

FAQ: Emergency Suicide Care & Treatment, cont.

What is available?

- Up to 30 days of inpatient or crisis residential care related to the acute suicide crisis (this period can be extended if deemed clinically necessary).
- Up to 90 days of outpatient care related to the acute suicide crisis, which includes both medical and mental health care (this period can be extended if deemed clinically necessary).
- Prescription medications that are related to your acute suicide crisis
- Emergency transportation (i.e. ambulance and air ambulance) required to receive Emergent suicide care.
- Emergent suicide care and associated emergency transportation must be provided at no cost—there will not be copayments or bills for eligible individuals.
- VA will determine eligibility for other VA services and benefits if individuals receiving Emergent suicide care are not enrolled or registered with VA.
- VA will refer eligible individuals for appropriate services for which they are otherwise eligible, including social work.

How should the emergency care get reported to VA?

Veterans seeking care at community facilities should inform the emergency care provider to report the emergency treatment to the VA Centralized Emergency Care Reporting Center as soon as possible after treatment starts by using the VA Emergency Care Reporting portal or calling the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline.

VA Emergency Care Reporting portal

<https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov>

VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline:

844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842)



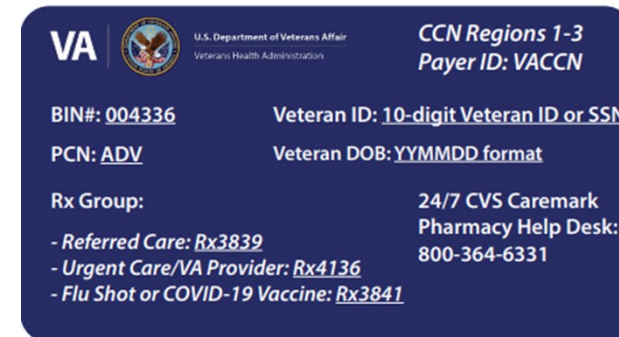
St. Cloud VA HCS

Edition 2, February 2023

Health care needs and services take many forms. Making sense of the type of care needed, and when and where to get needed care can be confusing.

Most care needs are grouped into three priority levels: routine, urgent or emergency needs.

Understanding the differences in these priority levels can help you get the right care in the right place and at the right time.



Going to a Community Pharmacy after a visit to a Community Urgent Care Center? Visit <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/programs/OCC-Billing-Information-Card.pdf>, to print or display this billing information for the community Pharmacist



Published by the Patient Advocate Office, Veteran and Community Service Department, St. Cloud VA HCS. Direct inquires, comments or adjustments to the CARE GUIDE to 320-252-1670, ext. 6353.

Routine Care

Routine Care includes annual physicals, health screenings, regular diabetes and blood pressure checks, medication renewals, and follow-up care. Follow-up care includes appointments after an urgent care visit, ER visit, hospital discharge, after surgery or seeing a specialist. Scheduling intervals can vary and are usually determined in coordination with your provider.

Routine care needs are provided in VA health care clinics, VA community-based outpatient clinics, and community care referrals for specialized care needs. Many needs can be met using virtual care methods such as phone calls, video visits or text chats.

For most routine health care needs, including follow-up visits and regular screenings contact Primary Care to make an appointment at 320-252-1670, ext. 6339.

Most routine mental health needs are provided in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic at ext. 6322. However, the Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) team integrates mental health care with routine medical care. You can get services for depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance use without a separate appointment. Contact PCMHI at ext. 7531.

Routine specialized care is generally received following a referral from a primary care provider. However, Veterans may schedule in these specialty clinics without a referral:

- Audiology, ext. 4370
- Optometry, ext. 5432
- Nutrition, ext. 6376
- Respiratory Therapy, ext. 6606 (established patients)

All other clinics require a referral from your primary care provider.

FAQ: Emergency Suicide Care & Treatment, cont.

How can I look up the nearest community emergency room?

Emergencies are never planned, so ensure you and your family member know where to go before you need help. Find your nearest community emergency room, urgent care facility or pharmacy by visiting https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=emergency_care. You should also remember to inform emergency care staff of your eligibility status while checking in to enable care coordination with VA as soon as possible.

Who is eligible?

An individual is eligible for Emergent suicide care if they have been determined to be in acute suicidal crisis, and such individual is either:

- A Veteran (enrolled or not enrolled) as defined in 38 U.S.C § 101 (meaning those who were discharged or released from active military, naval, air, or space service under conditions other than dishonorable) or;
- A former member of the armed forces, including the reserve components, who while serving in the active military, naval, air, or space service was discharged or released under a condition that is not honorable but not dishonorable or discharge by court martial;
- is not enrolled in the VA health care system;
- and either (A) served in the Armed Forces for more than 100 cumulative days and was deployed in a theater of combat operations, in support of a contingency operation, or in an area at a time during which hostilities are occurring in that area during service, including by controlling an unmanned aerial vehicle from a location other than such theater or arena; or (B), while serving in the Armed Forces, was the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment.

