

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Wellness Offerings

What do you live for? What matters most to you? The Alaska Health and Wellness Classes are here to support and enhance your quality of life!

1201 N Muldoon Rd
Anchorage AK, 99504
907-257-4854

Alaska VA Veterans Introductory Class

Learn about Alaska VA services.

- https://youtu.be/gXR--UPj_E0

Any questions, call Sam Hudson at 907-257-5490.

Arthritis Foundation's Walk With Ease

Participate in staff-led walks and receive health education to improve stamina and reduce pain.

- 6-week group sessions every **Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 1:00-2:00 p.m.**
- Also available by VA Video Connect on **Thursdays 1:00-2:00 p.m.**
- To refer a Veteran, alert Dr. Jill Duke in CPRS note.

Back Care Class

Learn how to manage back pain.

- Individual session with Michael Campbell with limited face to face appointments. Contact your provider to place a consult.

Caregiver Support Program (CSP)

Offers skill development, education, and support to qualified Caregivers through the Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS).

- Call 907-375-2606 for more information.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Managing Chronic Pain

Learn to manage pain and improve quality of life.

- 10-week session on **Tuesdays 2:30-4:00 p.m.** by group VA Video Connect with Kelley Russell. Call 907-257-4854.
- Group includes pain education and goal setting, activity pacing, relaxation practice, increasing meaningful activities, coping skills for unhelpful thoughts, and healthy sleep practices.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

A Cognitive Behavioral Therapy which provides patients with new skills to manage painful emotions and decrease conflict in relationship.

- **Co-ed** group meets for 12 weeks on **Tuesdays 2:00-4:00 p.m.** Providers need to complete DBT consult and ensure Veteran has a VA or Community Mental Health Provider.
- Veterans will focus on learning a new, very specific set of skills focusing on mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, and communication skills that will help them cope with stressors and challenges in a more effective way.

Healthy Teaching Kitchen

Learn to cook healthy meals through recipe demonstration and discussions.

- 6-session group series by VA Video Connect with Camille Irvine.
- **Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 p.m.**
- Call 907-257-4720 for more information.

Introduction to Mindfulness

Learn basics of practicing mindfulness to lower stress and improve wellbeing.

- 6-weeks group on **Thursdays 2:30-3:30 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Dr. Jill Duke.
- To refer a Veteran, alert Dr. Jill Duke in CPRS or call 907-257-4854 for more information.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual and other identities (LGBTQIA+) Support Group

Learn to cope with mental health issues, stressors with gender identity or sexual orientation, process emotions and receive social support.

- Offered every other **Monday 0900-10:00 a.m.** by VA Video Connect with Dr. Micol Levi-Minzi
- To refer a Veteran, provider must:
 1. Consult Dr. Levi-Minzi by CPRS or email.
 2. Update and complete intake.
 3. Obtain consent for referral and agrees to verbally engage with the group.
- This is not intended to replace individual psychotherapy.

Low Vision & Blind Support Group

Provide support for low vision and blind Veterans.

- Group support by telephone on **second Thursday of the month 10:00-11:00 a.m.** Call Laura Kabatt-Kennedy at 907-375-2187.

Mental Health Medication Education Group

Learn about your medications and ask questions.

- **Mondays from 2:30-3:30 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Dr. Melissa Palmer, Clinical Pharmacist Practitioner.
- General group topics include antidepressants, antipsychotics, sleep medications, mood stabilizers, and anxiety medications.
- Contact your Healthcare Team or call 907-257-4703 if interested.

MOVE - Introductory Session

Learn about resources and services available for weight management and lifestyle goals.

- **Tuesday** group class **11:00a.m.-12:00 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Camille Irvine.
- **2nd, 3rd, and 4th Wednesday 3:00-4:00 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Lauri Ek-Watson.
- Individual appointments with Lauri Ek-Watson or Camille Irvine. Call 907-257-4720.

MOVE - 16 Week Group Sessions

Recommend attending introductory class first.

