

Login.gov Adoption Discovery

Discovery Research | Login.gov Adoption Team | December 2022



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Login.gov adoption team



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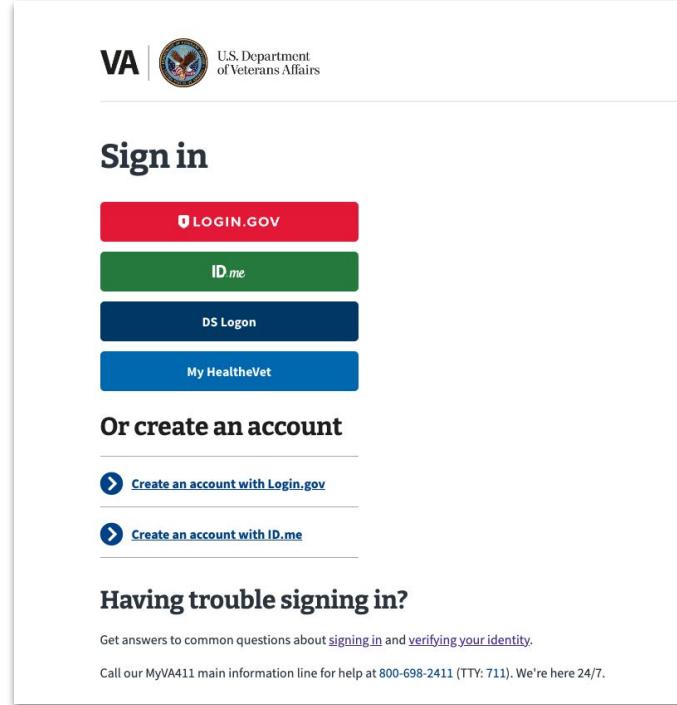
**Leaving the program after discovery*

Background

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There are currently multiple ways to sign in and access My HealtheVet and other VA services. These login options don't all meet the required security standards and also create frustration and confusion for users.

This research took place in-person, at a VA Medical Center, and explores the best ways to support Veterans, non-Veteran roles and the VA in migrating existing users and onboarding new users to Login.gov, a compliant, single sign-on credentialing platform.



The screenshot shows the official VA sign-in page. At the top right is the VA logo and the text "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs". Below this is a large "Sign in" heading. Underneath are four horizontal buttons: a red one labeled "LOGIN.GOV", a green one labeled "ID.me", a dark blue one labeled "DS Logon", and a blue one labeled "My HealtheVet". Below these buttons is a section titled "Or create an account" with two links: "Create an account with Login.gov" and "Create an account with ID.me". At the bottom is a section titled "Having trouble signing in?" with a note about common questions and a main information line.

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Sign in

LOGIN.GOV

ID.me

DS Logon

My HealtheVet

Or create an account

Create an account with Login.gov

Create an account with ID.me

Having trouble signing in?

Get answers to common questions about [signing in](#) and [verifying your identity](#).

Call our MyVA411 main information line for help at 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711). We're here 24/7.



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Research goals

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Introducing
Login.gov

Understand how we can **intervene** to ensure that new generations of Veterans use Login.gov to access My HealtheVet from the start.

In-person support

Understand what **in-person support** will enable Veterans to create and use a Login.gov account to access My HealtheVet.

Multi-factor authentication

Understand how the greatest number of Veterans can use **multi-factor authentication** options, including **security keys**.

Shared access for
non-Veterans

Understand how setting up and maintaining **shared access** might work for Veterans and non-Veterans.



