” said Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology and Chief Information Officer Kurt DelBene. “The transition is all about putting the Veteran first. By streamlining accounts, simplifying access, and providing tailored support, we’re empowering Veterans with a more user-friendly and modernized online experience that caters to their needs.”

Key aspects of the transition include:

Increased protection for Veterans and enhanced security compliance: VA is committed to implementing President Biden’s Executive Order on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity, which calls for sign-in accounts to meet modern security standards for identity verification and multifactor authentication. This transition ensures compliance with these regulations and provides a more secure experience for Veterans, particularly by retiring the My HealtheVet sign-in option.

A simplified experience - while still providing options: In response to Veteran feedback and to meet the goals of President Biden’s Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government, this transition consolidates sign-in options for a simplified experience. Login.gov and ID.me accounts may also be used across many other government websites, such as for social security accounts, providing Veterans with a more streamlined experience.

Efficient and reliable service: VA’s transition to Login.gov and ID.me accounts increases Veterans’ reliable access to online services by reducing downtime.

It is estimated this transition will impact approximately 3 million Veterans and other beneficiaries who do not yet use Login.gov or ID.me accounts to access VA’s online services. The department is dedicated to supporting Veterans through this transition. During the next several months, VA will work hard to communicate this change to all Veterans, particularly those who currently leverage My HealtheVet or DS Logon credentials.

Training and resources will be provided to help VA staff and Veterans Service Organizations support Veterans in selecting the account and multifactor authentication option that best suits their needs and preferences.

This includes assistance tailored to the unique needs of Veterans who use assistive devices and screen readers.

Through the transition and beyond, Veterans are always able to manage their benefits and services by phone or in-person at a VA location.

For more information and updates on the transition process, visit www.va.gov/sign-in-changes or call the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center’s My HealtheVet coordinator at 573-778-4180.

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U.S. Route 60 Ramps in Stoddard County Impacted for Shoulder Repairs

DECEMBER 11TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

U.S. Route 60 Ramps in Stoddard County Impacted for Shoulder Repairs

The ramps from Route 60 to Route 51 near Fisk, Missouri will be impacted as Missouri Department of Transportation perform shoulder repairs.

Weather permitting, work will take place from Monday, Dec. 16 through Thursday, Dec. 19 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily.

The work zones will be marked with signs. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution while traveling near the area.

For additional information MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636) or visit www.modot.org/southeast.

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Route J in Stoddard County
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Route E in Stoddard County
Reduced for Pavement Repairs

Stoddard County Justice Center Seeks Juvenile Officer

Route P in Stoddard County
Closed for Bridge Rehab

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MDC encourages public to use caution amidst suspected avian influenza outbreak

DECEMBER 11TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

MDC encourages public to use caution amidst suspected avian influenza outbreak

The Department is investigating numerous reports of sick and dead waterfowl across Missouri.

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is monitoring reports of sick and dead waterfowl, such as geese and ducks, across the state. The Department is actively collecting birds to determine the cause of illness but suspects highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) to be the cause. Other states, including Kansas and Iowa, are experiencing similar occurrences.

Avian influenza, commonly referred to as bird flu, spreads as birds along the North American flyways intermingle with infected birds from Europe and Asia. The viruses are transmitted from bird to bird through fecal droppings, saliva, and nasal discharges. There is a risk for spillover from wild birds into domestic poultry and then back again from poultry to wild birds, resulting in further spread.

Though HPAI does not present an immediate public health concern, MDC recommends the following:

- Do not touch dead geese, waterfowl, or other bird species.
- Report any sightings of dead geese to MDC online at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/4KD>
- Ensure that pets do not come into contact with dead animals to help prevent the spread of disease.
- If you have inadvertently come into contact with a dead goose, wash your hands thoroughly and contact a healthcare professional if you experience any unusual symptoms.

Due to ongoing waterfowl hunting seasons, waterfowl hunters should dress game birds in the field whenever possible or at a location away from poultry or other birds. Hunters should also properly dispose of harvest waste

by placing the remains in trash bags and disposing of them through trash collection or a permitted landfill. Bald eagles and other raptors are particularly susceptible to avian influenza. This simple action could help prevent bald eagle and other raptor mortalities.

Hunters should also be aware it is possible to transport avian influenza viruses on boats, waders, or other equipment, especially if it isn't dry before moving it from one site to another. Allowing hunting equipment to dry between outings will reduce this chance.

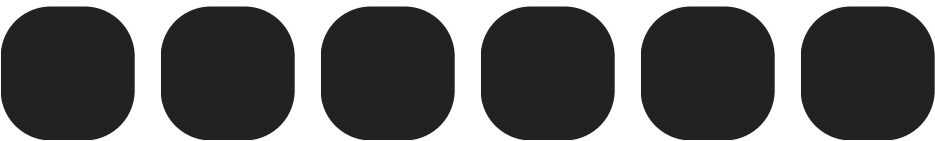
Avian influenza does not present an immediate public health concern, though on rare occasions it has infected humans and other animals. It is safe to eat poultry and wild game as normal cooking temperatures are hot enough to kill the virus if present. Meat should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

More information can be found on the Missouri Department of Agriculture website at <https://agriculture.mo.gov/avian-influenza.php>.

