

NORTHEAST OHIO VETERANS RESOURCES TOOLKIT



VA

**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health
Administration
*VA Northeast Ohio
Healthcare System*

NOVEMBER 2022

Veterans Affairs Welcome Kit

Whether you're just getting out of the service or you've been a civilian for years now, the VA Welcome Kit can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned.

Based on where you are in life, your VA benefits and services can support you in different ways. Keep your welcome kit handy so you can turn to it throughout your life—like when it's time to go to school, get a job, buy a house, get health care, retire, or make plans for your care as you age. Scan the QR code to access on your smart device or click the link to visit the website <https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/>



To print your kit in black and white, click or visit the link below

<https://www.va.gov/files/2022-07/va-welcome-kit-black-and-white.pdf>

or scan the QR code below to access on your smart device:



To print your kit in color, click or visit the link below

<https://www.va.gov/files/2022-07/va-welcome-kit-color.pdf>

or scan the QR code below to access on your smart device:



THE FOLLOWING PAGES ALSO CONTAIN VALUABLE RESOURCES FOR VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS/PROVIDERS.

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VETERANS CRISIS LINE

Are you a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one? You're not alone—the Veterans Crisis Line is here for you. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to call. The phone number for the Veterans Crisis Line is **988 press 1**. **You can also text 838255, or start a live chat by following the link:** <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/chat/> Visit the website for more information: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>



VA S.A.V.E. TRAINING

VA S.A.V.E. Training will help you act with care and compassion if you encounter a Veteran who is in crisis or experiencing suicidal thoughts. You can prevent Veteran suicide. Start by learning the VA S.A.V.E. acronym. https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/VA_SAVE_Training.pdf The acronym S.A.V.E. helps you remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- S** Signs of suicidal thinking should be recognized
- A** Ask the most important question of all — “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”
- V** Validate the Veteran’s experience
- E** Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help



1

APPLY FOR VETERANS HEALTHCARE

VA health care covers care for your physical and mental health. This includes a range of services from checkups to surgeries to home health care. It also includes prescriptions and medical equipment. Apply online now. Includes steps to check your eligibility, information/document (s) you need to gather to complete registration, and enrollment application for health benefits. (VA Form 10-10EZ), including links if you need help.



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QR1 online application OR QR2 fillable/printable application.

QR1: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction>

QR2: <https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/VA%20Form%2010-10EZ.pdf>



THE PACT ACT AND YOUR VA BENEFITS

The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve.

This page will help answer your questions about what the PACT Act means for you or your loved ones. You can also call us at 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711). And you can file a claim for PACT Act-related disability compensation or apply for VA health care now. <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>



FIND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LOCATIONS

This link will allow Veterans, family, or friends to search for VA locations to connect to Veterans Affairs facilities: <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>



VA VET CENTERS & READJUSTMENT COUNSELORS

Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services including professional readjustment counseling to Veterans and active duty Service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve components who served on active military duty in any combat theater or area of hostility.

www.vetcenter.va.gov



DON'T WAIT. REACH OUT.

Life has its challenges. You don't have to solve them alone. That's true whether it's an every-day struggle, or something more complicated. This site was designed for Veterans to proactively seek support and resources. You're not alone. You've got this. Don't wait. Reach out. Veterans, family members, or friends of Veterans can utilize this resource to find links for specific support and resources. When you click on "Get Support and Resources" button, it takes you to a page where you can click on the topics for which you are seeking support. Easy to navigate: <https://www.va.gov/REACH/>



START THE CONVERSATION

Use this toolkit to find information about common issues that man Veterans face, as well as concrete steps to help you support a Veteran who may be dealing with emotional distress or at risk for suicide. Additional resources about starting the conversation with Veterans can be found at the link below – can organize by intended audience and topic near the top of the page drop-down boxes: <https://starttheconversation.veteranscrisisline.net/toolkit>



MAKE THE CONNECTION

This link can help Veterans learn more about experiencing suicidal thoughts and behaviors, treatment options, self-help tools, and resources to help reconnect and find hope. There are videos of Veterans speaking on this topic and Veterans can easily conduct a customized search to hear Veterans from specific branches and service eras speak: <https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/suicide>



COACHING INTO CARE

Are you looking for help in encouraging a Veteran to get support or mental health care? Coaching Into Care is a free service for families and friends of Veterans. Our responders will briefly assess your concerns and provide appropriate resources and referrals. Licensed psychologists and social workers offer guidance and help for starting conversations with the Veteran in your life about their mental health or substance use and motivating them to seek treatment if it's needed.

