



Public Website:

Unauthenticated customer-facing experience

January 2020

Agenda

- DEPO North Star

- How DEPO North Star maps to Public Website goals

- 2020 Q1 + Q2

- 2020 H2

- People, people, people

- Appendix

1. DEPO North Star

DEPO North Star

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

DEPO key performance indicators

Increase the use of self-service tools

- # of new accounts created
- # of unique users to VA.gov
- # of self-service transactions (aggregate)
- # of successful online submissions (compared to offline submissions)
- # of appointments made online (compared to total)

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome

- Time to communication of decision for forms submitted online (in aggregate, compared to offline channels)
- # of Claim Status lookups
- Secure Messaging: % of Veteran messages answered within 24 hours
- Scheduling: average time to appointment confirmation

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience

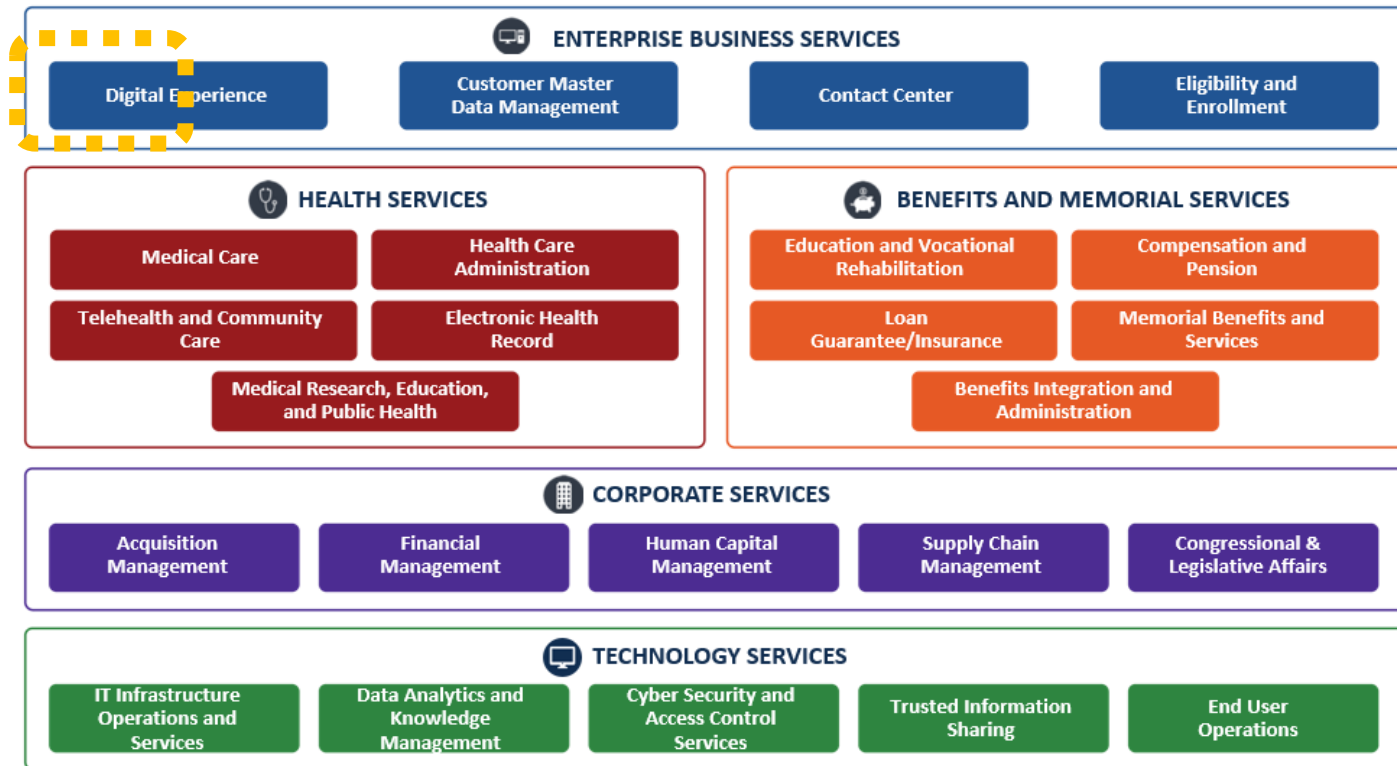
- Increase retention: (# of returning users, time since last visit for returning users)
- Reduction in call center volume
- Increase / maintain customer satisfaction score
- Maintain five 9s uptime and availability

DEPO prioritization for working on products

Prioritization Criteria			
Alignment with North Star	High		10
User impact	High		10
Transaction Volume	High		5
Ability to deliver iteratively following the Playbook	High		5
Cost of inaction & product dependencies	High		5
Alignment with business priorities & business value	High		5
			40

Product Line Management Structure

5 Portfolios – 24 Product Lines – 600+ Products (Systems)



DEPO Product Groups

Platform

Tools and systems to support other teams that build products on VA.gov.

Unauthenticated Experience

Content, navigation, and tools that provide customers the easiest way to find and act upon any VA service. (Public website content and tools like global menu, benefit hubs, Facility Locator, onsite search, Find a VA form, VAMC websites, Vet Centers/cemeteries, and other facilities)

Authenticated Experience

Creating a personalized experience for logged in users to better track and manage their interactions with VA. (Identity, SSO, profile, personalized dashboard)

Health Products

Online tools, services, and content so Veterans can make best use of VA's health care services

Benefits & Memorials Products

Online tools, services, and content providing Veterans and their families with easy access to the broad array of benefits VA provides (Applications, tools and features inside the authenticated sessions)

2. How DEPO North Star translates to Public Website goals

DEPO performance indicator

Increase the use of self-service tools

- # of new accounts created
- # of unique users to VA.gov
- # of self-service transactions (aggregate)
- # of successful online submissions (compared to offline submissions)
- # of appointments made online (compared to total)

Optimize user flows and conversion paths on public website pages to:

- Help increase account creation; online application submissions; sign in's to manage benefits or top tasks
- Ex: Launch redesigned VA forms search; improve IA of benefits; templatize benefit hubs for optimized conversion paths to tools and apps

Provide plain language tier 2 Veteran-facing, benefit-adjacent content to:

- Increase awareness and understanding of benefits and benefit-adjacent services
- Increase # of unique users to VA.gov
- Ex: Learning center; search landing pages; campaign landing pages

DEPO performance indicator: Decrease time waiting for an outcome

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome

- Time to communication of decision for forms submitted online (in aggregate, compared to offline channels)
- # of Claim Status lookups
- Secure Messaging: % of Veteran messages answered within 24 hours
- Scheduling: average time to appointment confirmation

Get users to the right benefit application to start, and help downstream delays from wrong or duplicate applications:

- Encourage using the Claim Status tool in relevant locations
- Better integrate wizard steps into the beginning of the applications (e.g., for Education, for appeals)

Improve facility locator searches:

- Get users to the right location and contact information (e.g., to make a community care appointment; find an urgent care walk-in clinic)

Help users keep their VA info current:

- Increase access to top tasks like changing address and DD to ensure we send benefits to the right place (whether it's prescription refills, payments, or claim decisions)

DEPO performance indicator: Satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience

- Increase retention: (# of returning users, time since last visit for returning users)
- Reduction in call center volume
- Increase / maintain customer satisfaction score
- Maintain five 9s uptime and availability

Continue Web Brand Consolidation strategy of providing single sources of truth for Veteran benefit information and online ease of experience equal to private sector.

