



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

Weekly Report: October 27–November 2, 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

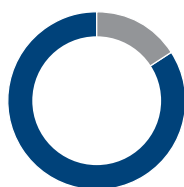
VA has tested **879,457** Veterans & employees for COVID-19

VA has diagnosed **67,905** Veterans with COVID-19

9.21m patients currently enrolled in VA health care

14,168 COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities

- » **606** current COVID-19 inpatients
- » **57,652** COVID-19 patients have reached convalescence



397,400 total VA employees

- **59,095** total VHA new hires*
- **11,136** registered nurses & nurse practitioners*

*from Mar. 29–Oct. 27.

VIRTUAL CARE

181,874 weekly home or off-site telehealth visits (Oct. 18–24)

1,525% increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Oct. 31)



449,293 prescription refill requests placed (Oct. 25–31)

276,442 secure messages exchanged (Oct. 25–31)

3,469,315 authenticated patients (as of Sept. 2020)

MEDIA OUTREACH

VA has published **59** news releases related to COVID-19

"Walmart reopens five VA telehealth access points after COVID-19 shutdown"

"VA guarantees more than 1 million home loans in record year"

Secretary Wilkie has participated in 266 media opportunities related to VA's response to COVID-19

630+ good news stories published

EHR Intelligence (Oct. 28, 2020)

"How a VA hospital developed an EHR COVID-19 screening tool"

HPPR (Oct. 28, 2020)

"Slowly and cautiously, the VA is reopening its medical clinics"

Media Outreach figures are from Feb.–Nov.

VETERAN OUTREACH

From Oct. 27–Nov. 2:

- » [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) had **2,811,709** visitors
- » [VA.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.va.gov/Coronavirus) had **9,124** visitors
- » [VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot](https://www.va.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot) had **113,170** visitors

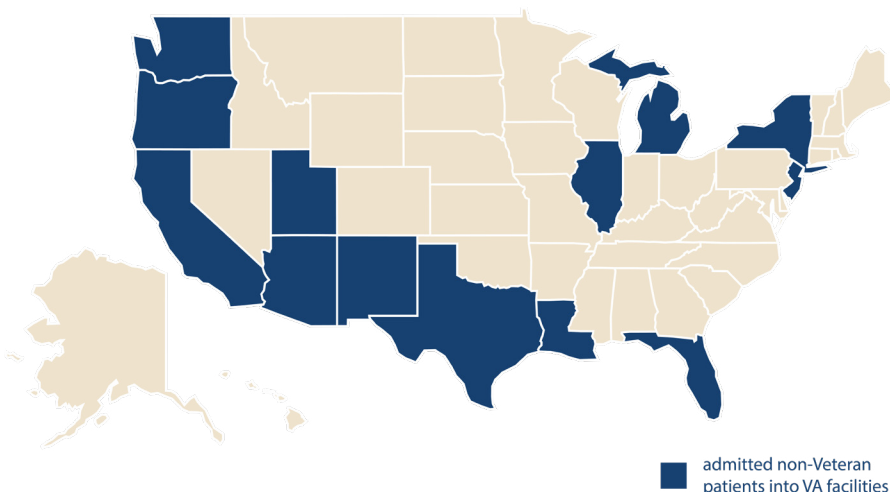
All figures are as of Nov. 2, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

56,113 COVID-19 related calls made to VA 411 & the White House VA Hotline

41,017 calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline: 844-698-2411

FOURTH MISSION

Supporting state & local health care systems



345 COVID-19 non-Veteran patients in **13** states

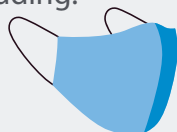
» States supported: TX, OR, WA, NJ, NY, FL, MI, IL, LA, UT, CA, AZ, NM

266 non-Veteran patients discharged

2,132 VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities*

Provided **869,998** total pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE)*, including:

- » **192,090+** masks
- » **545,170+** gloves



18,000+ pieces of PPE provided to WV State Veterans Homes*

56,656 tests processed on behalf of states*

1,022 Veterans admitted to care from State Veterans Homes (as of Oct. 28)

600+ hospital beds offered through Mission Assignments to non-Veteran patients*

**Fourth Mission figures are as of Oct. 30.*

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

21,843 calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19

106,241 VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits

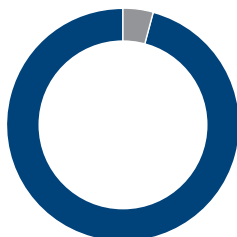
4,469,167 Veterans in **50** states & **7** VSOs reached through **96** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs

VBA figures are from Mar. 16–Oct. 30, unless otherwise noted.

BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS (BVA)

From Mar. 23–Nov. 2, BVA has

- » Held **5,416** virtual hearings
- » Issued **62,824** decisions



NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

82,367 total Veteran interments (from Mar. 9–Oct. 26)

- **3,501** COVID-19 related interments
- **78,866** other interments

6,685 Veteran Legacy Memorial posts (va.gov/remember) (as of Oct. 19)

All figures are as of Nov. 2, 2020, unless otherwise noted.



1) Veterans leave words of wisdom & hope for peers

In spite of COVID-19 safety measures, Veterans discharged from the North TX VA Domiciliary can leave words of inspiration for future residents on a new mural.

[Read the full story.](#)

2) Battling COVID-19 in Oahu

Surgical intensive care nurses from the Asheville VA Health Care System deployed as part of the Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System to Oahu, HI to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)



3) Vets help med students hone people skills

When COVID-19 cut contact between medical students & patients, Milwaukee VAMC established the Warrior Partnership Clinic, which allows med students to practice people skills & learn about the special challenges faced by Veterans.

[Read the full story.](#)

4) Veterans Affairs host their "topping out" event in Terre Haute

Terre Haute, IN Veterans signed the final beam of a new VA clinic that will serve 10,000 Veterans a year. Services will include mental health—especially important during COVID-19.

[Read the full story.](#)



5) A common diabetes medication may lower mortality risk among nursing home residents with COVID-19

A study of VA patients shows a link between the common diabetes drug metformin & a lower risk of COVID-19 related deaths.

[Read the full story.](#)

6) Tucson VA food services overcomes challenges

After 11 months of working outside in a mobile kitchen during the COVID-19 pandemic, Tucson VA Nutrition & Food Services moved back indoors with newly renovated equipment.

[Read the full story.](#)



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

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

VA 411: 844-698-2311

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

[VA.gov/Coronavirus](#)

[VA Coronavirus: FAQs page](#)

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

Sign up for weekly VA email updates at: [VA.gov/VetResources](#)

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs