

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

# News Release

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## **SAVE LIVES Act allows VA to soon provide COVID-19 vaccinations to all Veterans, their spouses and caregivers**

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden signed the [SAVE LIVES Act](#) into law today, expanding VA’s legal authority to provide COVID-19 vaccines to all Veterans, regardless of their VA health care enrollment status, as well as Veteran spouses, caregivers and some beneficiaries.

The SAVE LIVES Act removed some of the legal limits on the medical care VA can provide to Veterans, based on [health care eligibility](#) and [priority groups](#).

The expanded authority depends on readily available COVID-19 vaccine supply and requires VA to continue to prioritize vaccinations and healthcare delivery for our nation’s Veterans enrolled in VA care.

“The SAVE LIVES Act increases the number of individuals who are eligible to get lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines from VA from 9.5 million to more than 33 million,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “Meeting the task of vaccinating this expanded population will be a tremendous undertaking for the VA and will require a significant increase in our allocation of vaccine supply, but I am confident that VA’s workforce is up to the task.”

VA is providing COVID-19 vaccinations to Veterans and employees per its [COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#). As of March 24, VA has fully vaccinated 1,594,812 individuals, including Veterans, VA employees and federal partners.

The next steps in VA’s prioritized expansion efforts are to offer the vaccine to all enrolled Veterans – approximately 9.5 million – followed by those outlined in the bill, as vaccine supply permits:

- Non-enrolled Veterans as defined in the new legislation, including those without service-connected disabilities and who have incomes above VA’s threshold.
- Overseas Veterans who rely on the [Foreign Medical Program](#).
- Veteran caregivers who are enrolled in either the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers or the Program of General Caregiver Support Services.
- Veteran caregivers enrolled in certain Geriatrics and Extended Care Programs, such as Veteran Directed Care, Bowel and Bladder, Home Based Primary Care and VA’s Medical Foster Home Program.
- [Civilian Health and Medical Programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs](#) recipients.
- Veteran spouses.

In March and April 2021, VA will conduct pilots of COVID-19 vaccination for individuals specified in HR1276 at select VA medical centers. These pilots will work through critical steps in the process including communications, operations including space and staffing, systems for registration, enrollment, and scheduling, documentation, and data transmission.

VA currently receives approximately 200,000 first, or single doses, of COVID-19 vaccine each week. VA estimates that it will need a minimum of 300,000 first or single doses of COVID-19 vaccine weekly to offer COVID-19 vaccination to an additional three million Veterans who are enrolled but not currently using VA health care. VA estimates that it will need approximately 600,000 first, or single doses, of COVID-19 vaccine each week to further expand vaccination to all individuals outlined in HR1276. First or single dose supply is the best indicator of VA’s capacity to offer expanded COVID-19 vaccination.

Interested Veterans, their caregivers and Veteran spouses who qualify under the legislation can click [here](#) to get more information about COVID-19 vaccines at VA. Updates will be provided regarding the availability of vaccine supply and other resources.

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