

**VA**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

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## VA Releases Veteran Suicide Statistics by State

### *Report shows state, age, gender and most common method*

**WASHINGTON** — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released findings from its analysis of Veteran suicide data for 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

The release is part of VA's comprehensive [examination](#) of more than 55 million records, from 1979 to 2014, which will be used to develop and evaluate suicide prevention programs across every state.

The new data include Veteran suicide rates and overall suicide rates by state, age group, and gender and list the most common suicide methods. Analysis of this information will help VA's Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention gain insight into high-risk populations and share that information with community-based health care providers and partners, continuing to expand the network of support for Veterans.

#### **Among VA findings:**

- Findings show there is variability across the nation in the rates and numbers of deaths by suicide among Veterans. Overall, the Veteran rates mirror those of the general population in the geographic region, with the highest rates in Western states. While we see higher rates of suicide in some states with smaller populations, most Veteran suicides are still in the heaviest populated areas.
- The suicide rate among middle-age and older adult Veterans remains high. In 2014, approximately 65 percent of all Veterans who died by suicide were age 50 or older.
- After adjusting for differences in age and sex, risk for suicide was 22 percent higher among Veterans when compared to U.S. non-Veteran adults. After adjusting for differences in age, risk for suicide was 19 percent higher among male Veterans when compared to U.S. non-Veteran adult men. After adjusting for differences in age, risk for suicide was 2.5 times higher among female Veterans when compared to U.S. non-Veteran adult women.

"These findings are deeply concerning, which is why I made suicide prevention my top clinical priority," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "I am committed to reducing Veteran suicides through support and education. We know that of the 20 suicides a day that we reported last year, 14 are not under VA care. This is a national public health issue that requires a concerted, national approach."

Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat), or text to 838255.

For a full copy of the report, click here: [State Data](#). For more information on VA's suicide prevention campaign, visit [Be There](#). Reporters covering this report are strongly encouraged to visit [www.ReportingOnSuicide.Org](http://www.ReportingOnSuicide.Org) for important guidance on ways to communicate suicide.

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