Scan the QR code or visit <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/> -OR- Call us Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time [888-823-7458](tel:888-823-7458). If we miss your call, leave a message and we'll return your call within one business day or email CoachingIntoCare@va.gov. Calls generally last from 10 to 30 minutes depending on the situation. Some coaching requires more than one call, usually with the same coach.



FIREARM SUICIDE PREVENTION & LETHAL MEANS SAFETY

Lethal means are objects like guns, medications, alcohol, opioids or other substances, ropes, cords, or sharp objects that can be used during a suicidal crisis. If a Veteran is in crisis or having suicidal thoughts, these items can become deadly when they are easily accessible. For example, nearly 7 out of every 10 Veteran deaths by suicide are the result of firearm injuries (Dept. of Veteran Affairs, 2018).

Increasing the time and distance between someone in a suicidal crisis and access to lethal means can reduce suicide risk and save lives. There are simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. On this page, you'll find:

- *How to identify and handle a suicidal crisis
- *Helpful tips for storing guns, medications, and other lethal means
- *Additional resources about safe storage

<https://www.va.gov/reach/lethal-means/>



VA MENTAL HEALTH

VA has a variety of mental health resources, information, treatment options, and more — all accessible to Veterans, Veterans’ supporters, and the general public. Explore the site to learn more about a specific mental health topic or to find information specifically tailored to your needs. VA provides support for a variety of mental health conditions and other challenges. Exploring by topic includes resources, information on treatment options, and more. <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/index.asp>



VA PTSD DECISION AID

Learn about PTSD and how this decision aid can help. Compare effective PTSD treatment options. Take action to start treatment. <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/Decisionaid/>



ABOUT FACE - PTSD

PTSD. We’ve been there. After a traumatic event — like combat, an assault, or a disaster — it's normal to feel scared, keyed up, or sad at first. But if it's been months or years since the trauma and you're not feeling better, you may have PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder). Veterans, family members, and clinicians share their experiences with PTSD and PTSD treatment. Choose a topic to see a video about what they have to say. <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace/>



SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT FOR VETERANS

If you’re struggling with substance use problems, you’re not alone. Many Veterans have problems with the use of alcohol, tobacco, street drugs, and prescription medicines. We’re here to help. Find out how to get support for substance use problems through VA. <https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/substance-use-problems/>



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Learn more about Substance Use Disorders (SUD). Click on a state's initials to view all Specialized SUD Programs in that state.

NOTE: VA Medical Centers without a specific SUD Program do offer SUD Treatment. Contact your local VA Medical Center and ask for the Mental Health clinic. Many Vet Centers and VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics also offer SUD treatment.

To search for SUD treatment outside of VA, visit SAMHSA's treatment locator: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator?sType=sa>

Scan QR Code or visit VA SUD Program Locations website: <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/SUD.asp>



TEAM RED, WHITE, AND BLUE

Team RWB’s mission is to enrich the lives of America’s veterans by connecting them to their community through physical and social activity. <https://www.teamrwb.org/>



1

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

Veterans benefits help Veterans and their families buy homes, earn degrees, start careers, stay healthy, and more. Find links to other important benefit resources under any of the “Resources” sections on the web pages listed. Also, find your nearest VA Benefits Office.
VBA Support: 1-800-827-1000



2

QR1 Home page
<https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>



3

QR2 View major program offices and resources of VBA
<https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/about.asp>

QR3 Search Benefits A to Z
<https://www.benefits.va.gov/atoz/>

FIREARM LIFE PLAN



1

The Firearm Life Plan site, and its associated resources, was developed to help people think about important questions related to their firearms and protect their families from the burden of making difficult decisions without guidance. A Firearm Life Plan is a voluntary, personal plan made between a firearm owner and those they trust.