- Improve facility locator; consolidate legacy locators where appropriate
- Retire and redirect tier 1 benefit content on legacy pages
- Continue header/footer injection on legacy subdomains
- Create a VA.gov benefit learning center (and retire/redirect IRIS tier 2 benefit-adjacent content) to reduce call center volume and help better understand benefits and other VA resources
- Improve accuracy of onsite search results
- Improve accuracy of onsite form search results
- Improve SEO to increase unique user visits and engagement (retention, return visits, account creations)

3. Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Priorities for Q1 + Q2

- Redirects of legacy and parity benefit pages
- MVP launch Find a VA form experience & form detail landing pages
- MVP launch campaign landing page template
- Yellow Ribbon participating schools tool
- Metrics – baseline and goals

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Complete tier 1 content redirects in Q1 2020

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

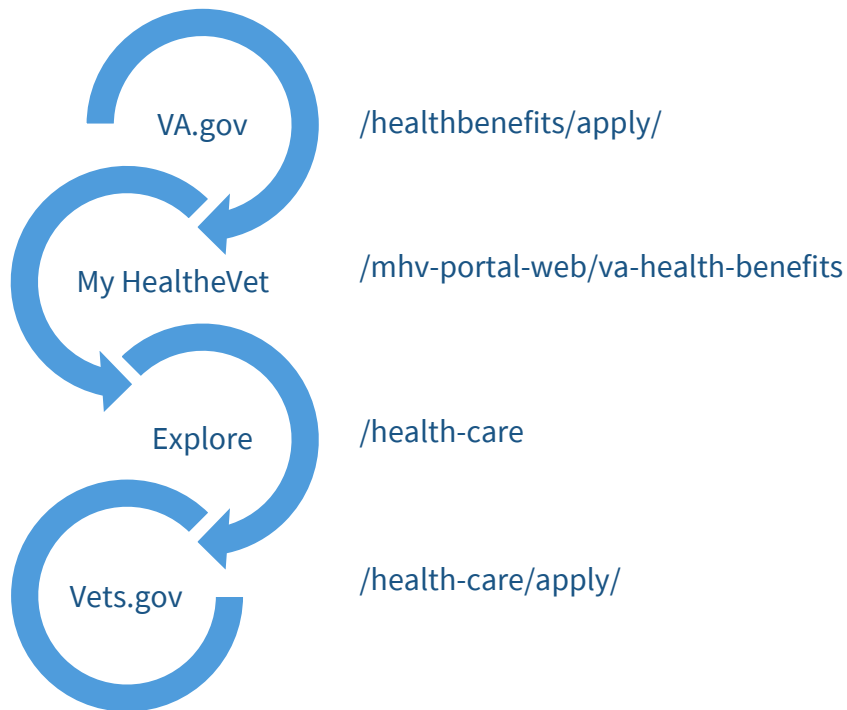
WHY IT MATTERS

We have to create single sources of truth—one version of content, one version of a tool

A user Googles...

how do I apply for VA health care?

...and gets competing results from VA





Redirecting and retiring duplicate tier 1 benefit information on legacy pages is needed to provide a single source of truth for Veterans

Example: Nov. 11, 2019, New York Times article about hospice services at VA

The article links to VA pension and burial benefits content, both of which now live inside our new VA.gov benefit hubs.

LIVEThe New York TimesPLAY THE CROSSWORDAccount

As Vietnam Veterans Age, Hospices Aim to Meet Their Needs

In addition to high rates of disability and psychological issues, some vets facing the end of life are confronting long-suppressed memories of the traumas of war.



When Brenda Hellrung's husband, Timothy, a Vietnam veteran, needed a hospice program in June, he chose one run by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Nick Hagen for The New York Times

By Julie Halpert

Nov. 11, 2019

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [r](#) [17](#)

When Timothy Hellrung was told he had aggressive cancer this past June and had only days or weeks to live, he knew where he

The New York Times pointed readers to...

I AM A...
Select One

VA » Veterans Benefits Administration » Compensation » Special » Burial Benefits

Compensation

Transition

Compensation

Compensation Home

Types of Compensation

Types of Claims

Claims Process

Evidence Requirements

Compensation & Pension Exam

Effective Dates

Fully Developed Claims

Apply

Burial Benefits

Effective July 7, 2014: VA is changing its monetary burial benefits regulations to simplify the program and pay eligible survivors more quickly and efficiently. These regulations will authorize VA to pay, without a written application, most eligible surviving spouses basic monetary burial benefits at the maximum amount authorized in law through automated systems rather than reimbursing them for actual costs incurred.

- Under the current regulations, VA pays for burial and funeral expenses on a reimbursement basis, which requires survivors to submit small one-time payments that VA generally pays at the next payment permitted by law.
- The new burial regulations will permit VA to pay, at a flat or interment allowances thereby enabling VA to automate payments of benefits to most eligible surviving spouses and more efficiently process claims.

RESOURCES

Appeals Modernization

Military Sexual Trauma Coordinators

Agent and Attorney Fee Coordinators

I AM A...
Select One

VA » Veterans Benefits Administration » Pension » Survivors Pension

Pension

Transition

Compensation

Education & Training

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Pension

Pension Home Page

Veterans Pension

Survivors Pension

The Survivors Pension benefit, which may also be referred to as Death Pension, is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to a low-income, un-remarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

Eligibility

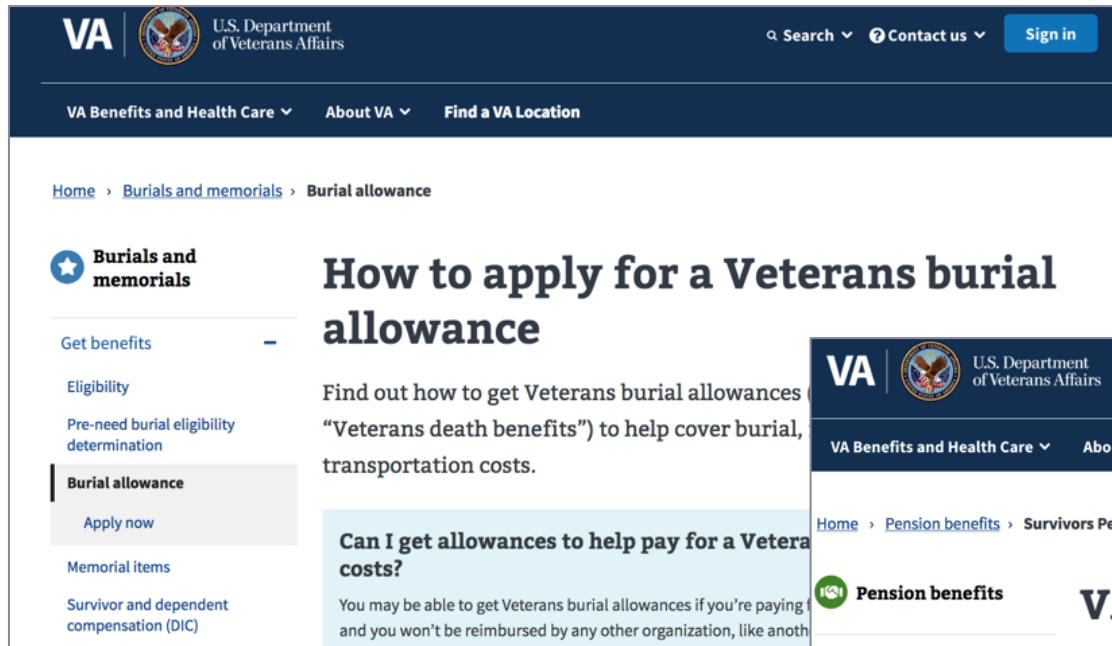
The deceased Veteran must have met the following service requirements:

- For service on or before September 7, 1980, the Veteran must have served at least 90 days of active military service, with at least one day during a war time

Warning: Pension recipients at risk of financial exploitation.