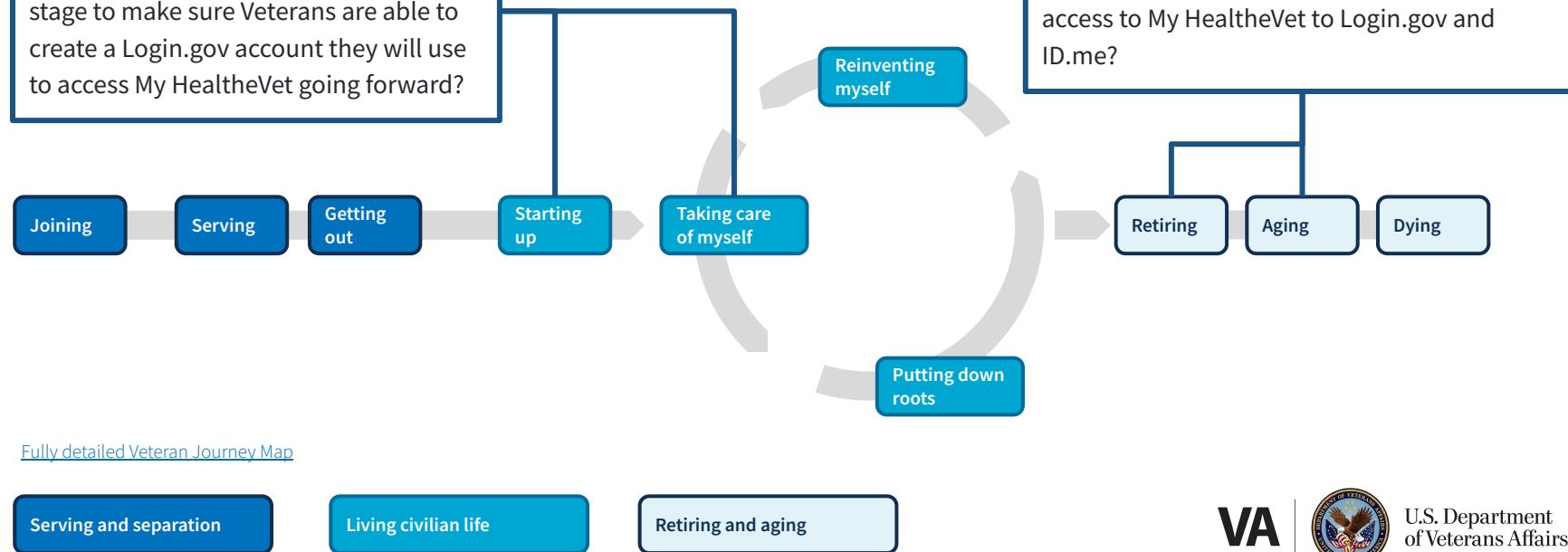
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How this research maps to the Veteran journey

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Attending to health needs

How can we proactively intervene at this stage to make sure Veterans are able to create a Login.gov account they will use to access My HealtheVet going forward?



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OCTO-DE goals this research supports

Supported

Not supported

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Veterans and their families can apply for all benefits online	Veterans and their families can find a single, authoritative source of information	Veterans and their families trust the security, accuracy, and relevancy of VA.gov	Veterans can manage their health services online	VFS teams can build and deploy high-quality products for Veterans on the Platform	Logged-in users have a personalized experience, with relevant and time-saving features	Logged-in users can update their personal information easily and instantly	Logged-in users can easily track applications, claims, or appeals online
Measures to increase	Completion rate of online transactions	Percent of applications submitted online (vs. paper)	Veteran satisfaction with VA.gov Benefit use and enrollment, across all business lines	Benefit value (in \$) delivered from online applications or transactions	Number of VA.gov users as a function of total Veteran population	Usage of digital, self-service tools	
Measures to decrease	Time to successful complete and submit online transactions	Time to process online applications (vs. paper)	Call center volume, wait time, and time to resolution	Time from online benefit discovery to benefit delivery			



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Methodology

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Participant demographics

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Our findings may not include the perspectives of the following underserved Veteran groups, those:

- with a cognitive disability
- who identify as Native
- who identify as LGBTQ+

And we don't have data on whether Veterans included in our study have mobile devices, were other than honorable, or, are of immigrant origin.

We recommend studies with these underserved groups in the future, and in particular, Veterans who are experiencing homelessness.

