



U.S. Department  
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# News Release

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## Secretary McDonough statement on FY 2023 budget

### *President Biden outlines proposals to invest improvements in critical areas of suicide prevention and mental health care services for Veterans*

**WASHINGTON** — The Biden-Harris administration submitted to Congress the president's budget for fiscal year 2023.

This budget delivers critical resources to help VA serve Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors as well as they have served our country — and it will allow VA to continue providing more care, more services, and more benefits to more Veterans than any time in its history.

In outlining his [Unity Agenda](#), the president identified supporting Veterans as a key priority. His budget request supports the importance of ensuring Veterans have timely access to high quality services and benefits.

To fulfill this promise, the Department of Veterans Affairs' total FY 2023 budget request is \$301.4 billion, an 10.6% increase above the 2022 Enacted Budget (with rescissions). This includes a discretionary request of \$139.1 billion (with medical care collections), an 18.8% increase above the 2022 Enacted Budget (with rescissions). The 2023 mandatory funding request totals \$161.3 billion, an increase of \$5.1 billion or 3.3% above the 2022 Enacted Budget.

The president's 2023 budget request for VA includes:

- **Support VA medical care.** The budget provides \$122.7 billion (with collections), 21.3% above the 2022 enacted budget, to meet the medical needs of Veterans. In addition to fully funding inpatient, outpatient, mental health and long-term care services, it supports programs that improve VA health care quality and delivery, including investments in training programs for clinicians, health professionals and medical students. The budget also further supports VA's preparedness for regional and national public health emergencies.
- **Improve Veterans' mental health care services.** The budget provides \$13.9 billion for VA mental health care, which offers a system of comprehensive treatments and services to meet the needs of each Veteran and the family members involved in the Veteran's care. Consistent with the president's vision for addressing the national mental health crisis, it focuses on increasing timely access to quality mental health care and lowering the cost of mental health services for Veterans, with the goal of helping Veterans take charge of their treatment and live full and meaningful lives.
- **Prioritize Veteran suicide prevention.** The president made reducing military and veteran suicide a priority and strengthening veteran suicide prevention is a top clinical priority for the secretary. To help address these priorities, the budget provides \$497 million to support the administration's Veteran suicide prevention initiatives, including implementation of: the Veterans Crisis Line's 988 expansion initiative (a new national three-digit emergency telephone number to access crisis call centers across the country for suicide prevention); increased focus on suicide prevention public health efforts in communities, a lethal means safety campaign; and the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program to enhance community-based prevention strategies.
- **Increase women Veterans' health care.** The budget invests \$9.8 billion for all of women Veterans' health care, including \$767 million towards women's gender specific care. More women are choosing VA health care than ever before, with women accounting for over 30% of the increase in Veterans enrolled over the past five years. Investments support comprehensive specialty medical and surgical services for women Veterans. Additionally, VA proposes to increase access to infertility counseling and assisted reproductive technology and to eliminate copayments for contraceptive coverage. It also improves the safety of women Veterans by supporting implementation of the zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and assault at VA facilities.
- **Address environmental exposures.** The budget increases resources for hiring additional claims processors and advancing claims automation and modernization efforts to speed processing new presumptive disability compensation claims related to environmental exposures during military service. It also invests \$51 million within VA research programs and \$63 million within the VA medical care program to increase scientific understanding of and clinical support for Veterans and health care providers regarding the potential adverse impacts from environmental exposures during military service.
- **Support cancer moonshot and precision oncology.** The budget invests \$81 million in research and \$167 million in medical care funds for precision oncology to provide the best possible cancer care for Veterans and support the [cancer moonshot's](#) goal to end cancer as we know it today. Funds support research and programs that address cancer care, rare cancers and cancers in women, as well as genetic counseling and consultation that advance tele-oncology and precision oncology care.
- **Invest in human infrastructure.** This budget will allow us to invest in people and technology to improve the hiring experience for applicants, managers, and human resource professionals; support an additional 28,963 full-time equivalent personnel; develop and implement staffing models throughout VA; promote strong labor relations with our national unions; and lead our post-pandemic occupational safety and health planning and programs.

The budget makes smart investments while also reducing deficits and improving our country's long-term fiscal outlook. We are grateful to Congress and President Biden for their strong support of our Veterans, which this budget demonstrates. This is great news for the Veterans we serve, because it means VA can continue delivering the world-class, timely care and benefits that they deserve. Visit [VA Budget Office](#) or [FY 2023 budget](#) for more information.

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