This is a warning about dishonest individuals who prey on those who receive pension benefits with regular aid and attendance. There have been reports of scam artists targeting and taking advantage of Veterans receiving these benefits.

Instead of VA.gov pages...



The screenshot shows the VA.gov homepage with a dark blue header. The header includes the VA logo, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs name, and links for Search, Contact us, and Sign in. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for VA Benefits and Health Care, About VA, and Find a VA Location. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: Home > Burials and memorials > Burial allowance. On the left is a sidebar with a 'Burials and memorials' section containing links for Get benefits, Eligibility, Pre-need burial eligibility determination, Burial allowance (highlighted), Apply now, Memorial items, and Survivor and dependent compensation (DIC). The main heading is 'How to apply for a Veterans burial allowance'. Below it is a paragraph: 'Find out how to get Veterans burial allowances (“Veterans death benefits”) to help cover burial, transportation costs.' A light blue callout box contains the text: 'Can I get allowances to help pay for a Veterans costs? You may be able to get Veterans burial allowances if you're paying for burial and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another VA benefit.'

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Search Contact us Sign in

VA Benefits and Health Care About VA Find a VA Location

Home > Burials and memorials > Burial allowance

Burials and memorials

Get benefits

Eligibility

Pre-need burial eligibility determination

Burial allowance

Apply now

Memorial items

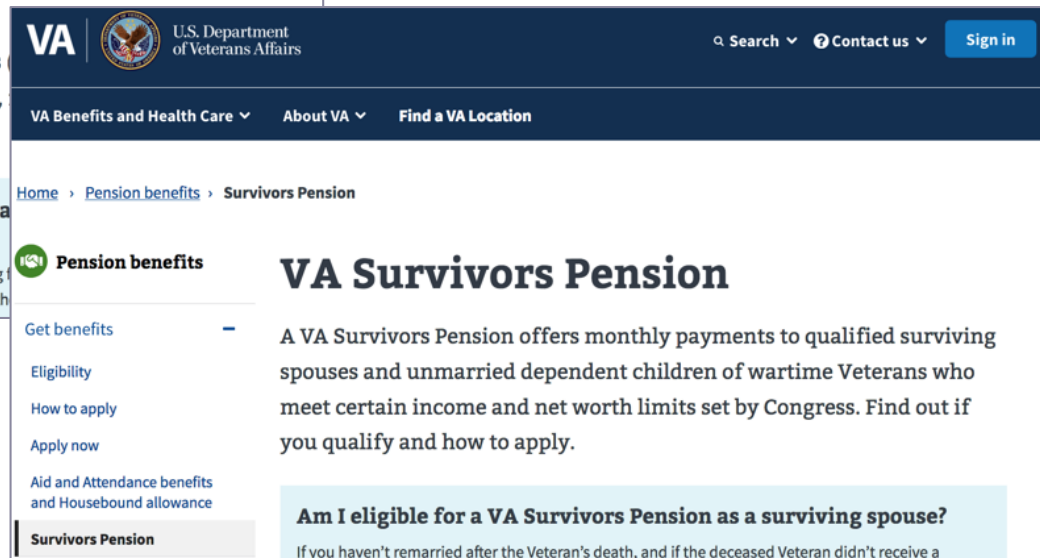
Survivor and dependent compensation (DIC)

How to apply for a Veterans burial allowance

Find out how to get Veterans burial allowances (“Veterans death benefits”) to help cover burial, transportation costs.

Can I get allowances to help pay for a Veterans costs?

You may be able to get Veterans burial allowances if you're paying for burial and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another VA benefit.



The screenshot shows the VA.gov homepage with a dark blue header. The header includes the VA logo, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs name, and links for Search, Contact us, and Sign in. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for VA Benefits and Health Care, About VA, and Find a VA Location. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: Home > Pension benefits > Survivors Pension. On the left is a sidebar with a 'Pension benefits' section containing links for Get benefits, Eligibility, How to apply, Apply now, Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound allowance, and Survivors Pension (highlighted). The main heading is 'VA Survivors Pension'. Below it is a paragraph: 'A VA Survivors Pension offers monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress. Find out if you qualify and how to apply.' A light blue callout box contains the text: 'Am I eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as a surviving spouse? If you haven't remarried after the Veteran's death, and if the deceased Veteran didn't receive a VA Survivors Pension, you may be eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as a surviving spouse.'

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Search Contact us Sign in

VA Benefits and Health Care About VA Find a VA Location

Home > Pension benefits > Survivors Pension

Pension benefits

Get benefits

Eligibility

How to apply

Apply now

Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound allowance

Survivors Pension

VA Survivors Pension

A VA Survivors Pension offers monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress. Find out if you qualify and how to apply.

Am I eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as a surviving spouse?

If you haven't remarried after the Veteran's death, and if the deceased Veteran didn't receive a VA Survivors Pension, you may be eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as a surviving spouse.

Cost of waiting to retire legacy content

From: "Hurley, Tammy, VBAVACO" <tammy.hurley1@va.gov>
Date: Monday, November 18, 2019 at 8:29 AM
To: "Self, Matthew" <Matthew.Self2@va.gov>, "Lee, Jennifer Y." <Jennifer.Lee27@va.gov>
Cc: "Hoffman, Kevin M." <Kevin.Hoffman1@va.gov>
Subject: RE: Update to REAP Page

Your VA.gov REAP page needs to reflect the changes we made to our REAP page.

Tammy S. Hurley

Education Service

Veterans Benefits Administration

202-461-9838

- Multiple sources of truth
- Out of sync benefit information
- No way for Veterans to know which source is more accurate, more true
- Never-ending cycle of parity “migration”
- Confusion for Veterans looking for ONE source of benefit information

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/teams/vsa/teams/public-websites/content-team-processes/URL-redirect-process>

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Find a VA form MVP

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

VA forms search is consistently top ranked on both onsite and organic searches

Current state:

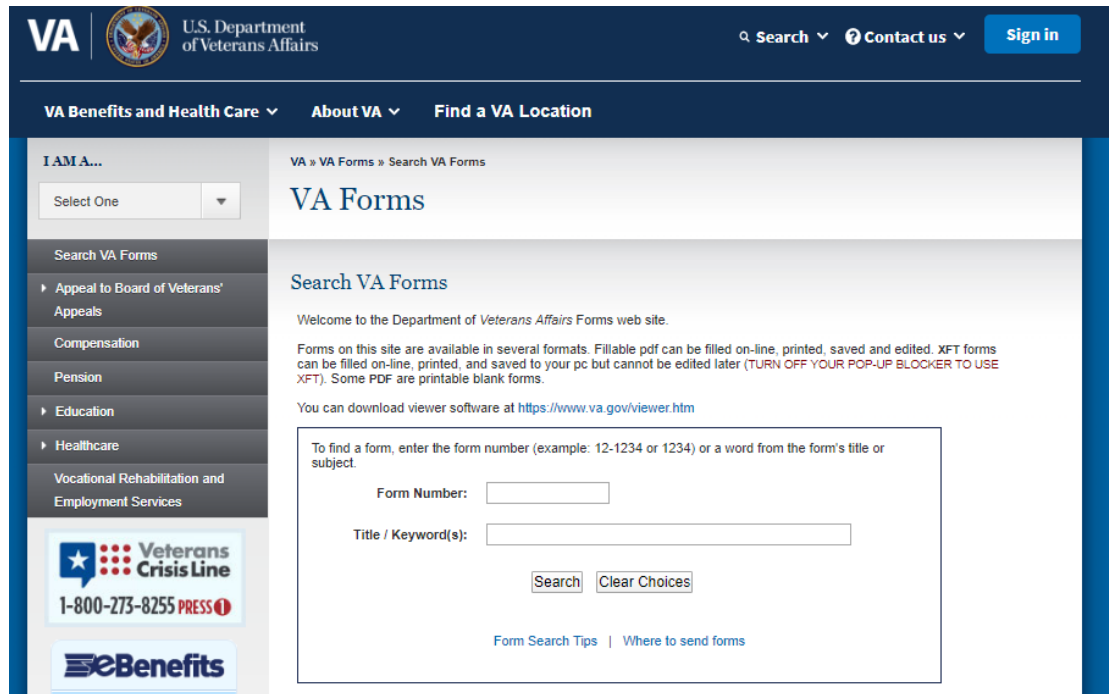
- No conversion paths to digital tools
- Forms search doesn't work well.
- When it works, users can't tell if a paper form has an easier online application alternative.

