

Public Website: Unauthenticated customer-facing experience Highlights and hits of 2020

December 2020

The best laid plans

It's funny to look back to the plans we made in January of 2020

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Priorities for Q1 + Q2

- MVP launch Find a VA form experience & form detail landing pages
- MVP launch campaign landing page template (In flight!)
- Yellow Ribbon participating schools tool
- Metrics baseline and goals (for new products, but not benefit hubs and not portfolio → opportunity for 2021!)

Major Public Website initiatives for 2020

Priorities for H2/2020

- Onsite search 2.0 (new team)
- MVP mini-learning center
- Benefit hubs 2.0 templatization (didn't happen)
- Benefit hubs flattened IA + nav (started and ice boxed)
- Learning center content, IA
- Search landing page template and pilot pages (didn't happen)
- MVP benefit hub localization (didn't happen, but revived in a super experimental fashion for COVID-19 content)

Oh yeah, this happened: COVID-19



Home > Coronavirus FAQs: What Veterans need to know

Coronavirus FAQs: What Veterans need to know

Our call centers and some VA health facilities are currently experiencing very high numbers of calls. To help us address the most urgent needs first, we ask that you use our online tools and frequently asked questions (FAQs) for routine or non-urgent questions. We'll continue to update this page as the situation changes.

On this page

- → Coronavirus-specific concerns
- → Health care, appointments, and more
- → Benefit payments, claims, claim exams, and other services

Home > Health care > COVID 19 vaccines > Stay informed and help us prepare

COVID-19 vaccines: Stay informed and help us prepare

We're working to get COVID-19 vaccines to Veterans as quickly and safely as possible based on CDC guidelines and available supply. We need your help to prepare. And we want to keep you informed at every step.

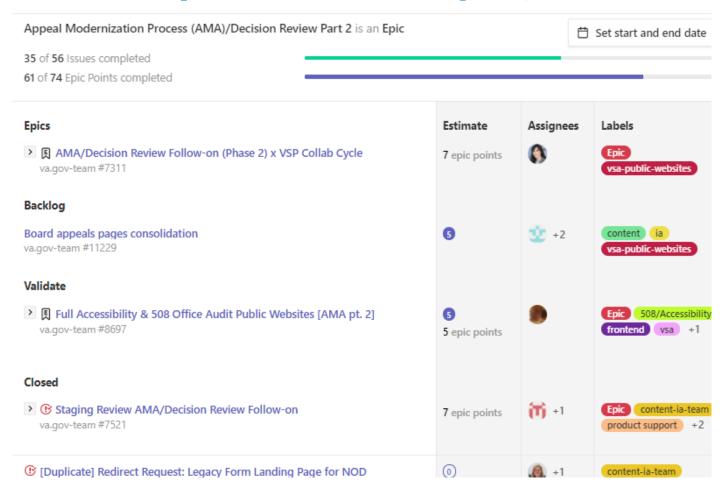
Sign up below to help us understand your interest in getting a vaccine. We'll send you updates on how we're providing vaccines across the country—and when you can get your vaccine if you want one. We'll also offer information and answers to your questions along the way.

When you sign in, we can fill in some of your information for you.

Sign in

Continue without signing in

AMA content updates was an epic (Parts 1 & 2!)



AMA content updates was an epic (X 2)

https://www.va.gov/decision-reviews/

- 56 issues
- 74 epic points
- A new Decision Reviews hub

Purpose: Meet AMA legislative changes, and help Veterans to better understand a very complex appeals process in plain language.

Surprise bonus: Laura Walsh became BFFs with Fred Somers and the PW resident AMA expert. Also: We standardized all the claims tools CTAs for better tracking and more consistency.

Great learning: We created a content launch list because of how huge this was and it worked great!

Before:

Find a Yellow Ribbon school

50 static HTML table pages for each state plus U.S. territories.

Data maintained via email, fax, phone calls, and sticky notes.





After: Find a Yellow Ribbon school

Information for participating schools		
	s is for the current academic year, August 2019 through Ju	ly 2020.
Search criteria	Displaying 1–10 of 5567 results	
School name	Abilene Christian University Abilene, TX	
State or territory - Select -	Maximum Yellow Ribbon funding amount (per student, per year) Pays remaining tuition that Post-9/11 GI Bill doesn't cover	Degree type All
City	Funding available for All eligible students	School or program All
Only show schools that provide maximum funding (tuition that's left after your Post-9/11 GI Bill) Only show schools that provide	School website www.acu.edu	
	Abraham Baldwin Agricultural	College
funding to all eligible students Search	Maximum Yellow Ribbon funding amount (per student, per year) \$2,106	Degree type All
Helpful links	Funding available for 5 students	School or program All
Find out if you're eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill	School website www.abac.edu	
Find out if you qualify for the Yellow Ribbon Program	Abraham Lincoln University Los Angeles, CA	

https://www.va.gov/education/yellow-ribbon-participating-schools/

Purpose: Help students find Yellow Ribbon information in a modern accessible way.

