

**Official news from:**  
 VA Puget Sound Health Care System  
 Office of Public Affairs, MS S-00-PA  
 1660 S. Columbian Way  
 Seattle, WA 98108  
 206-277-1711

## Face masks still required at care sites



Wearing a mask is still required at all VA Puget Sound care sites. While we follow federal (not state) guidelines, our continued mask policy is consistent with Washington State Department of

Health's recent recommendation that masks continue to be worn by patients, providers and visitors in health care settings. Wearing mask in health care facilities is driven by the health and safety needs of our patients and staff, proximity to or direct care provided to our most vulnerable patients. As COVID-19 shifts and our world and community adapt to those shifts, we continue to reevaluate our practices and needs with Veteran, patient and staff safety always at the center of the policies we have in place to protect them.

## How to file a PACT Act Claim

You can file a PACT Act claim online, by mail, in person, or with the help of a trained professional:

- File a new claim online now – [www.va.gov/PACT](http://www.va.gov/PACT).
- Make an appointment with a Veterans Benefits Administration counselor at [www.benefits.va.gov/seattle](http://www.benefits.va.gov/seattle)
- Call Veterans Benefits Administration hotline at 1-800-827-1000 (press 8 for PACT Act).
- Work with a Veterans Service Organization or the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs 206-341-8295.
- Call 1-800-MY-VA-411 to learn more.

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### Observances

- April**
- 14: U.S. Air Force Reserve Birthday
  - 23: U.S. Army Reserve Birthday
- May**
- Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month
  - 8: VE Day
  - 29: Memorial Day
- June**
- 6: D-Day
  - 12: U.S. Army Birthday
  - 20: Juneteenth

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Central Appointments: 800-329-8387

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### Story ideas?

Office of Public Affairs  
 206-277-1711  
[PublicAffairsPugetSound@va.gov](mailto:PublicAffairsPugetSound@va.gov)

**Main Campuses**

American Lake  
9600 Veterans Dr.  
Lakewood, WA 98493

Seattle  
1660 S. Columbian Way  
Seattle, WA 98108

**Outpatient Clinics**

Edmonds  
21616 76th Ave. West,  
Suites 107 and 112

Port Angeles/North Olympic  
1114 Georgiana St.  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Everett  
220 Olympic Boulevard  
Everett, WA 98203

Puyallup  
Sunrise Medical Center  
11216 Sunrise Blvd. East  
Bldg. 3, Suite 209  
Puyallup, WA 98374

Olympia  
Memorial Medical Plaza  
500 Lilly Rd. NE, Suite 201,  
Olympia, WA 98506

Silverdale  
9177 Ridgeway Blvd. NW  
Silverdale, WA 98383

**Community Resource & Referral Centers**

Community Resource & Referral Center  
305 S. Lucile St.  
Seattle, WA 98108  
206-764-5149

Community Resource & Referral Center  
419 South 2nd Street  
Suite 2  
Renton, WA 98057  
425-203-7201



## Making it more convenient to get VA Puget Sound care

VA Puget Sound has more than 155,000 Veterans enrolled at one of our care sites across Western Washington—from Mount Vernon to Olympia.

Changes over the last few years and those that will take place over the next decade are part of VA Puget Sound's ongoing efforts to make getting care for our largest population of enrolled Veterans more convenient.

Expansion of our primary and specialty care footprint has most recently included the August 30, 2022 opening of our new \$10 million, 28,000 sq. ft. clinic in Everett. Senator Patty Murray (featured in the photo to right) joined our celebration. And we are already caring for more than 5,300 Veterans there. Designed with its Patient Aligned Care Teams at the heart of facility, it has 32 exam rooms—two are dedicated for women's health and one is a bariatric procedure room. Services include primary care (in-clinic, home-based and homeless), laboratory services, behavioral health, social work, clinical pharmacy specialists, radiology (CT, echocardiogram, MRI and ultrasound) telemedicine and nutrition. Future specialty care is expected to include cardiology, podiatry, musculoskeletal, urology, gynecology, wound/ostomy care, dermatology, vascular surgery, hand, lung cancer screening, rehabilitation services (physical and occupational therapy, audiology, speech, chiropractic, blind rehabilitation,

physical medicine and rehabilitation) and prosthetics and orthotics. Additionally, we expect to offer the Prevention of Amputation in Veterans Everywhere (PAVE) Program—a podiatry specialty clinic aimed at preventing or delaying limb loss as well as caring for Veterans who have had amputations.

