***General VAMC Inquiries***

***Participant Guide***

National Contact Center New Hire Challenge Training

Veterans Benefits Administration

[Status]

**Duration:** 1.5 hours

**TMS: TMS# 4644587**

**Audience:** This lesson is intended for new Public Contact Representatives (PCRs) within VBA’s National Call Centers (NCCs) however, it is also suitable for any VA employee desiring information on this subject.

**Purpose:** This lesson provides VA employees assisting the public with an opportunity to enhance their knowledge on this topic. It fulfills the training requirement outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for new hires in the National Training Curriculum (NTC).

**Objectives:** Upon completing this lesson, trainees will be able to

* Locate resources to assist callers with Veterans Health Administration (VHA) inquiries
* Provide eligibility requirements for VHA benefits
* Locate VHA Facilities
* Answer questions regarding copayments for services
* Answer questions regarding prescriptions
* Answer questions regarding dental treatment
* Provide assistance to callers about Travel Pay
* Answer questions about emergency care
* Explain the eligibility requirements for hearing aids
* Discuss readjustment and bereavement counseling
* Explain the purpose of Vet Centers
* Provide eligibility requirements for nursing homes
* Explain the Domiciliary program
* Locate coordinators for Registries
* Provide information on the Patient Advocate
* Discuss the Afford Care Act
* Provide information to callers regarding VA Caregiver Support
* Explain the Mission Act

**References:**

**KM ARTICLE:**

* [VA Healthcare](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002596/VA-Healthcare?query=Medication%20copay)
* [Medication Copays](https://www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates/)
* [Reimbursement, Travel](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002551/Reimbursement-Travel?query=Travel%20Reimbursemente)
* [Beneficiary Travel Benefits](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002909/Beneficiary-Travel-Benefits?query=Travel%20Reimbursemente)
* [Emergency Treatment Reimbursement](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002894/Emergency-Treatment-Reimbursement?query=Emergency%20Treatment%20Reimbursement)
* [Hearing Aids](https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/Hearing_Aids.asp)
* [Readjustment Counseling - Who May Qualify?](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000004178/Readjustment-Counseling-Who-May-Qualify)
* [Mental Health Counseling](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002634/Mental-Health-Counseling?query=Mental%20Health%20counseling)  .
* [Nursing homes](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002676/Nursing-Homes?query=Nursing%20Homes)
* [Medical Foster Home (MFH) Program Ready Reference](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000003720/Medical-Foster-Home-MFH-Program-Ready-Reference?query=Medical%20Foster%20home)
* [Domiciliary Care](https://www.va.gov/homeless/dchv.asp)
* [Environmental Exposures](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/search/Environmental%20Exposures)
* [Directory of Environmental Health Coordinators](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp)
* [Complaints about VA Medical Centers](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002945/Complaints-about-VA-Medical-Centers?query=Complaints%20about%20VA%20medical%20centers)
* [Affordable Care Act](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000008780/Affordable-Care-Act-ACA?query=Affordable%20Care%20Act)
* [Caregiver Support](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000002920/Caregiver-Support?query=Caregiver%20support)
* [Press Release: VA launches new healthcare options under MISSION Act](https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5264)

**CPKM:**

* [38 CFR 17.108 Copayments](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ea573736bdccc4631ffbdb1962738490&mc=true&node=pt38.1.17&rgn=div5#sg38.1.17_1107.sg18)
* [38 CFR 17.149 Sensori-neural aids](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=bc72b8d6f2cf283ce2408093bfdecf2b&mc=true&node=pt38.1.17&rgn=div5#se38.1.17_1149)
* [38 CFR 17.46 Hospital, Domiciliary, and Nursing Home Care](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9361fdfa3b6babf40a5c9268a0fa0328&mc=true&node=pt38.1.17&rgn=div5#se38.1.17_146)
* [38 CFR 17.3100 Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) Program](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ea573736bdccc4631ffbdb1962738490&mc=true&node=pt38.1.17&rgn=div5#sg38.1.17_12000.sg51)