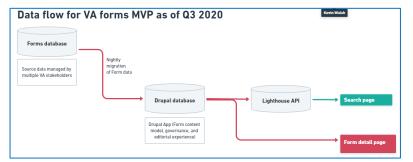
Bonus outcome: Uses GIDS as the data source of truth – all data now maintained via GIDS.

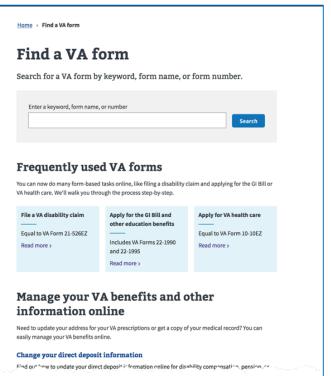
Extra bonus: Tammy Hurley wrote and sang us a YR launch song!

Find a VA form, 1.0

Goal: Provide people with the VA form they're looking for, AND the digital tool when it's available.

Stealth goal: Use the tremendous search traffic of the legacy forms search and pages to add paths to top task digital tools like changing address and direct deposit.

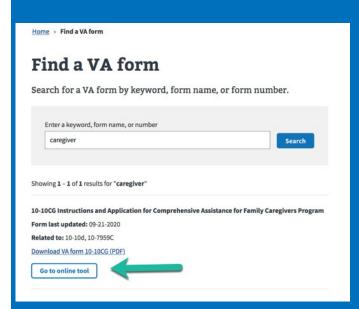




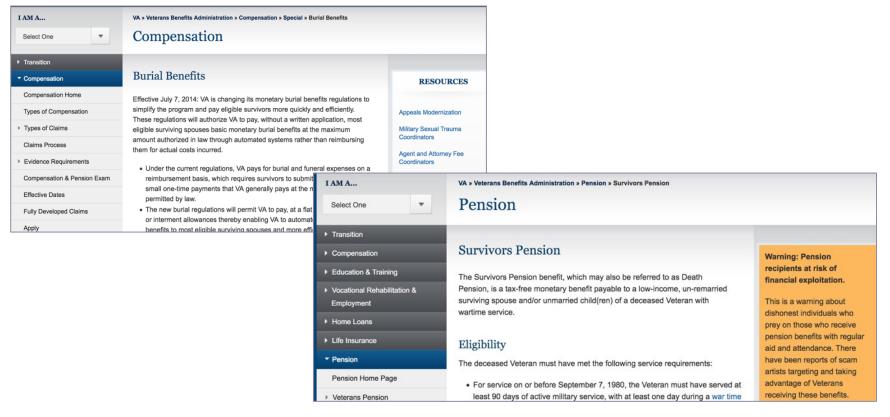
Find a VA form & landing pages

Since June 29 launch to Aug 10 period:

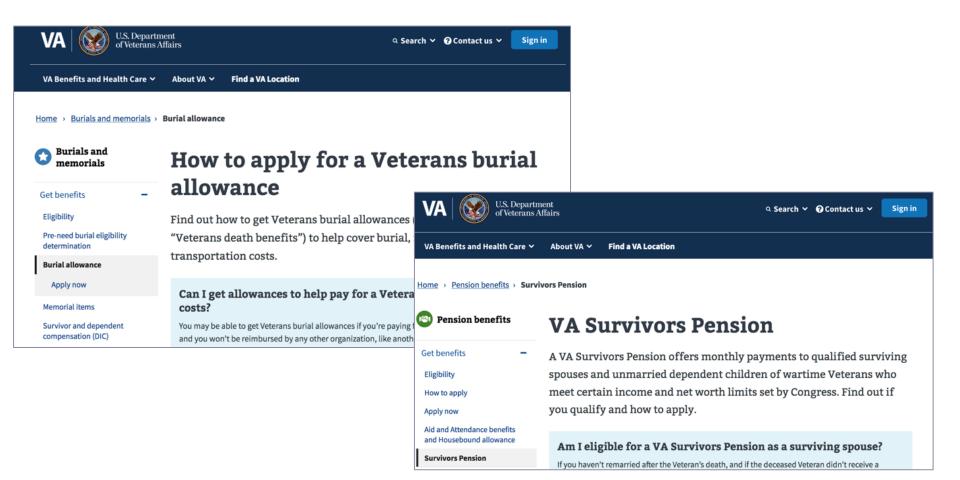
- **217,918** sessions
- 101,597 pdf form downloads
- 14,451 (6.63%) top task clicks (Disability, Education, Health Care online applications)
- 12,144 (5.57%) conversions to other benefit tools and content (Direct Deposit, Change Address, others)
- Top form searched on: VA Form 10-2850C
 (Application for Associated Health Occupations)
- Top next page: va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/



<Remember this?> The New York Times pointed readers to...



Instead of VA.gov pages...



