



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

## Weekly Report: August 18–24, 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 **576,213** Veterans & employees for COVID-19



VA has diagnosed **43,276** Veterans with COVID-19



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



**9,696** COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities

- » **413** current COVID-19 inpatients
- » **37,293** COVID-19 patients have reached convalescence



**397,400** total VA employees

- » From March 29–Aug. 18, VHA has onboarded **39,224** new hires, including **7,319** registered nurses & nurse practitioners

### VIRTUAL CARE



**165,377** weekly telehealth to home or off-site visits (from Aug. 8–15)

**463,225** prescription refill requests placed through My HealtheVet (from Aug. 16–22)



**1,309%** increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (from March 1–Aug. 17)

**273,099** Secure Messages exchanged through My HealtheVet (from Aug. 16–22)

### MEDIA OUTREACH

VA has published **51** news releases related to COVID-19

*Cape Gazette (Aug. 19, 2020)*

"Veteran honors local VA healthcare workers with flags"

*WDTN (Aug. 20, 2020)*

"Dayton VA delivers free groceries to nearly 250 veterans in need"

**Secretary Wilkie has participated in 168 media opportunities**

**380** good news stories published

*13WMAZ (Aug. 20, 2020)*

"Carl Vinson VA Medical Center reactivating volunteer program"

*Spectrum News (Aug. 19, 2020)*

"VA Telehealth Appointments Increase 1000% During Pandemic"

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

### VETERAN OUTREACH

VA has sent **4** batches of text messages (VEText), resulting in **32.2M** total texts

From Aug. 18–24:

- » VA.gov had **2,712,918** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus had **9,152** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot had **78,420** visitors

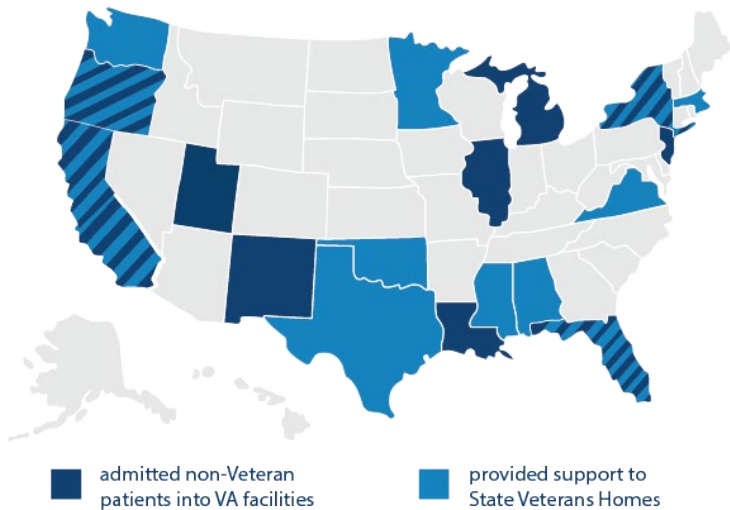
All figures are as of Aug. 24, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

## VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

**42,289** COVID-19 related calls made to VA311 & the White House VA Hotline

**28,580** 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

### 261 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

**1,689** VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities

Provided to State Veterans Homes:

» IA: **100** reusable gowns  
» MN: **25** COVID-19 collection kits  
» NJ: **292** 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 CIVILIAN NURSING HOMES

Providing support to **80** nursing homes in FL with **207** nurses & certified nursing assistants (CNA) caring for an estimated **8,687** patients

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

» States supported: RI, CA



## VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

**21,234** calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19 (since March 1)

**79,292** VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits

**2,163,347** Veterans in **41** states & **3** VSOs reached through **55** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs (since March 1)

## BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

Since March 23, the Board of Veterans' Appeals has

» Held **3,023** virtual hearings  
» Issued **44,789** decisions



## NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

**2,908** COVID-19 related Veteran interments

» **55,462** interments (since March 9)  
» **6,600** Veteran tributes

All figures are as of Aug. 24, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

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