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VA responds with record number of Fourth Mission assignments to assist America during pandemic

WASHINGTON — In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, since March 2020, the Department of Veterans Affairs has completed 150 Fourth Mission assignments nationwide.

COVID-19 mission assignments are carried out in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

Assignments range in scope from:

- Deploying staff to other VA facilities.
- Placing VA staff in community medical and long-term care facilities.
- Caring for civilian in-patients at VA facilities.
- Helping local governments in need of COVID-19 testing, vaccines and staff.

"VA nurses, doctors and other staff have volunteered for more than 5,000 deployments supporting missions in State Veterans Homes, community medical facilities and nursing homes across the nation," said Acting Under Secretary for Health Richard Stone, M.D. "This past year has undoubtably been a challenging time in our history. Seeing VA staff rise to the challenge and volunteering to help others has remained a point of hope throughout this pandemic."

In addition to mission assignments, VA has provided nearly 1 million pieces of personal protective equipment to states and local governments since the start of the pandemic and admitted over 480 non-Veteran patients for COVID-19 care at VA medical centers.

VA's Fourth Mission is a statutory requirement to support states, territories, tribes and other federal agencies by providing resources and support in times of emergency. An independent report published by the Government Accountability Office in May, found VA in coordination with FEMA successfully achieved its mission serving as back-up for the nation's health care system.

Learn more about VA's Fourth Mission Summary.

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