FAQ: Emergency Suicide Care & Treatment

Who can I talk to if I am in crisis?

To connect with a Veterans Crisis Line responder, anytime day or night: Dial **988** then press 1, or Start a confidential chat by visiting: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/chat>, or Text 838255. If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 800-799-4889

What should I do during a medical or mental health emergency?

During a medical or mental health emergency, you should immediately seek care at the nearest emergency department. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away. If possible, you should also take steps to safely store, or ask a trusted individual to assist with securing all lethal means when in a mental health crisis.

What is an acute suicide crisis?

Acute suicide crisis means an individual was determined to be at imminent risk of self-harm by a trained crisis responder or health care provider. Imminent risk of self-harm will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and can include clinical considerations such as an individual's stated intent to harm themselves as well as other information such as knowledge of an individual's past or present behaviors that signal a risk of self-harm (such as past suicide attempts that could evidence additional risk of self-harm).

What is emergent suicide care?

For an individual in acute suicidal crisis, care that ensures, to the extent practicable, immediate safety and reduces: the severity of distress; the need for urgent care; or the likelihood that the severity of distress or need for urgent care will increase during the transfer of that individual from a facility at which the individual has received care for that acute suicidal crisis.

Urgent Care

Urgent Care is when you need immediate care for minor injuries and illnesses that are not life-threatening, but which need to be addressed within 24-48 hours.

Urgent care is for health problems or symptoms like these:

- Sore throat or persistent cough
- Strains, sprains, or minor broken bones
- Deep cuts that are no longer bleeding a lot
- Allergies
- Mild burns
- Mild nausea or vomiting
- Urinary tract infection symptoms (like needing to urinate often or urgently, urine that looks cloudy or smells bad, pain when you urinate, or pain in your side, abdomen, or pelvic area)
- Urgent mental health or substance use concerns

Urgent care needs are provided in the St. Cloud VA Urgent Care Center in Bldg. 1 (available for walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., 7 days a week including holidays) or at in-network community urgent care or retail clinics for eligible Veterans.

Find community urgent care or retail clinic locations at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/> or call 877-881-7618 (M-F, 7 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.). See the Community Urgent Care Checklist on pages 6-8 for helpful information on using the VA MISSION Act Urgent Care benefit at VA's in-network community locations.

Thoughts of suicide or harming yourself or others?

*Call the Veterans Crisis Line at 988 and press 1, text to 838255, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net), call **911**, or go to the closest community hospital emergency department.*

Community Urgent Care Checklist

For Veterans:

1. Check eligibility. You are eligible if enrolled in the VA healthcare system and received care through VA or a VA authorized community provider within the past 24 months. Call 844-698-2411 and select option 1 then option 3 to verify your eligibility for urgent care services, or for general questions related to the urgent care benefit.

2. Find a provider. Use the VA Facility Locator to find in-network urgent care and pharmacy locations <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>

- Select the “urgent care” VA facility type and the “community urgent care providers (in VA’s network) from the service type drop down box.
- Network changes do occur, so check for in-network providers before each visit, and call to confirm services and hours prior to visiting.

3. Confirm the provider is an in-network VA urgent care provider.

- Bring a valid, government-issued photo ID, and state you are using the VA Urgent Care benefit.
- The Urgent Care provider must verify in-network status and Veteran eligibility by calling 888-901-6609.
- By law, VA cannot pay for urgent care from providers that are not part of the VA network. If the provider is not in-network, Veterans can pay for care themselves, go to a different in-network provider or to the nearest VA medical facility with Urgent Care services.

Emergency Suicide Care & Treatment

Starting January 17, 2023, Veterans in suicidal crises can go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care – including transportation costs, inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days, including social work.

During a mental health emergency, you should immediately seek care at the nearest emergency department and let staff know you are a Veteran. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away. If possible, you should also take steps to safely store medications and firearms or ask a trusted individual to assist with securing them, when you believe you are in a mental health crisis.

You are covered if you were:

- Discharged from the military under a condition that is other than dishonorable and served more than 24 months of active service or more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location.
- Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces are also eligible.

Emergencies are never planned, so ensure you and your family member know where to go before you need help. Find your nearest community emergency room, urgent care facility or pharmacy by visiting https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=emergency_care.

Emergency Care Quick-Facts

Reporting Emergency Episodes of Care

- To facilitate treatment and claims payment, emergency care episodes must be reported to VA within 72 hours. Veterans and family members should remind community hospitals and providers to report emergency visits to VA using the VA Community Care portal at <https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov/#/request> or by phone at **1-844-72HRVHA** or **(844-724-7842)**. Reporting emergency admissions helps your VA team arrange additional care or transfer to a VA facility.
- VA payment authority for emergency care is normally limited to the point-of-stabilization only. VA authorization is required to engage in any additional treatment or follow-on care at community hospitals, rehabilitation centers or other sites of care.