- **Monday 4:00- 5:00 p.m.** with Lauri Ek-Watson in **Anchorage Clinic.**

By VA Video Connect:

- **Monday 10:00- 11:00 a.m.** with Lauri Ek-Watson.
- **Tuesday 11:00-12:00 p.m.** with Sofia Szanto.
- **Tuesday 3:00-4:00 p.m.** with Dr. Jill Duke and Camille Irvine.
- **Wednesday 10:00-11:00 p.m.** with Sofia Szanto.
- **Thursday 12:00- 1:00 p.m.** with Sofia Szanto.
- **Friday 11:00-12:00 p.m. or 1:00-2:00 p.m.** with Dr. Jill Duke and Camille Irvine.
- Call 907-257-4720 for more information.

MOVE Maintenance Group by VA Video Connect:

- 1. MOVE Maintenance Group** (anyone who is engaged with or has completed the 16 weeks series) can join on:
3rd Wednesday of the month 3:00-4:00 p.m. with Camille Irvine
2nd Thursday of the month 3:00-4:00 p.m. with Lauri Ek-Watson
- 2. MOVE Engagement Group** (anyone currently enrolled or has completed the MOVE program) can join on:
4th Wednesday of the month 3:00-4:00 p.m. This group includes special topics featuring VA providers.
- 3. Women's MOVE Support Group** (women who are engaged with or have completed the 16 weeks series) can join on:
2nd Wednesday of the month 3:00-4:00 p.m.

MOVE - Bariatric Group Support

Learn Alaska VA criteria for bariatric surgery and what to expect pre-surgery and post-surgery.

- **1st Wednesdays of the month 3:00-4:00 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Lauri Ek-Watson.
- Contact your provider for referral.
- Call 907-257-4720 for more information.

MOVE - Telephone Lifestyle Coaching

Learn weight management by telephone.

- 16-19 weeks telephone support with Lauri Ek-Watson or Camille Irvine. Call 907-257-4720.

Orientation to Behavioral Health Services **ON HOLD**

Offers information for Veterans new to Behavioral Health Services, introduces patient rights and responsibilities, and prepares participants for treatment modalities.

- **One time session** completed before an intake is scheduled with a Provider by VA Video Connect with Jason Steward on **Mondays** from **11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.**

PTSD Symptom Management **ON HOLD**

Learn why PTSD develops and how to cope with it.

Reaching Out to Educate and Assist Caring, Healthy Families (REACH)

A multifamily group, psychoeducational program for Veterans living with PTSD and their families.

- It is a 3-phase program. The group meets on **Wednesdays 3:00-4:30 p.m.** by VA Video Connect. Providers need to contact Dr. Julie Vierthaler and Dr. Roxanne Cockburn to refer.
- Topics include communication skills, problem-solving skills, managing anger and conflict more effectively, increasing social support, fostering wellness, and understanding and managing symptoms of PTSD

Strength at Home (SAH)

Learn how to enhance relationship skills with assertive communication, understanding anger and stress, learn ways to deescalate situations that may lead to conflict and aggression.

- 12-week group session by VA Video Connect. Providers need to contact Janine Smith-Baker for referral.

Strength at Home (SAH) For Couples

Learn how to enhance relationship skills with assertive communication, understanding anger and stress, learn ways to deescalate situations that may lead to conflict and aggression.

- 10-week group session by VA Video Connect. Providers need to contact Jeremiah Newbold for referral.

Tobacco Cessation Group

Learn to quit tobacco with other Veterans.

- **Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Dr. Michael Frazier and Dr. Jill Duke. Call 907-257-4854 to be scheduled or alert Dr. Duke in CPRS.
- Open to all Veterans considering quitting tobacco and Veterans may join the group at any session.
- Get support from a team of providers and other Veterans who are learning to quit.
- Meet with our Clinical Pharmacist Practitioner about medication options to aid with quitting.
- Topics covered in group: reasons for wanting to quit, barriers to quitting, handling triggers and cravings, effects of nicotine on your body, health benefits of quitting, medications to quit, planning for quit day, stress management, and staying tobacco free.