We encourage people to fill the documents out and share them only with trusted partners. We can't plan for everything life throws at us – but we can plan how we'll respond. And again – the Firearm Life Plan documents are for firearm owners and only those they want to share them with. No information is ever stored on this site.



2

A Firearm Life Plan will help a firearm owner be prepared. The Firearm Inventory worksheet outlines what someone wants done with their firearms, and when. The Legacy Map lets someone share the importance of firearms in their life and preserve their memories.

QR 1 Website link <https://firearmlifeplan.org/>

QR 2 Life Plan Toolkit <https://firearmlifeplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Firearm-Life-Plan-Toolkit.pdf>



GIVE AN HOUR

Give An Hour - Through a national network of licensed mental health providers, Give an Hour offers barrier free access to mental health care for Active duty, National Guard and Reserve, Veterans, and their loved ones. <https://giveanhour.org/military/>



AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention raises awareness, funds scientific research and provides resources and aid to those affected by suicide. <https://afsp.org/find-support/>



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY

American Association of Suicidology is an inclusive community that envisions a world where people know how to prevent suicide and find hope and healing.
<http://www.suicidology.org/Resources/Crisis-Centers>



VA SUICIDE PREVENTION

VA's top clinical priority is preventing suicide among all Veterans — including those who do not, and may never, seek care within the VA health care system. As a Veteran, you can play a role in fulfilling this mission, and VA can equip you with tools to do your part. You can explore suicide prevention resources to build networks of support among community-based organizations, Veterans Service Organizations, health care providers, and other members of your community that strengthen protective factors for Veterans.

https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/index.asp



HOMELESS VETERANS OR AT-RISK OF BEING HOMELESS

VA is committed to ending homelessness among Veterans. The focus is threefold: Conducting coordinated outreach to proactively seek out Veterans in need of assistance. Connecting homeless and at-risk Veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services and other required supports. Collaborating with federal, state and local agencies; employers; housing providers, faith-based and community nonprofits; and others to expand employment and affordable housing options for Veterans exiting homelessness.

1-877-42AID-VET (1-877-424-3838). <https://www.va.gov/homeless/>



VA COMMUNITY ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS/JOB PROGRAMS

https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/for_the_community.asp



VETERAN READINESS & EMPLOYMENT

VR&E services (formerly known as Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment) may help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. Other services may be provided to assist Veterans in starting their own businesses or independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment. VA's Education and Career Counseling program is a great opportunity for Veterans and Servicemembers to get personalized counseling and support to help guide their career paths, ensure the most effective use of their VA benefits, and achieve their goals.

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp>



CENTER FOR MINORITY VETERANS

The Center for Minority Veterans is the Department of Veterans Affairs model for inter-and intra-agency co-operation, to ensure all veterans receive equal service regardless of race, origin, religion, or gender. <https://www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans/index.asp>



CENTER FOR WOMEN VETERANS

The Center for Women Veterans monitors and coordinates VA's administration of health care and benefits services, and programs for women Veterans. Serves as an advocate for a cultural transformation (both within VA and in the general public) in recognizing the service and contributions of women Veterans and women in the military. Raises awareness of the responsibility to treat women Veterans with dignity and respect. <https://www.va.gov/womenvet/index.asp>



MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA (MST)

If you're having difficulties related to MST, we're here to support you in whatever way will help you best. <https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/military-sexual-trauma/>



VETERANS HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION

The Veterans Health Administration is America's largest integrated health care system, providing care at 1,298 health care facilities, including 171 medical centers and 1,113 outpatient sites of care of varying complexity (VHA outpatient clinics), serving 9 million enrolled Veterans each year. <https://www.va.gov/health/index.asp>



FIND A VA HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Search by State or parent VA Facility to find providers in the occupation or specialty that you are seeking. <https://www.accesstocare.va.gov/ourproviders>



HOME BASED PRIMARY CARE - GERIATRICS & EXTENDED CARE

Home Based Primary Care is health care services provided to Veterans in their home. The program is for Veterans who need team based in-home support for ongoing diseases and illnesses that affect their health and daily activities. Veterans usually have difficulty making and keeping clinic visits because of the severity of their illness and are often homebound, but that is not required. This program is also for Veterans who are isolated, or their caregiver is experiencing burden. Home Based Primary Care can be used in combination with other Home and Community Based Services. https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/Home_Based_Primary_Care.asp



