



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
Eastern Colorado Health Care System

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Media Advisory**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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**VA ECHCS to host Front Range resource fairs, offer toxic-exposure screenings**

AURORA, Colo. – VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (ECHCS) will host resource fairs and town halls March 14-16 in three Front Range communities.

Open to Veterans and their spouses, caregivers and community leaders, VA ECHCS resource fairs and town halls are scheduled for March 14 in Colorado Springs, March 15 in Pueblo, then March 16 in Buena Vista.

“These are community-based opportunities for Veterans to get one-on-one support with understanding, accessing and using their benefits and services, then collaborate closely with VA at the local level,” said VA ECHCS Director Michael Kilmer.

VA ECHCS currently provides care for more than 100,000 Veterans in Eastern Colorado and surrounding states. During the resource fairs, Veterans will get one-on-one support with understanding, accessing and using their VA benefits and services.

VA health care and benefits expanded in August for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. The president signed the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, or PACT Act, into law Aug. 10, expanding care for hundreds of thousands of Vietnam-era, Gulf War-era and post-9/11 Veterans.

During the fairs, Veterans and survivors can speak with a VA benefits specialist about PACT Act-related claims and eligibility. When confirmed eligible for health care, Veterans will get assistance with enrolling and scheduling an initial appointment.

VA nurses will offer enrolled Veterans an on-site toxic-exposure screening. Routine screenings are meant to document possible exposures and assist long-term health care needs, including early diagnoses and treatments for health concerns that might be connected to an exposure.

Enrolled Veterans can also get help with community care consults, beneficiary travel claims, caregiver support and home and community-based services for extended care needs. A National Cemetery Administration program specialist will answer questions on burial benefits.

Community leaders can learn how local providers partner with VA to keep Veteran care timely and convenient and meeting individual needs or circumstances, as well as explore community-based initiatives to end homelessness and prevent suicide.

During the culminating one-hour town halls, Kilmer will encourage an exchange of information and feedback that will help VA meet local Veteran needs. He says community-level collaboration is vital to identifying, testing and evaluating innovative solutions.

Kilmer says enrolling helps inform VA health care infrastructure investment strategies.

With the Pikes Peak Veteran population expected to outpace Denver metro over the coming decade, VA ECHCS is preparing to bolster its primary, mental health and specialty care services this year in Colorado Springs by opening Garden of the Gods VA Clinic and Space Center VA Clinic and adding a second floor to the Union Boulevard VA Clinic.

“Registering is one way to keep resources available to vulnerable Veterans,” said Kilmer. “We’ve heard that a lot of Veterans feel enrolling for VA care could take it away from someone who needs it more, but every enrolled Veteran brings VA resources to our communities.”

“If you don’t need it now, you may one day. Even if you already get care elsewhere, it’s a fallback.”

For more information on how to apply, including the documents needed to determine eligibility, visit [VA.gov/health-care/how-to-apply](https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply).

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### **Colorado Springs VA Resource Fair, Town Hall**

**When:** Tuesday, March 14. Resource fair from 1 to 4 p.m.; town hall, 4-5 p.m.

**Where:** PFC Floyd K. Lindstrom American Legion Post 5  
15 East Platte Avenue  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

### **Pueblo VA Resource Fair, Town Hall**

**When:** Wednesday, March 15. Resource fair from 1 to 4 p.m.; town hall, 4-5 p.m.

**Where:** Center for American Values  
101 South Main Street  
Pueblo, Colorado 81003

### **Buena Vista VA Resource Fair, Town Hall**

**When:** Thursday, March 16. Resource fair from noon to 3 p.m.; town hall, 3-4 p.m.

**Where:** Cliff Sexton American Legion Post 55  
338 N Railroad Street  
Buena Vista, Colorado 81211

### **Attached Photo**



230214-0738 – Director Michael Kilmer, VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System, speaks with rural Veterans during a town hall Feb. 14 at Lamar Senior Center in Lamar. Kilmer. (Courtesy Photo/VA ECHCS)