MVP 1.0:

- Add conversion paths on search and search results pages to digital tools for top tasks and top online applications.

MVP 2.0 (TBD):

- Improve or replace current SQL db search
- Improve better forms governance via Drupal asset management library



The screenshot shows the VA Forms search interface. At the top is a dark blue header with the VA logo, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs name, and navigation links for Search, Contact us, and Sign in. Below the header is a secondary navigation bar with links for VA Benefits and Health Care, About VA, and Find a VA Location. The main content area is titled 'VA Forms' and includes a search bar with a dropdown menu labeled 'I AM A...'. Below the search bar is a list of categories: Search VA Forms, Appeal to Board of Veterans' Appeals, Compensation, Pension, Education, Healthcare, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services, and Veterans Crisis Line. The search results section is titled 'Search VA Forms' and includes a welcome message, a description of the forms available, and a link to download viewer software. Below this is a search form with fields for 'Form Number' and 'Title / Keyword(s)', and buttons for 'Search' and 'Clear Choices'. At the bottom of the search form are links for 'Form Search Tips' and 'Where to send forms'.

Some PDF forms appear in organic searches

Current state:

- Users click straight into the raw PDF form which provides little context, sometimes/not includes instructions.
- No indication if an easier online tool is available.

MVP 1.0:

- Launch redesigned forms detail landing pages for top forms, optimized for search and online conversion paths to tools and apps.

Kick-off deck: <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/find-vb-forms-redesign/agenda-vb-forms-082819.pdf>

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/1632>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "va-form-10-10cg.pdf filler.com". The page features a navigation bar with links: HOME, FOR BUSINESS, DEVELOPERS, FEATURES, SUPPORT, PRICING, and LOG IN. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is titled "Catalog · Life · Va Forms". The central focus is a form titled "Department of Veterans Affairs Application for Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Program". The form includes a "Get Form" button and various input fields for personal information. A large, semi-transparent overlay text reads "Get the VA 10-10CG 2016-2020".

Department of Veterans Affairs Application for Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Program

Attention: Complete the application (print or typewritten only) and mail it to: Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Road NE, Ste 220, Atlanta, GA 30329-1647, for expedited processing; or, hand carry it to your local VA Medical Center Caregiver Support Coordinator (CSC). The date the application is received by VA is the date the application process begins. At this time VA does not provide the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to Veterans/Service members and Family Caregivers living in a foreign country.

SECTION I - VETERAN/SERVICEMEMBER

Last Name First Name Middle Name

Current Street Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone Number (including Area Code) Cell Number (including Area Code)

Email Address Enrolled in VA Health Care?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of VA medical center or clinic where you receive or plan to receive health care services.

Show details ^

Name of facility where you last received medical treatment ☐ Hospital ☐ Clinic

Find a VA form – search and form detail landing page – Drupal

Important links and tickets (esp for Beth Jacobson)

Product outline: <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/find-v-a-forms-redesign#product-outline-redesign-the-find-a-v-a-form-page-httpswwwvagovvaforms>

Forms search page epic: <https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/1632>

Related Drupal ticket: <https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/4913>

Forms search page/results design: <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/find-v-a-forms-redesign/design/VA-Forms-search-landing.pdf>

Form detail landing pages epic: <https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/5590>

Related Drupal tickets:

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/6419>

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/5653>

Drupal + Lighthouse technical approach: <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/find-v-a-forms-redesign/find-v-a-forms-redesign/forms-content-scenario-5v2.png>

Form detail landing page design and content specs: <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/find-v-a-forms-redesign/VA-form-master-detail-LP-patterns-mockups-v7.pdf>

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

T2T (tier 2 time!)

In other words:
Benefit-adjacent tier 2 content

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.
Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.



Building on 2018 and 2019 VA.gov work

2018: Launched new VA.gov. <https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/va-gov-relaunch-2018>

2019: Brought over tier 1 benefit content from the legacy pages into the new hubs, stood up a new CMS, and migrated benefit hubs into the CMS.

Tier 1

Veteran-facing benefit and health care content and tools

Tier 2

Benefit-related program and engagement content

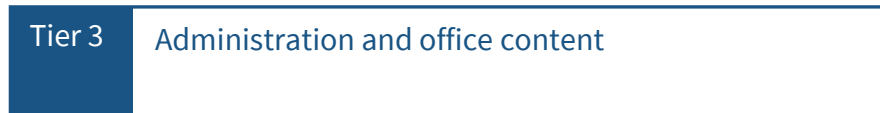
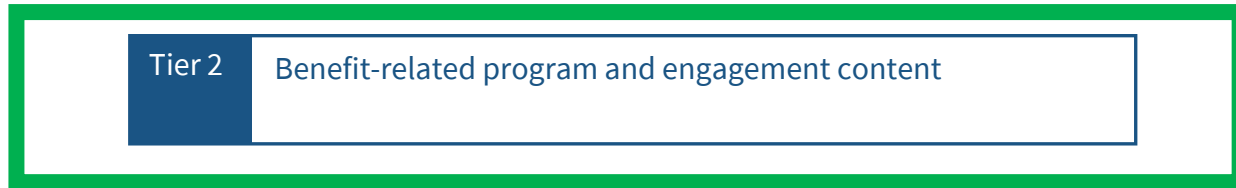
Tier 3

Administration and office content



Building on 2018 and 2019 VA.gov work

2020: We will create new templates and IA for tier 2 benefit-adjacent content, while also optimizing tier 1 benefit hubs.



What is tier 2 content?

Tier 2 content includes:

- Benefit learning center and account help/support content
- Campaign landing page template
- Search landing page template
- Possibly other types of benefit-adjacent or benefit related content

Like tier 1 Veteran-facing content, tier 2 content may be embedded with other kinds of non-Veteran-facing information (such as about us and program office content, regulatory legislation content).

- Some tier 2 content work, like tier 1 content parity, may need extracting beneficiary-facing information from legacy pages, rewriting it in plain language VA.gov style, and bringing it into the new CMS as learning/ support center content.
- Tier 2 content will also include information for non-Veteran audiences, like VSOs, school counselors, loan officers, and others who work with Veterans or support benefits.

Tier 1 Veteran-facing benefit and health care content and tool

Primary users

Veterans and other beneficiaries (family members, service members)

Examples

- Benefit eligibility content
- Online applications and tools
- Authenticated (signed in) experiences like My VA dashboard
- Veteran-facing content on VAMC and RO facility sites (top tasks, parking, directions, available services)

Quality assurance

- Inter-administrations and DEPO collaboration
- Centralized quality control and processes at DEPO/VACO level
- Web Content Team white-glove support

How to apply for VA health care

Find out how to apply for VA health care benefits as a Veteran or service member.

