



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

Weekly Report: October 6–12, 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 **787,223** Veterans & employees for COVID-19



VA has diagnosed **58,240** Veterans with COVID-19

9.21M patients currently enrolled in VA health care

12,267 COVID-19 patients admitted to VA facilities

- » **432** current COVID-19 inpatients
- » **50,690** COVID-19 patients have reached convalescence



397,400 total VA employees

- » From Mar. 29–Oct. 6, VHA has onboarded **55,386** new hires, including **10,436** registered nurses & nurse practitioners

VIRTUAL CARE

176,324 weekly telehealth to home or off-site visits (Sept. 27–Oct. 3)



1,476% increase in home or off-site telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Oct. 3)

453,516 prescription refill requests placed (Sept. 27–Oct. 3)

283,251 secure messages exchanged (Sept. 27–Oct. 3)

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

MEDIA OUTREACH

VA has published **56** news releases related to COVID-19

"VA resumes in-person benefits services halted by the COVID-19 response"

Secretary Wilkie has participated in **245** media opportunities related to VA's response to COVID-19 (as of Oct. 5)

540 good news stories published

WBTV (Oct. 8, 2020)

"Salisbury VA now expanding face-to-face appointments"

13 WMAZ (Oct. 8, 2020)

"Carl Vinson VA Medical Center in Dublin moving to Phase 3 of reopening"

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

VETERAN OUTREACH

From Oct. 6–12:

- » VA.gov had **2,821,438** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus had **6,710** visitors
- » VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot had **103,610** visitors

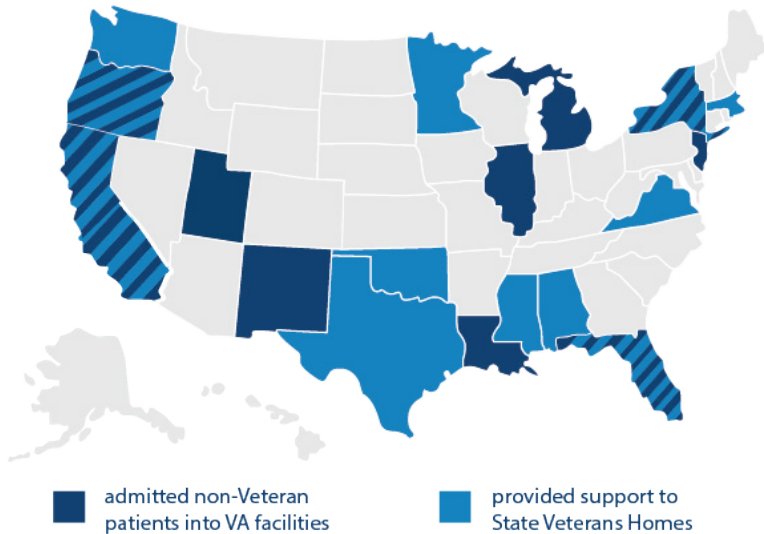
All figures are as of Oct. 12, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

50,796 COVID-19 related calls made to VA311 & the White House VA Hotline

37,074 calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline: 844-698-2311

SUPPORT TO STATES & OTHER AGENCIES



345 COVID-19 non-Veteran patients in 11 states

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

265 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

2,035 VA staff members supporting non-VA facilities (as of Oct. 9)

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)

21,645 calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19 (since Mar. 1)

95,321 VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits

3,524,617 Veterans in **50** states & **7** VSOs reached through **85** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs (since Mar. 1)

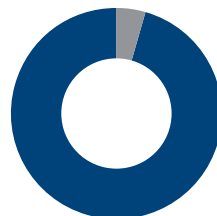
BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS

From Mar. 23–Oct. 5, the Board of Veterans' Appeals has

- » Held **4,262** virtual hearings
- » Issued **53,976** decisions

All figures are as of Oct. 12, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

