

## Veterans Newsletter

Broome County Executive Office  
PO Box 1766  
Binghamton, NY 13902

## HELPFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

### Broome County Veterans Service Agency

To provide assistance in determining eligibility and applying for VA benefits.

Broome County Office Building  
60 Hawley St., 4th Floor  
PO Box 1766 Binghamton, NY 13902  
Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm  
(Please make appointment)  
607-778-2147

### Binghamton Veterans Center

Providing counseling to combat veterans.  
53 Chenango St. Binghamton, NY 13901  
Monday – Friday 9:00am-5:30pm & by appointment  
607-722-2393

### VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic Binghamton

Provides Primary Care. Can refer to additional services and provide transportation to Syracuse VA Hospital.  
Garvin Building 425 Robinson St.  
Binghamton, NY 13901  
Monday – Friday 8:00am-4:30pm  
607-772-9100

### Veterans Crisis Hotline

Confidential help for Veterans and their families.  
1-800-273-8255 (press 1)  
www.veteranscrisisline.net  
Text 838255

### Military Order of the Purple Heart

Provides information and assist in processing benefit claims.  
(Purple Heart Award not necessary for services.)  
VA Outpatient Clinic 425 Robinson St.  
Binghamton, NY 13904  
607-772-3087

### NYS Division of Veterans Affairs

To provide assistance in determining eligibility and applying for VA benefits.  
Broome County Office Building  
60 Hawley St., 4th Floor  
PO Box 1766 Binghamton, NY 13902  
Mon., Wed. & Fri. 8:30am – 4:30pm  
(Appointments (607) 724-1299)  
Veterans Home Oxford  
Tues. & Thurs. (607) 843-3299



## Welcome from the County Executive

On behalf of the residents of Broome County, I'd like to present the Fall 2016 edition of your Veterans Newsletter.

I've often said that Veterans hold a special place in my heart. We do a great deal in our community to make sure you are not forgotten.

We have done some great things for our Veterans over the past few months. You will read about Broome County hosting the American Legion convention, donations and new services to help our Veterans, get information on the upcoming Honor Flight and see who was honored as a "Veteran of Distinction" by the Broome County Legislature

I want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you for your service and your sacrifice, past and present.

God bless you and your families and God Bless America.

DebbiePreston

Broome County Executive

## County Legislature Honors Veterans of Distinction

On May 19, 2016, Chairman Dan Reynolds and the Broome County Legislature held its 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans of Distinction ceremony. The ceremony honors local Veterans and celebrates their service, both as members of the Armed Forces, and as members of the Veterans community after their active duty. The Veterans of Distinction ceremony recognizes men and women of all branches of service and all conflicts who represent the thousands of Veterans residing in Broome County. At the ceremony, the Broome County Legislators presented Certificates of Appreciation to the Veterans of Distinction who have been nominated through one of the local Veterans organizations such as the VFW or American Legion.

This year's Veterans of Distinction are:

**Cara Tilton**, who served in the United States Marine Corps. She is also a member of the Southern Tier Veterans Support Group. Ms. Tilton was presented her certificate by Legislator Mary Kaminsky.

**Robert Brady**, who served in the United States Army in Vietnam. He is a member of American Legion Post 974. Mr. Brady was given his certificate by Legislator Ron Keibel.

**James Ryan**, who served in the United States Army in Vietnam. He is a member of American Legion Post 80. He was presented his certificate by Legislator Mark Whalen.

**Thomas Nedlik**, who served for four years in the United States Air Force. He is a member of American Legion Post 758. Mr. Nedlik was given his certificate by Legislator Ron Heebner.

**Edward Arnold**, who served in the United States Navy for 23 years, and was stationed in Germany. He is also a member of American Legion



*Stephen Smith of American Legion Post 758 (left) and Legislator Ron Heebner (right) presenta certificate to Veteran Thomas Nedlik (center).*

Post 82. Mr. Arnold was presented his certificate by Legislator Matt Pasquale.

**Robert Fiedler**, who served in the United States Army in Korea. He is a member of the Korean War Veterans Association. He was given his certificate by Legislator Michael Sopchak.

**Gerald Page**, who served in the United States Army in Vietnam. He is a member of American Legion Post

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# Veterans Day Luncheon



Broome County Office for Aging  
invites all veterans to a special luncheon on

**Wednesday, November 9, 2016**

(Thursday, November 10 in Deposit)

to honor your service to our country

Lunch served around noon

Menu includes chicken cordon bleu, brown rice, traditional blend vegetables, dinner roll, lemon meringue pie and beverage.

