

VA



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VA Solid Start program makes strides in first year

Successful contact made with recently separated Veterans during first 365-days following transition from military service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today, as [VA Solid Start](#) celebrates its one year anniversary — the Veterans Benefits Administration connected with nearly 70,000 newly-separated service members.

Annually, the program aims to proactively contact Veterans three times during their first year of transition from military to civilian life at the 90-, 180- and 360-day mark after separation.

“The department’s efforts have been effective,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Approximately 124,000 service members separated from the military in fiscal year 2020, and nearly 60% of those Veterans called, answered — resulting in VA connecting recently separated Veterans to earned VA benefits, including, helping Veterans in crisis immediately connect with Suicide Prevention Specialists.”

VA, in collaboration with the Department of Defense and Homeland Security, launched VA Solid Start December 2019 in response to [Executive Order \(EO\) 13822: Supporting Our Veterans During Their Transition from Uniformed Service to Civilian Life](#). The EO was issued to improve transitioning service members’ mental health care and access to suicide prevention resources in the year following discharge, separation or retirement.

If a Veteran has separated from the military in the past 90 days and has not been contacted by [VA Solid Start](#), call 1-800-827-1000 to reach a highly trained VA Solid Start representative.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and Press 1, text to 838255 or chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.

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