



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

## Weekly Report: December 22–28, 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 diagnosed **129,529** Veterans with COVID-19 (as of Dec. 27)



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

**23,500** COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities  
» **1,380** current COVID-19 inpatients

**114,093** COVID-19 patients now in convalescence

### TESTING

**1,147,878** Veterans & employees tested for COVID-19 (as of Dec. 23)

**79,321** tests processed on behalf of states (as of Dec. 17)



### VIRTUAL CARE

**206,618** weekly home or off-site telehealth visits (Dec. 13–19)



**1,747%** increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Dec. 19)

\*Virtual Care figures are from Dec. 20–26.



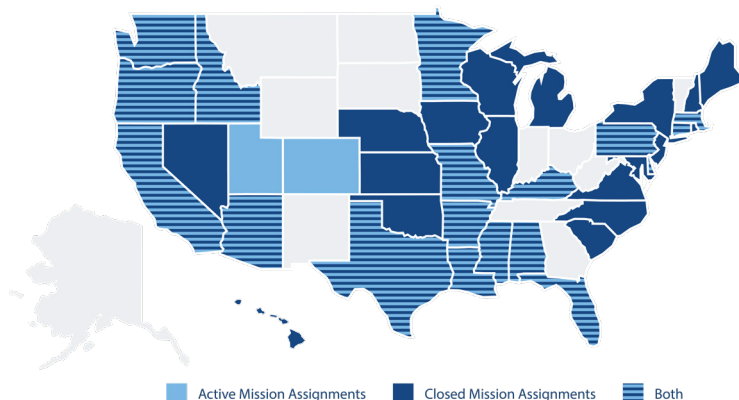
**205,990** secure messages exchanged\*

**376,643** prescription refill requests placed\*

**3,521,661** authenticated patients (as of Nov. 2020)

### FOURTH MISSION

#### Supporting state & local health care systems



**1,372** Veterans admitted to care from State Veterans Homes (as of Dec. 21)

**30** hospital beds provided for non-Veterans in CO community hospitals\*

**11,000+** tests processed on behalf of FL\*

**325** non-Veteran patients discharged home (as of Dec. 29)

**2,266** VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities\*

Provided **911,750** total pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE)\*, including:

**213,834+** masks



**557,170+** gloves



**452** COVID-19 non-Veteran patients in **14** states (as of Dec. 29)

\*Fourth Mission figures are as of Dec. 17.

All figures are as of Dec. 28, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

## VETERAN OUTREACH

[VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) had **2,585,974** visitors

[VA.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.va.gov/Coronavirus) had **14,843** visitors

[VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot](https://www.va.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot) had **8,640** visitors

Veteran Outreach figures are from Dec. 21–27.

## VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

**81,581** COVID-19 related calls made to VA 411 & the White House VA Hotline

**56,027** calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline

Veteran Engagement figures are as of Dec. 27.

## MEDIA OUTREACH

### Secretary Wilkie has participated in **275** media opportunities related to VA's response to COVID-19



**KCTV 5 (Dec. 24, 2020)**

*"Kansas City Veteran Affairs vaccinates 1,000 frontline workers"*

**Chicago Crusader (Dec. 28, 2020)**

*"Volunteer service makes the difference at VA"*

**The Press of Atlantic City (Dec. 27, 2020)**

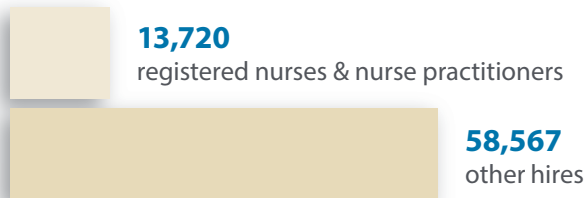
*"Our view: Cape Veterans clinic crowns years improved care in South Jersey"*



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

## STAFFING

### 72,287 total VHA new hires



Staffing figures are from Mar. 29–Dec. 17.

## BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS (BVA)

Held **7,895**  
virtual hearings

Issued **75,913**  
decisions

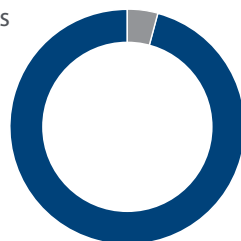


BVA figures are from Mar. 23–Dec. 28.

## NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

**105,395** total Veteran interments (since Mar. 9)

- **4,514** COVID-19 related interments
- **100,881** other interments



**8,950** Veteran Legacy Memorial posts ([va.gov/remember](https://www.va.gov/remember))

All figures are as of Dec. 28, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

## VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

**22,363** calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19 (from Mar. 16–Dec. 25)

**127,309** VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits\*



**5,731,926** Veterans in **50** states & **7** VSOs reached through **110** tele-town halls held to discuss VBA's COVID-19 Response, Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs (from Mar. 16–Dec. 25)

\*VBA figures as of Dec. 25.



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### 1) Son gives father COVID-19 vaccine shot

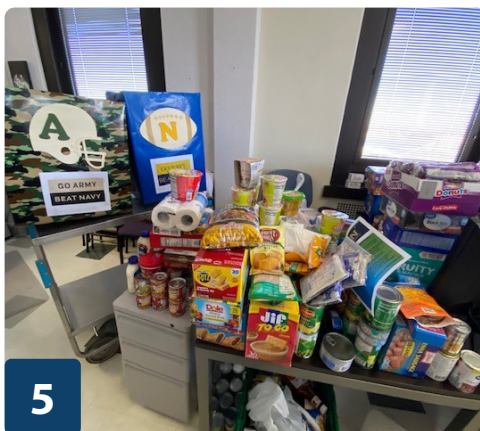
A registered nurse at Milwaukee VA gave the COVID-19 vaccination to his father, a PT assistant who also works at the hospital.

[Read the full story.](#)

### 2) Charity ride on hold, food donations continue

Although this year's Columbia VA Veteran Christmas Charity Ride was canceled due to COVID-19, local community members donated 320 holiday food baskets for Veterans in need.

[Read the full story.](#)



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### 3) Alabama students prep presents for Veterans

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Birmingham, AL elementary students donated & wrapped gifts for every patient at Birmingham VAMC, plus several in transitional housing.

[Read the full story.](#)

### 4) NYC bakery donates 2,700 meals to VA hospital

Butterfield Bakery in New York City donated 2,700 meals to frontline health care workers at VA NY Harbor HS in recognition of their hard work & dedication during COVID-19.

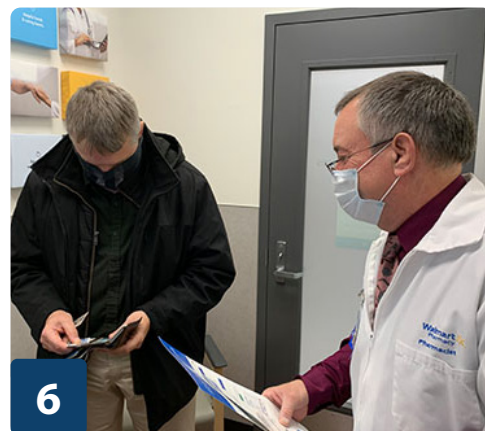
[Read the full story.](#)



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### 5) Army takes on Navy at Amarillo VA

Army & Navy Veteran employees of Amarillo VA competed to bring in the most food donations. The winners were Veterans in need during COVID-19.

[Read the full story.](#)

### 6) Program helps Veterans connect with docs

The relaunched ATLAS program offers telehealth visits for Veterans during COVID-19 from sites such as Walmart stores & American Legion posts.

[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](#)



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs