

WELCOME PAGE

Welcome to the "Introduction to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Programs" module.

This module will help you, as a Nevada Veterans Advocate (NVA), understand the VHA Programs. You may receive questions about the VHA programs such as:

- What VA health benefits are available and what am I entitled to?
- What are the eligibility requirements for VA health care?
- How can I apply for the VHA benefits?
- I want a VA ID card. How can I get one?

The answer to these and many other questions will be addressed during this module. As an NVA, you will be able to use the information in this module to answer some of the basic questions about VHA Programs and refer veterans to the appropriate person or VA Department for additional information.

Let's begin.

COURSE CONTENT

VA Health Care benefits

VHA provides world-class health care to eligible veterans. The VHA is America's largest integrated health care system, with more than 1,700 sites of care, and it is consistently ranked among the nation's top health care providers. Many veterans may be eligible for VHA health care. Enrollment in VHA health care satisfies your Affordable Care Act health coverage requirement (Obama Care)—no add-on insurance plan is needed. VHA encourages all veterans to explore the VHA's health care benefits, including the following services:

- All enrolled veterans have access to VHA's comprehensive medical benefits package including preventive, primary, and specialty care; prescriptions; mental health care; home health care; geriatrics and extended care; medical equipment and prosthetics; and more.
- Most veterans qualify for cost-free health care services, although some veterans must pay modest co pays for health care or prescriptions. Priority Group 1 prescriptions are free; Priority Groups 2 through 6 are \$8.00 per prescription; Priority Groups 7 through 8 are \$9.00 per prescription. Prescriptions provided for the treatment of a service-connected condition are free.
- Women veterans can receive primary care, breast and cervical cancer screenings, prenatal care, maternity care coverage, and other gender-specific services.
- Veterans who have served in combat-zones—and their family members—may visit VA's many community-based Readjustment Counseling Services (Vet Centers), which provide no-cost counseling, outreach, and referral services to help the whole family adjust to life after deployment. There are Vet Centers currently in Las Vegas, Henderson, and Reno.
- Combat veterans who were discharged or released from active service on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible to enroll in the VHA health care system for five years from the date of their discharge or release, regardless of their disability claim status. Combat veterans who enroll with VHA under this enhanced combat

veteran authority will continue to be enrolled after their enhanced eligibility period ends, although their enrollment priority group may change. Many combat veterans applying after their five-year special enrollment period ends are eligible for enrollment and are encouraged to learn more about these and other health care benefits on [VA's health benefits page](#).

Priority Groups

The number of veterans who can be enrolled in the health care program is determined by the amount of money Congress gives VA each year. Since funds are limited, VA set up Priority Groups to make sure that certain groups of veterans are able to be enrolled before others.

Once an applicant applies for enrollment, their eligibility will be verified. Based on their specific eligibility status, they will be assigned a Priority Group. The Priority Groups range from 1-8 with 1 being the highest priority for enrollment. Some veterans may have to agree to pay co-payments to be placed in certain Priority Groups.

An applicant may be eligible for more than one Enrollment Priority Group. In that case, VHA will always place them in the highest Priority Group that they are eligible for. Under the Medical Benefits Package, the same services are generally available to all enrolled Veterans. VA determines their eligibility for VA's comprehensive medical benefits package through our patient enrollment system, which is based on Priority Groups from 1 through 8. Priority Groups can be found in the VA handbook (VA Pamphlet 870-14-01), on the VA website, and at the VA Medical Centers Eligibility Department.

Priority Group 1

- Veterans with VA-rated service-connected disabilities 50% or more disabling
- Veterans determined by VA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions

Priority Group 2

- Veterans with VA-rated service-connected disabilities 30% or 40% disabling

Priority Group 3

- Veterans who are Former Prisoners of War (POWs)
- Veterans awarded a Purple Heart medal
- Veterans whose discharge was for a disability that was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty
- Veterans with VA-rated service-connected disabilities 10% or 20% disabling
- Veterans awarded special eligibility classification under Title 38, U.S.C., § 1151, "benefits for individuals disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation"
- Veterans awarded the Medal Of Honor (MOH)

Priority Group 4

- Veterans who are receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits from VA
- Veterans who have been determined by VA to be catastrophically disabled

Priority Group 5

- Non-service-connected Veterans and non-compensable service-connected Veterans rated 0% disabled by VA with annual income below the VA's and geographically (based on their resident zip code) adjusted income limits.
- Veterans receiving VA pension benefits
- Veterans eligible for Medicaid programs

Priority Group 6

- Compensable 0% service-connected Veterans
- Veterans exposed to Ionizing Radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- Project 112/SHAD participants
- Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975
- Veterans of the Persian Gulf War that served between August 2, 1990 and November 11, 1998
- *Veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for not fewer than 30 days beginning Jan. 1, 1957 and ending Dec. 31, 1987
- Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998 as follows: Currently enrolled Veterans and new enrollees who were discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003, are eligible for the enhanced benefits for 5 years post discharge

Note: At the end of this enhanced enrollment priority group placement time period veterans will be assigned to the highest Priority Group their unique eligibility status at that time qualifies for.

