

Summer 2019

# SALUTE YOUR HEALTH

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health  
Administration

Erie  
VA Medical Center

## Erie VA going Smoke-Free this fall!

Erie VA Medical Center is changing our smoking policy along with all other medical centers across the country to further our commitment to provide a safe and healthy environment for patients, visitors, vendors, volunteers, contractors and employees.

Beginning this fall, **smoking will no longer be permitted on the VA campus for patients, visitors, contractors, volunteers, and vendors.**

The policy covers all smoking material including **but not limited to:**

- Cigarettes
- Cigars
- Pipes
- any other combustion of tobacco
- non-Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approved electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), including but not limited to electronic or e-cigarettes, vape pens, or e-cigars.

Patients, visitors, vendors, volunteers and contractors will be strongly encouraged to leave all smoking materials at home. To reduce the risk of ignition near oxygen or other flammable gases used in our facility, some areas may require materials to be

stored during their visit. Erie VAMC offers smoking cessation treatment services for Veterans. Veterans who wish to obtain more information about smoking cessation should contact their Primary Care Team.

### FREE Smoking Cessation Resources:

Veterans may request the following from their primary care providers: Wellbutrin, Nicotine Lozenge, Nicotine Patch, Nicotine gum and Chantix

Smoking Cessation groups:

- One-time smoking cessation group the 2nd Wednesday of every month from 2:30- 4 p.m. (Veterans should see their Primary Care Provider for more information)
- Weekly smoking cessation support group every Wednesday from 12-12:30 p.m. in the Whole Health room 617 on the 6th Floor of the main building. Veterans can call 814-860-2408 or 814-860-2447 for more information.

Veterans who want extra support can call the free Quit Vet line at 1-855-quit-Vet available Monday-Friday 9 a.m.- 9 p.m. or text VET to 47848.

# What Veterans should know about the MISSION Act

Signed into law on June 6, 2018, the MISSION Act strengthens VA's ability to deliver trusted, easy to access, high quality care at VA facilities, virtually through telehealth, and in Veterans' communities. The law makes several improvements to VA care that began on June 6, 2019.

[www.missionact.va.gov](http://www.missionact.va.gov)

## Two Significant Changes that will Impact Veterans under the MISSION Act:

1. **New Community Care Criteria:** VA established six different eligibility criteria for community care:

- Veteran needs a service not available at a VA medical center
- Veteran lives in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility
- Veteran qualifies under the "Grandfather" provision related to distance eligibility for Veterans Choice Program
- VA cannot provide care within certain designated access standards
- It is in the Veteran's best medical interest
- A VA service line does not meet certain quality standards

When you call to schedule an appointment or speak with your health care team, VA staff will notify you if you are eligible for community care. **Please note: VA must still authorize your care before you receive care from an in-network community provider.**

2. **New Urgent Care Benefit:** VA now offers an urgent care benefit so Veterans have new care options in the community for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses, such as colds, sore throats, and minor skin infections.

This urgent care benefit is available for any Veterans enrolled in VHA who have received care through VA within the past 24 months.

Veterans may call 1-833-483-8669 to confirm their eligibility for the urgent care benefit.

Veterans do not need VA authorization before seeing an urgent care community provider, however, the urgent care **MUST** be an approved in-network provider.

To find an in-network Urgent Care community provider, visit [www.va.gov/find-locations](http://www.va.gov/find-locations), enter your zip code, choose the Community Care option, then click on the "Find VA-approved urgent care locations and pharmacies near you." Veterans may have to pay a \$30 copay for the in-network urgent care visit. If Veterans have any issues at the in-network urgent care visit or pharmacy, call 1-866-620-2071 for assistance. As a reminder, Veterans may still visit the Erie VAMC Urgent Care Center open 8am-8pm daily including weekends & holidays.

**Please note: if you are experiencing a medical emergency, please dial 911 or visit the nearest emergency room.** This new urgent care benefit does NOT cover emergency room visits. The process for non-VA emergency care remains the same. If you visit a community Emergency Department or are admitted to a community hospital, VA Payment is not guaranteed. To be considered for payment, you must notify the VA within 72 hours by calling Erie VA Care in the Community at 814-860-2800 and press option 3.