**Internet**

* [Community Care](https://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/)
* [Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services](https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/Hearing_Aids.asp)
* [eBenefits](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/)
* [Readjustment Counseling](https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Vet_Center_Services.asp)
* [Bereavement Counseling](https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Bereavement_Counseling.asp)
* [Geriatrics and Extended Care](https://www.va.gov/Geriatrics/)
* [Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program - Homeless Veterans](https://www.va.gov/homeless/dchv.asp)
* [Environmental Health Registry](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/benefits/registry-evaluation.asp)
* [Public Health Military Exposures](https://www.publichealth.va.gov/index.asp)
* [Patient Advocate](https://www.va.gov/health/patientadvocate/)
* [Affordable Care Act -- VA, Affordable Care Act and You](https://www.va.gov/health/ACA/)
* [HealthCare.gov - Health Insurance Marketplace](https://www.healthcare.gov/)
* [VA Caregiver Support](https://www.caregiver.va.gov/)

**VA Forms**

* [VA Form 10-10EZ Instruction for Completing Enrollment Application for Health Benefits](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf)
* [VA Form 10-3542 Veteran/Beneficiary Claim for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/Search_action.asp?FormNo=10-3542&tkey=&Action=Search)
* [VA Form 10-10EC Application for extended Care Services](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/Search_action.asp?FormNo=10-10ec&tkey=&Action=Search)
* [VA Form 10-10CG Instructions for Completing Application for Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Program](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/Search_action.asp?FormNo=10-10CG&tkey=&Action=Search)

**Benefit Pamphlets/Fact Sheets:**

* [All VHA Fact Sheets](https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/publications.asp)

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# **Overview of Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**

The Veterans Health Administration is America’s largest integrated health care system, providing care at 1,293 health care facilities. This includes 170 VA Medical Centers (VAMC) and 1,112 outpatient sites. VHA serves 9 million enrolled Veterans each year.

The first portion of this training is focused on an overview of VHA benefits and how to locate VHA-related resources. The second portion provides a practical application exercise to allow trainees to become familiar with searching and explaining VHA-related benefits. This lesson is designed to enhance the PCRs ability and confidence when searching for information using KM and va.gov.

# **Locating Resources to Assist Callers**

PCRs located in the Veterans Benefits Administration National Contact Centers will receive calls regarding VHA-related benefits. While the National Contact Center PCRs are specifically trained to provide information on Compensation and Pension benefits, PCRs are also expected to answer questions regarding VHA benefits.

There is a wealth of information online at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) to assist the public with their questions. PCRs are required to assist callers with obtaining answers to their VHA-related questions. Some common VHA-related inquiries PCRs receive are:

* How do I enroll in VA healthcare?
* Where is the closest VA facility to where I live?
* Do I have to pay a copayment for services?
* Why do I have to pay for prescriptions filled at the pharmacy at the VAMC?
* How can I get dental treatment through VA?
* I went to an appointment at the VAMC and I was told I would be reimbursed for my travel expense.
* Will I have to pay for services provided by a private facility for an emergency situation?
* How do I get hearing aids from VA?
* Does VA have nursing homes?
* How do I go about getting on the Agent Orange Health Registry?
* My wife is my caregiver, can she receive anything from VHA?
* Can I still go to my private provider?

PCRs should use Knowledge Management (KM) and [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) as references when addressing these inquiries. PCRs are required to research the caller’s question to determine if they have access to the information through Knowledge Management or [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). If the information is not available in these resources, the PCR may transfer the caller to the VA Health Resource Center for assistance.

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# **VA Healthcare Enrollment**

PCRs will receive calls about how VA Healthcare enrollment.

Veterans who served in the active military, naval, or air service and separated under conditions other than dishonorable may quality for VA health care benefits, to include qualifying Reserve and National Guard members.

* Once enrolled, Veterans will be assigned an [Enrollment Priority Group](https://www.va.gov/HEALTHBENEFITS/resources/priority_groups.asp) and copay status.
* Enrollees will receive an introductory letter and Veterans Health Benefits Handbook in the mail.
* Financial Assessment (formerly known as a means test) – Veterans who do not have a VA-rated service connected disability, receive VA pension payment, or have a special eligibility (i.e. Purple Heart recipient) must provide their gross household income from the previous year when applying for VA health care enrollment.