How do I prepare before starting my application?

- [Find out if you're eligible for VA health care benefits](#)
- Gather the documents listed below that you'll need to fill out an Application for Health Benefits (VA Form 10-10EZ)

What documents and information do I need to apply?

- Your most recent tax return
- Social Security numbers for yourself and your qualified dependents
- Account numbers for any current health insurance you already have (like Medicare, private insurance, or insurance from your employer)

How do I apply?

You can apply online right now.

[Apply for health care benefits](#)

[Obtenga instrucciones para esta solicitud en Español.](#) ▾



Tier 2 benefit-related program and engagement content

Primary users

A mix of Veterans and non-beneficiary audiences who support benefits (e.g., VSOs, caregivers, loan officers, school administrators)

Examples

















- Health wellness content
- Support resources for caregivers (who don't receive family member benefits)

Quality assurance

- Inter-administration and DEPO collaboration
- Quality control and processes, mix of VACO, DEPO, and business lines
- Some content support for some Veteran-facing tier 2 content

National Cemetery Administration

Available Emblems of Belief for Placement on Government Headstones and Markers

EMBLEM						
01 - LATIN (Christian) CROSS		02 - BUDDHIST (Wheel of Righteousness)				
03 - JUDAISM (Star of David)		04 - P CROS	15 - BAHAI (9 Pointed Star)		16 - ATHEIST	
05 - RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CROSS		06 - L	17 - MUSLIM (Crescent and Star)		18 - HINDU	
07 - EPISCOPAL CROSS		08 - U CHUF UNIV ASSO	19 - KONKO-KYO FAITH		20 - COMMUNITY OF CHRIST	
09 - UNITED METHODIST		10 - A	21 - SUFISM REORIENTED		22 - TENRIKYO CHURCH	
			23 - SEICHO-NO-IE		24 - CHURCH OF WORLD MESSIANITY (Izunome)	

Tier 3 administration and office content

Primary users

Non-Veteran or non-beneficiary audiences (press/media, medical professionals, Congress, vendors and suppliers)

Examples

- Administration 'mission/history' pages
- Program or department pages
- Legal or other regulatory information like BWN legislation landing page

Quality assurance

- Set by each administration or business
- Templates, training, VA.gov design system and content style guide resources

Select One ▾

Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction

INTERESTS SKILLS
CAREER
VALUES EDUCATION
GOALS VISION

Interested in a Federal Acquisition, Logistics, or Construction and Facilities Management career?

View a listing of job opportunities available throughout the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction.

[Read more »](#)

June 2019 AWIS A Huge Success!

VA Hospital Voted "Best of the Best" in Engineering News Record Magazine

OALC Career Opportunities

OALC Organization

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

eBenefits
Your VA & DoD Benefits. Online.
[Register Now](#)
www.ebenefits.va.gov

Acquisition
Architect/Engineer | Information Technology | Major Construction | National Healthcare | Non-IT Enterprise-Wide Solutions | VA Federal Supply Schedules | VA Forecast of Contracting Opportunities | Small Business

Major Construction
Technical Information Library (TIL) | TIL Alerts | Cost Estimating | Consulting Support Services | Historic Preservation

RESOURCES
[OALC Home](#)
[About OALC](#)
[OALC Organization](#)
[OALC Executive Biographies](#)
[OALC Career Opportunities](#)

Tier 2 content is vast

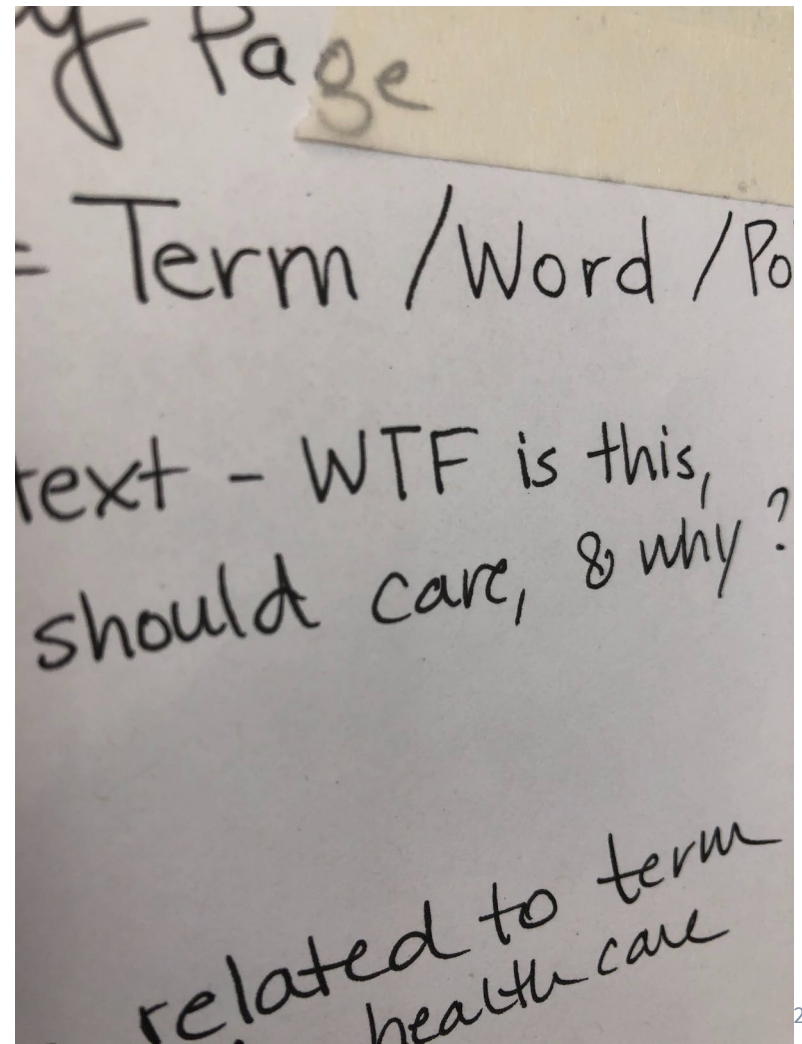
It's hard to grasp.

It feels blobby.

There's a lot of gray areas.

It makes everyone a little bit nervous.

Breathe....



