

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

# News Release

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## **VA and Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States partner to increase access to suicide prevention resources for its members**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently partnered with the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States ([EANGUS](#)) to promote the availability of vital VA-developed education resources for suicide prevention, substance use and abuse and mental health education to current and former members of the National Guard.

Since Aug. 12, the partnership has explored opportunities for identifying and contacting Veterans who are not enrolled in the VA health care system to provide them with information about enrollment.

“VA engaging members of the National Guard is a priority set in the National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This partnership enhances the access to these resources for current service members and Veterans already connected with VA.”

“This collaboration will provide access to VA-developed education resources for current and former National Guard members who otherwise do not qualify for VA services, especially when it comes to mental wellness, substance use struggles and necessary emotional support,” said retired U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. Frank Yoakum, EANGUS executive director.

VA will share these resources with the 414,000 EANGUS members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, as well as the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. Additionally, it will discuss potential mental health educational initiatives with colleges and universities.”

Go to [VA’s Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention](#) to learn more.

*Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can contact 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, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#).*

*Reporters covering this issue can download [VA’s Safe Messaging Best Practices](#) fact sheet or visit [www.ReportingOnSuicide.org](http://www.ReportingOnSuicide.org) for important guidance on how to communicate about suicide.*

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