ADVANCE CARE PLANNING VIA GROUP VISITS (ACP-GV) PROGRAM

VA offers interactive groups where Veterans and caregivers can join their peers to learn more about the process of planning for future health care needs known as, 'advance care planning.' https://www.socialwork.va.gov/ACP_GV.asp



FISHER HOUSE PROGRAM

A Fisher House™ is a "home away from home" for families and caregivers of Veterans and Service members receiving treatment at major military and VA medical facilities. VA Fisher House accommodations are provided at no cost to guests and located within walking distance of the treatment facility. VA Fisher Houses provide temporary accommodations at no cost for Veterans, Service members, their families and caregivers while receiving treatment through a VA Medical Facility. <https://www.socialwork.va.gov/fisher.asp>



CAREGIVER SUPPORT

The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Caregiver Support Program (CSP) offers clinical services to caregivers of eligible and covered Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. The program's mission is to promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our Nation's Veterans, through education, resources, support, and services. There is a CSP team CSP Team Locator located at every VA facility. <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (IPVAP)

The VA's Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP) is committed to helping Veterans, their partners, and VA staff who are impacted by IPV. If you, or someone you know could be experiencing and/or using IPV - help is available. Find help in the community by calling the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE) or TTY 1-800-787-3224. <https://www.socialwork.va.gov/IPV/Index.asp>



VETERANS HEALTH LIBRARY

The Veterans Health Library is your source for health information. Developed under the guidance of National Center of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention’s Veterans Health Education and Information Program, the VHL offers Veterans, family members, and caregivers 24/7 access to comprehensive, consistent, Veteran-focused health information, no matter where the Veteran receives care. <https://www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov/>



VA MOBILE APPS

VA Mobile aims to improve Veterans’ health by providing technologies that expand clinical care beyond the traditional office visit. VA Mobile develops apps that give both Veterans and VA care teams safe and secure mobile access to important health data — providing more opportunities for Veterans to be active participants in their health care. VA Mobile also features health care and wellness apps for caregivers and civilians. VA Mobile is critical in connecting Veterans to care, and VA is dedicated to providing that connection through innovative apps that enhance Veterans’ care experiences. <https://mobile.va.gov/>



WHOLE HEALTH

Whole Health is VA’s approach to care that supports your health and well-being. Whole Health centers around what matters to you, not what is the matter with you. This means your health team will get to know you as a person, before working with you to develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals. <https://www.va.gov/wholehealth/>



UNITING FOR SUICIDE POSTVENTION

Suicide prevention is a commonly used and understood term. However not everyone recognizes suicide postvention. Suicide postvention builds upon prevention efforts by providing immediate and ongoing support to those impacted by a suicide loss. Postvention is critical for healing after suicide. Uniting for Suicide Postvention (USPV) provides resources and support for everyone touched by suicide loss. Check out our USPV sections to learn more. <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/postvention/>



PSYCHARMOR

PsychArmor is a national nonprofit organization that provides education and training to improve the health and life outcomes of military-connected individuals. We create data-driven and evidence-based virtual training courses that help to enhance the level of connection between civilians and military-connected people. <https://psycharmor.org/>



HAVE YOU EVER SERVED

Have You Ever Served in the Military? represents a commitment to mobilize all sectors of the community to support Veterans and their families. Nurses, healthcare’s equivalent to the boots on the ground, are uniquely positioned to facilitate a fundamental change in care which ensures vital military service information is obtained and recorded in order to improve the quality of healthcare provided to our Veterans and their families. <https://www.haveyoueverserved.com/>



NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

Looking for a cemetery? Trying to locate a grave? Questions about burial benefits? What happens during a committal service? <https://www.cem.va.gov/>