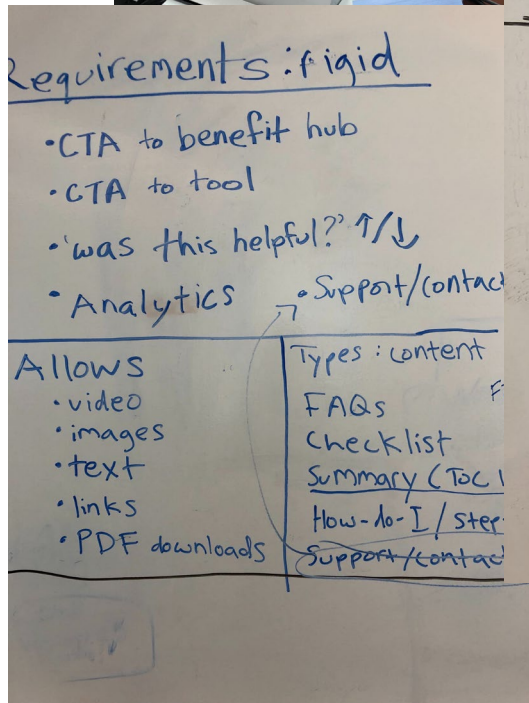
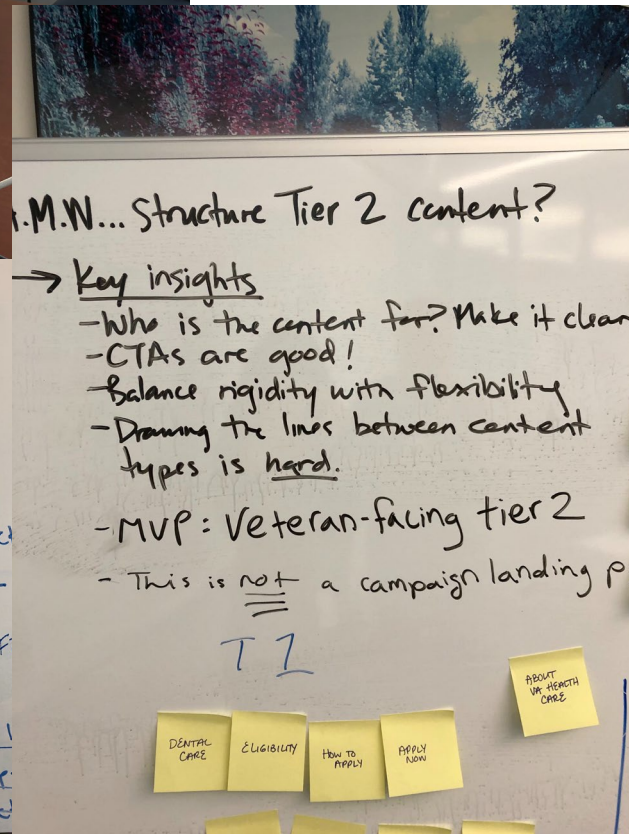
We did a lot of this...

2 days of design workshop,
brainstorming, sharing, arguing, eating,
drinking.

*And then we went home and kept
thinking...*

PW Laura Walsh did a VBA 'lite' tier 2
audit. A lot of tier 2 information mixed
in with tier 3 information.

Similar to tier 1 Veteran-facing benefit
content.



Start with the broadest kinds of tier 2 benefit-adjacent content

- MVP mini-learning center
- A campaign landing page template pilot
- Search landing page template

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/content/tier-2-content-IA-and-design>

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/2281>

Home Answers Ask a Question Your Account

I am enrolled in school. When will I receive my benefits from VA?

Answer ID 63 | Published 07/31/2002 11:56 AM | Updated 11/01/2018 03:24 PM

There are many things that can delay the processing to begin. If you are enrolling. In general, it can take 30 days to verify your service, remove your pending status, and processing longer. Processing can take 30 days.

If you are receiving benefits, you will receive the end of each month.

For instructions on how to enroll, see the VA website.

You will generally receive your benefits using Direct Deposit (if you have provided your bank information).

To check on the status of your benefits, you can use an automated update, or you can call the VA.

Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS)

Welcome to the VA's Inquiry Routing & Information System! We are here to answer your questions.

Please complete the following details on your inquiry using the form below.



Having trouble with this web page?
Click here for recommended browser settings.



I am asking about benefits/services: is required

Question is required

Please Select a Topic - Please select an item under Appeals of Denied Claims

Preferred Response Type is required

Form of Address is required

First Name is required

Last Name is required

Country is required

How does a Veteran relate to your question?

I am asking about benefits/services: *

--

[Veteran Status Help](#)

What is your question?

Please ask your question or describe the issue in detail in the space below. If the question, or issue, is about a disability, please be specific as to the type of disability(ies) or the issue(s). If you have multiple claims for benefits pending and want the status, please tell us which claim this is about.

Question *

Please do not enter your name, file number, or social

Tier 2 templates will be Drupal powered, like...

Campaign landing page template:

- FE design complete
- Design Intent checked
- Content specs done
- **Drupal AX TBD**
- Launch & learn
- Pilot with OMHSP – initial discussion highly positive; formal pitch meeting set April 13.

Product repo:

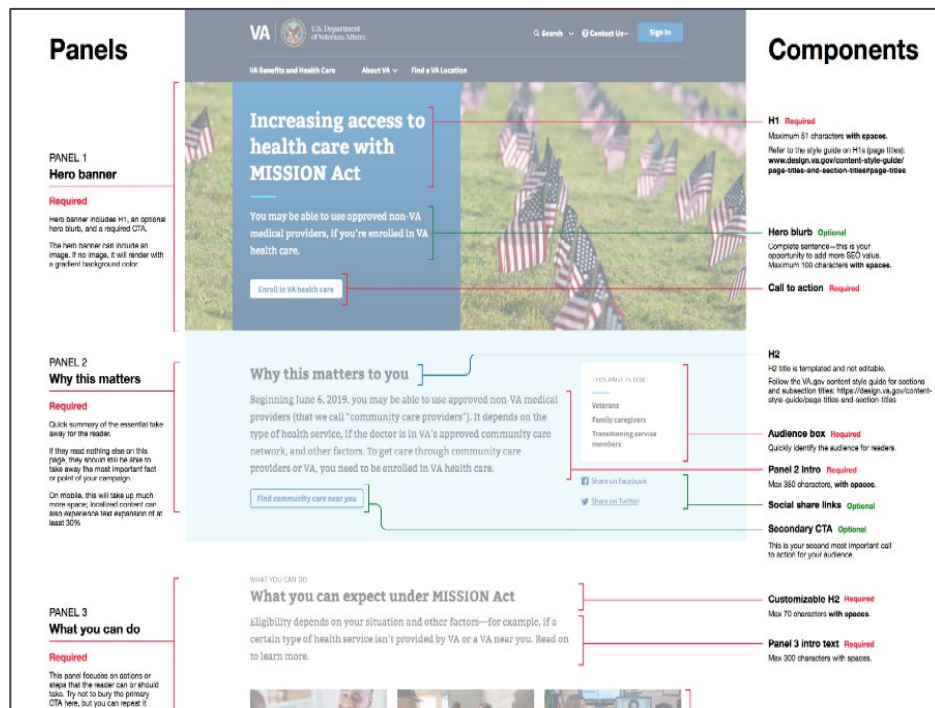
<https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/content/tier-2-content-IA-and-design/campaign-landing-page-templates#campaign-landing-page-template-mvp-10---product-outline>

Content fields/specs:

<https://github.com/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/content/tier-2-content-IA-and-design/campaign-landing-page-templates/campaign-lp-content-requirements-022420.pdf>

GitHub Drupal ticket:

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/departement-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/4858>



And...

MVP Learning Center templates:

- Single FAQ*
- Multiple FAQs*
- About
- Step-by-step
- Checklist - *new*
- Image rich list – *new*
- Tabular info like rates – *new*

All of this will be 'new' but making use of existing components to form more rigid, page-level templates. A few things will be net new, both design and functionality.

* FAQs COPE ticket: <https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/6708>

<https://app.zenhub.com/workspaces/vft-59c95ae5fda7577a9b3184f8/issues/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/2281>

Required*

*H1 →

Intro text →

*Page topics →

*Audiences →

*Content body →

block (1 template option)

CTA Zone (up to 3) →

*Contact info →

*Helpful? →

Related info →

What is a Veterans Health ID card?

This page is about:	This page is for:
VA benefits VA accounts VA health care	Veterans

What you can do:

*Apply for VA health care

Apply for Veteran ID card

Get help about this topic:	Was this page helpful?
- Call 1-800-Veteran - Submit an inquiry - Chat with a VA agent	Yes No

Related information

Example image rich learning center template for image/video content

Emblems of belief for headstones and markers

TAGS

Burials and memorials

Headstones

AUDIENCE

Family members


Veterans

Media list

An emblem of belief for inscription on a Government headstone marker is an emblem or symbol that represents the sincere belief of the decedent that constituted a religion or the fundamental equivalent of religion and was believed and/or accepted as that individual during his or her life.


