



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

Office of Public Affairs  
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# State Summary

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## South Dakota And the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### General Information

The [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#) offers a wide variety of programs and services for the nation's 23 million veterans. In 2009, about 5.75 million people were treated in [VA health care](#) facilities, 3.9 million veterans and survivors received [VA disability compensation or pensions](#), more than 564,000 used GI Bill [education benefits](#) and nearly 326,000 home loans were guaranteed by GI Bill [home loan benefits](#). VA issued nearly \$162,053 million in Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit payments to 34,393 individuals and their educational institutions in 2009. Nearly 78,127 veterans took advantage of VA's [vocational rehabilitation](#) and employment service, and nationally, veterans held more than 1.2 million [life insurance](#) policies valued at \$14.6 billion in 2009. More than 106,000 veterans and family members were buried in VA's [national cemeteries](#) and more than 360,000 headstones and markers were provided for veterans' graves worldwide.

### General Information – South Dakota

- *Number of veterans: 72,704*
- *VA expenditures in South Dakota: \$506 million*
  - *Compensation and pensions: \$162 million*
  - *Readjustment benefits: \$12 million*
  - *Medical and construction programs: \$319 million*
  - *Insurance and indemnities: \$4 million*
- *Number of veterans receiving disability compensation or pension payments: 13,451*
- *Number of South Dakota veterans using GI Bill education benefits: 1,992*
- *Number of home loans in South Dakota backed by VA guarantees: 1,248*
- *Value of South Dakota home loans guaranteed by VA: \$219 million*
- *Number of VA life insurance policies held by South Dakota residents: 4,221*
- *Value of VA life insurance policies held by South Dakota residents: \$49 million*
- *Number of South Dakota participants in VA vocational rehabilitation: 312*
- *Number of headstones and markers provided for graves of South Dakota veterans and survivors: 1,856*

### Health Care

One of the most visible of all VA benefits is [health care](#). VA has 153 hospitals, 773 community-based outpatient clinics, 260 Vet Centers, 135 nursing homes, 47 residential rehabilitation treatment programs and 121 comprehensive home care programs. To improve patients' ability to access care, VA has changed from a hospital-based system to a primarily outpatient-focused system over the past decade. Veterans will make more than 60 million outpatient visits to VA health care facilities this year.

### **Health Care - South Dakota**

- *Inpatient admissions, statewide, fiscal year 2009: 4,756*
  - [Black Hills Health Care System](#) (including Ft. Meade and Hot Springs): 2,405
  - [Sioux Falls](#): 2,351
- *Outpatient visits, statewide, fiscal year 2009: 449,000*
- *Outpatient clinic locations*

<i>Aberdeen</i>	<i>Pine Ridge</i>
<i>Eagle Butte (3)</i>	<i>Rapid City</i>
<i>McLaughlin</i>	<i>Wagner</i>
<i>Mission</i>	<i>Watertown</i>
<i>Pierre</i>	<i>Winner</i>

### **Post-Conflict Care**

VA has launched special efforts to provide a "seamless transition" for those returning from service in [Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom \(OEF/OIF\)](#). Each VA medical facility and benefits regional office has a point of contact to coordinate activities locally to help meet the needs of these returning combat service members and veterans. In addition, VA increased the staffing of benefits counselors at key military hospitals where severely wounded service members from Iraq and Afghanistan are frequently sent. Once home, recent Iraq and Afghan veterans have ready access to VA health care, which is free of charge for five years following separation for any health problem possibly related to wartime service. Some 537,000 veterans from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have sought VA health care since returning stateside, about 47 percent of the total number of men and women leaving military service.

### **Post-Conflict Care - South Dakota**

- [Veterans Readjustment Counseling Centers](#) (Vet Centers) Locations:
  - *Martin (Pine Ridge)*
  - *Rapid City*
  - *Sioux Falls*

### **Disabilities and Pensions**

Not all military service-related issues end when people are discharged from active duty. About 2.9 million veterans receive monthly VA disability compensation for medical conditions related to their service in uniform. VA pensions go to about 316,000 wartime veterans with limited means. Family members of about 528,000 veterans qualify for monthly VA payments as the survivors of disabled veterans or pension recipients.

### **Disabilities and Pensions - South Dakota**

- *Number of veterans receiving monthly disability compensation: 11,937*
- *Number of VA pensions to veterans in South Dakota: 1,514*
- *Number of disability compensation claims processed: 3,110*

### **Memorial Affairs**

Most men and women who served in the military are [eligible for burial](#) in a VA national cemetery, as are their spouses and dependent children. VA manages the country's [network of national cemeteries](#) with approximately 3 million [gravesites](#) at 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, as well as in 33 soldier's lots and monument sites. In 2009, more

than 106,000 veterans and dependents were buried in VA's national cemeteries. Additionally, VA provided more than 350,000 [headstones and markers](#) and 655,000 [Presidential Memorial Certificates](#) to the loved ones of deceased veterans. VA-assisted [state veterans cemeteries](#) provided more than 26,000 interments.

***Memorial Affairs – South Dakota***

- *National cemetery burials in South Dakota, 2009: 672*
  - [Black Hills](#): 672
  - [Ft. Meade](#): None (Closed to new burials)
  - [Hot Springs](#): None (Closed to new burials)
- *Headstones and markers provided in 2009 (statewide): 1,856*
- *Presidential Memorial Certificates issued in 2009 (statewide): 1,253*

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