**All veterans receive a complimentary lunch!**

Please reserve your meal by noon on Tuesday, November 8,  
by calling the senior center of your choice or 778-2298.

## Participating Senior Centers

Broome West: Endwell 785-1777

Johnson City: 797-1149

Deposit: 467-3953

North Shore Towers: Binghamton 772-6214

Eastern Broome: Harpursville 693-2069

Northern Broome: Whitney Point 692-3405

First Ward: Binghamton 729-6214

Vestal: 754-9596

# WANTED!



**WORLD WAR II, KOREAN, VIETNAM  
AND TERMINALLY ILL VETERANS  
OF ANY CONFLICT**

**“HONOR FLIGHT IS FREE TO ALL VETERANS”**

**“TWIN TIERS HONOR FLIGHT”**

**Transports Veterans to Washington, DC to visit their National Memorials**

**Each Veteran is accompanied by a Guardian to ensure the Veteran  
experiences the trip of a lifetime!**

**Download Veteran & Guardian Applications:**

**[www.twintiershonorflight.org](http://www.twintiershonorflight.org)**

**Additional Information:** [twintiershonorflight@gmail.com](mailto:twintiershonorflight@gmail.com) or **(914)-420-2545**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

**1 PERSON**

**can make a difference.**

**1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1**



### CALL US IN TIMES OF CRISIS

When emotional issues reach a crisis point, it's time to call the Veterans Crisis Line for support. Sometimes, a crisis may involve signs of suicide such as: hopelessness, anxiety, agitation, rage, anger, feeling as if there is no reason to live, engaging in risky activity without thinking, increased drug or alcohol abuse, and withdrawal from family and friends.

**If you know a Veteran who is experiencing a crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line immediately. You are not alone.**

**Veterans Crisis Line**



© 10/14 VHA

••• Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to **838255** •••

### Office for Aging Hosts Information Session for Veterans and Families

The Broome County Office for Aging, along with the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs and the New York State Office for the Aging hosted an information session for Veterans, currently serving members of the Armed Forces, and families of Veterans and Service members about benefits and services available to Veterans and their family members.



The idea was to allow attendees to receive information directly from agencies and organizations responsible for helping Veterans and their families receive these benefits.

Topics discussed included assistance for Veterans and their family members seeking federal, state, and local Veterans' benefits, access to healthcare for Veterans and their families, nursing home care available to Veterans and their families, and state-offered benefits from transportation assistance to meals to home care that allow older adults and individuals of all ages with disabilities to remain in their homes for as long as possible.

### Broome County Hosted New York State American Legion Convention



Binghamton, NY – Nearly a thousand people came to Broome County in July to take part in the 98<sup>th</sup> annual New York State American Legion Convention, as well as the 96<sup>th</sup> annual New York State Auxiliary Convention and the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Sons of the American Legion Convention.

“We are thrilled to welcome hundreds and hundreds of veterans to our community to host this event for the 4<sup>th</sup> time since 1999,” says Broome County Executive Debbie

Preston. “Not only will this be a large economic boost, but it shows people from around the state how much we care about our Veterans.”

“We welcome the opportunity to host the 98<sup>th</sup> annual American Legion Convention in Broome County,” Konopka says. “We know that people enjoyed their visit back in 2011 and we hope to show them the same great time or event better time this year.”

The Holiday Inn in Downtown Binghamton, along with the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena served as the headquarters for the Legion Convention. The Arena Board graciously waived the rental fee for the Arena, saving the convention thousands of dollars in costs.

The Doubletree by Hilton in Binghamton will serve as the headquarters for the Auxiliary and the Quality Inn and Suites in Vestal will serve as the headquarters for the Sons of the American Legion convention.

“There’s no better place to hold this statewide Convention and recognize the contributions of our Veterans, than right here at our very own Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena,” said Chairman Daniel Reynolds. “As a member of the Arena Board of Directors I was glad we were able to waive the rental fee for our Veterans. We take great pride in helping and honoring our Veterans in the community, from the new DAV Van, to the Honor Flights, the Legislature’s Annual Veterans of Distinction Ceremony and helping secure the statewide convention is another example of one of the many things Broome County is doing to support our Veterans.”