Search emblems by keyword

Search




1 Latin cross (Christian)


Short description or detail regarding this image.




2 Buddhist (Wheel of Righteousness)




3 Judaism (Star of David)




4 Protestant cross




6 Lutheran cross




7 Episcopal cross



8 Unitarian Church/Unitarian Universalist Association



9 United Methodist Church



10 Aaronic Order Church

1

2

3

...

11

Next >

Apply for a memorial item

Apply for burial allowance

Need more help?

National Cemetery Scheduling Office: [800-535-1117](tel:800-535-1117)

Headstones and markers: [800-697-6947](tel:800-697-6947)

VA benefits hotline: 800-827-1000

Was this page helpful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Related information

[Burials and memorials >](#)

Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial

Consistent framework or ‘shell’ on every learning center content template:

- H1
- Tags
- Audience
- Content type label (- tbd -)
- Intro text
- Content type body (FAQ, Checklist, Step-by-step, etc.)
- Up to 2 CTA buttons
- Need more help – contact info
- Was this helpful rating
- Related information (cross links to benefits)

We must have rigid Drupal AX for tier 2.

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Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Priorities for H2/2020

- Onsite search 2.0
- MVP mini-learning center
- *Benefit hubs 2.0 – templatization*
- *Benefit hubs – flattened IA + nav*
- Learning center content, IA
- Search landing page template and pilot pages
- MVP benefit hub localization

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Onsite search

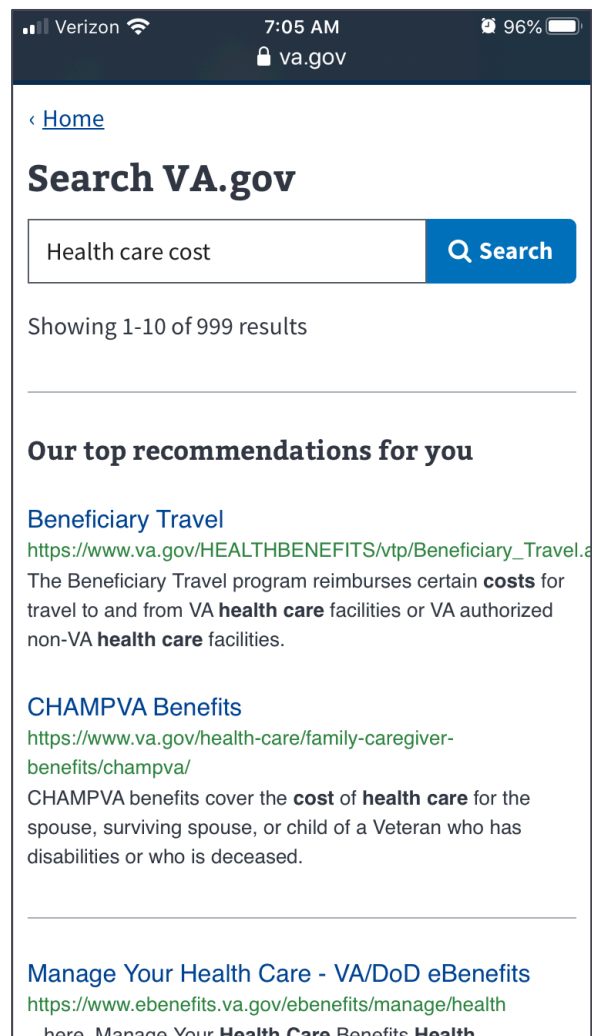
Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.
Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.
Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.



Improve accuracy and UX of search.gov tool on VA.gov

- Audit “top recommendations.”
- Improve current “top recommendations.”
- Update product strategy and documentation.
- Future future: Potentially implement for other public website products (learning center; VA forms?).
- Explore new features and integrations – content tagging/word tags, type ahead, trending search....

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/public-websites/onsite-search>



Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Templatize benefit hub pages

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

This is not a content model.



Related links
with custom
header title



Benefit hubs have a lot of “blobbiness” diversity

When we migrated the benefit hubs into Drupal, we didn’t do any redesigning of the content model, which was determined to be too “blobby” to make rigid in the current state.

Aside from certain atomic components (like in-body alerts, FAQ accordions), the pages are mostly comprised of WYSIWYG boxes that any author can remove, move, or change on the fly.

Title

Intro text (100%)

Crisis alert box (20% of health care pages)

Feature (blue block) (about ~70%) - mostly Q&A and text blobs

Blob - mostly sets of Q&As, but also accordions, react widgets, process maps, and text blobs

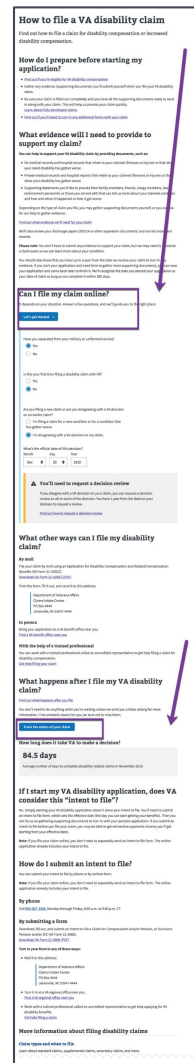
Related links

Make tier 1 benefit hubs more rigid and optimized for accessing important tools and applications

Whether someone lands from organic or site search, from a learning center page, or campaign or search landing page, we need to ensure that people can **easily continue their path** to relevant online tools, with the right contextual information.

Will need:

- FE design iteration
- Drupal AX build
- FE engineering



Tier 2 content will be optimized to send people to tier 1 benefit tools and content

- Access/conversion paths to tools and apps on tier 1 pages are sometimes so far down a page, some users scroll right past them.
- We can't start people on application intros for some tools because critical pre-requisite steps (like tracking claim status or answering the disability/education wizard questions) are on a content heavy page where those tools themselves are sometimes hard to find.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Benefits and Health Care ▾ About VA ▾ Find a VA Location

Home ▾ VA Forms ▾ VA Form 10-10EZ

VA Form 10-10EZ

Application for Health Benefits

Related to: Health care benefits

When to use this form

When you are a veteran or service member and want to apply for VA health care benefits, so that you can receive treatment and preventive care at your choice of 1,200 care locations.

[Download VA Form 10-10EZ \(PDF\)](#)

There's an online tool

You can choose to apply online for health benefits instead of using VA Form 10-10EZ.

[Go to the online tool >](#)

Related forms and instructions

Health Benefits Renewal Form (VA Form 10-10EZR)

Use this form if you already receive VA health care benefits and need to update your personal, insurance, or financial information.

[Download VA Form 10-10EZR \(PDF\)](#)

Instrucciones Para Solicitar La Afiliación A Los Beneficios Medicos (VA Form 10-10EZ)

Use este formulario si es un veterano o miembro del servicio y desea solicitar los beneficios de atención médica de VA, para que pueda recibir tratamiento y atención preventiva en las 1,200 ubicaciones de atención que elija.

[Download VA Form 10-10EZ \(PDF\)](#)

Related health care links

Have you applied for VA health care before?

Sign in to check your application status.

Learn about community care with non-VA providers

If you're enrolled in VA health care, find out how you may be able to use a VA-approved community care provider.

NOTE: All content is FPO. See Excel document for actual content to be displayed for each form.



Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Spanish localization of benefit content

MVP: Page-level translation

Some day: Enterprise site-wide localization (?)