Understanding Anger Group

Learn to reduce the impact of anger and lead a meaningful life.

- 8-9 sessions on **Wednesdays 3:00-4:00 p.m.** by VA Video Connect with Janine Smith-Baker. Providers need to contact for referral and when a new cycle starts.
- Veterans will learn common thinking patterns and beliefs that maintain anger, why it is a problem for those with PTSD and trauma, and how to manage anger from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.
- Group closed after 1st session.

Whole Health Coaching

Coaches team with the Veteran and their provider to reach Veteran's ultimate health and wellness goals.

- **Monday-Thursday, 8:00-11:00 a.m. and 1:00-2:00 p.m.**
- Any questions or to schedule an appointment call 907-257-5425.

Wise Warriors

Offer support and skills to develop Suicide Prevention Safety Plans

- Weekly drop-in group every **Friday 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** at the DOM with Jessica Waters. Call Julie Moth at 907-375-2111.

Women Veteran's Military Sexual Trauma (MST) Courage Group

Offer group support and skills to move forward from the impacts of MST and no trauma details will be discussed.

- Closed group support with no more than 7 Veterans.
- 12 -weeks group session meeting weekly on **Tuesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.**
- Interested Veteran needs to contact their Mental Health (MH) Provider or MH Staff (PACT SW, BHIP, Whole Health) for referral to Matthew Kauhn or Dr. Amy Hufstedler.
- Call 907-257-4854 for more information or question.

Yoga

Reduce stress, anxiety, and pain while improving well-being.

By VA Video Connect on:

- **Mondays and Wednesdays 09:30-10:30 a.m.**
- Call Whole Health Program Manager at 907-257-5425 for any question.

VA Domiciliary Wellness Center Offerings

residents only

3001 C Street
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-273-4011

CogSMART

Learn to improve memory and problem-solving.

- **Thursdays 2:15-3:15 p.m.** with Natasha Swan
- Any questions, call 907-273-4020.

Early Recovery Skills for Substance Abuse

- **Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:30 a.m.**
- Length varies by each person's progress with the addiction team.
- Call 907-273-4011 to set up an ATP screening appointment.

Job Club (Anchorage)

Class on resume writing, job seeking, overcoming employment barriers, interview techniques, guest speakers, employers, and more!

- Every **Monday 9:30-11:00 a.m.**
- Please contact the below staff for virtual link.
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only Domiciliary residents can attend in person. Alaska Veterans can attend virtually via WebEx.

For questions call:

- Charles Gorman 907-273-4044, Toni Trend 907-273-4077, John Ferrell 907-273-4072, or Jay Easter 907-273-4032.

Motivation Toward Recovery

- 10-week course on **Fridays 3:00-5:00 p.m.** with Dr. Natasha Swan. No referral needed, contact 907-273-4011 for questions.

SMART Recovery Support Group

- **Thursdays 5:30-6:30 p.m.** with Addiction Team staff.
- Staff should contact Joel Saccomanno.

Tobacco Addiction Awareness & Recovery

- **Mondays 1:00-2:00 p.m.** with Dr. Jill Duke and Renee Robinson.
- Any questions call 907-273-4011.

Yoga

Reduce stress, anxiety, and pain while improving well-being.

- **Tuesdays 6:00- 7:00 p.m.**
- Any questions contact 907-257-5425.

