***­­­“Don’t Wait. Reach Out.”* Campaign**

 **Customizable Press Release**

*You can customize the draft press release below to feature any events, offerings, and activations that your organization is doing to support Veterans.*

*Please update all highlighted sections below; you may also wish to revise or add additional details about your organization’s specific offerings.*

 **[Organization name] Offers Veterans Support through Events and Resources**

**[CITY, date]** – Veterans are often the first to help others, but it can sometimes be hard for Veterans to accept or ask for help themselves. This [month], [organization name] is offering events and resources to help Veterans who are struggling.

In addition to the local resources offered, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Ad Council have released [new public service advertisements (PSAs)](https://youtu.be/7InsC5TScjY) as a part of the ongoing national campaign: *“Don’t Wait. Reach Out*.” which first launched in 2021. The new PSAs were informed by extensive research with Veterans and features a diverse range of Veterans reflecting on the difficulties of asking for support. The PSA directs audiences to [VA.gov/REACH](http://www.va.gov/reach), a comprehensive website designed to help Veterans navigate the wide range of resources available.

“[quote about the importance and these efforts in addressing suicide,” said [name, title.] “Insert second part of quote here about importance/impact of events and collaboration within their community.”

[Add one sentence with more details about the specific local events/resources – dates, times, how they can be accessed, etc.]

Although the Veteran suicide rate meaningfully decreased in both 2019 and 2020, the suicide rate among Veterans in 2020 was 57% higher than non-Veteran adults, according to the most recent available data from the [2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/data-sheets/2022/2022-National-Veteran-Suicide-Prevention-Annual-Report-FINAL-508.pdf). Suicide is complex, and stressful life events like life transitions or struggles with housing can be risk factors. [Organization] offers resources to support Veterans across a wide range of life challenges, before these problems become overwhelming.

[Organization]’s efforts support VA’s 10-year strategy to end Veteran suicide through a comprehensive, public health approach. According to VA’s 2022 National Suicide Prevention Annual Report:

* In each year from 2001 through 2020, age- and sex-adjusted suicide rates of Veterans exceeded those of non-Veterans.
* Among Veterans between ages 18–44, suicide was the second-leading cause of death.
* 44,298 U.S. adults died in 2020 from suicide. This included 6,146 Veteran suicides.

Everyone can be part of the solution by checking in with the Veterans in their life and encouraging them to reach out if they need help. Visit [VA.gov/REACH](http://www.va.gov/REACH/spread-the-word) to download and share social media content to spread the word.

In addition to hosting special events [tailor this line as needed] throughout this month, [organization] offers assistance for Veterans all year round. Learn more by visiting [organization website and/or social handles].

**###**

###### *If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Dial 988 then Press 1, text 838255 or chat online at*[*VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat*](http://veteranscrisisline.net/Chat)*.*

*Reporters covering this issue can download*[*VA’s Safe Messaging Best Practices*](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/OMH-086-VA-OMHSP-Safe-Messaging-Factsheet-4-9-2019.pdf)*fact sheet or visit*[*www.ReportingOnSuicide.org*](http://www.reportingonsuicide.org/)*for important guidance on how to communicate about suicide.*

**About [organization]**

[Insert boilerplate information about your organization]

**Media Contacts**:

[Insert contact information]