“We’re a community that respects and values our veterans, and having so many distinguished individuals come to Binghamton for the state American Legion convention is a bright spot for both the City and the Southern Tier,” says Binghamton Mayor Richard C. David.

## Senator Fred Akshar Announces Funding for Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Program in Broome County

Senator Fred Akshar joined County Executive Debra Preston and local veterans advocates at the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena to announce that Broome will be the 16th county in New York to have its own Joseph P. Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Veterans Support Program.



“One of the first meetings I took last year was a round-table with a group of local veterans and it became clear that we need more support services,” said Senator Fred Akshar. “The Dwyer Program is very versatile, each county can use a bottom-up approach to identify the needs of veterans in their area and structure their program accordingly.”

After local veterans identified the need for more peer-to-peer support for returning servicemen and women, Senator Akshar worked to secure \$120,000 in this year’s State Budget to expand the Dwyer peer outreach support program to the Southern Tier.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, one in three veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from some degree of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). More shockingly, the department reports that 19 veterans commit suicide every day across the United States.

“Having several of my family members proudly serve our Country, I know firsthand how difficult it can be for them when they return home,” says Broome County Executive Debbie Preston. “This new peer-to-peer program will be a great benefit because the veterans will be able to confide in other veterans, who understand what they went through. I believe this program will help in the healing process for many of our returning heroes.”

The Dwyer program will provide a safe space for peer-to-peer counseling, outreach and educational opportunities, while aiming to help address the gap between clinical services and family support.

“As strong advocates for local Veterans, we are excited to see this new program being brought to Broome County. There are some resources for veterans currently in the area already, such as the Veterans Center but we are happy to see an evolving approach to Veterans services” said local advocate, Barbara Beebe.

Through the program, local veterans will conduct one-on-one and group setting support meetings, offer referral services, help integrate veterans into the community and provide discussion forums.

“Veterans put their lives on the line and sacrifice so much, it’s crucial to give them the support and tools they need at home,” said Senator Akshar.

Broome County is working with existing veterans support programs to identify the specific needs of our local veterans and are working toward an end-of-year start date.

### Wounded Warrior vs. Law Enforcement Softball Game at NYSEG Stadium July 30th



## Saratoga National Cemetery

By Joseph Sullivan

The Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery located in Schuylerville, NY and founded in 1999 believes that military veterans should be buried with dignity and honor. Its mission statement is “to ensure that the veteran’s burial service is handled respectfully.” Saratoga pledges to honor the memory of each veteran and to provide excellent service to the family.

Upon entering the cemetery which is situated on 373 acres, a kiosk is provided to visitors with gravesite information, a map to locate the gravesite and other general information. Each year, Saratoga accommodates over 1,000 burials and it serves an estimated 200,000 veterans in New York and Vermont. It serves casketed and cremated remains.

Burial benefits provided at no cost to the next-of-kin, include: burial plot, opening and closing of the gravesite, a government liner, headstone or liner with inscription, internment flag, perpetual care of the gravesite and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Funeral director’s services are not covered.

Gravesites are assigned by the cemetery and cannot be selected in advance. Assignments are made without regard to rank, ethnic or religious background, branch of service or other factors. The veteran and spouse are interred in the same grave. If both are veterans, they may choose to be buried side-by-side in separate graves.

In order to pay homage to the veteran, Saratoga asks the veteran’s next-of-kin contact the cemetery directly to schedule active duty interments, schedule memorial services without interment, cancel or reschedule interments, change information initially provided to the office or request disinterment or relocation of remains.

Military honors are provided by the Department of Defense and are to be arranged by the funeral director. If there is no funeral director, cemetery staff will assist the family in arranging for military honors.

The funeral home should fax all available military discharge documents - DD 214 - to the scheduling office at (866) 900-6417 and follow up with a call to (800) 535-1117. If the military discharge documents are not available, the scheduling office representatives will assist the funeral home or next-of-kin with the verification process. This may require 48 hours or more to determine eligibility for burial in a national cemetery. The scheduling office is open seven days a week from 7 am to 6:30 PM.

For more information contact:  
Gerald B.H. Solomon,  
Saratoga National Cemetery,  
200 Duell Road, Schuylerville, NY 12871  
Phone: (518) 583- 9128.  
Website: [www.cem.va.gov/](http://www.cem.va.gov/).

## NY Connects: Choices for Long Term Services and Supports

NY Connects is an Aging and Disability Resource Center that is easy to access and available to all individuals who may need help with their long term needs, regardless of age, income or source of payment.