Cost of waiting too long 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-veteransaffairs/va.govteam/tree/master/teams/vsa/teams/publicwebsites/content-team-processes/URL-redirectprocess

Legacy page redirects

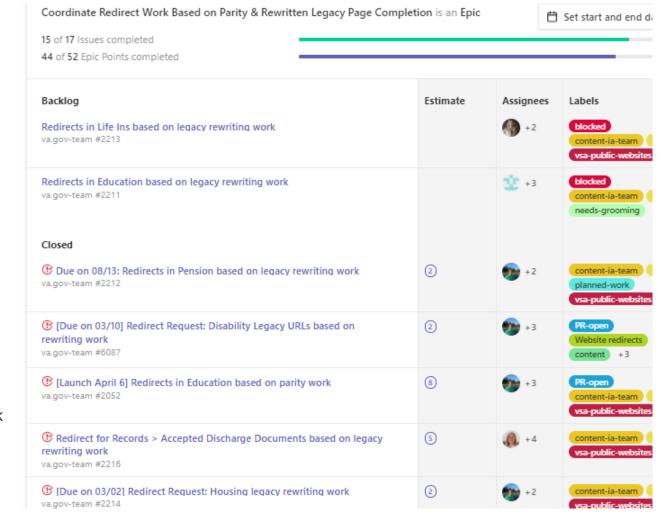
- 15 of 17 issues completed
- Legacy redirects are ongoing

Purpose: Create trustworthy single sources of truth.

Side effect: Boosts SEO power of new VA.gov benefit hub pages

Tl;dr: A couple of push backs, but now established as a practice.

Stakeholders know this is just an expected last step of content work for anything being 'migrated.'



Accessibility improvements

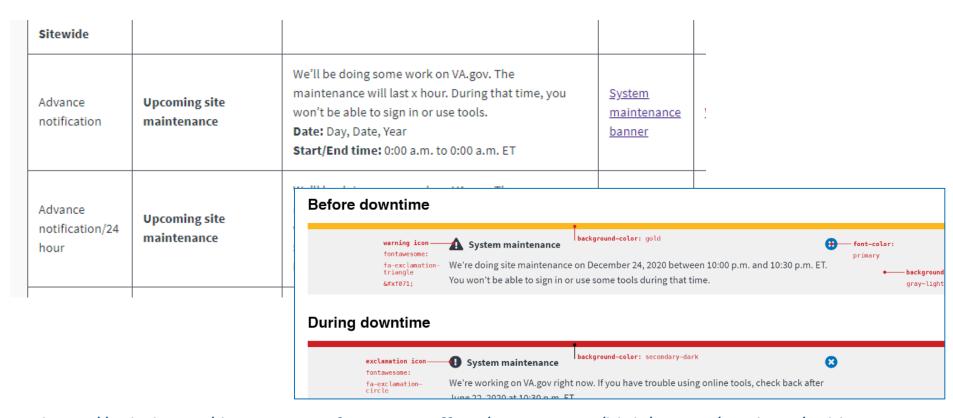
Axe checks, aria labels on phone numbers, consistent focus state on links and buttons, better headings hygiene—semantic order, and much much more.

VFT ♦ > department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team#8697 > Full Accessibility & 508 Office Audit Public Websites [All

Required

- Conduct axe browser scan, and document or address issues found (required)
- Ensure end-to-end tests including the axe check, pass (required)
- Check color pairing for proper contrast (required)
- Check for colorblindness issues (required)
- Zoom to 200% and confirm readability, no info cut off, etc (required)
- Repeat for 300% (required)
- Repeat for 400% (required)
- ✓ Navigate all pages and core functionality with keyboard only (required)
- ✓ Test all pages and core functionality happy path with MacOs + VoiceOver and/or NVDA+Firefox (required)

Ready for sitewide downtime maintenance!



https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/public-websites/sitewide-banner/readme.md

Best of all: the knock-knock dad jokes



Nick Sullivan 8 months ago

@Liz Lantz you gotta say "who's there"



Liz Lantz 👶 8 months ago

I was only halfway playing but now you've sucked m Who's there?



Nick Sullivan 8 months ago Déia



Liz Lantz 👶 8 months ago Déia Who?



Nick Sullivan 8 months ago knock knock





Liz Lantz 👶 8 months ago This is like the orange/banana one







Nick Sullivan Apr 23rd at 10:19 AM

knock knock 🦐





Kelson Adams 8 months ago ahhhhh! go away! social distancing!







Nick Sullivan 8 months ago

I'm backed up six feet from the door



Kelson Adams 8 months ago oh great, in that case, who's there?

2) 1 (E)



Nick Sullivan 8 months ago



Kelson Adams 8 months ago mustache who?



Nick Sullivan 8 months ago I mustache you a question, but I'll shave it for later





Robin Garrison 8 months ago

LOL, I was about to say Kevin "Mush" Stachura (@Kevin Stachura)? Why are you at my house?!







Kevin Stachura 8 months ago "Same reason I showed up at the other team member's hom

Bunch of amazing people, including but not only...

Kelson Adams

Fareez Ahmed

Selina Cooper

John Hashimoto

Randi Hecht

Liz Lantz

Brian Lloyd

Beth Potts

Nick Sullivan

Danielle Thierry

Laura Walsh

And... honorary PW members:

Dave Conlon

Oksana Cyrwus

Peggy Gannon

Zachary Morel

Mikki Northuis

Mickin Sahni

Jennifer Strickland

Ryan Thurlwell

Kevin Walsh

Jon Wehausen

Martha Wilkes

Steve Wirt

Happy holidays and here's to a happier new year