

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System**  
975 Kirman Avenue  
Reno, NV 89502

# MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **State of Nevada and VA pilot initiative to improve access to health care for traveling Veterans**

**RENO, Nev.** – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the State of Nevada launched a new pilot program to connect Veterans in rural areas with telehealth and mental health resources.

The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) posted flyers at rest areas across Nevada to help connect Veterans to VA resources while they are traveling. The flyers share information about Veterans' telehealth options, the closest VA location, and the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) (Veterans can call 988 and Press 1) -- empowering Veterans to access care based on their emergent, urgent, or routine health care needs.

VA collaborated with the State of Nevada after seeing successful efforts in states across the Rocky Mountain region. As the country's seventh largest state, Nevada maintains more than 100,000 miles of roadways, to include the Interstate Highway System and State Highway System.

"We are excited to collaborate with VA to share information about health care options for Veterans at more than 30 rest areas across the state," said NDOT Director Tracy Larkin Thomason. "As a major travel corridor for both the Southwest and Mountain West, we believe this is a unique opportunity to reach the thousands of individuals who utilize our rest areas daily. Many drivers and their family members could benefit from services like VA Telehealth, and we are proud to play a small part in getting the word out."

This effort is also a reflection of the importance VA places on collaborating with community and governmental organizations where Veterans receive care. VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System, headquartered in Reno, provides that care to Veterans in northern Nevada and northeastern California. VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, based North Las Vegas, provides care in the southern portion of the state. The far northeastern area of Nevada is covered by the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System. Attached is an example of the information you will find at each rest area.

“Partnering with Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to find new ways to reach the Veteran community is exciting and we are grateful for their willingness to share information about VA Telehealth and crisis contact information at every rest area throughout Nevada. VA Telehealth has expanded VA’s ability to provide health care to Veterans wherever they are. As a highly rural state, it is critical to us that Veterans know of the new and easy ways to access their health care. To expand services from VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System (VASNHCS) to Veterans who are traveling to or through Nevada means we can continue serving America’s heroes with the world class healthcare they deserve” said VASNHCS Executive Director Kevin Amick.

Rural health care is often limited because of various challenges with funding, care requirements, and expansive geography. This campaign will help connect Veterans with VA resources and maintain their continuity of care within the VA health care system based upon the [“Anywhere-to-Anywhere” Telehealth Practice Authority](#) using [VA Video Connect](#).

After rolling out the project in Nevada, VA plans to continue the initiative in other states.

For media questions regarding this release, please contact Glenna Smith, Public Affairs Officer at (775) 842-4835 or email: [Glenna.Smith2@va.gov](mailto:Glenna.Smith2@va.gov).

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### **About VASNHCS**

VASNHCS provides primary and secondary care to approximately 40,000 Veterans living in a large geographical area in northern Nevada and northeastern California, with Reno/Sparks representing the largest urban area. VASNHCS provides a broad array of inpatient and outpatient care.

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