[Participant Tracker in Google Sheets](#)

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final # of participants	10		# of AT users	0		# of no shows	3									
Category	%	Target	Study	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Veterans																
Age 55-64+	50.00%	5	6	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Cognitive Disability	50.00%	5	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mobile user	50.00%	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rural	25.00%	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
No degree	25.00%	3	4	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other than honorable	21.00%	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Immigrant origin	17.00%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women	10.00%	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Expat (living abroad)	0.40%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Race																
Black	15.00%	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Hispanic	12.00%	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Biracial	3.90%	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Asian	3.00%	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native	0.30%	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LGBTQ+																
Gay, lesbian, or bisexual	-- %	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender	-- %	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nonbinary, gender fluid, ge	-- %	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assistive Tech (AT)																
Beginner AT User	50.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



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Research questions

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Introducing Login.gov

When should proactive intervention encourage the creation of a Login.gov account?

What do Veterans find important or beneficial when choosing a login credential?

How do we support Veterans and non-Veterans after they set up Login.gov?

In-person support

How do we communicate the need to migrate to Login.gov?

When people in-person proof and migrate their account, what issues arise for them?

What resources or workflows will help with issues during in-person proofing & migration?

Multi-factor authentication

How do Veterans understand the process of choosing and using a MFA method?

Which MFA options will allow more Veterans to migrate to Login.gov?

How can MFA support non-Veterans who need access to parts of a Veterans' information?

Shared access for non-Veterans

Which non-Veteran users would Veterans choose to set up access for, when and why?

How do non-Veterans imagine shared access to work for themselves and non-Veterans?

Methods

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Scenario Validation

We presented Veterans with a scenario showing a potential approach to creating a Login.gov account and accessing My HealtheVet.

This helped us evaluate whether Veteran finds particular touchpoints or journeys to be useful and clear or not.

Service Prototype Testing

We walked Veterans through a service prototype of how they would in-person proof, set up multi-factor authentication and secure a Login.gov account at a VA facility.

This helped us evaluate two distinct workflows and where support is needed.

Intercepts

We ran contextual intercepts with Veterans where we shared more focused stimuli, like, an email or a login screen.

This helped us clarify content and tone-of-voice of messaging and reach Veterans who don't yet have a My HealtheVet or Login.gov account yet.



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Scenarios

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Research goals

Introducing Login.gov

In-person support

Multi-factor authentication

Shared access for non-Veterans

Scenario 1: Migration and re-proofing

Task 1 Task 2 Task 3 Task 4 Task 5 Task 6 Task 7 Task 8 Task 9

Scenario 2: Migration and delayed proofing

Task 1 Task 2 Task 3 Task 4 Task 5 Task 6 Task 7 Task 8 Task 9 Task 10

Scenario 3: Proactive creation at Eligibility and Enrollment

Task 1 Task 2 Task 3 Task 4 Task 5 Task 6 Task 7

Intercept testing

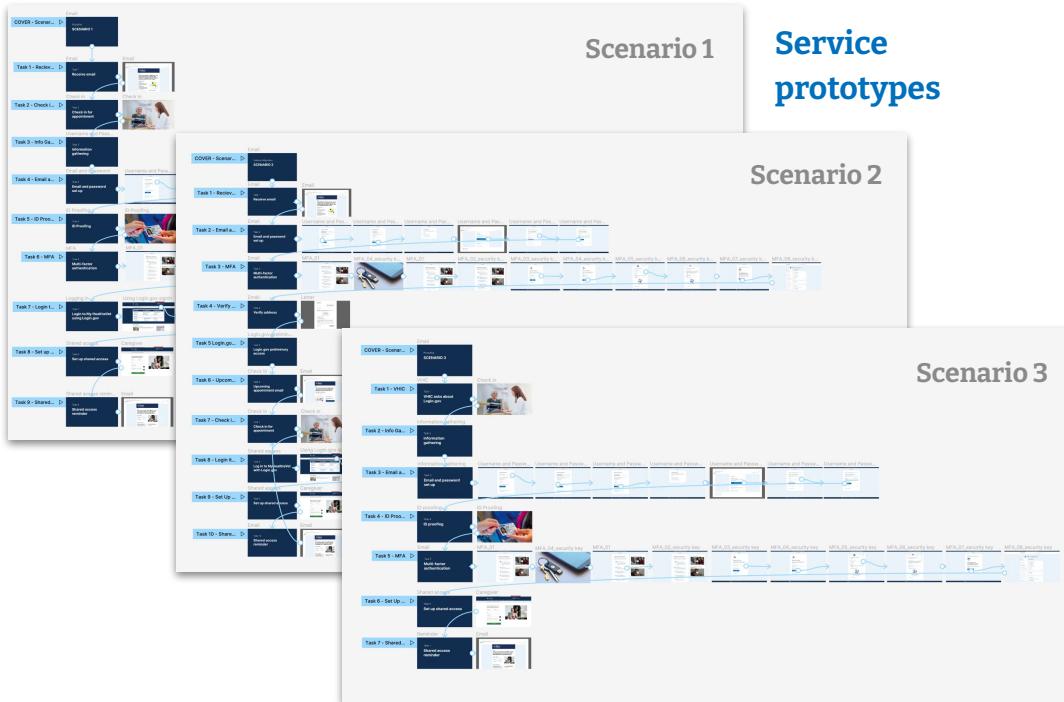
Intercept A Intercept B Intercept C Intercept D



