VHA National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships (HAP) and the Veteran Sponsorship Partnership Network (VSPN)

How Service members and Veterans Can Re-enter Civilian Life With Better Outcomes

The Veteran Health Administration (VHA)'s **Veteran Sponsorship Partnership Network (VSPN)** initiative is based on the model of the **DoD sponsorship program**. Thanks to the community partners and volunteers in the VSPN, Service members and Veterans can be paired with a sponsor in the community they and their family moves to after they conclude their military service. Keep reading to learn more about how Service members and Veterans are matched with sponsors, and how community organizations, volunteers, and VA are working together to support them.

What is the VSPN? How does it help Service members and Veterans?

VHA created the VSPN initiative to leverage the power of public-private partnerships to help transitioning Service members and their families access VA services and community resources, such as employment opportunities, education benefits, housing assistance, and more. Joining the initiative means:

- Having someone who cares about you as you exit the military and begin a new phase of your life and will check in on you regularly.
- Having help navigating resources and benefits that can help you achieve your goals as you transition into a new civilian community.

Early research has shown that engaging in VHA care with community-based interventions and sponsorship programs can help Veterans achieve better outcomes across **social determinants of health**, experience less difficulty when transitioning back into civilian communities, and reduce risk factors related to Veteran death by suicide. The sponsors, community organizations, and the VHA ultimately help deliver quality benefits, whole health care, and accessible services the way Veterans want to receive them to improve experiences, wellbeing, and outcomes.

Who is eligible to be paired with a sponsor?

Any Service member or Veteran who is transitioning to a civilian community within the United States can sign up to be paired with a volunteer sponsor. If you do not yet know which community in the U.S. you are moving to, you can be paired with a sponsor to help guide you through that process of finalizing a location.

Benefits for All Veterans.

- Receive individualized, accessible support from local volunteers guiding you to achieve your post-military goals around employment, housing, healthcare, and more.
- Meet a friendly face at a new location. Sponsors can provide personal experience and recommendations (like housing options or the best places for kids) to help you and your family settle into your new home.
- Connect with VA as well as community resources through sponsors who can explain what benefits are available to help you and your family and how to access them.

How do I get a sponsor and resources from VSPN community partners?

- Apply online for a sponsor: **etssponsorship.com/signup/regioncheck/**.
- While still in active duty, communicate with your sponsor virtually to learn what national and local VA resources are available to you.
- Meet face-to-face with your sponsor once you are in your post-military home.
- Develop a Transition Action Plan with your sponsor to smooth reentry to civilian life. Communicate regularly with your sponsor about those goals and what you need.
- Whether you have a sponsor or not, you can reach out to a VSPN community partner and/or VA with any additional requests for resources or help with acute care or crisis management.

Innovative Strategic Partnerships Facilitated through HAP

The mission of the VHA National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships (formerly known as the Office of Community Engagement) is to serve as a trusted resource and a catalyst for the growth of effective partnerships at the national, state, and community level and advances the health and wellbeing of Veterens through exploration of innovative, safe, and ethical emerging therapies.

To learn more about the VSPN, please visit: **va.gov/HEALTHPARTNERSHIPS/vspn.asp**

To learn more about VHA partnerships, please visit: **va.gov/healthpartnerships**.

Disclaimer: Sponsors are not managed by VA. Individuals who wish to become a sponsor do so by signing up as a volunteer with a non-VA organization. VA does not endorse and is not responsible for sponsors or organizations that manage sponsors. Sponsors are trained with materials provided by VA in collaboration with an academic affiliate. The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute an endorsement by the Department of Veterans Affairs of the linked websites, or the information, products, or services contained therein. Veterans and members of the public are encouraged to adhere to current CDC guidelines pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic.