



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

Weekly Report: November 17–23, 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
87,617 Veterans
with COVID-19



9.21m patients
currently enrolled
in VA health care

17,176 COVID-19 patients
admitted to VA facilities
» **944** current COVID-19 inpatients

70,694 COVID-19
patients have reached
convalescence

TESTING

**VA has tested 989,636 Veterans
& employees for COVID-19**

77,880
tests processed on
behalf of states (as of Nov. 18)



VIRTUAL CARE

148,035 weekly home or off-site
telehealth visits (Nov. 8–14)



1,223%
increase in home or off-site
telehealth visits (Mar. 1–Nov. 14)

*Virtual Care figures are from Nov. 15–21.



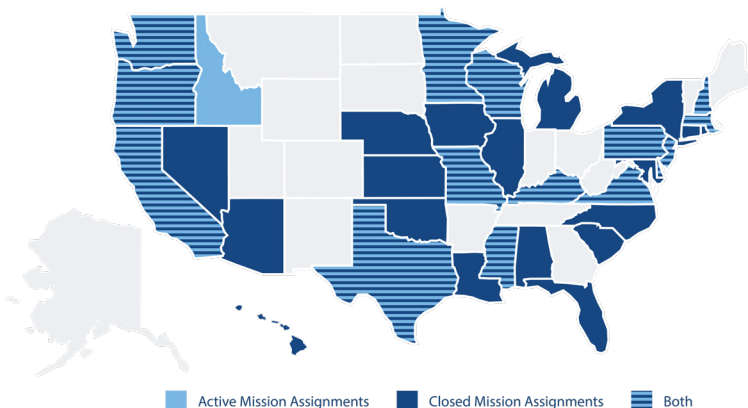
292,353 secure
messages exchanged*

472,346 prescription refill requests placed*

3,496,839 authenticated patients (as of Oct. 2020)

FOURTH MISSION

Supporting state & local health care systems



267 non-Veteran patients
discharged home

2,143 VA staff members
supporting non-VA facilities*

1,156 Veterans admitted to care
from State Veterans Homes*

84 nurses & other
clinical staff who
supported MO
State Veterans
Homes*

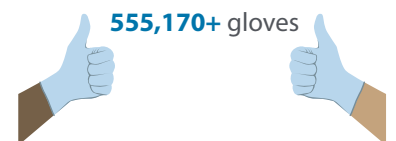
10 UT nursing
homes supported
with PPE consultation
& fit testing by Salt
Lake City VA*

Provided **908,380** total pieces of personal
protective equipment (PPE)*, including:

213,774+ masks



555,170+ gloves



358 COVID-19 non-Veteran patients in **14** states

*Fourth Mission figures are as of Nov. 18.

All figures are as of Nov. 23, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

VETERAN OUTREACH

VA.gov had **3,785,389** visitors

VA.gov/Coronavirus had **8,913** visitors

VA.gov/Coronavirus-chatbot had **5,570** visitors

Veteran Outreach figures are from Nov. 16–22.

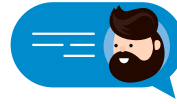


VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

62,912 COVID-19 related calls made to VA 411 & the White House VA Hotline

45,813 calls made to VA's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Hotline

Veteran Engagement figures are as of Nov. 22.



MEDIA OUTREACH

Secretary Wilkie has participated in **268** media opportunities related to VA's response to COVID-19 (as of Nov. 16)

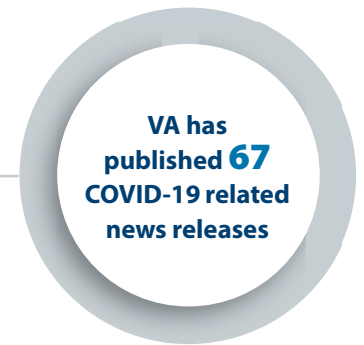


The American Legion (Nov. 18, 2020)

"Pennsylvania's District 12 continues support for VA patients"

The Town-Crier (Nov. 19, 2020)

"Red Cross partners with WPB VA on notes of hope for homeless Vets"



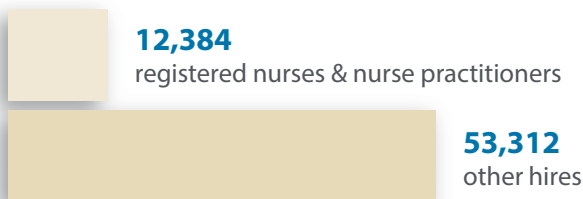
"VA, federal partners plan for COVID-19 vaccination distribution"

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

STAFFING

BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS (BVA)

65,696 total VHA new hires (from Mar. 29–Nov. 17)



Staffing figures are from Oct. 1–Nov. 17.

Held **6,350** virtual hearings

Issued **67,813** decisions



BVA figures are from Mar. 23–Nov. 20.

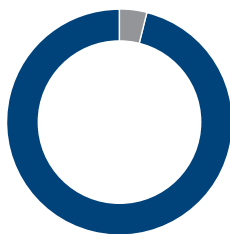
NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION (VBA)

92,710 total Veteran interments (since Mar. 9)

- **3,786** COVID-19 related interments
- **88,924** other interments

8,850 Veteran Legacy Memorial posts (va.gov/remember)



22,040 calls received at VBA National Call Center related to COVID-19*

114,870 VA Video Connect appointments conducted for VA benefits



5,259,144 Veterans in **50** states & **7** VSOs reached through **105** tele-town halls held to discuss Blue Water Navy, VBBP, & Solid Start Programs*

All figures are as of Nov. 23, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

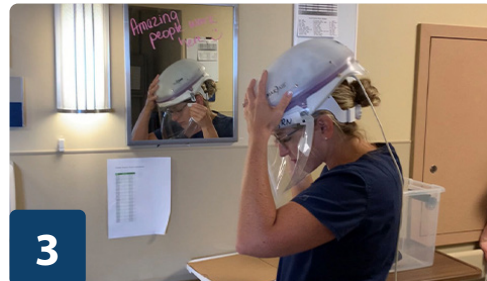
*VBA figures are from Mar. 16–Nov. 23.



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1) When COVID-19 vaccine comes, VA will be ready

Planning is underway to deliver a COVID-19 vaccine when one becomes available. VA is working with the CDC to develop a phased plan based on 5 core ethical pillars: safety, maximizing the benefit of the vaccine, equity, fairness & transparency.

[Read the full story.](#)

2) All hands on deck: 11M pairs of gloves on way to VA hospitals

11M pairs of gloves are headed to VA hospitals & clinics around the country as part of an effort led by New Hampshire to secure PPE for front-line workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the full story.](#)

3) Milwaukee VA stays atop COVID-19 surge

While a surge of COVID-19 cases are flooding hospitals all over the country (especially in Wisconsin) the Milwaukee VAMC is staying atop the wave thanks to preparation & lessons learned in the spring.

[Read the full story.](#)

4) Telehealth pilot program provides at-home care

A new cardiology telehealth pilot program at the Tampa VA lets VA health care teams monitor vital signs remotely from anywhere in the country, allowing heart surgery patients to remain at home, safe from potential exposure to COVID-19.

[Read the full story.](#)

5) Five ways VA supports rural Veterans during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges facing the nearly 5M Veterans who live rural communities leave them particularly vulnerable. VA is committed to providing high-quality health care to rural Veterans during the pandemic & beyond.

[Read the full story.](#)

6) Cutting-edge COVID-19 testing system at Northport

Northport VAMC recently acquired a BioFire respiratory panel system to aid in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The system provides quick COVID-19 test results, taking the wait down from 2 days to 1 hour.

[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
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