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Stimuli

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Physical artifacts



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Into the field

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We conducted in-person research at a VA Medical Center in Tampa.

We held scheduled interviews at the Primary Care Annex (PCA), and we ran intercepts at the PCA and the Main Facility, in or near Eligibility and Enrollment offices.



Key findings



Key findings

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1. Setting up a new credential is frustrating for Veterans if it's made to seem like a choice or the need is unclear.
2. Knowing humanized and dedicated support is available, motivates Veterans to setup and use a credential.
3. Being identity proofed at another appointment, and, as the start or end to account setup, is more convenient for Veterans
4. Veterans see security as the VA's responsibility, but are motivated to be more careful if it puts their benefits access at risk, or they understand how their actions affect fellow Veterans.
5. Perceived ease of use and complex views on security inform Veterans' multi-factor authentication choices.
6. Veterans will choose whichever login credential is most familiar, or, seems more direct to complete a task.
7. Veterans don't think to share access to their healthcare information until life altering events make it necessary.

Insight 1

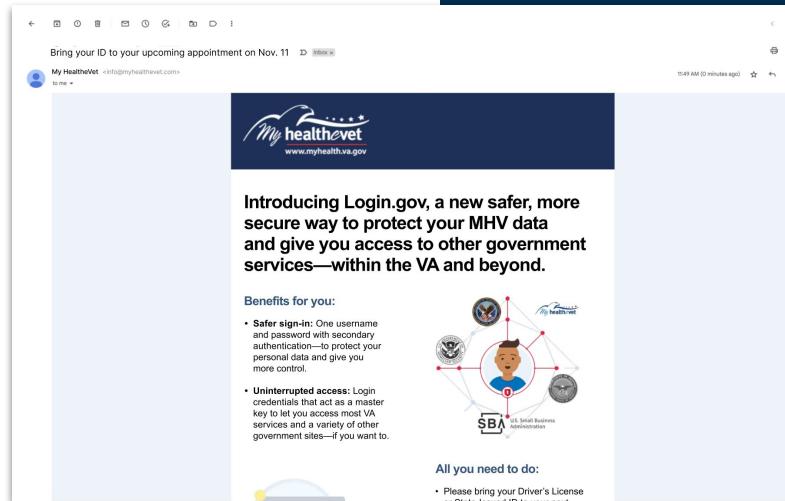
“If Login.gov is the preferred method, the VA has to say that and stop providing options.”

Participant 9, Veteran Interview

Setting up a new credential is frustrating for Veterans if it's made to seem like a choice or the need is unclear

Messaging that suggestions setting up a new credential is optional, when it's actually required, is frustrating for Veterans. They want clear instructions about what is expected of them.

And if Login.gov is the only option available for accessing valued services, Veterans will use it, but they'd like to know the reason for the changing requirements. Transparency around government decisions and spending instills trust and supports Veterans to embrace change.