PCRs must provide all methods of applying for VA Healthcare benefits to the caller:

1. Contact the Health Resource Center (HRC)
   * Telephone – 1-877-222-VETS (8387)
   * Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm, EST
2. Apply Online

* Vets.gov, [Health Care Application Process](https://www.vets.gov/health-care/apply/)
* Submit completed application online

1. Apply in Person

* Veterans may apply in person at their local VA Medical Center ([VA Medical Center Locator](https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp?dnum=1))

1. Apply by Mail

* Complete [VA Form 10-10EZ Instruction for Completing Enrollment Application For Health Benefits](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf)
* Return completed signed application to Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200, Atlanta GA 30329-1647

**PCR Responsibilities**

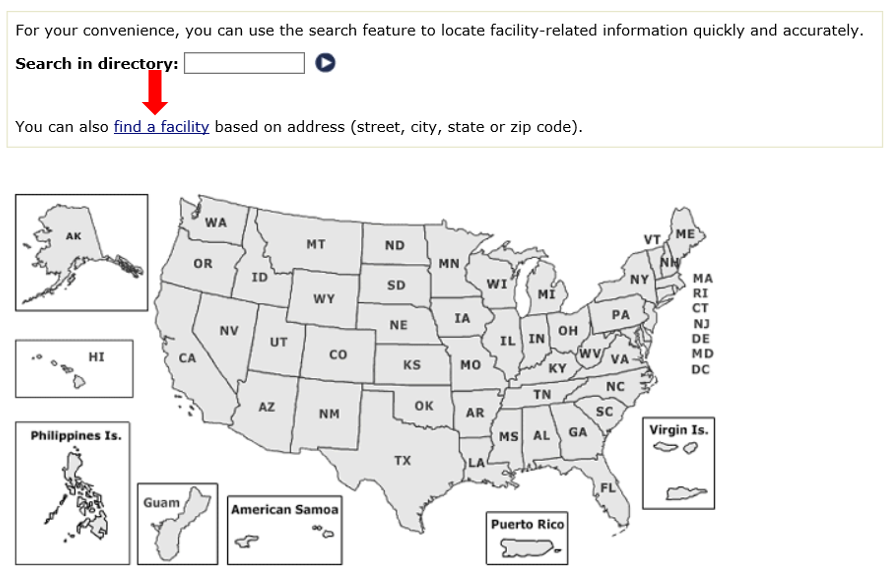
* Provide all options to apply for health care benefits, offer to send the [VA Form 10-10EZ Instruction for Completing Enrollment Application For Health Benefits](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf), and provide the return address of Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200, Atlanta GA 30329-1647.
* Provide the telephone number to the Veteran’s closest VA medical facility and offer to transfer the caller.

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# **Locating VA Facilities**

PCRs will routinely receive telephone calls asking for the VA medical facility closest to their home as well as the physical address and telephone number to that facility. PCRs search for the location of the VAMC by going to Knowledge Management and then clicking ‘Locations’.





Click on “find a facility” to search for a facility within a specific area.

# **Copayments for Services**

Some Veterans may be required to pay copays for treatment of their non-service-connected conditions. Copays are determined by the Veteran’s Priority Group. Veterans receive free healthcare services for service-connected conditions. Veterans may utilize the [Health Benefits Explorer](http://hbexplorer.vacloud.us/) to determine what copays apply to their health care plan. Additional information regarding Copayment rates can be found at [Copayment Rates](https://www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates/).

# **Pharmacy Benefits**

VA will provide medications that are prescribed by VA providers in conjunction with VA medical care. VA will fill prescriptions prescribed by non-VA provider only if all of the following criteria are met:

* Enrolled in VA health benefits
* Assigned a Primary Care Provider
* Provided the medical records from the non-VA provider to Primary Care Provider
* VA health care provider agrees with the medication prescribed by the non-VA provider

VA health care providers are under no obligation to prescribe a medication recommended by a non-VA provider. Some Veterans may receive VA medications free of charge based on their service-connected disabilities. Veterans in Priority Group 1 do not pay for medications. Veterans have several options to refill prescriptions online at [My HealtheVet](https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home), mail order by completing the refill notice received with original refill or telephone by contacting local VA medical facility.