NY Connects empowers individuals and families to consider available services and supports whether in the community, or in an assisted living or nursing home facility. The core services offered by NY Connects include information and assistance, conflict free referrals, assistance applying for public benefits, and person centered planning including care transitions and individualized options counseling.

NY Connects serves anyone needing information on long term services and supports: a child or adult with a disability, a family member or caregiver, friends and neighbors, older adults or professionals.

Call NY Connects at 607-778-2278 for information on long term services and supports.



## Fly Fishing

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“When we were approached for a donation last year, we were delighted to help,” says Director of Veteran Services Brian Vojtisek. “This program fits into our mission of helping veterans financially, and in adjusting to a return to civilian life.”

This is a one-time donation.

## Veterans of Distinction *Continued from Page 1*

1300. Mr. Page was presented his certificate by Legislator Kelly Wildoner.

**Daniel Kriner**, who served for over 21 years in the United States Army. He is a member of American Legion Post 1254. He was given his certificate by Legislator Karl Bernhardsen.

**John Bannister** served in the United States Army for four years. He is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter #896. He was presented his certificate by Legislator Scott Baker.

**George Coates** served in the United States Marine Corps. He is a member of American Legion Post 89. Mr. Coates was given his certificate by Legislator Dan Reynolds.

**Peggy Phillips** served for over thirty years in the United States Army. She is a member of the Military Officers Association of America, Southern Tier Chapter. Ms. Phillips was presented her certificate by Legislator Ron Heebner.

**Robert Wood** served for over in the United States Air Force. He is a member of and American Legion Post 1700. He was presented his certificate by Legislator Matt Pasquale.

Lastly, **Brian Spencer** served in the United States Army for four years. He is a member of the Veterans of Modern Warfare, Chapter 9. He was given his certificate by Legislator Dan Reynolds.

The Broome County Legislature appreciates the sacrifices made by our Veterans to protect the freedoms that all Americans enjoy. If you know someone that you would like to nominate to be a 2017 Veteran of Distinction, please contact your local Veterans' organization.

*County Clerk and Veteran Rick Blythe (right) leads the invocation to begin the Veterans of Distinction ceremony.*



*Legislator Karl Bernhardsen (right) discusses Veterans issues with Daniel Kriner of American Legion Post 1254 (left).*

## "Mr. Wednesday's" Medals Proudly Displayed in Clerk's Office



Broome County Executive Debbie Preston joined Broome County Clerk Rick Blythe to honor a former member of the DAV.

Known as "Mr. Wednesday," Carl Oliver was a decorated World War II veteran who would visit County Clerk Rick Blythe every Wednesday. During his military career, Oliver served as an Army medic and was involved in 5 major battles and campaigns, including the Battle of the Bulge. After his discharge in Paris in 1946, Oliver had a hard time receiving his VA benefits because he was discharged overseas.

Blythe worked with the DAV and the Broome County Veterans Services Office, and obtained Oliver's medals, which are proudly hung on display in the County Clerk's office. "Carl Oliver was a wonderful man, who proudly served his Country," says County Clerk Blythe. "I am honored to be able to call Carl a friend and to have his medals on display in my office as a reminder of not only his dedication to his Country, but also to our friendship."

Oliver passed away in 2006 and is buried in the Chenango Valley Cemetery.



## County Leaders, DAV Address How to Help Local Disabled Veterans

(Binghamton, NY) Broome County Executive Debbie Preston joined Broome County Clerk Rick Blythe, Director of Veteran Services Brian Vojtisek and Commander of the Bill Gaspar Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 60, Jeffrey Largue, to discuss ways the community can help disabled veterans in our community.



"These brave men and women set their lives aside for the good of our Country," says Broome County Executive Debbie Preston. "We have a local group that does its best to help these veterans out in any way they can."

In 2014, Broome County purchased a van and donated it to the DAV to help transport disabled veterans to and from doctor's appointments. On top of that, the group is constantly trying to raise money that is used to help our local disabled veterans with financial needs.

"I have spoken to people who do not even know that we exist, or they think they have to have been wounded or hurt to be a member of our organization. We help all veterans that are having trouble," says DAV Commander Jeffrey Largue. "I think the most important thing we can do for our veterans is to get exposure to the services that are available to our servicemen who have come home."