Insight 2

“I would walk away at this point unless someone is on the phone helping me [with my password].”

Participant 8, Veteran Interview

Knowing humanized and dedicated support is available, motivates Veterans to setup and use a credential

Veterans expect the VA to respect their independence, which means making it easy to navigate set up on their own terms. Although Veterans are competent and familiar with login and setup processes, they do tend to have limited troubleshooting skills.

This means that knowing humanized, dedicated help is available throughout the journey, makes Veterans more willing to set up and continue to use a new credential.



Insight 3

"I would set up Login.gov at the end of my appointment, while I'm here. I'd rather get more done in a single period."

Participant 6, Veteran Interview

Being identity proofed at another appointment, and, as the start or end to account setup, is more convenient for Veterans

Setting up Login.gov alongside another VA appointment is a welcome convenience for Veterans, as long as it represents a definitive start or end to the process. But, if it creates another ongoing process then Veterans are less likely to see it through.

Moving between online and offline touchpoints can create confusion – but clarity on what to bring, why you're identity proofing and how it won't affect your existing appointments or accounts, helps put Veterans at ease.



Insight 4

**"I understand they are trying to be secure,
but I also know that when it comes to the
Internet, nothing is under lock."**

Participant 4, Veteran Interview

Veterans see security as the VA's responsibility, but are motivated to be more careful if it puts their benefits access at risk, or they understand how their actions affect fellow Veterans

While Veterans may distrust the government, they tend to overestimate its online security and feel it's the responsibility of the VA to make sure things are secure.

Many Veterans perceive little risk around their medical information being hacked, but are concerned about not being able to access their doctors and prescriptions through My HealtheVet. When considering data concerns, Veterans are more motivated by keeping fellow Veterans' data safe than their own.



Insight 5

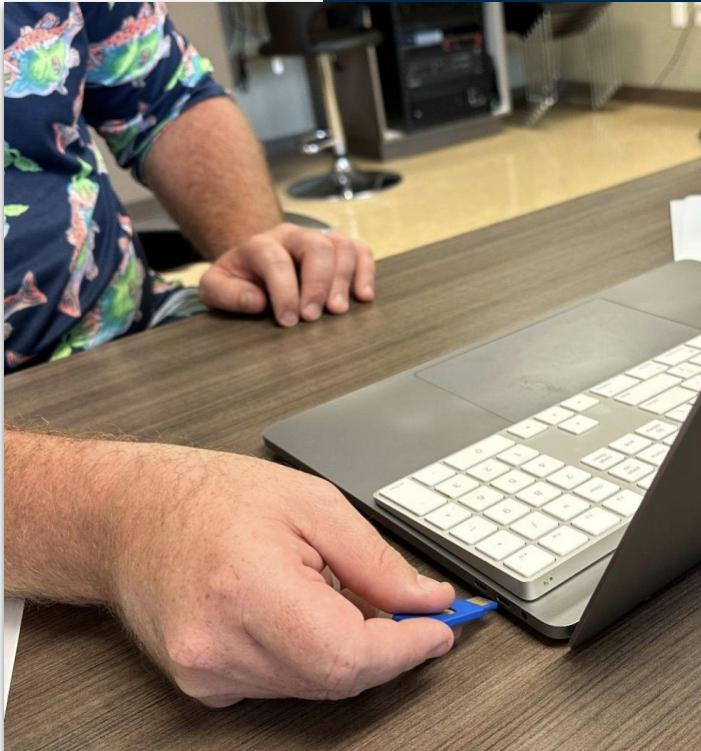
“We've all experienced the ‘oh, my God, where's my rifle!?’ Veterans aren't going to want to be accountable for [a security key] since there's too much ingrained trauma there.”

Participant 7, Veteran Interview

Perceived ease of use and complex views on security inform Veterans' multi-factor authentication choices

Perceived ease of use drives Veterans' security and multi-factor authentication choices. While they might say security is a priority, in practice, Veterans make choices based on ease of use.