# **Dental Care**

VA offers a one-time dental treatment available at no cost if the Veteran’s DD214 does not show all needed dental service was received at least 90 days prior to separation. The Veteran must apply to VA for this dental care within 180 days (6 months) of separation from active duty with an other than dishonorable discharge.

Eligibility for outpatient dental care is not the same as other VA medical benefits and is categorized into classes.

* To apply for VA dental care benefits, Veterans must complete [VA Form 10-10EZ Instruction for Completing Enrollment Application For Health Benefits](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf) .

If a Veteran is not eligible for VA dental care benefits, they may be able to buy dental insurance at a reduced cost through the VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide all options to apply for dental care benefits, offer to send the [VA Form 10-10EZ Instruction for Completing Enrollment Application For Health Benefits](http://vaww.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/10-10EZ-fillable.pdf) , and provide the return address
* Provide the telephone number to the Veteran’s closest VA dental care facility and offer to transfer the call if the caller is requesting to schedule a dental appointment by utilizing [Find a VA dental clinic near you](https://www.va.gov/DENTAL/Dental-Clinic-Locations-Finder.asp)
* Provide the telephone number and offer to transfer the caller to HRC, 1-877-222-VETS (8387), if they have additional dental eligibility questions

# **Travel Pay**

The Beneficiary Travel program (BT) provides mileage reimbursement for travel to and from Compensation and Pension (C&P) exams. Veterans must complete [VA Form 10-3542](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-3542-fill.pdf) and return it to their local VA medical facility.

Veterans are eligible for travel reimbursement if one of the following criteria is met:

* Service-connected rating of 30% or more
* Travel for treatment of a service-connected condition
* Receive VA pension
* Income does not exceed the Maximum Annual VA Pension Rate (MAPR)
* Travel for scheduled C&P exams
* Applications for payment must be submitted within 30 calendar days from the date of travel.

The current mileage reimbursement rate is 41.5 cents per mile.

Travel reimbursements are subject to a maximum deductible of $18 monthly.

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide telephone number and offer to transfer caller to local VA medical facility travel pay department
* Provide [VA Form 10-3542](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-3542-fill.pdf) , instruct caller to mail or hand deliver completed form to local VA medical facility, and provide mailing address of medical facility
* Provide HRC telephone number, 1-877-222-VETS (8387), if Veteran needs assistance completing the form

# **Emergency Care**

Veterans may receive emergency care at a non-VA health care facility at VA’s expense when a VA facility cannot furnish care due to distance from the facility or when VA is unable to furnish the needed emergency services.

A medical emergency is generally defined as a condition of such a nature that a prudent layperson would reasonably expect that delay in seeking immediate medical attention would be hazardous to life or health.

Veteran must contact their local VA medical facility as soon as the Veteran’s condition is stable enough to transfer to a VA facility.

An emergency is deemed to have ended at the point when a VA provider has determined the Veteran should be transferred from the non-VA facility to a VA medical facility and payment may be limited.

VA may pay for the non-VA emergency care if (not all inclusive):

* Treatment was for a rated service-connected disability
* Treatment was for a non-service-connected disability associated with the service-connected disability
* Treatment was for any condition if an active participant in the Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation program and the treatment makes it possible to enroll or continue course training
* Veteran is rated as permanent and total (P&T)

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide telephone number and offer to transfer caller to local VA medical facility

# **Hearing Aids**

Hearing aids are provided to Veterans who are:

* At least 10% service connected
* Former Prisoners of War (POW)
* Purple Heart recipients
* Veterans in receipt of benefits under 38 U.S.C. 1151
* Veterans’ hearing impairment resulted from a condition being treated at the VA medical facility
* Housebound (HB) and/or Aid & Attendance (A&A) recipients
* Enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation
* Veterans rated 0% for hearing loss
* Experiencing a hearing impairment so severe that the provision of sensor-neural aids is necessary to permit active participation in their own medical treatment

The Veteran must contact the Prosthetics Department at his local VA medical facility.