For more MISSION Act information, please visit [www.missionact.VA.gov](http://www.missionact.VA.gov).

# Changes at Erie VAMC



On June 28, the Erie VAMC opened the Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program. This new program uses a mental health recovery model which includes empowering the Veteran to take ownership of their own recovery and meeting them where they are in their recovery process. For more information, please call 814-860-2474.

In July, the Erie VAMC and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation opened the new entrance on E 38th Street. The entrance includes traffic lights to help staff, Veterans, visitors, and community members enter and exit the facility safely.

## High Reliability Organization

Erie VAMC was selected as one of 18 medical centers across the nation as a lead site in high reliability organization (HRO) which focuses on leadership commitment, culture of safety, and continuous process improvement. As a lead site, Erie VAMC will share and adapt best practices and lessons learned in efforts to collaborate with other VA medical centers and ultimately transform VA.

Our journey as a HRO began over the past decade with the implementation of a system-wide approach to problem solving using Lean principles. Since then, we have expanded the problem-solving approach to include patient experience, servant leadership, employee engagement, and just culture.

We are committed to affirming the trust of Veterans and their families through the achievement of Zero Harm and to provide an unmatched patient experience for those we are privileged to serve.

## Veteran Job Club

Erie VAMC offers FREE employment assistance with resumes, interview skills, job searching and more! For additional details, contact:  
Marty Acri at (814) 860-2861  
Lorie Panitzke at (814) 860-2008

### **Erie, PA Veteran Job Club**

#### **WHEN**

Every Monday (except holidays)  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

#### **WHERE**

Behavioral Health Clinic, Erie VAMC  
2nd Floor - Conference Room #237

### **Meadville, PA Veteran Job Club**

#### **WHEN**

2nd & 4th Friday of the Month  
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

#### **WHERE**

PMI 764 Bessemer St.  
#105 Meadville, PA 16335

### **Ashtabula, OH Veteran Job Club**

#### **WHEN**

2nd & 4th Wednesday of the Month  
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

#### **WHERE**

Veterans Service Commission  
1212 Lake Ave. in Ashtabula, OH

Salute Your Health is published quarterly as a patient education service by the Erie VA Medical Center. The publication is intended to provide information to help you stay well, manage your health care, and learn more about the many services available through the VA. This publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, which should be obtained from your provider. All articles may be reproduced for educational purposes. Our mission is to maintain and improve the health and well-being of Veterans by providing state-of-the-art comprehensive health care in a professional and pleasant environment. All models used for illustrative purposes only.

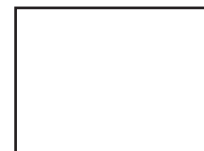
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:  
Erie VA Medical Center  
135 East 38th St., Erie, PA 16504  
814-868-8661 or 800-274-8387  
Check out our website for hours, telephone numbers, and maps at [www.erie.va.gov](http://www.erie.va.gov).

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Attention Postmaster: Time Dated Material Enclosed

## 2019 Veteran Events

### Connected Care Fair

Date: October 9

Time: 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Location: Erie VAMC

For more information, call 814-860-2547

### Domestic Violence Awareness Resource Fair

Date: October 22

Time: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Location: Erie VAMC

For more information, call 814-860-2753

### Veterans Day Parade & Ceremony

Date: November 9

Time: Parade begins at 9:30; Ceremony begins at 11 at Jefferson Elementary School

### Show Your Support!

1. Sign your organization up to march in the Veterans Day Parade! Call Ken Sawdey at 814-866-9565 to sign up

2. Show your support from the side-lines. We're asking the entire community to line the streets and cheer on local Veterans.

## Important Contacts

### Main Line – Phone Tree

814-868-8661

1-800-274-8387 (toll-free)

**Press 1** – Pharmacy

**Press 2** – Appointments, speak to the Call Center, specialty care provider or to **leave a message with your CBOC provider**

**Press 3** – Nurse Line

**Press 4** – Eligibility

**Press 5** – Billing

**Press 6** – MISSION Act questions/ information

**Press 7** – Veterans Crisis Line

### Behavioral Health Clinic

814-860-2038

### Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)

For information on upcoming Town Halls, Flu Shot Clinics and more, connect with us online:



[www.erie.va.gov](http://www.erie.va.gov)

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