Ingrained responsibility for government-issued property undermines the perception that a security key from the VA would be an easy and low-stress MFA option. And while biometrics can at first feel like a violation, through repeated exposure it's increasingly embraced as an easy option requiring no memory.



Insight 6

"I seem to press 'My HealtheVet' more often than not. I think it's because that is where I'm going. It feels more direct, like it's getting me right in."

Participant 10, Veteran Interview

Veterans will choose whichever login credential is familiar, or, seems more direct to complete a task

When Veterans gravitate towards familiarity. If they're used to logging in to My HealtheVet using DS Logon, they will continue to do so, even after they've set up Login.gov.

And in some cases, Veterans will choose a particular login credential because it appears to be the most direct route to completing a task.

Familiarity also helps Veterans who struggle to remember their password, a common and major pain point.



Sign in

 LOGIN.GOV

 ID.me

 DS Logon

 My HealtheVet

Or create an account

 [Create an account with Login.gov](#)

 [Create an account with ID.me](#)

Having trouble signing in?

Get answers to common questions about [signing in](#) and [verifying your identity](#).

Call our MyVA411 main information line for help at 800-698-2411 (TTY: 711). We're here 24/7.

Insight 7

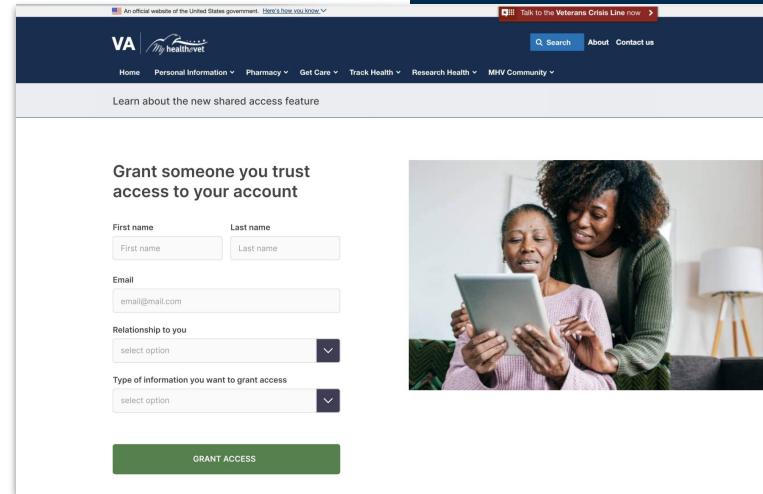
“It depends on my trust in the person who I give access, what I would give them access to. My husband could have full access, but my children, would be able to see my medications only.”

Participant 15, Veteran Intercept

Veterans don't think to share access to their healthcare information until life altering events make it necessary

Veterans don't think to set up shared access until life altering events make it necessary for others to have access to their information. Shared access asks Veterans to consider who they trust and who will take care of them in the future, which can evolve or change over time.

With more complex care situations, caretakers recognize the need for nuanced permissions when accessing a Veterans' information. Veterans and their support systems find it important that a Veteran is able to grant and revoke shared access and see exactly what has been accessed by others.



The screenshot shows the VA My HealthVet website's "Grant someone you trust access to your account" page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Personal Information, Pharmacy, Get Care, Track Health, Research Health, MHV Community, Search, About, and Contact Us. A banner at the top right says "Talk to the Veterans Crisis Line now". Below the banner, a sub-header reads "Learn about the new shared access feature". The main form area has fields for First name, Last name, Email, Relationship to you, and Type of information you want to grant access. Each field has a dropdown menu labeled "select option". A large green "GRANT ACCESS" button is at the bottom of the form. To the right of the form is a photograph of two women, one older and one younger, looking at a tablet together.

Additional insights

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1. Passwords represent the biggest point of friction in ongoing use of a login credential. Veterans find passwords difficult to remember, particularly if they are required to update them often. They end up losing access to their My HealtheVet accounts (or having them deactivated) due to an inability to login.
2. Veterans choose to use ID.me because it helps them get access to discounts and other retail benefits.
3. Frustrating past experience with helplines, in general, makes Veterans hesitant to call a helpline for support with Login.gov.
4. Veterans expect identity proofing in-person to take around 5 to 10 minutes.
5. Once Veterans are logged in, they find immense value in My HealtheVet, as a useful, convenient and easy to use service.



