



# U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Weekly Report: September 15–21, 2020

"Americans are coming together to fight COVID-19 in ways they haven't joined together since World War II, and VA is providing vital services to both Veterans and non-Veterans as part of this fight."

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie



## VETERAN CARE



VA has tested **695,052** Veterans & employees for COVID-19



VA has diagnosed **51,350** Veterans with COVID-19

**9.21M** patients currently enrolled in VA health care

**11,054** COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities

- » **335** current COVID-19 inpatients
- » **45,098** COVID-19 patients have reached convalescence



**397,400** total VA employees

- » From Mar. 29–Sept. 15, VHA has onboarded **48,115** new hires, including **9,009** registered nurses & nurse practitioners

## VIRTUAL CARE

**138,021** weekly telehealth to home or off-site visits (Sept. 6–12)



**1,133%** increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Sept. 12)

**440,164** prescription refill requests placed (Sept. 13–19)

**283,014** secure messages exchanged (Sept. 13–19)

**3,444,834** authenticated patients (as of Aug. 2020)

## MEDIA OUTREACH

VA has published **54** news releases related to COVID-19

"VA recognizes HeRO award winners for safety initiatives, COVID-19 efforts"

Secretary Wilkie has participated in **195** media opportunities

**440** good news stories published

Kusi News (Sept. 21, 2020)

"U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs innovates as it fight against COVID-19"

Corridor News (Sept. 21, 2020)

"VA Researchers To Study Blood Plasma For Treating Seriously Ill COVID-19 Patients"

All figures in the Media Outreach section are from Feb.–Sept.

## VETERAN OUTREACH

From Sept. 15–21:

- » VA.gov had **2,796,372** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus had **13,201** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot had **93,480** visitors

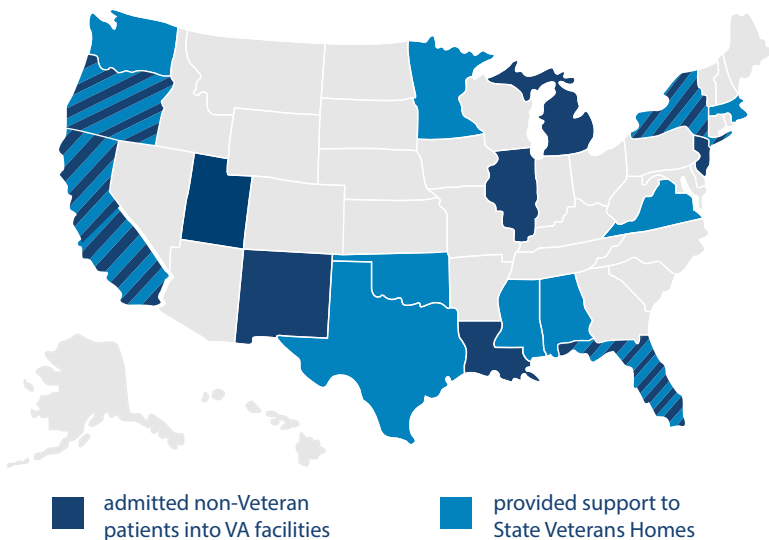
All figures are as of Sept. 21, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

## VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

**46,960** COVID-19 related calls made to VA311 & the White House VA Hotline

**33,260** calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline: 844-698-2311

## SUPPORT TO STATES & OTHER AGENCIES



### 343 COVID-19 non-Veteran patients in 11 states

- » States supported: NY, NJ, FL, LA, MI, IL, UT, OR, CA, AZ, NM

### 264 non-Veteran patients discharged home

**120** Veterans from **12** State Veterans Homes admitted for care in VHA facilities

- » States supported: MA, NY, VA, AL, FL, MS, TX, OK, WA, OR, CA, MN

VHAs mobile Vet Center has provided outreach & counseling in **12** states

- » States supported: NY, OR, PA, SD, CO, TX, CA, LA, IL, WA, FL, AZ

**1,932** VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities (as of Sept. 18)

Provided to State Veterans Homes:

- » IA: **100** reusable gowns
- » MN: **25** COVID-19 collection kits
- » NJ: **162** nurses to support operations

Provided up to **30** beds to patients in Portland, OR

Distributed **100** masks to tribal Veterans between the Cheyenne & Standing Rock Reservations

## SUPPORT TO NON-VA NURSING HOMES

Providing support to **82** nursing homes in FL with **207** nurses & certified nursing assistants caring for an estimated **8,863** patients

Admitted **12** Veteran patients from community nursing homes

- » States supported: RI, CA



## VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

**21,493** calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19 (since Mar. 1)

**89,877** VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits

**2,511,562** Veterans in **50** states & **5** VSOs reached through **71** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs (since Mar. 1)

## BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

Since Mar. 23, the Board of Veterans' Appeals has

- » Held **3,963** virtual hearings
- » Issued **52,126** decisions



## NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

**3,203** COVID-19 related Veteran interments

- » **66,750** interments (since Mar. 9)
- » **6,675** Veteran tributes

All figures are as of Sept. 21, 2020, unless otherwise noted.



1



2



3



4



5



6

### 1) VA medical center receives 10,000 masks

On Sept. 14, the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center received 10,000 masks to distribute to Veteran patients & their families.

*Read the full story.*

### 2) Palliative & hospice care staff lift Veterans' spirits with "Silver Lining Stories"

One program office within VHA recently created an opportunity for employees & staff members to share uplifting stories with one another.

*Read the full story.*

### 3) Partnership with West Allis Fire Department helps Veterans

The Mobile Integrated Healthcare program seeks to find out why some Veterans make numerous trips to the Emergency Department & then figure out ways for the Veterans to better manage their health.

*Read the full story.*

### 4) VA volunteer Barbara Abbey awarded national honor

VA volunteer Barbara Abbey was named the winner of a national AARP contest saluting Volunteers in the "Show Your Love Volunteer 2020" competition.

*Read the full story.*

### 5) Drive-thru flu shot clinic – 'tis the season

VA North Texas Health Care System is making it easy for Veterans & employees to receive their immunization with this clinic, & it's not just for people in their cars.

*Read the full story.*

### 6) Nurse supports Apache Nation during COVID peak

Dorothy Barrow became the first VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (ECHCS) employee in approximately seven years to deploy through DEMPS.

*Read the full story.*

VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline: 844-698-2311

Veterans Crisis Line: 800-273-8255 & Press 1

VA311: 844-698-2311

Call your VA medical center ([VA.gov/find-locations](https://www.va.gov/find-locations)) before visiting. This helps us protect you, other Veterans & medical staff.

[VA.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.va.gov/Coronavirus)

VA Coronavirus: FAQs page

Download your VA Welcome Kit: [VA.gov/welcome-kit](https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit)

Sign-up for weekly VA e-mail updates at: [VA.gov/VetResources](https://www.va.gov/VetResources)

**VA**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs