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News Release

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VA Prioritizes Improving Veterans' Access to Pro Bono Legal Services

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), together with the American Bar Association, The Veterans Consortium and National Law School Veterans Clinic Consortium, signed a Memorandum of Agreement aimed at improving Veterans' access to free legal services.

Veterans often face stressful legal problems — such as eviction, foreclosure, child support, or drivers' license revocations — that can affect their ability to gain or maintain employment and housing or focus on medical treatment. In VA's annual Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups survey, legal assistance repeatedly tops the list of homeless Veterans' unmet needs.

"We are encouraging VA Medical Centers and other VA facilities to engage with their local communities to establish legal clinics and Medical Legal Partnerships to address Veterans' legal needs that threaten their health and well-being," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "By signing this agreement, we are documenting a shared commitment to better facilitate Veterans' access to legal services."

Currently, VA hosts at least 165 free legal clinics in its VA Medical Centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinics and Vet Centers across the country by partnering with external, legal-service providers, such as local bar associations, legal-aid organizations and law school clinics.

More information on VA's coordination of legal services for Veterans at VA facilities may be found at <https://www.va.gov/OGC/LegalServices.asp>.

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