



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

Weekly Report: November 3–9, 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 913,624 Veterans & employees for COVID-19

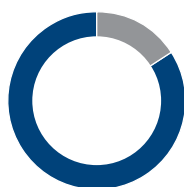
VA has diagnosed 73,084 Veterans with COVID-19

9.21m patients currently enrolled in VA health care

14,911 COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities

» **708** current COVID-19 inpatients

» **60,824** 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

180,325 weekly home or off-site telehealth visits (Oct. 24–31)



1,512% increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Oct. 31)

446,979 prescription refill requests placed (Nov. 1–7)

276,442 secure messages exchanged (Nov. 1–7)

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

MEDIA OUTREACH

VA has published **63** news releases related to COVID-19

"VA releases COVID-19 Response Report"

"VA honors caregivers of Veterans throughout November"

Secretary Wilkie has participated in 268 media opportunities related to VA's response to COVID-19

Nearly 700 good news stories published

Deseret News (Nov. 2, 2020)

"U.S. Secretary of VA: What I learned about Utah's COVID-19 response during my visit"

Healthcare IT News (Nov. 6, 2020)

"Veterans Health Administration to 3D print medical devices"

Media Outreach figures are from Feb.–Nov.

VETERAN OUTREACH

From Nov. 2–8:

» VA.gov had **4,103,478** visitors

» VA.gov/Coronavirus had **7,876** visitors

» VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot had **3,660** visitors

All figures are as of Nov. 9, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

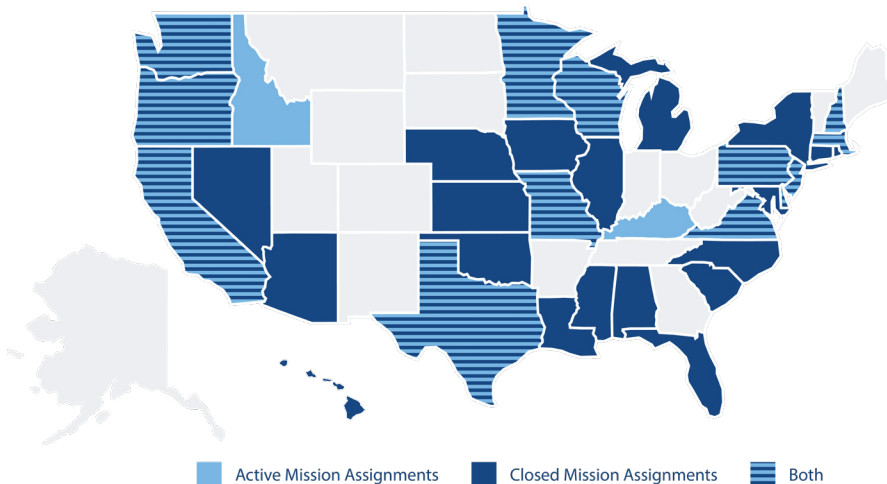
57,712 COVID-19 related calls made to VA 411 & the White House VA Hotline

42,275 calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline: 844-698-2411

Veteran Engagement figures are as of Nov. 8.

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

2,144 VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities*

Provided **870,550** total pieces of personal protective equipment*, including:

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



13 VA staff supporting State Veterans Homes in MO*

56,530 tests processed on behalf of states*

1,085 Veterans admitted to care from State Veterans Homes

10,000+ tests processed on behalf of FL*

**Fourth Mission figures are as of Nov. 6.*

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

21,907 calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19

109,242 VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits

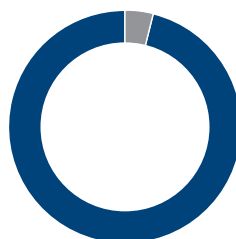
4,501,970 Veterans in **50** states & **7** VSOs reached through **97** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs

VBA figures are from Mar. 16–Nov. 6, unless otherwise noted.

BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS (BVA)

From Mar. 23–Nov. 9, BVA has

- » Held **5,628** virtual hearings
- » Issued **64,438** decisions



All figures are as of Nov. 9, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

87,297 total Veteran interments (from Mar. 9–Nov. 9)

- **3,606** COVID-19 related interments
- **83,691** other interments

7,500 Veteran Legacy Memorial posts (va.gov/remember)



1

1) Puget Sound VA nurses send quilt to Bronx VA nurses

Nurses at VA Puget Sound sent a homemade quilt to nurses at the Bronx VA. The quilt expresses respect & concern for health care staff on the front lines of a facility that was hit hard early in the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)

2) Students' nonprofit increases Veterans' access to telehealth

Telehealth Access for Seniors, a nonprofit organization founded by students, has donated over 700 mobile devices to VA health care facilities around the country. The donations allow Veterans to safely receive care through telehealth appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)



2



3



5

3) VA partners with OnStar to prevent Veteran suicide

Thanks to a partnership between VA & OnStar, Veterans in crisis can use OnStar's in-vehicle emergency services button or smartphone app to connect with mental health assistance. Many Veterans are especially vulnerable to mental health crises during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)

4) Adjusting Programing During A Pandemic

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Buffalo VA recreation therapy team created virtual therapeutic activities using mobile devices & in-person programs, which all follow physical distancing & sanitizing protocols.

[Read the full story.](#)



6

5) Charleston VA wins Shark Tank Competition

The Charleston VA was recognized for its Voluntary Service Curbside Delivery Program, which uses vans from DAV to transport food, hygiene kits, & other critical items to over 500 vulnerable Veterans who are sequestered at home due to COVID-19.

[Read the full story.](#)

6) Innovation in policing at South TX

VA innovation during COVID-19: Five feet tall & weighing 400 pounds, K5 is the newest member of the South TX VA police force. This robot quietly patrols the campus with its 360-degree camera & ability to let people talk directly with a police operator while remaining safely distanced.

[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