SAFE FIREARM STORAGE TOOLKIT

Developed in partnership with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association for the firearms industry. Toolkit guides communities through the process of building coalitions to raise awareness about safe storage and its connection to suicide prevention. [Safe Firearm Storage Toolkit https://mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Toolkit_Safe_Firearm_Storage_CLEARED_508_2-24-20.pdf](https://mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Toolkit_Safe_Firearm_Storage_CLEARED_508_2-24-20.pdf)



KEEP IT SECURE

A safe home environment can buy you, or someone you care about, time to get help. Contrary to popular belief, people who are suicidal don't generally seek other ways to attempt suicide if they can't access the method they planned to use. Nor will they attempt suicide if safeguards are in place making the method more difficult. It's important to keep in mind: During a crisis, remove any household items that could be used to harm oneself. KeepItSecure.net



SUICIDE RISK MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION PROGRAM RESOURCE FOR CLINICIANS

The Suicide Risk Management Consultation Program (SRM) provides free consultation, support, and resources that promote therapeutic best practices for providers working with Veterans at risk of suicide. <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/consult/>



SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY TOOLKIT

This toolkit outlines the steps you can take to provide support to the Veterans in your life if ever they express emotional distress, feelings of crisis, or thoughts of suicide on social media — helping to keep them safe and providing and encouraging them to connect with resources https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/OMH-074-Suicide-Prevention-Social-Media-Toolkit-1-8_508.pdf



HTTP://WWW.VA.GOV/CONTACT-US

Get answers to your questions about VA benefits and services. Ask us a question online, call us, or explore our FAQs and other resources. The link has these phone numbers and many others including but not limited to: Women's health, Quit Vet for tobacco cessation, Caregiver Support Line, GI Bill Hotline, debt management hotline, MyHealthVet, and many others. <https://www.va.gov/contact-us/>

Follow us on social media!



[@deptvetaffairs](https://www.instagram.com/deptvetaffairs)

[@veteransmtc](https://www.instagram.com/veteransmtc)



[U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](https://www.facebook.com/U.S.DepartmentofVeteransAffairs)

[Veterans Health Administration](https://www.facebook.com/VeteransHealthAdministration)



[@deptvetaffairs](https://twitter.com/deptvetaffairs)

[@veteranshealth](https://twitter.com/veteranshealth)

[Make the Connection](#)



STATE OF OHIO SPECIFIC RESOURCES



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

Learn about the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. Discover all of the programs, responsibilities, endeavors and goals of the state agency. <https://dvs.ohio.gov/home>



1

FIND COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

This map is a searchable directory of Ohio's County Veterans Service Offices by county. Search by your location and either click on a map pin or the name of a provider in the results list to learn more about what your county office provides and to obtain office contact information.

QR 1 <https://dvs.ohio.gov/what-we-do/find-a-cvso>



2

QR 2 Print-friendly version of Service Office Contacts for Ohio <https://dvs.ohio.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/030f5c02-81a9-4a8f-880d-b4cb6f252b7d/VSCCLST-2022.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=obVWGkC>

OHIO SUICIDE PREVENTION FOUNDATION

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation is a prevention, education, and resource organization. Saving lives by connecting every Ohioan to hope, help, and suicide prevention resources. The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation is a non-profit organization that works tirelessly to prevent one of our most preventable causes of death: suicide. Our work includes reducing the stigma of suicide, promoting evidence-based prevention strategies, and raising awareness about suicide's relationship to mental illness, alcohol, drug abuse, and other issues.

<http://www.ohiospf.org>



LIFE SIDE OHIO

By Your Side. United for Life. Life Side Ohio is a campaign of direct, suicide prevention outreach dedicated to the firearms community. We *don't* talk politics, nor do we wade into debates on bills, statutes, or legislation on guns. We *do* talk openly and honestly about suicide as the crisis that it is. <https://www.lifesideohio.org/>



1

OHIO CARES

OhioCares began as a collaboration of state and local agencies to support the behavioral health of Ohio National Guard members returning from deployments and their families. Today, OhioCares partners strive to connect all military personnel, veterans, military retirees, and their families to important behavioral health services.

QR1 - FOR SERVICE MEMBERS/FAMILIES/PUBLIC: <https://ohiocares.ohio.gov/>



2

QR2 - FOR PROVIDERS: <https://ohiocares.ohio.gov/providers/welcome>