The Disabled American Veterans meet the second Monday of every month except for the months of July and August, but we are available at any time to help when someone is in need. They meet on the second floor of American Legion Post 80 on Main Street in Binghamton. There is an elevator for those veterans who have trouble climbing stairs.

Donations from the public are the only way they keep the organization running. They do fund raisers by selling forget-me-nots at certain functions and at department stores. Anyone wishing to donate can do so by sending a check to the Disabled American Veterans P.O. Box# 308 Binghamton, New York 13902.

To obtain more information on the D.A.V. you may call me at (607) 242-2798 "Every little bit helps to get these veterans what they need, we have wheelchairs and small motorized scooters available for loan," Largue says.

## County Leaders Announce Donation to Veterans Fly Fishing Program



Broome County Executive Debbie Preston, Broome County Legislators, and Director of Veteran Services Brian Vojtisek joined the Broome County Veterans Fly Fishing Program to discuss details of a recent donation to help the program.

Broome County gave \$10,000 to the program to help offset costs for travel to fly fishing destinations to facilitate fly fishing instruction. "As you know, veterans hold a very special place in my heart and I'm willing to help them out in any way that I can," says Broome County Executive Debbie Preston. "Fly fishing is a wonderful activity and I'm on board with anything we can do to help our local veterans live the best possible lives they can after sacrificing a part of their life for this Country."

The mission of the Binghamton Veteran Fly Fishers is to lift the morale and support the welfare of Broome County veterans.

"We want to thank the County Executive and Brian Vojtisek in the Veterans Services Office for this wonderful donation," says Gary Romanic, vice president of the Broome County Veterans Fly Fishing program. "This money will go a long way in not only getting the veterans to prime fly fishing areas, but also to provide instruction to those who have never fished before."

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## “HOW CAN I HELP YOU?”

<b>Homeless Veteran</b>	<b>Immediately call the 24-hour National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID-VET</b>	
<b>Benefit Eligibility Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Videos and easy to understand 30 second eligibility quiz are available on <a href="http://explore.va">explore.va</a></li> <li>A hardcopy and online handbook is for available benefits and qualifications information</li> <li>Comprehensive benefits and eligibility information are available at <a href="http://ebenefits.va">ebenefits.va</a></li> </ul>	VA National Call Center: 1-800-827-1000 Benefits Handbook: <a href="http://www.va.gov/opa/">www.va.gov/opa/</a> Easy to understand videos about all VA programs and eligibility: <a href="http://explore.va.gov/">http://explore.va.gov/</a> Applications and detailed eligibility: <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a>
<b>Benefit Application/Claim Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information, forms, and phone numbers are available online for Veterans and their dependents</li> </ul>	All forms and applications available at: <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a>  Videos that explain how to fill out select forms: <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/videos.asp">http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/videos.asp</a>  VA National Call Center: 1-800-827-1000
<b>Disability Compensation Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to eligible Veterans</li> <li>Eligibility is determined by injuries/diseases from/aggravated by service</li> </ul>	All forms and information available at: <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a>
<b>Dependency &amp; Indemnity Compensation for Veteran's Dependents</b>	Dependents may be awarded tax-free benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Death during military service or post-service related to a service-connected disability</li> <li>Death after extended period of 100 percent disability</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-dependency_and_indemnity.asp">http://benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-dependency_and_indemnity.asp</a>  <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a>
<b>Education and Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The post-9/11 GI Bill pays higher education tuition, housing and stipends for Veterans, service members or their dependents</li> <li>Eligibility - served at least 90 days on active duty after 9/10/2001</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/">http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/</a>  GI Bill Hotline :at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (442-4551)
<b>Insurance and TSGLI/SGLI Questions</b>	Veterans are eligible for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance Service members' Group Life Insurance</li> <li>Veterans' Group Life Insurance</li> <li>Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance</li> <li>TSGLI - SGLI Traumatic Injury Protection</li> </ul>	All forms and information available at: <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance">http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance</a>  VA Life Insurance Call Center: at 1-800-669-8477
<b>Home Loan Guaranty Program Questions or Payment on a VA-Provided Home Loan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VA guarantees loans made by private lenders such as banks, savings and loan associations, and mortgage companies</li> <li>The VA provides Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grants for severely disabled Veterans</li> </ul>	All forms and information available at: <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/index.asp">www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/index.asp</a>  Payment Assistance:1-877-827-3702
<b>Transition Assistance Program (TAP)</b>	TAP may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition from service briefings and assistance</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.dodtap.mil/">https://www.dodtap.mil/</a>
<b>Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&amp;E) Information</b>	VR&E includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational assessments, counseling and planning for education and employment</li> <li>Payment for tuition, books, fees, supplies, and monthly subsistence</li> <li>Job-seeking skills and assistance in finding employment</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs</a>
<b>For information about benefits or VA services, call the VA National Call Center at 1-800-827-1000 Monday-Friday 8am-9pm EST* *Call back service may be available after hours</b>		

