U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
COVID-19 Pandemic Response
Weekly Report: May 1–7, 2021

VETERAN CARE

VA has diagnosed 256,628 people with COVID-19

40,161 COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities (as of Apr. 29, 2021)

272 current COVID-19 inpatients

241,316 COVID-19 patients now in convalescence

201,141 weekly home or off-site telehealth visits (from Apr. 25–May 1, 2021)

1,698% increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (from Mar. 1, 2020–May 1, 2021)

VIRTUAL CARE

552,669 secure messages exchanged (from Apr. 25–May 1, 2021)

443,014 prescription refill requests placed (from Apr. 25–May 1, 2021)

3,677,925 authenticated patients (as of Apr. 30, 2021)

VACCINE & TESTING

3,002,848 people vaccinated (at least one dose)

2,604,019 Veterans

307,858 employees

3,546,984 tests completed

VACCINE & TESTING

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FOURTH MISSION

Supporting state & local health care systems

1,694 Veterans admitted to care from State Veterans Homes (as of May 3, 2021)

25 mission assignments (as of May 6, 2021)

121 completed missions (as of May 6, 2021)

Provided 926,787 total pieces of personal protective equipment, including:

225,754 masks

559,770 gloves

All figures are as of May 7, 2021, unless otherwise noted.
**VETERAN OUTREACH**

- **VA.gov** had **3,050,610** visitors (last 7 days)
- **VA.gov/Coronavirus** had **2,730** visitors*
- **VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot** had **320,920** visitors*

*Veteran Outreach figures are from May 1–7, 2021.

**MEDIA OUTREACH**

- Fox 10 Phoenix (May 5, 2021)
  “VA program to help thousands of Veterans learn new career after being unemployed due to COVID-19 pandemic”
- WAVY.com (May 7, 2021)
  “Vets Secretary sees rapidly growing caseload at Hampton VAMC, need for Southside facility”
- GoErie (May 7, 2021)
  “Dorene Sommers: Experiences in nursing through Veterans Health Administration are life-altering”
- VA has published **100** COVID-19 related news releases

All figures in the Media Outreach section are from Feb. 2020–May 2021.

**STAFFING**

- **106,184** VHA new hires
  - **20,319** registered nurses & nurse practitioners
  - **85,865** other hires

Staffing figures are from Nov. 17, 2020–Apr. 19, 2021.

**BOARD OF VETERANS’ APPEALS (BVA)**

- **Held 16,637** virtual hearings
- **Issued 114,204** decisions

BVA figures are from Mar. 23, 2020–May 10, 2021.

**NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION**

- **85,465** Veteran interments (as of May 10, 2021)
  - **7,140** COVID-19 related interments
  - **78,325** other interments

- **15,200** Veteran Legacy Memorial posts (va.gov/remember) (as of May 10, 2021)

**VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)**

- **179,061** VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits*
- **27,800** calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19

*VBA figures are from Mar. 16, 2020–May 7, 2021.
1) South Texas VA implements SAVE LIVES Act
A vacant department store in San Antonio was transformed into an important SAVE LIVES ACT location for Texans receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.
Read the full story.

2) ‘Choose Home’ keeps senior Veterans connected
As the COVID-19 pandemic response normalized physical separations, Choose Home, guaranteed senior Veterans social connections. Now, the Colorado Springs-based program seeks to expand.
Read the full story.

3) 3D Printing: Innovative rapid prototyping & custom solutions
Kaila Grenier fabricated hundreds of “ear savers” for face masks. She identified a failure in protective helmets where the disposable face shield attaches & printed 3D replacement side clips.
Read the full story.

4) A Veteran’s message on COVID-19 vaccinations
John Ziegler, a familiar face to Milwaukee-area Veterans, is doing his part to make sure people get the COVID-19 vaccination.
Read the full story.

5) Wyoming team nominated for award for COVID-19 response
Wyoming VA’s team of RPM–HT care coordinators monitor Veterans with chronic clinical issues. With phone & video visits, they help Veterans make lifestyle changes & avoid hospital visits.
Read the full story.

6) From Baghdad to pandemic: A Hines nurse’s journey
From Baghdad to pandemic: A Hines nurse’s journey to treat his fellow Veterans—An Iraqi battlefield is not where most people decide what to do with the rest of their lives. Matt Mason is not most people.
Read the full story.