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

MVP user research sessions completed in 2019

VA Benefits and Health Care ▾ About VA ▾ Find a VA Location

[Home](#) › [Housing](#) › [VA-backed home loans](#) › [Surviving spouse programs](#)

Housing assistance [Leer esta página en español](#)

◀ [VA-backed home loans](#)

- Loan types
- Eligibility
- How to apply
- Check appeal status
- Surviving spouse programs**
- Trouble making payments?
- Warning about refinancing offers
- Home buying process
- VA Loan funding fee
- Find a VA regional loan center
- Find VA-acquired properties

VA home loan programs for surviving spouses

To get a VA-backed home loan as the surviving spouse of a Veteran, you'll need a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to show your lender that you qualify for this benefit. Find out if you can get a COE. Keep in mind that you'll also need to meet your lender's credit and income requirements to get a loan.

Note: If you have a VA-backed loan and you're having trouble making your mortgage payments, we can help you avoid foreclosure and keep your house.

[Learn about VA financial counseling](#)

Can I get a COE?

You may be able to get a COE if you're the spouse of a Veteran, and at least one of the descriptions below is true for them.

- VA has no prior research on LEP users.
- An enterprise localization program is a major commitment.
- Let's start small. Gather user feedback. Collect data. Assess. Repeat.
- So we can make more informed decisions before committing to full on localization program.

Repo: <https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets.gov-team/tree/master/Products/Global/benefits-spanish-localization>

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/tree/master/products/content/spanish-translation>

MVP user research sessions completed in 2019



The screenshot shows the VA website's 'Surviving spouse programs' page. The top navigation bar includes 'VA Benefits and Health Care', 'About VA', and 'Find a VA Location'. The breadcrumb trail is 'Home > Housing > VA-backed home loans > Surviving spouse programs'. The left sidebar lists 'Housing assistance' with sub-links: 'VA-backed home loans', 'Loan types', 'Eligibility', 'How to apply', 'Check appeal status', 'Surviving spouse programs' (highlighted), 'Trouble making payments?', 'Warning about refinancing offers', 'Home buying process', 'VA Loan funding fee', 'Find a VA regional loan center', and 'Find VA-acquired properties'. The main content area features the title 'Programas de préstamos de vivienda VA para cónyuges sobrevivientes' and a link to 'Read this page in English'. The text explains that to obtain a VA-backed mortgage as a surviving spouse, a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is required, and it provides a note about assistance with payments and a link to learn more about financial counseling.

VA Benefits and Health Care ▾ About VA ▾ Find a VA Location

[Home](#) > [Housing](#) > [VA-backed home loans](#) > [Surviving spouse programs](#)

 **Housing assistance**

◀ [VA-backed home loans](#)

- Loan types
- Eligibility
- How to apply
- Check appeal status
- Surviving spouse programs**
- Trouble making payments?
- Warning about refinancing offers
- Home buying process
- VA Loan funding fee
- Find a VA regional loan center
- Find VA-acquired properties

 [Read this page in English](#)

Programas de préstamos de vivienda VA para cónyuges sobrevivientes

Para obtener un préstamo hipotecario respaldado por VA como el cónyuge sobreviviente de un veterano, necesitará un Certificado de Elegibilidad (COE, por sus siglas en inglés) para demostrarle a su prestamista que califica para este beneficio. Averigüe si puede obtener un COE. Tenga en cuenta que también deberá cumplir con los requisitos de crédito e ingresos de su prestamista para obtener un préstamo.

Nota: Si tiene un préstamo respaldado por VA y tiene problemas para hacer los pagos de su hipoteca, podemos ayudarlo a evitar la ejecución hipotecaria y conservar su casa.

[Aprenda sobre la asesoría financiera de VA](#)

Assumptions: Doesn't the military have an English fluency requirement?

What we learned is that in previous decades, the language requirement wasn't as strict.

So older Veterans, for example of the Vietnam period, may be LEP and language is a barrier for accessing the benefits they're entitled to.

Takeaway #1: family members are our primary users

They look for information for themselves (family member benefits like education, pension, burial benefits, health care, home loans).

As caregivers, they look for information for their older Veterans.

Our users	User needs	Language/culture sensitive comments?
Family members	Survivors benefits	Don't say things like verdad [truth]? Language in Spanish can be accusatory - it needs to be more gentle.
Veteran - helps friends and family friends he helps translate information for in PR	Beneficiaries	Acronyms are difficult to understand - note: let's define if these need to be in Spanish or English and what the standards are for the translated information.
Survivors	Lists of qualifications	COE example - Spell it out - this was a comment from a user about acronyms
Veterans who prefer Spanish	Brochures	Language: Acronyms in EN don't match the translation
Users: younger Veterans have very little problem/none navigating and understanding	Status of disability claims	Language: Standard Spanish, not regional
Users: most users had not visited VA.gov; most had visited MHV or eBenefits.	Acronyms are difficult to understand	Terminology is difficult to understand - miembro activo?
	Family members - Reading level 6th grade	

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Metrics

Tracking and measuring the right things to assess how we can better:

Increase the use of self-service tools, focusing on services most important to Veterans.

Decrease the time users spend waiting for an outcome.

Consistently deliver a satisfying, reliable, and secure online experience.

Can we track, like, everything? JK.

(Kind of.)

Baselines and future metrics for...

- Account creations (access points to)
- Sign ins (access points to)
- Onsite vs organic searches
- Pages, bounce rates, scroll depth
- Clicks on tools, applications, wizards, page links
- Downloads of forms (benefit pages, new outreach library)
- Filter out VA IP addresses – clearer view of customer driven metrics
- Metrics for new kinds of content types: search and campaign landing pages; form detail landing pages
- New site features to measure satisfaction/helpfulness
- User query terms (internal, external: filter out VA IP addresses)



While of course we're still doing website ops, maintaining quality, and serving Veterans

Continue WBC

Header/footer injections; ongoing benefit content support; new site features to improve Veteran experience (track your ideas to [epic #2589](#)); CMS authoring experience and onboarding for tiers 1 and 2; stand up SEO practice; establish 2020 website analytics baselines and goals; explore static tool landing page problem; Veterans' service-connected health conditions library; tee up tier 3 office template work (for 2021)...

If we can only do 5 things in 2020...

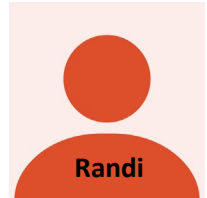
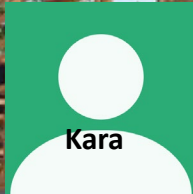
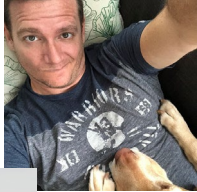
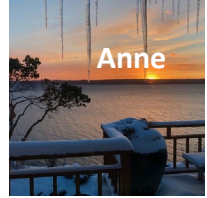
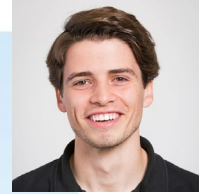
- Complete redirects of legacy/parity benefit pages
- Find a VA form MVP + form detail landing pages
- Benefit hubs 2.0 – templatize with flattened IA + nav
- MVP learning center content (w/proof of concept templates for claim status)
- Campaign landing page template/Onsite search TLC

The cult team is growing in 2020

People, people, people

- + Dave Conlon! (PO facility locator; facilities; onsite search; co-PO localization MVP)
- + Drupal engineer (To build all the template things)
- + USDS support (???)

This isn't possible without lots of teams, and especially YOU all.



You rock! Thank you!





Appendix

[VA Digital Modernization Strategy](#)

[Web Brand Consolidation – New VA.gov Briefing](#)