



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

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## VA expands virtual services to support Veterans amid regional office closures due to COVID-19 pandemic

WASHINGTON – Veterans continue to receive benefits and services after the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) temporarily closed its [56 regional offices](#) to the public, March 19, in response to COVID-19.

“The decision to close our offices to the general public, is part of the VA’s effort to limit exposure to vulnerable populations like our older Veterans and those with underlying medical conditions, as identified by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#),” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA is expanding existing technologies to remain accessible to Veterans, service members and their families.”

Many in-person services are already available via the phone or online through virtual options like [VA Video Connect](#). VBA has and continues to adjust to ensure the safety and well-being of its clients and staff. The changes include:

- [Uninterrupted GI Bill payments](#) so students continue to receive their benefits unaffected by any change from in-person to online learning.
- Supporting students for educational counseling through online and telephone services.
- Connecting Veterans to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services through teleconferencing; providing case management and general counseling virtually through VA Video Connect.
- Informal conference hearings by telephone or video conferencing when needed.
- Collecting information to process fiduciary claims by telephone. When necessary other accommodations will be arranged.
- Collecting information remotely via phone or teleconference when possible, to process grant requests for special adaptive housing.
- Conducting examinations for disability benefits using tele-compensation and pension or “tele-C&P” exams. If an in-person examination is required, Veterans will be notified for scheduling.

Effective March 30, VA will discontinue VA benefit briefings and services on military installations for transitioning service members and their families through the interagency [Transition Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#) until further notice. However, VA will provide virtual briefings and individualized counseling for transitioning service members where possible. Service members who have not received these briefings, as required by TAP, may access the [Joint Knowledge Online \(JKO\)](#) platform and register for “TGPS-US006: VA Benefits and Services.”

Veterans with specific questions can call 1-800-827-1000 or go [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) for additional details. Veterans can continue to get information about [benefits](#), [file a claim online](#) or can call for claim-specific questions.

Visit [VA’s website](#) for information and updates regarding VA’s response to COVID-19.

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