Veterans must be enrolled with the Veterans Health Administration (Refer to Health Enrollment section to discuss how to enroll) The Prosthetics Department at the VA medical facility provides hearing aids to Veterans who are authorized to receive hearing aid batteries from the VA may request the batteries:

* Mail using blue VA Form 2346, Request for Batteries and Accessories card/envelope received with the initial order and return to VA Denver Acquisition and Logistics Center (DALC), P.O. Box 25166, Denver, CO 80225-0166
* Phone by calling DALC at 303-273-6200
* Online with eBenefits, <http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/> (Note: Veterans cannot order batteries through MyHeatheVet website)

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide the telephone number and offer to transfer to the caller’s local Prosthetics Department at the VA medical facility
* Provide all options to obtain replacement batteries to include providing appropriate telephone numbers, mailing address, form information, and website

# **Readjustment Counseling**

VA provides readjustment counseling services to Veterans and their families through 300 community-based Vet Centers. Vet Center counselors provide individual, group, marriage, and family readjustment counseling.

Counselors assist in making a successful transition from military to civilian life through various treatment services.

Most Veterans who served in any combat zone and received a military campaign ribbon are generally eligible to receive readjustment counseling and other services at community-based Vet Centers. The Veteran must contact the local Vet Center to schedule an appointment.

Vet Center staff is available 24/7 at 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387). If Veteran is displaying immediate signs of anxiety and distress, the Veterans Crisis Line is available to all Veterans, regardless of enrollment status, by calling 800-273-TALK (8255).

# **Bereavement Counseling**

Bereavement counseling is assistance and support to people with emotional and psychological stress after the death of a loved one.

VA offers bereavement counseling to spouses, parents, and children of Armed Forces personnel who died while on active duty at community-based Vet Centers by contacting 202-461-6530 or via email at [vetcenter.bereavement@va.gov](mailto:vetcenter.bereavement@va.gov). Family members of Reservists and National Guardsmen who die while on duty are eligible. There is no cost for VA bereavement counseling.

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# **Vet Center Program**

Vet Centers across the country provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to combat Veterans and their families. You may call the Vet Center closest to you or the Vet Center Call Center at 1-877-WAR VETS (1-877-927-8387).

The Vet Center Program was established by Congress in 1979 out of the recognition that a significant number of Vietnam-era Veterans were still experiencing readjustment programs.

Any Veteran and active Service member may seek services at the Vet Center Program if he/she served on active military duty in any combat theater or area of hostility.

Vet Center services may include individual and group counseling in areas such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), alcohol and drug assessment, military sexual trauma (MST), and suicide prevention referrals. Vet Centers also offer Bereavement and Readjustment counseling. All Vet Center services are free of cost and strictly confidential.

# **Nursing Homes**

VHA provides nursing home care through three national programs:

Community Nursing Homes, Community Living Centers (CLC), and State Veterans Homes. VA social workers/case managers are available to assist with eligibility and copay requirements.

Each program has admission and eligibility criteria specific to the program. VA is obligated to pay the full cost of nursing home services for enrolled Veterans who need nursing home care for a service-connected disability, or who have a 70% or greater service-connected disability, or Veterans with a rating of total disability based on individual unemployability (IU). All other Veterans are able to receive nursing home care based on available resources.

Veterans must submit [VA Form 10-10EC, Application for Extended Care Benefits](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-10EC-fill.pdf) to determine the estimated amount of his/her monthly copayment obligations for extended care services provided by VA.

# **Domiciliary Care**

Domiciliary care provides services to economically disadvantaged and homeless Veterans. It is an active clinical rehabilitation and treatment program for Veterans that addresses goals of recovery, health maintenance, and community integration.

Domiciliary programs are integrated with the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs (MH RRTPs).