The opening of the Everett clinic comes on the heels of clinic openings in Olympia, Puyallup and Edmonds in 2021.

Our future plans include moving our Mount Vernon clinic to a newer, state-of-the art site, and replacing our existing clinic in Olympia with a larger, more centralized multi-specialty clinic in 2026. And our next new community clinic locations will be in Auburn and Northeast King County.

Expansion of services as American Lake include our new Specialty Care Building (201) expected to open in 2028. It will create more capacity for primary and specialty care



## Message from our Director

VA Puget Sound Veterans,

I began my military career in the U.S. Army 104th Infantry Division. As a combat Veteran, I know first hand how challenging it can be to navigate care at our country's largest health care system. We are working hard at VA Puget Sound to support a seamless, positive experience with each visit to one of our care sites—whether that care is at one of our main campuses or at one of our community clinics.

Our team of about 5,000 care givers and support staff are very committed to ensuring the best health outcomes and improving the lives of Veterans entrusted to us for care. Our culture is one of respect, compassion, empathy, kindness and dignity. Our focus is on treating people the way we want to be treated, something we ask our Veterans to embrace as well.

We honor you for service and sacrifice. And thank you for choosing VA Puget Sound as your health care provider.

Warmest regards,

Thomas Bundt, PhD., FACHE  
VA Puget Sound Health Care System Executive Director

## News and Updates

Seattle Campus Staff and Visitors: Employee South Parking Lot (C, D and E) construction will close up to 25 parking spots at a time from March 13 through May 19, 2023 as we make improvements to our campus and enhance security for staff and visitors alike. Thank for your understanding and patience!

## Key phone numbers

Central Appointments: 800-329-8387  
Community Care: 800-329-8387 x64545 and 253-582-8440 x64545  
Patient Advocates: 253-583-2585 and 206-764-2160  
Travel Office Call Center: 206-764-2120



## New VA mission statement recognizes sacred commitment to all Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced an updated version of its 1959 mission statement March 16, 2023. The new mission statement is: “To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation’s military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.”

The new mission statement is inclusive of all those who have served in our nation’s military — including women Veterans — as well as Veteran families, caregivers, and survivors. VA currently serves more than 600,000 women Veterans, the fastest growing cohort of Veterans. VA also serves more than 50,000 Veteran caregivers, more than 600,000 Veteran survivors, and millions of Veterans who did not serve in combat.

In crafting the new mission statement, VA surveyed roughly 30,000 Veterans. Among Veterans surveyed, the new version of VA’s mission statement was chosen over the current version by every age group; by men and by women; by LGBTQ+ Veterans; and by white, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian and American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans.

“Whenever any Veteran, family member, caregiver, or survivor walks by a VA facility, we want them to see themselves in the mission statement on the outside of the building,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “We are here to serve all Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors — and now, our mission statement reflects exactly that.”

### Have an appointment? Check in with your smartphone or with a member of our team

1 Text check in to **53079**

To: **53079**  
Message: **check in**

OR scan this code with your camera.



2 Wait until you get a text back with a link. This should only take a few seconds.

3 Tap on the link to start your check-in. Data charges may apply.



programs and services in the Tacoma area.

Other improvements at American Lake include the renovation of an of existing space (Building 5) for a Women’s Domiciliary program. While still in the design process, the estimated construction completion date will be in 2026.

Phase 2 of our parking expansion at American Lake that began February is expected to be completed June 2023. It will improve parking and traffic flow for patients, visitors and staff.

Seismic renovations are in the building design phase for buildings 7, 8, 9 and 111 to reinforce the structure of each building in the event of seismic activity. Estimated construction completion is tentatively 2025.

Together, this new clinical footprint allows VA Puget Sound to directly serve Everett and Olympia, two major metropolitan areas in Western Washington that did not previously

have VA facilities.

These efforts also create new capacity for our areas of highest growth in South King and Pierce counties as well as provide better outreach to rural Veterans in North King County with clinics planned in Auburn and the Northeast King County areas.

The expanded primary and specialty care services across our Western Washington care sites are designed to complement the community care options available to Veterans under the MISSION Act.