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Bloomfield Transit to Stop Offering Services

DECEMBER 05TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Bloomfield Transit to Stop Offering Services

Citizens of Bloomfield,

On Nov. 25, 2024, council members discussed, in executive session, the pros and cons of continuing to operate a city transit bus.

The low number of riders that benefit from this service did not outweigh the expenses each month incurred by the city. Council members voted unanimously to discontinue this service to the residents of Bloomfield.

Effective 01/01/2025, the city bus will no longer be operating. If you have any questions or concerns relating to the closing of the transit service, you may reach out to a council member: Cecil Haley, Rachel Clary, Jacob Goodin, Nick Roe, or call City Hall at (573)568-3464.

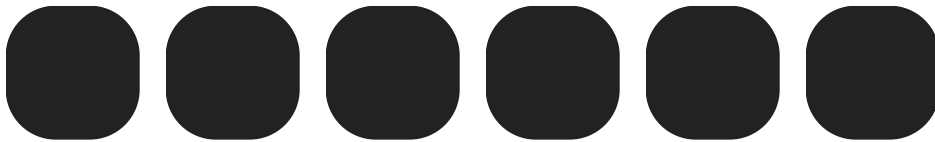
However, should you need a ride in the future, please contact SMTS at (573)624-8624.

Sincerely,
Bloomfield City Council

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Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Monday, December 2, 2024

DECEMBER 05TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Monday, December 2, 2024

Presiding Commissioner asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer over the county.

The Commissioner failed to address the other two individuals on the Johnson Grass Board when they appointed Doug Lowery. When they received a letter in the mail from the Agriculture Dept requesting they re-appoint the other individuals.

Motion to re-appoint Ronnie Elsworth and Matt Nichols to the Johnson Grass Board made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. All three voted yes and motion passed.

Cecil Weeks, Stoddard County Clerk

Misc Fund is actually the Private Car Tax Fund. All the railroad cars that come thru the town of Dexter has a tax on it. The Financial Institution Tax from the courts also goes into that Misc. Fund.

Mr. Weeks distributes the monies to the schools within the county. The auditor suggested that the Commissioners change the name of the fund from Misc. Fund to the Private Car Tax Fund. \$3,315.00.

Motion to rename Misc Fund 16 on the Stoddard County Budget to the Private Car Tax Fund made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. All three voted yes and motion passed.

Fund #5 County Farm Line Item on the Stoddard County Budget

According to Commissioner Stewart there is \$27,810.00 is in the fund as of 11/7/2024. The Poor Farm Monument came from out of this fund several years ago. The recommendation came from Mr. Weeks to move that money to the General Revenue Fund because no one has requested any monies out of it in years. It was just a housekeeping move. Question from this reporter was, "Could the monies be used for the upkeep of the grass or something for the Veterans Cemetery Foundation? No real answer given; however it was discussed among the Commissioners.

Motion to closed out County Farm Fund 5 and transfers to General Revenue in the amount of \$27,810.32 made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner C.D. Stewart. All three voted yes and motion passed.

Remove CART from Fund 6

Motion to Remove the word CART from Fund 6 made by Commissioner C.D.Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. All three voted yes and motion passed.

CART Fund is now Fund 44 and Fund 6 will now only be Road & Bridge.

"We are not moving any money just renaming the Fund for the auditors," stated Weeks.

County Aid Road Trust Fund (CART) monies are split between the road districts and the county.

Drainage Ditches

"I know that Speakman has done some good research on these ditches," stated Mathis.

"Nobody knew when the ditches consolidated etc."

"Let's put this on the Agenda for two weeks from today," stated Mathis.

Dale Moreland, Castor Township Requesting Additional ARPA Monies

"The Railroad did not have any ownership of County Road 551 across from County Road 510," stated Dale Moreland, Castor Township.

"That bridge there goes into the Bostic property, the side walls are good and Chad Payne gave us a quote in the amount of \$11,750. and that is for a deck on top of that bridge.

Jacob Cleary printed off some things and the bridge is absolutely terrible," Commissioner Mathis said.

"The railroad people said it is not on them. It will be the Castor Township and therefore requesting monies out of the ARPA funds," continued Moreland.

"We will put it on our agenda next week to get the money allocated for that repair," stated Mathis. Moreland said he will make sure when the Board meets on Tuesday night they will vote on everything and get a letter to Katelyn Lambert at Bootheel Regional Planning Commission as soon as possible.

Motion to accept Monday, November 25th minutes made by Commissioner Jarrell, Mathis seconded. Abstaining due to be absence Sewart. Both voted yes and motion

passed.

Motion to put out for bid for the roof top unit over the Justice Center will be delayed until next week. Specs have been written; however the Commissioner need time to review the information.

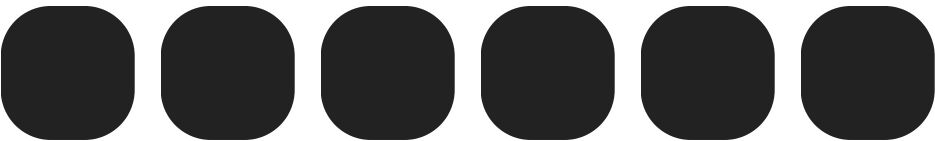
Motion to accept the Closed Session meeting minutes from Monday, November 25th made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Mathis. Abstaining was Stewart due to absence. Both voted yes and motion passed.

Motion to enter into Closed Session made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. Open session ended at 11:05 a.m.

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