

Welcome to the
VA Maine Fisher House



because A FAMILY'S LOVE *is good medicine*

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SECTION 1 – WHAT IS A FISHER HOUSE?



Front Entry

Welcome to the beautiful **VA Maine Fisher House**.

Zachary & Elizabeth Fisher established the Fisher House Program in 1990. They wanted families to feel as though they were guests in their own home.

Today, Kenneth Fisher, Chairman and CEO of the Fisher House Foundation, continues the family legacy of reuniting military members and Veterans with their families during medical recovery.

Amenities include:

- Approximately 13,500 square feet of space.
- 16 Guest Suites with bedroom & private bathroom.
- Also Included: A Library, Dining Room, Kitchen, Family Room and Laundry Room.
- All rooms are handicap accessible.

Since inception, Fisher Houses have saved military and Veterans' families an estimated **\$500 Million** in out of pocket costs for lodging and transportation.

SECTION 2 – FISHER HOUSE FACTS

- The Fisher House Program was founded in **1990** by **Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher**.
- Fisher Houses provide **Free Lodging** for military families living more than 50 miles away from a VA or DOD Medical Center, allowing families to stay together while their loved ones are receiving treatment.
- On any given night, up to **1,000 Families** are staying in a Fisher House throughout the country.
- Fisher House has:
 - Served over **400,000 Families**
 - Provided **10 Million Days of Lodging**
 - Saved over **\$500 Million Dollars** in out-of-pocket savings to families in lodging and transportation expenses.

On February 17, 2020
VA Maine Fisher House
officially became the
86th Fisher House
in the Foundation's proud history.

SECTION 3 – ELIGIBILITY & RULES

Family Members or Caregivers

- 1 - Is involved in the “episodic care” of the Veteran being treated at VA Maine Healthcare System.
- 2 - Must be capable of self-care.
- 3 - Resides 50-miles or more from the VA Maine Healthcare System campus.

Veterans

- 1 - Receiving “episodic care” at VA Maine Healthcare System.
- 2 – Accompanied by a family member or a caregiver.
- 3 - Resides 50-miles or more from the VA Maine Healthcare System campus.

“Episodic Care” is confirmed through medical consults.

Exceptions to the 50-mile rule, while rare, may be granted at the discretion of the Fisher House Manager.

Basic Rules of the Fisher House

Guests must be willing to abide by all house rules:

- No smoking, alcohol, weapons or drug use.
- Willing & able to clean up after themselves.
- No pets (except for service dogs).
- Guests must express a willingness to respect the rights of other guests and contribute to a supportive and caring environment.
- Children under the age of 18 must always be supervised by their family member.
- Families will only be assigned one guest room.

SECTION 4 - TUTORIAL

Fisher Bust & USS Intrepid



Every Fisher House has a bronze bust of Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, founders of the Fisher House Program. Although unable to serve in the military due to a leg injury, Mr. Fisher was an avid supporter of the military and spent millions of dollars building comfort homes for active duty military and Veterans. As a result of Zachary's incredible patriotism and dedication, he had the distinction of being only one of two individuals made an "Honorary Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces." He shares that honor with none other than Bob Hope. Every Fisher House also has a photo of the USS Intrepid. In 1978, Mr. Fisher founded the campaign to save the historic and battle-scarred World War II aircraft carrier from the scrapyard and transformed it into America's largest naval museum. The *USS Intrepid* became the center of New York City's Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, which hosts nearly one million visitors annually.

Library



As you look around you will see that our library's furniture is arranged in small group settings. This is done intentionally to

promote intimate conversations among the families staying in the Fisher House. It is a warm, comfortable space where guests can sit quietly to read or reflect, and it embodies the spirit of Fisher Houses across the nation by providing a "home away from home."

Dining Room

Welcome to our communal dining room. This is where our families come together to eat meals during their stay at the Fisher House. Special events will be hosted



such as Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners and other holiday meals. At full capacity, this room can hold 30 people. The tables are intentionally designed for small groups to sit together. This helps to create the sense of community and family that is an integral part of every Fisher House. A large portrait of the Kenneth & Tammy Fisher can be found in this room. Although our original founders are no longer with us, their family continues the tradition of building and gifting Fisher Houses to lodge loved ones of our hospitalized Veterans.

Kitchen



Our gourmet kitchen has two complete kitchens in one:

Two double ovens, two stoves, two microwaves, two sinks, two dishwashers, etc. Underneath the beautiful quartz countertop, you will see individual dry storage areas where guests can secure their dry goods. For the convenience of our guests, we have three sub-zero refrigerators and two freezers, one being in the laundry room. Guests will be assigned a portion of each to store their personal groceries. These “community” refrigerators allow donated food items to be accessed by any guest.

Families can cook their own meals, or on occasion, volunteer groups may come in to cook family meals. Food may be donated or gift cards provided to families to go grocery shopping.

Family Room

Welcome to our cozy family room. The family room is a more informal setting for guests.



This room is designed to promote a sense of comfort and support as families gather to watch TV and keep an eye on what's cooking in the kitchen, just like in a private home.

Guests will also have access to games and DVDs in the family room as well.

Laundry Room



Our laundry room has three washers and three dryers. During our guests' stay, they have access to the laundry room to do their own laundry.

Laundry detergent, bleach, fabric softener, spot remover and dryer sheets are provided through donations for guest use.

The laundry room holds one of the freezers, an ice machine and cleaning supplies for guests to utilize while living at the house.

Guest Rooms

Welcome to the private spaces of our Fisher House. We have 16 guest rooms in the house. There are eight suites on each floor of the Fisher House.



Each room is configured a little differently with each having either one Queen size bed or two Full-Size beds. The furniture and decorations are slightly different, which was done intentionally to ensure the house felt more like a home than a hotel.



Each suite includes a TV and DVD player for the comfort of our guests. Each guest room has a private bathroom and shower and are wheelchair accessible. The linens are beautiful and are of luxury hotel quality.

SECTION 5 – SERVICE DOGS



Are Service Dogs allowed at the Fisher House?

Yes. Legitimate Service Dogs, those who perform a service for a Guest staying at the Fisher House, are allowed.

Requirements

- Guests have sole responsibility for oversight, feeding and care of their Service Dog.
- Service Dogs are required to remain with the Guest they perform a service for at all times.
- A Veteran's Service Dog is welcome at the Fisher House as long as the Service Dog remains with the Veteran at all times.

Disclaimers

We Cannot Board Service Dogs: Service Dogs cannot be left behind at the Fisher House at any time, including:

- Leaving a Service Dog in our Guest Rooms, or
- Leaving a Veteran's Service Dog behind with family while the Veteran attends a medical appointment.

Service Dogs Only: Pets, "comfort animals", etc., are not allowed – only legitimate Service Dogs.

In the rare event that a Service Dog becomes disruptive, the Fisher House staff reserves the right to ask that the Service Dog be removed.

SECTION 6 – HOW CAN I HELP?

For those wishing to become involved, there are many different opportunities to do so:

- House Volunteers
- Meal Volunteers
- Special Projects

To volunteer for any activity involving the Fisher House, volunteers must first apply through and receive orientation from **Voluntary Service**.

Donations

- All donations, to include checks, gift cards, etc., must go through **Voluntary Service**.
- If you want more information about donations and how to contribute – ask about our Wish List.

Voluntary Service: Phone: (207) 621-4886
Email: VAVSMaine@va.gov



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