

VA MISSION Act of 2018

Your Care is Our Mission

Overarching Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Q1. What is the VA MISSION Act?

A1. The VA MISSION Act is legislation passed by Congress and signed into law on June 6, 2018. Through this VA will need to make changes in several key areas including:

- Streamlining and Improving Community Care,
- Establishing a new Urgent Care benefit,
- Expanding Caregivers Eligibility,
- Strengthening VA's Workforce,
- and Strengthening VA's Infrastructure.

Through the MISSION Act, VA has additional opportunities to enhance our high-quality health care to our nation's Veterans.

Q2: What does the MISSION acronym stand for?

A2: Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION).

Q3. Is the MISSION Act about privatizing Veterans' health care?

A3. No, it's not about privatizing VA. The MISSION Act is designed to strengthen and improve VA's high-quality health care system.

Q4. What does the MISSION Act encompass?

A4. The MISSION Act legislation contains more than 50 sections intended to strengthen and improve VA's ability to deliver world-class health care. As this is complex and will take place for several years, we have a visual graphic depicting how it will work. You can find the handout at this link: https://www.va.gov/oei/docs/MISSION_Act_Placemat.pdf.

If you're interested in learning more you can read through the handout entitled "MISSION ACT 101: How the law will improve VA's ability to deliver health care to Veterans" on VA's Vantage Point blog located at: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/56414/mission-act-101-how-the-law-will-improve-vas-ability-to-deliver-health-care-to-veterans/>.

Q5: How will the VA MISSION Act Improve Community Care?

A5: VA community care programs have grown in number and complexity through the years, making them complicated. The MISSION Act streamlines and improves VA's community care programs, providing Veterans better customer service when receiving community care.

Q6: How will the VA MISSION Act expand Caregivers Eligibility?

A6: The VA MISSION Act expands eligibility for Veterans who have family members serve as their caregivers. Right now, the Caregiver program is only available to eligible Veterans who were injured on or after September 11, 2001. But, the expansion under the MISSION Act will open the program to eligible Veterans and their caregivers from all eras.

Q7. What are the key benefits for recruiting and retaining high quality staff under the MISSION Act?

A7. Key benefits for employees under the MISSION Act include:

- **Providing** several options to help recruit and retain employees through an expanded education debt reduction program,
- Improving flexibility for recruitment bonuses,
- Allowing for relocation and retention pay so we can keep high-quality medical professionals,
- Piloting a scholarship program for eligible Veterans to receive medical training in return for serving in a VA hospital or clinic for four years.

Q8: How will the VA MISSION Act strengthen VA's Infrastructure?

A8: Many VA buildings are nearly 60 years old and half of them were built before 1920. We need ways to ensure we can keep up with the changes to technology and building improvements as we modernize our systems. That's why the MISSION Act offers reviews and plans to help VA better manage its infrastructure.

Q9. When will the MISSION Act be implemented?

A9. VA is already developing processes for a multi-year effort, including plans to keep all of us informed each step of the way. We are excited to improve access to VA's high-quality care and reaffirm our commitment to America's Veterans.

Q10. How will the MISSION Act benefit Veterans?

A10. The MISSION Act empowers Veterans and enhances care options. VA will:

- Continue to be a trusted, caring partner
- Meet Veterans where they are, with the right care at the right place and the right time
- Provide telehealth in their home, in a VA facility, or in the community
- Focus on providing an excellent experience for Veterans and their families.

Q11. How will the MISSION Act benefit VA staff members?

A11. The MISSION Act empowers employees and strengthens VA care nationwide. The MISSION Act:

- Improves ways to hire staff and keep staff onboard
- Creates "Anywhere to Anywhere" telehealth linking Veterans with their care teams across state lines
- Allows VA to lead with cutting-edge technology
- Strengthens VA as a leader for U.S. health care

Q12. Where can I find the full text of the MISSION Act?

A12. You can read the MISSION Act online at this link: <https://www.va.gov/oei/missionAct/index.asp>.

Q13. How can I find out more about the MISSION Act?

A13. [External – Public] You can learn more about the MISSION Act by visiting the website at: <https://www.va.gov/oei/missionAct/index.asp>.