When a Veteran without a spouse or a child is furnished domiciliary care by VA, the pension is reduced to an amount not to exceed $90 per month after three calendar months of care.

Domiciliary care focuses on the Veteran’s strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences by utilizing a therapeutic community based on peer and professional support in a structured and supervised setting.

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# **Environmental Health Registry**

VA’s health registry evaluation is a free medical assessment for Veterans who may have been exposed to certain environmental hazards during military service. VA maintains health registries to provide special health evaluations and health-related information.

The registry evaluation is separate from VA’s disability compensation process; a Veteran must file a claim for disability compensation if they want the exposure-related health problem to be considered. The health registries do not confirm exposure to environmental hazards during military service.

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide the telephone number and transfer the caller to the local VA Environmental Health Coordinator

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# **Patient Advocate**

A Patient Advocate assists with getting care and resolving problems/concerns for all Veterans and their families who receive care at Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities. If your concerns have not been addressed by your treatment team, you may contact a VA Patient Advocate at the local medical facility.

Patient Advocates are employees who are specifically designated at each VHA facility to manage the feedback received from Veterans and their family.

The Patient Advocate works directly with management and employees to facilitate resolutions.

Veterans should be encouraged to first speak with their treatment team to include the doctor, nurse, social worker, dietitian, pharmacist, chaplain, therapist, and any VA professional involved in the medical care before contacting the Patient Advocate.

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide the telephone number and offer to transfer the caller to the Patient Advocate at the local VA medical facility

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# **Affordable Care Act**

The Affordable Care Act, also known as health care law, was created to provide more Americans with access to affordable health insurance.

Veterans who do not have health insurance may enroll for VA’s health benefits by applying using [10-10EZ, Application for Health Care](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/1010EZ-fillable.pdf) (Refer to the Health Enrollment section) or by purchasing private health insurance by visiting HealthCare.gov.

VA will mail IRS Form 1095-B, Health Coverage, to Veterans in order to declare they had minimum health coverage.

# **VA Caregiver Support**

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers offers enhanced support for Caregivers of eligible Veterans seriously injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001.

The Caregiver Support Program offers training, educational resources, and a support line for advice on being a caregiver.

The Caregiver Support Line is 855-260-3274 and is available to all Caregivers.

Caregivers are able to contact local Caregiver Support Coordinators to assist with services and resources by utilizing the [Care for Caregivers - VA Caregiver Support Locator](https://www.caregiver.va.gov/Care_Caregivers.asp).

**PCR Responsibilities**

* Provide the telephone number and offer to transfer the caller to the Caregiver Support Line
* Provide all options to obtain forms/applications and provide the return mailing address

# **Mission Act**

Veterans should expect improved access to care due to [new eligibility criteria](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000102532/Veteran-Community-Care-–-Eligibility-(VA-MISSION-Act)).

The process for receiving care will also be improved to include the following steps:

* VA confirms the Veteran’s eligibility for community care under the new criteria.
* A VA staff member assists the Veteran with scheduling the appointment or the Veteran schedules the appointment with their preferred community provider within the VA network.
* Veteran receives care from a community provider in the VA network
* Community provider sends a claim to a third-party Administrator or VA for payment.

In addition to new eligibility criteria, Veterans can expect the following improvements to community care under the VA MISSION Act.

