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COVID-19 Resources for Veterans

There are several programs and relief initiatives in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for veterans. This guide can serve as a starting point to guide you in the right direction.

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provides funding to ensure that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) has the equipment, tests, and support services necessary to provide veterans with needed care at facilities nationwide.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs maintains this website as a resource for all veterans who have questions about the VA's response to the coronavirus:

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will the VA contact me when I'm eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

- VA health facilities are at different phases of the plan. The local facility where you are registered will contact you when your risk group is eligible for a vaccine.
- Designated caregivers are also eligible for a vaccine when the Veteran they care for is eligible.
- *Protect yourself from scams.* The VA will never ask you for your personal information in an email or include links that take you to a non-secure page that asks you to provide this information. If someone calls you about getting a vaccine, be sure to verify that they're your VA provider. Get more tips on how to avoid COVID-19 scams here: <https://www.fcc.gov/covid-scams>

What can I do now to prepare for the vaccine?

If you currently receive care through the VA:

- Make sure your VA.gov profile is up to date. Check your address and phone number on file with the VA to be sure it has your current contact information.
 - Learn how to change your address and other info on file with VA: <https://www.va.gov/resources/change-your-address-on-file-with-va>
 - Get answers to questions about signing in to VA.gov: <https://www.va.gov/resources/signing-in-to-vagov>
- Talk to your VA health care provider. If you have questions about how your personal risk for COVID-19 will determine when you can get a vaccine, send a secure message to your provider. If you don't receive care at VA, contact your primary health care provider. <https://www.va.gov/health-care/secure-messaging/>

If you are enrolled for VA health care, but haven't received VA care for the past two years:

- Contact your local VA health facility to schedule a primary care appointment.

- If you haven't yet registered at a facility, visit this link to find the nearest VA health facility: <https://www.va.gov/find-locations/>

If you do NOT receive care through the VA:

- Determine if you are eligible for VA health care. Visit this site to check eligibility and potentially apply for VA care: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/>
- Consider all your options. Your employer, local public health officials, or local pharmacy may offer you a COVID-19 vaccine. We encourage you to take the first opportunity you have to get a vaccine at the most convenient location for you.

What should I do if I am experiencing COVID-19 symptoms?

- If you have a fever, coughing, and shortness of breath, call your VA medical center before going to a clinic, urgent care, or emergency room.
- If you currently receive VA health care, you can also send your doctor a secure message through My HealtheVet at: <https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/user-login>

Do VA health facilities offer COVID-19 testing?

- Testing is based on many factors including the severity of symptoms, other existing illnesses or conditions, possible exposure, and other criteria. VA health facilities have been testing Veterans who meet the testing criteria provided by the CDC.
- Check testing criteria here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>
- There is no charge for testing.

What should I do if I have an upcoming VA health appointment?

- For routine appointments, the VA recommends using telehealth (phone or video) for your scheduled appointment.
- You can also cancel and reschedule your appointment for a later date.
- If you have a non-urgent elective procedure scheduled, the VA may contact you to cancel or reschedule for a later date.

How will the Pandemic impact my GI benefits?

- The VA will continue to provide the same level of education benefits to students taking courses online due to the pandemic. For more information visit the VA at: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/72852/veterans-gi-bill-benefits-continue-covid-19-pandemic/>.

Is home loan assistance available to veterans during the pandemic?

- Veterans who have questions regarding their home loans should visit <https://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/>.
- For more information on the provisions in the American Rescue Plan Act for homeowners, including veterans, see the Federal Housing Finance Agency's information page:

<https://www.fhfa.gov/Homeownersbuyer/MortgageAssistance/Pages/Coronavirus-Assistance-Information.aspx>.

Will I get my money back if I used VA health care during the pandemic and paid my bills after the VA sent me a letter on how much I owed?

- Yes. The American Rescue Plan authorizes the VA to reimburse any veteran who already submitted payments for VA health care received between April 6, 2020 and September 30, 2021.

If I receive VA disability or pension benefits, will I automatically get my third stimulus check?

- Yes. If you receive VA disability or pension benefits, you'll automatically get your third stimulus check. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will send your check even if you don't file tax returns. You don't need to do anything.
- If you didn't get your first or second stimulus check, or if you didn't get the full amount, you may still be eligible to get a payment in 2021. [Go to the IRS.gov website to learn more about economic impact payments](#)

Will my COVID-19 stimulus check lower my VA payments?

- No. The VA won't count any money received as part of the COVID-19 stimulus package as income for VA disability compensation, individual unemployability (TDIU), VA pension, or parent Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) beneficiaries.

I'm a veteran who lost my job during the pandemic. Do I qualify for any programs? And how do I apply?

- Veterans between the ages of 22 and 66, who are unemployed due to COVID-19, and do not have any remaining eligibility under any other VA education benefits, qualify for the Rapid Retraining Assistance Program, which was enacted as part of the American Rescue Plan.
- Similar to other VA education programs, veterans can apply and confirm their eligibility at: Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program (VRRAP) - Education and Training (va.gov) <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/vrrap.asp>

What can I do if I feel anxious and overwhelmed?

- First, it's important to know you're not alone. Concerns about COVID-19 can be stressful for many people. You can take steps to manage stress and get support. Stay connected and healthy, keep your existing mental health appointments, or ask for a new mental health appointment.
- Veterans, or those concerned about a veteran, may contact the Veteran's Crisis Line by calling: 1-800-273-8255 and pressing 1.

Where can I find additional assistance?

- Senator Warner's office stands ready to assist with any coronavirus and non-coronavirus federal issues.

- If you or a loved one is currently experiencing an issue with a federal agency, please contact Senator Warner's office by calling: (202) 224-2023 or visiting: <https://www.warner.senate.gov/>.