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Recommendations



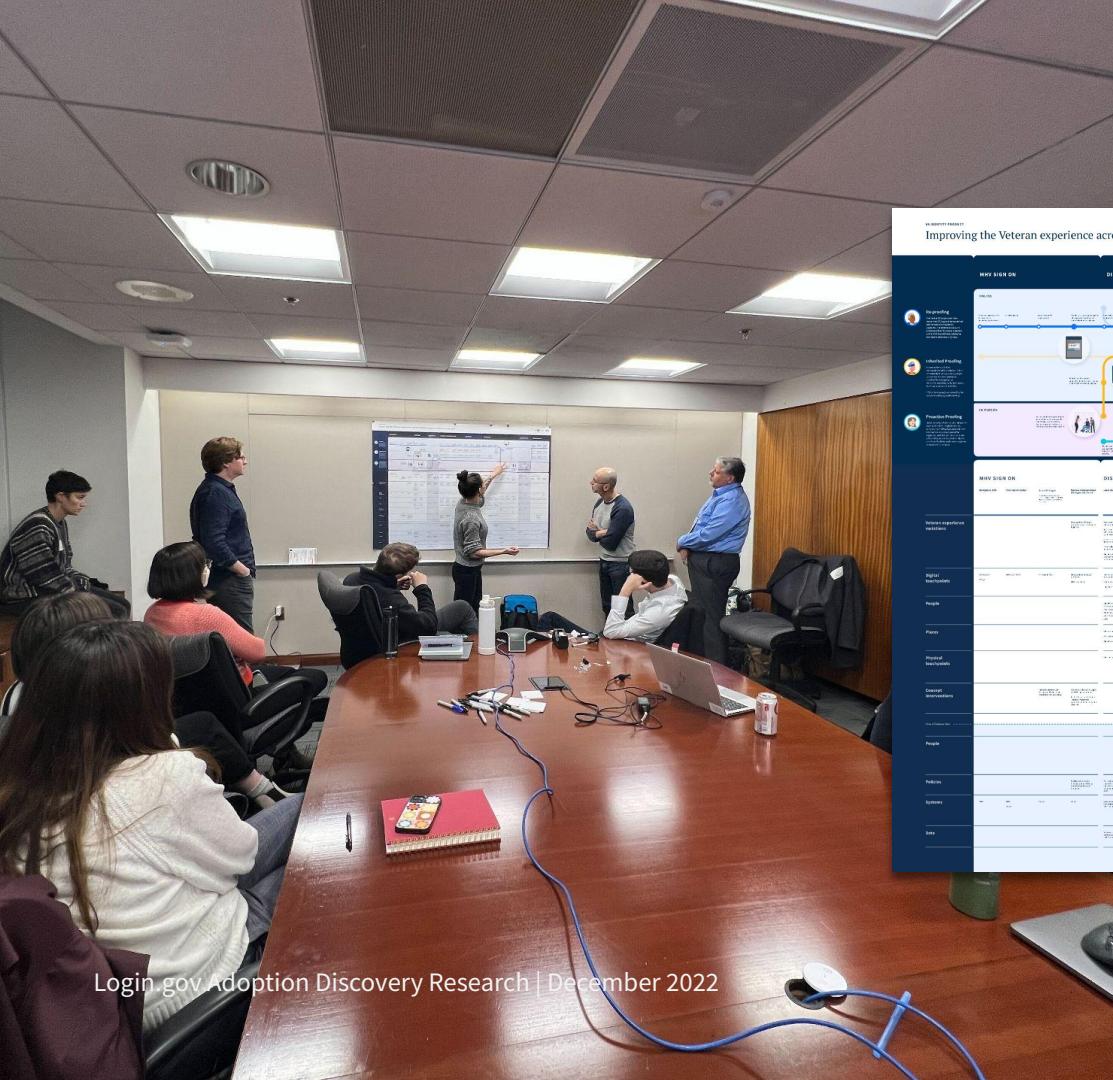
Recommendations

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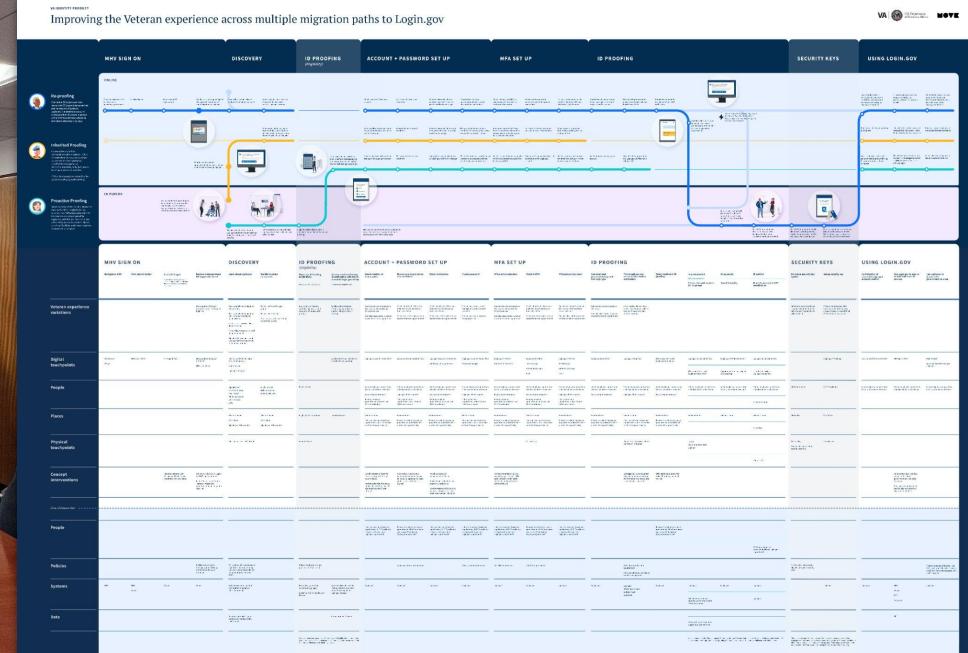
- Explain the need for Login.gov setup through consistent, contextual reminders and emphasis on help and ease.
- Help Veterans understand their role in ensuring continued access to VA services and protecting fellow Veterans.
- Make it easy to bundle identity proofing with existing appointments.
- Provide in-person support with account creation and use, including identity proofing in-person.
- Help Veterans become familiar with Login.gov by making it an obvious default.
- Recommend multi-factor authentication options that are appropriate and meet each Veterans' specific needs.
- Encourage Veterans to set up shared access early-on, or, when a life altering event occurs.
- Help Veterans periodically review who has access to their information, so they stay in control and grant the right permissions.
- Provide dedicated, supportive help at every step and reach out to those who struggle with setup or use.



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Improving the Veteran experience across multiple migration paths to Login.gov



[Service blueprint](#)

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Thanks!

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Appendix



Key terms

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Identity proofing: A process that a Veteran goes through in order to verify their identity, usually by providing a form of identification such as a driver's license or other state-issued ID card.

Multi-factor authentication (MFA): An additional security check, which requires a user to provide 2 or more verification factors to gain access to an application or account. By requiring an additional verification factor, besides just a username and password, MFA aims to decrease security risk.

Security key: A device that facilitates authentication for an application or account. This is one MFA option, some others include, biometrics (like, face recognition or touch identification) or text messages.

Shared access: In this discovery, we used the term shared access to refer to non-Veterans, such as family members, caretakers or other people who have or need to have access to a Veterans benefits information.



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Learn more about this research

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[Research plan](#)

[Research findings](#)

[Service blueprint](#)

[Comprehensive discovery phase readout](#)

[Recruitment checker for equality](#)

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