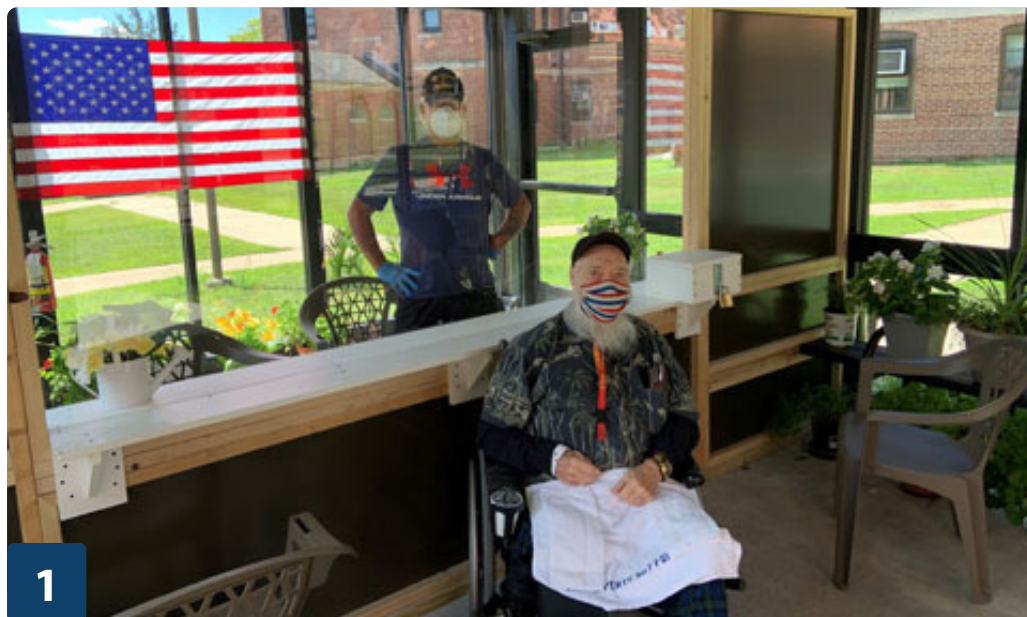


75,833 total Veteran interments (since Mar. 9)

● **3,381** COVID-19 related interments

● **72,452** other interments

6,685 Veteran Legacy Memorial posts (va.gov/remember)



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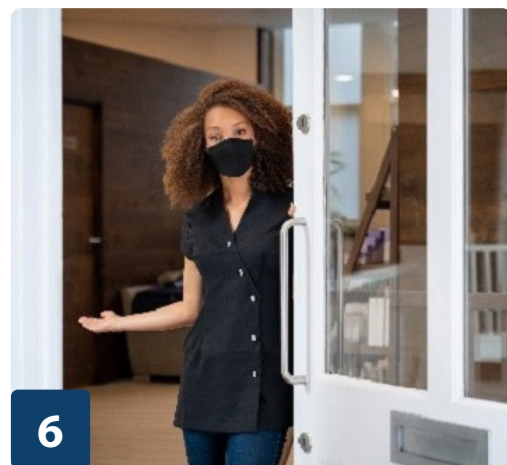
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1) Visitation Cottages for Veterans

Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital created outdoor visitation spaces where Community Living Center residents could comfortably visit with their family members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)

2) Flu Shots Distributed - Preparation COVID Vaccine

VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System is providing flu shots to staff & Veterans. Staff are using the event as a chance to prepare for large-scale COVID-19 vaccinations when the time comes.

[Read the full story.](#)

3) Health Care Heroes

This week's Thank You Thursday features the medical center's Sterile Processing Service (SPS) which has stepped up to serve throughout the hospital during the era of COVID-19.

[Read the full story.](#)

4) Igniting innovation to tackle a historic pandemic

In response to COVID-19, VA innovators have new 3D-printed designs including a retractable door-opening tool. VA has printed more than 1 million 3D objects in 2020, including over 300,000 masks.

[Read the full story.](#)

5) Going Toe to Toe with Social Distancing

Recognizing the likelihood of increased isolation in Veterans & aware of its potential effects, the Social Work team at the White River Junction VA (WRJ VA) wasted no time in coordinating a proactive outreach response.

[Read the full story.](#)

6) VA Continues Masking Requirement at All Facilities

We encourage you to bring a face covering when you visit VA. If you do not have a face covering, we can provide one for use while you are here. Your safe care is our mission.

[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](#)) 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 e-mail updates at: [VA.gov/VetResources](#)

VA



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