Vet Center Resources

Anchorage Vet Center Offerings

4400 Business Park Boulevard
Anchorage AK 99503
907-563-6966

Group	Day	Hours	Counselor
Combat PTSD	Monday	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Christian Garrett
Combat PTSD	Thursday	1:00-3:00 p.m.	Ann Brennan
Combat Veteran Cancer Survivors	1 st and 3 rd Wednesday	4:00-5:00 p.m.	William Boyles
iRest and Yoga	ON HOLD	2:00-3:00 p.m.	
Trauma Recovery Support (for female Veterans)	Wednesday	4:00-6:00 p.m.	Marie Bateman
Trauma Recovery Support (for male Veterans)	Friday	1:30-3:30 p.m.	Marie Bateman

Kenai Vet Center-Outstation Offerings

43299 Kalifornsky Beach Road, #4
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 260-7640

Group	Day	Hours	Counselor
Combat Veteran Group	Thursday	10:00 -12:00 p.m.	Ruby Vincent
Women's Trauma Group	Every other Wednesday	2:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Ruby Vincent

Wasilla Vet Center Offerings

1751 E. Gardner Way, Suite B
Wasilla Ak 99654
907-376-4318

Interested Veterans or Providers please call first for referral & confirmation:

Group	Day	Hours	Facilitator
Tabletop Gaming	Friday	1:00-4:00 p.m.	Ron Wilmot
Job Club (Mat-Su) *In person or via WebEx *No referral needed	Tuesday	11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	VHA Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Women's Social Support and Activities Group	Friday	6:00-8:30 p.m.	Hope Wells
Yoga	Second Monday Fourth Monday	7:00-8:00 p.m. 6:00-7:00 p.m.	Cheryl Lundy
Art Program	First & Third Tuesday	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Cheryl Lundy
Veteran Recovery Support Group	Wednesday	11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Cheryl Lundy

*In-center community agencies: Disabled American Veterans Service Organizations

Vet Center Class Information

Job Club (Mat-Su)

Class on resume writing, job seeking, overcoming employment barriers, interview techniques, guest speakers, employers, and more!

- Every **Tuesday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**, please contact the below staff for virtual link.
- Veterans can attend via WebEx or in person.
- Veterans can request Vocational Assistance appointments for resume reviews, interview prep, job application assistance, or USAJOBS help by contacting Toni Trend at 907-273-4077.

For questions call:

- Charles Gorman 907-273-4044, Toni Trend 907-273-4077, John Ferrell 907-273-4072, or Jay Easter 907-273-4032.

Project Healing Water (PHW)

- Wasilla Vet Center meets on Bogard Road **every 1st and 3rd Thursday 3:00-5:00 p.m.** For more information contact Dale Aki at daki@gci.net

Additional Community Resources

Alaska 2-1-1

Connects you to your local emergency food and shelter, disability services, counseling, senior services, healthcare, child-care, drug and alcohol programs, legal assistance, transportation needs, educational opportunities, and more!

- Dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-478-2221 **Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.** or email Alaska211.org.

Anchorage and Matsu Women's Cancer Support Group

- Every **Friday 10:00-11:30 a.m.** During COVID-19, the group meets by online video only.
- To take part, email news@womenlisten.org by Thursday evening. For more information, please go to <http://womenlisten.org/>

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (PHWFF)

Helps disabled active military personnel and Veterans recover from their physical and emotional injuries through fly fishing throughout the year. These activities include fly tying, rod building, fly casting, fishing instruction, float tubing on lakes, overnight fishing trips, family fishing picnics, and holiday celebrations. The camaraderie, connectedness, and community found in our program fosters a sense of belonging, resilience, and post traumatic growth.

- **Anchorage Program** meets every **Thursday 5:30-7:30 p.m. October through May** at the William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery at 941 N Reeve Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99501 2nd floor conference room. For more information, contact Sara Pate sara.pate@projecthealingwaters.org

- **Wasilla VFW** meets **every Tuesday 6:00-8:00 p.m.** For more information, contact Duane McHenry at duane.mchenry@projecthealingwaters.org
- All activities, supplies and equipment are provided free of cost to disabled Veterans.
- Veterans need to bring VA benefits form or VA ID card.

Additional Information:

- Bob Bechtold, Bob.Bechtold@projecthealingwaters.org
- Email: Alaska@projecthealingwaters.org
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PHWFFAlaska/>