* Single community care program. Existing programs will be combined into one single community care program. The Veterans Choice Program came to an end on June 6, 2019, but some of its elements are being adopted into the new program. With one program and a single set of rules and processes, there is less complexity and likelihood of errors and problems.
* Better customer service. VA is implementing redesigned, streamlined internal processes, with improved education and communications resources for Veterans, our Veterans Service Organization (VSO) partners, and VA employees involved in community care operations. This will make administering community care easier and support excellent customer service for Veterans.
* New urgent care benefit. The new [urgent care benefit](https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/554400000001001/content/554400000102528/Veteran-Community-Care-–-Urgent-Care-Benefit-(VA-MISSION-Act)) will provide eligible Veterans with access to non-emergent care for certain conditions in the VA network of community providers. Veterans can go to any urgent care or walk-in care provider in VA’s network without prior authorization from VA. There may be copayments associated with this benefit depending on a Veteran’s assigned priority group and the number of times the benefit is used in a calendar year.
* New Community Care Network. VA is establishing a [Community Care Network (CCN)](https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/CCN-Veterans.asp) of community providers, which is being administered through Third Party Administrators (TPAs) in six regions. Once CCN is implemented, VA will directly coordinate with Veterans to schedule community care appointments, (and in some instances, continue to schedule their own appointments), and support care coordination. VA’s TPAs will also be required to make timely payments to community providers.
* Modern IT systems. VA is modernizing its information technology (IT) systems to replace a patchwork of old technology and manual processes that slowed down the administration and delivery of community care. Once in place, the new IT systems will speed up all aspects of community care – eligibility, authorizations, appointments, care coordination, claims, and payments – while improving overall communication between Veterans, community providers, and VA staff members.

Practical Application Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize trainees with various VA Medical Center related topics and to provide practice on locating the information.

Each trainee will need a computer with Knowledge Management (KM), VA Intranet, and VA Internet access. Instructor will pose the scenarios and allow trainees to research the answer. A trainee should be selected, after research is conducted, to provide the answer and explain how they located the information.

**Scenario 1:** My father is a Gulf War Veteran and is having some major health problems. How does he go about getting an appointment at the VA?

Answer:

Path:

Scenario 2: I am enrolled in VA healthcare. Will I have to pay a copayment to be seen at the VAMC?

Answer:

Path:

Scenario 3: My father is a Vietnam Veteran who gets a monthly check from the VA. Can he fill his prescription with the VA pharmacy? (Note: No additional details provided)

Answer:

Path:

**Scenario 4:** I applied for VA compensation and I am scheduled for an exam at the VA hospital. Will VA reimburse me for travel expenses?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 5:** I live three hours from the nearest VA medical facility. If I have a heart attack and go to my local emergency room, will I have to pay for it?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 6:** My father receives VA pension benefits with housebound allowance. His doctor says he needs hearing aids. Will VA provide hearing aids for him?

Answer:

Path:

**Scenario 7:** My husband was in the Gulf War with the Army and was discharged 18 months ago. Now he is having some psychiatric issues. Can the VA help him?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 8:** I was just notified my son was killed in Iraq. I’m just devastated. Is there anywhere I can go for help?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 9:** My daughter served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and has not been the same since returning home. She is not willing to get treatment from the VA hospital because she feels it’s too crowded. Is there any other place she can get help?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 10:** My brother was discharged from the Army last month. Can he get free dental care from the VA?

Answer:

Path:

**Scenario 11:** My father is a Korean War Veteran. He is suffering from dementia. Does VA have nursing homes?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 12:** My father just told us he was going to the VA Medical Center domiciliary. Can you tell me what that is?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 13:** My father is a Vietnam Veteran and would like to have a health examination because of exposure to Agent Orange. Who should he contact? Does he have to be enrolled in the VA health care system before he can get an exam?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 14:** I am a cancer patient at a VA Medical Center. I am concerned about the course of treatment prescribed by my physician. What are my options?

**Answer:**

Path:

**Scenario 15:** I receive VA Medical care. Am I covered under the Affordable Care Act?

Answer:

Path:

**Scenario 16:** My husband served Post 9/11 and was seriously injured. I care for him full-time and would like to know if the VA will reimburse me since I am no longer able to work full-time?

Answer:

Path:

**Scenario 17:** I am a Veteran enrolled in VA Healthcare, but I would like to use my current provider instead of the VAMC, can I do that with the Mission Act Benefits?

Answer:

Path:

Knowledge Check

1. What form is used for VA Healthcare enrollment?
2. What is the name of the new act that broadens the Veterans eligibility for Community care?
3. What are the four residential setting programs available for Veterans?
4. True or False:

Veterans have to enroll with the Environmental Exposure section in VHA before submitting a claim for said benefits.

1. True or False:

All Veterans are eligible for dental treatment at VA Facilities.