

For Immediate Release

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COVID-19 Update - Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Visit www.FloridaVets.org for the latest information.

Florida's Veterans' Claims Examiners – Who to contact?

Veterans' Claims Examiners from the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs are connecting veterans and their families with earned services, benefits and support. To contact a teleworking FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiner, call (727) 319-7440 and they'll return your call within 24 hours. All services are free to the veteran. You may also contact them via e-mail at VSO@fdva.state.fl.us

New! Video Teleconferencing now available for Florida Veterans: FDVA has launched a new "virtual" video conference option, providing Veterans with the flexibility and convenience of meeting with their Veteran Representatives from a personal computer or mobile device. For more information, visit <https://www.floridavets.org/benefits-services/>

Crisis Counseling – Who to contact?

For 24-hour counsel, call the *National Veteran Crisis Hotline* at 1-800-273-8255. You are not alone! You may also call the *Florida Veterans Support Line* at 1-844-MyFLVet (693-5838) or 2-1-1.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS (FDVA)

Admissions have resumed in our network of state veterans' homes. Consult the nearest veterans' home to you for details. <https://www.floridavets.org/locations/state-veterans-nursing-homes/>

COVID-19 Vaccines for Veterans

President Joe Biden recently signed the [SAVE LIVES Act](#) into law, 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. Contact your local VA Healthcare System for availability.

Veterans who currently receive care at VA, including homebound veterans, can learn more about COVID-19 vaccine availability at VA facilities in Florida:

[Bay Pines VA Healthcare System](#) (web site) or call 888-820-0230

[James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital](#) – Tampa (web site) or call 888-716-7787

[Miami VA Healthcare System](#) (web site) or call 305-575-7000

[North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System](#) (web site) or call 352-548-6000 ext. 103755

[Orlando VA Healthcare System](#) (web site) or call 407-631-0499

[West Palm Beach VA Medical Center](#) (web site) or call 800-972-8262 ext. 5220

Gov. Ron DeSantis recently announced new eligibility guidelines for COVID-19 vaccinations in Florida. As of April 5, all individuals age 18 and older are eligible to receive the vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccines for Homebound World War II and Korean War Veterans

Gov. Ron DeSantis has directed the Department of Health and the Division of Emergency Management to coordinate with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to identify veterans of World War II and the Korean War who are unable to travel to receive a vaccine. More than 800 eligible veterans have signed up to date. When contacted, let the Department of Health know if your spouse is the principal caregiver who also needs access to the vaccine.

For more information, visit <https://www.floridavets.org/homeboundveterans/>

COVID-19 Testing

If a veteran suspects they have COVID-19 symptoms, contact your VA health team or the VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center (1-877-741-3400) for nurse advice and triage. Clinical staff are available to provide 24/7 virtual care and support, including nurse advice and triage.

VA launches single access point to all VA contact centers

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced Dec. 16, 2020, the formal launch of 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411), a single access point to all VA contact centers. The number is available 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year to serve Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

Responding to Veteran feedback on the challenges of knowing the right number for VA assistance, 1-800-MyVA411, serves all members of the Veteran community seeking information or help.

Veterans and their families can still reach the Veterans Crisis Line directly at 1-800-273-8255 and pressing 1, by [Chat](#) or by texting 838255.

The White House VA Hotline is also still available at 1-855-948-2311 for Veterans and their families to share compliments and concerns.

When dialing 1-800-MyVA411, callers have the option of pressing 0 to be immediately connected with a customer service agent to answer questions or provide a warm-handoff to the appropriate VA expert.

1-800-MyVA411 provides information on:

- COVID-19 updates.
- Health care eligibility and enrollment.
- VA benefits, such as disability, compensation and pension, education programs, caregiver support, insurance, home loans, and burial headstones and markers among others.
- The nearest VA medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries to Veterans, VA Medical Center operational updates and connection to VA Medical Center operators.
- Directory assistance and technical support for www.VA.gov.
- Debt and payment options.

COVID-19 FAQs: What veterans need to know (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)
<https://www.va.gov/coronavirus-veteran-frequently-asked-questions/>

Requesting Military Records – COVID-19 Delays

The **National Personnel Records Center** is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They will continue servicing emergency requests associated with medical treatments, burials and homeless veterans trying to gain admittance to a homeless shelter.

Please refrain from submitting non-emergency requests such as replacement medals, administrative corrections, or records research until they return to pre-COVID staffing levels.

- *More information on [NPRC's operating status](#)*
- *[Alternative sources for modern military records](#)*
- *More information about the National Archives' response to coronavirus can be found at [archives.gov/coronavirus](https://www.archives.gov/coronavirus).*

Compensation and Pension (C&P) Disability Examinations

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) seeks to raise awareness of availability and access to Compensation and Pension (C&P) disability examinations.

Although the pandemic has caused more than 200K examinations to accumulate, we have safely resumed in-person exams everywhere in the country and will schedule them as soon as possible using all applicable Center for Disease Control (CDC) safeguards. In addition, VA has implemented policy changes that enable broader use of the virtual Tele-C&P and Acceptable Clinical Evidence examination modalities by both the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) contract examiners.

[VA has a dedicated website](#) related to its resumption of in-person C&P examinations, and other websites that have answers to commonly asked questions about the examination process. Visit [VA claim exam | Veterans Affairs](#) for information ranging from what to expect at a VA examination, how to schedule an examination, and what happens after an examination. Information on VA's Disability Compensation benefits can be found at [Compensation Home \(va.gov\)](#).

VA extends existing moratoriums on evictions and foreclosures and extends loan forbearance opportunities

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has extended the existing moratorium on evictions and foreclosures, as well as extend VA loan forbearance requests, to June 30, 2021, because of COVID-19.

“We will do everything in our power to help Veterans, their families, survivors and our caregivers get through this pandemic,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “The department’s moratorium and forbearance extensions support President Biden’s Jan. 22 [Executive Order](#) to deliver economic relief to Americans amid the COVID-19 crisis by addressing economic hardships the Veteran community faces, through no fault of its own, during the ongoing pandemic.”

VA borrowers experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 can review [VA guidance for borrowers](#) or call 877-827-3702 for additional information.

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VA offers continued debt relief options to Veterans

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reaffirms its commitment to extend debt relief for Veterans through Sept. 30, 2021.

VA will [continue suspension](#) of collection on all Veteran benefit overpayments and medical copayment debts incurred after April 1, 2020.

VA is suspending this debt collection to provide Veterans continued financial relief due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To assist with making informed choices for their situation, VA will notify Veterans of the existence of their current debt and available [expansive relief options](#). These options include making payments, extending repayment plans, waivers, compromises and temporary hardship suspensions.

Veterans and beneficiaries with questions regarding benefit overpayments can see [frequently asked questions](#), go online to [submit requests](#) or call 800-827-0648. Call volume is generally lower Tuesday-Friday.

For [health care co-payment debts](#), Veterans should contact the Health Resource Center at 866-400-1238 for payments.