Emergency Care Claims

- In most cases, providers will submit a claim directly to VA or to the Third-party Administrator-Optum Health Service, and the Veteran will not have to take further action.
- For emergency care claims assistance, Veterans can call 877- 881-7618.

Billing and payment

- VA has specific legal authorities to purchase emergency care. VA can pay for care an eligible Veteran received from a community emergency department in certain circumstances and under specific conditions.
- Once a claim for emergency treatment is received by VA, the claim will be administratively reviewed to determine eligibility. If the Veteran meets administrative eligibility criteria, the treatment documentation will then be reviewed by VA clinical staff to determine if the treatment received meets the clinical criteria necessary for VA to pay for the care.

Community Urgent Care Checklist, cont.

4. Get Urgent Care

- After receiving care, if you need prescription medication, make sure the provider activates your pharmacy benefits under the VA urgent care benefit.
- VA will pay for a 14-day supply (no refills) of prescription medication for the condition for which you are provided care (Opiates limited to seven days or less, consistent with the pharmacy locations state law).
- Prescriptions must be on the VA formulary list and can be filled at a VA pharmacy, at an authorized in-network pharmacy or pay out-of-pocket at a out-of-network pharmacy and file for reimbursement. Pharmacy help-desk number is 800-364-6331.
- To find an in-network pharmacy, visit <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>
- Veterans filing claims for prescription medication reimbursement should submit a VA Form 10-583, and include a copy of the prescription (pharmacy label) and receipt and mail to: *OCC Claims Processing – St. Cloud, PO Box 1004, Fort Harrison, MT 59636-1004*

5. Copayments

- DO NOT pay a copayment at the time of urgent care visit or for medications. Copays are billed separately by VA.
- Copays depend on your assigned priority group and how many times you use urgent care in a calendar year.

Community Urgent Care Checklist, cont.

6. For Providers

- Call 888-901-6609 to confirm Veteran's eligibility for urgent care services.
- Ensure any 14-day Rx is on VA Urgent/Emergent Formulary at <https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp> if prescribing an urgent care prescription.
- Make sure you have activated Veteran's pharmacy benefit by calling to check their eligibility.
- File urgent care claim within 180 days with Optum.
- After visit, submit medical documentation to the Veteran's home VA medical center (VAMC) within 30 days. Find a VAMC at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>

7. For Pharmacist

- Maximum day supply for a Veteran's initial fill is 14 days (7 days or fewer for opioids). No refills. Medication must be on VA Urgent/Emergent Formulary <https://www.pbm.va.gov/PBM/NationalFormulary.asp>
- DO NOT charge Veteran a copayment for dispensed medications. Instruct Veteran to fill prescriptions in the same state as their urgent care visit.
- Enter VA pharmacy claims using the following information:
 - Step 1: Enter BIN: 004336
 - Step 2: Enter PCN: ADV
 - Step 3: Enter Rx Group: RX4136
 - Step 4: Enter Veteran 9-digit SSN or 10-digit Veterans ID number
 - Step 5: Enter Veteran's date of birth (YYMMDD format)
- You can print a card with the information for Zone 2 here <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/programs/OCC-Billing-Information-Card.pdf>.
- If a non-contracted pharmacy is used, Veteran must pay out-of-pocket for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement

Emergency Care

Emergency Care is needed any time you think your life or health is in danger. Go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 right away.

The St. Cloud VA does not have an emergency department, acute medical care services, or after-hours outpatient services at any of our locations. If you need emergency care, you don't need a VA referral or approval to go to a non-VA emergency room in your community!

Get emergency help right away for any symptoms like these:

- * Head injury or trouble breathing
- * Falling without a known cause
- * Cuts that won't stop bleeding
- * Severe burns, or wounds that won't close
- * Stroke symptoms (like slurred speech, sudden numbness or weakness in a part of your body, loss of balance or vision, or a drooping face)
- * Chest pain or discomfort (like pressure, squeezing, or a feeling of fullness in your chest)
- * Severe allergic reaction symptoms (like swelling lips or trouble swallowing or breathing)
- * Vaginal bleeding or abdominal pain during pregnancy
- * Severe dizziness or losing consciousness (passing out)
- * A headache that keeps getting worse or won't go away
- * Vomiting or nausea that won't stop
- * A high fever with a headache or stiff neck
- * Seizures
- * Dilated pupils, trouble waking up or staying awake, or clear fluids draining from the nose or ears after a head injury
- * Thoughts of suicide or harming yourself or others

These symptoms aren't all the signs of an emergency. If you feel your life or health is in danger, get help right away.