Veterans Benefits Administration

As of 5/5/15



**To help a Veteran in crisis, call the 24 hour Crisis Hotline at 1-800-273-8255 option 1**

## “HOW CAN I HELP?”

<b>Health Benefits or Application Questions</b>	VA provides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary care</li> <li>Mental health care (including Veteran-specific treatment for PTSD, TBI care, etc.)</li> <li>Preventative care</li> <li>A wide variety of specialty care</li> <li>Inpatient and outpatient pharmacy</li> <li>Geriatric care</li> <li>Long term care and support</li> </ul>	Application, program and eligibility information available at: <a href="http://www.va.gov/health/AboutVHA.asp">http://www.va.gov/health/AboutVHA.asp</a> <a href="http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility">www.va.gov/healtheligibility</a> <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a> 1-877-222-VETS (8387)	Veterans Health Administration
<b>Locating the nearest VA Medical Center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VA medical facilities can be found across the country, divided into 23 regional networks</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a> VA National Call Center: 1-800-827-1000 And Veterans Health Administration Helpline: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)	
<b>Access to Patient Medical information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My HealtheVet is VA's online personal health record system designed to help VA patients manage their healthcare records and notes from medical providers</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="https://www.myhealth.va.gov/in dex.html">https://www.myhealth.va.gov/in dex.html</a> 1-877-327-0022	
<b>Rural Veterans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The VA Office of Rural Health helps rural Veterans access medical care through VA facilities</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov">http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov</a>	
<b>Burial and memorial Benefits Information</b>	VA offers Veterans and their dependents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burial and honoring services, including gravesites and grave liners</li> <li>Maintenance of national cemeteries</li> <li>Headstones, markers, and presidential memorial certificates</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://www.cem.va.gov">www.cem.va.gov</a>  <a href="https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/">https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/</a>  National Call Center: 1-800-827-1000	National Cemetery Administration
<b>Whistleblower Complaints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Office of Inspector General Hotline receives, screens, and refers complaints within VA</li> <li>Cases are accepted on a select basis based on the most potential risk to veterans, VA programs, and operations</li> </ul>	Reporting information available at: <a href="http://www.va.gov/oig">www.va.gov/oig</a> 1-800-488-8244 <a href="mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov">vaoighotline@va.gov</a>	
<b>Support Services for VA Employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Employee Assistance Program helps employees manage personal issues in a confidential manner</li> <li>Local Union representatives are available to provide additional information</li> </ul>	EAP Information available at: 1-202-461-5931  Union information available at: <a href="http://www.va.gov/LMR/laborunions.asp">http://www.va.gov/LMR/laborunions.asp</a>	VA Central Office and Special Offices
<b>Veteran (Vet) Center information</b>	Vet Centers provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual and Group Counseling</li> <li>Discharge Upgrade Information</li> <li>Community, Social Service and Medical Referrals</li> <li>Employee Assistance Referrals</li> <li>VA Benefits Assistance Referrals</li> </ul>	Information available at: 1-877-WAR-VETS	
<b>Claims Appeal Process information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Veteran or dependent/caregiver has a full year to appeal a denied claim regarding any benefit offered by VA - disability, healthcare, or burial related</li> <li>To appeal, Veterans must file a Notice of Disagreement (NOD) with the Administration that denied the benefit</li> <li>The appeals process has many stages, and most of the appeals processing and resolutions take place in the Administration that made the initial claims decision.</li> <li>If Veterans or dependents/caregivers are not satisfied with the appeals decision/statement of the case, they may continue to pursue their appeal before the Board of Veterans' Appeals</li> </ul>	Information available at: <a href="http://www.bva.va.gov/How_Do_I_Appeal.asp">http://www.bva.va.gov/How_Do_I_Appeal.asp</a>  1-800-923-8387	
<b>VA Organizational Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on VA's organizational structure and Administrations</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a>	