Most important, VA Puget Sound’s new clinics and enhancements to existing facilities are designed to place the needs of our Veterans front and center and underscore our commitment to caring for both their physical and mental health care needs.



### Free, drop-in child care during American Lake appointments

Did you know that VA Puget Sound was selected in 2012 as one of only four pilot sites for Drop-in Child Care Center at our American Lake Campus, and remains the only one to offer this service? Drop-in services are provided Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (except federal holidays) so Veterans with children ages 6-weeks-old to 12 years-old can receive free child care services when they have appointments. Up to three hours of care is provided. Activities offered, include: dramatic play, art projects and Storytime with indoor and outdoor play areas. Snacks are provided. For more information, call 253-589-4223 for email [PugVeteranChildCare@va.gov](mailto:PugVeteranChildCare@va.gov).



## Expanded care through our regional hubs

Along with caring for Veterans enrolled at one of our facilities, VA Puget Sound offers Veterans from a five-state area in the Pacific Northwest specialized care through our regional hubs in blind rehabilitation, spinal cord injury, amputation, marrow and lung transplant, and polytrauma.

VA Puget Sound's Blind Rehabilitation Center at our American Lake campus is one of 13 in the VA Blind Rehabilitation continuum of care. The center provides comprehensive, individualized rehabilitation services in an inpatient facility by a multidisciplinary team of rehabilitation specialists including blind rehabilitation, nursing, social work, psychology, recreation therapy, and low vision optometry/eye care. Blind Rehabilitation specialists provide assessment and

therapeutic instruction in orientation and mobility, activities of daily living, assistive technology, adaptive vision skills and manual skills therapy.

VA Puget Sound Spinal Cord Injury Service provides rehabilitation as well as specialized medical, surgical and primary care for Veterans with new and chronic spinal cord injuries. VA Puget Sound serves as the regional hub site for nine VA health care systems in Veterans



Integrated Services Networks 20 and 19 which encompasses the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountains, providing care to over 900 Veterans living with SCI.

Our Regional Amputation Center is one of seven hubs in the VA's national amputation system of care, overseeing the care of more than 900 Veterans with major limb loss. Our mission is to provide excellent, state-of-the-art, holistic, interdisciplinary care to the Veteran with limb loss. Our team works with Veterans to help them prepare for amputation and provides lifelong rehabilitation care after amputation.

The longitudinal follow-up care and clinical advice provided by the Seattle program is key to successful outcomes for patients referred by VA centers throughout the country.



VA Puget Sound's Marrow Transplant Unit was founded in 1982. Together with the VA program in Nashville, it provides comprehensive hematopoietic stem cell transplantation services for Veterans with a variety of malignant and nonmalignant hematologic disorders. Since inception through September 30, 2022, the Marrow Transplant Unit has surpassed 1,900 transplants, including over 240 from unrelated donors. Utilizing eight inpatient beds and one outpatient suite, 60-70 transplants are performed annually. Seattle patients receive either their own (autologous) stem cells or products from a matched or closely-matched relative or unrelated donor (allogeneic) as well as half-matched family members (haploidentical allogeneic). Allogeneic transplant recipients, especially those with mismatched and unrelated donor sources, require prolonged immunosuppression and are at risk for a variety of complications. Immunologic tolerance requires close medical surveillance for months to years.

The Lung Transplant Program at VA Puget Sound Health Care System provides comprehensive evaluation and management of Veterans with advanced lung disease referred for lung transplantation. It is a collaborative program with the University of Washington lung transplant program. Veterans are referred to the VA Program from VA facilities throughout the U.S. and are listed for lung transplantation at the University of Washington. Lung transplant surgery occurs at the University of Washington Medical Center and patients are typically transferred to VA Puget Sound to complete inpatient care within five days after transplantation. After discharge, patients remain in Seattle post-transplant for a minimum of three months for recovery before returning home. Longer term care in collaboration with each Veteran's home VA with regular follow-up visits with the Seattle program via telemedicine or in-person. Transplant care at VA Puget Sound Seattle Campus is multidisciplinary and relies upon outstanding local expertise and collaboration by pulmonary medicine, thoracic surgery, internal medicine, medical and surgical specialties, radiology, pathology, laboratory medicine, social work, mental health and nursing.