***Note:** While eligible for Priority Group (PG) 6; until system changes are implemented a veteran would be assigned to PG 7 or 8 depending on their income.

Priority Group 7

- Veterans with gross household income below the geographically-adjusted income limits (GMT) for their resident location and who agree to pay co pays

Priority Group 8

- Veterans with gross household income above the VA and the geographically-adjusted income limits for their resident location and who agrees to pay co pays

Veterans eligible for enrollment: Non-compensable 0% service-connected and:

- Sub priority a: Enrolled as of January 16, 2003, and who have remained enrolled since that date and/or placed in this sub priority due to changed eligibility status
- Sub priority b: Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009 whose income exceeds the current VA or Geographic Income limits by 10% or less
- Non-service-connected and:
- Sub priority c: Enrolled as of January 16, 2003, and who have remained enrolled since that date and/or placed in this sub priority due to changed eligibility status
- Sub priority d: Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009 whose income exceeds the current VA or Geographic Income limits by 10% or less

Veterans **not eligible** for enrollment:

- Veterans not meeting the criteria above:
- Sub priority e: Non-compensable 0% service-connected (eligible for care of their SC condition only)
- Sub priority g: Non-service-connected

Military Service requirements

Veterans must have served in the active military, naval, or air service and separated under any conditions other than dishonorable.

Most veterans who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty. This includes current and former members of the Reserve or National Guard called to active duty by a federal order (Title 10 or 32).

Application requirements

Proof of discharge papers such as a DD-214 or equivalent

Any additional health insurance information, including coverage through a spouse or domestic partner

Wage and financial information, including previous calendar-year gross income for the Veteran, spouse, and dependent children [Explore VA Health Care Today](#)

Application Process

Applying is easy:

- An applicant can submit an application form (VAF 10-10EZ) <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/> and the VHA will send a written notification of the enrollment status.
- Explore eligibility for health care using VA's [Health Benefits Explorer](#) tool.
- The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is designed to expand access to health coverage, control health care costs, improve health care quality, and coordinate health care. Learn more about Veterans and ACA at [VA's ACA website](#).

The simplest way to apply for VA health benefits is by completing and submitting VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits online.

The following questions and answers address the many ways to apply for enrollment as well as the answer to other questions regarding VA health care.

Apply online

Fill out the application online and electronically submit it to the VA for processing at <http://www.va.gov/HEALTHBENEFITS/apply/>

There is no need for additional documents to verify military service. If an applicant was recently discharged, the VHA will get the military information for the applicant. Applying online is faster and significantly reduces the processing time for enrollment and the veteran will be able to access their health care benefits more quickly.

- Complete [VA Form 10-10EZ](#), Application for Health Benefits online.
- Once an applicant completes their information, they may submit their application online.
- The applicant will immediately receive a confirmation message notifying them that their application has been received.

Apply in person

Go to a local VA health care facility and ask for the Eligibility Department.

1. Complete [VA Form 10-10EZ](#), Application for Health Benefits.
2. Generally, an applicant will receive written notification of enrollment status in the VA health care system within 5 -7 days.
3. The letter will also give instructions on how to appeal the decision if an applicant does not agree with the enrollment decision the VHA makes.

Apply by telephone

Call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday-Friday, 8 am to 10 pm Mon-Fri, 11 am to 3pm Sat, EST.

- Complete application over the telephone with a VA representative.
- Within 3-5 business days an applicant will receive the completed VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits for review, signature and return. Applicants mail the completed and signed application to: Health Eligibility Center 2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200 Atlanta, GA 30329-1647

Apply by mail

An applicant can pick up an application at the local VHA or download the application (VA Form 10-10EZ) online.

Mail a completed and signed application to:

**Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647**

Help completing forms

For help filling out the form, call 1-877-222-VETS (8387) between the hours of 8 am and 8 pm Mon through Friday, EST. An applicant may also contact the local VAMC health care facility for assistance.

Signature requirement to enroll in VA Health Care

There is not a signature requirement for the online registration.

If an applicant applies in person, by mail or via telephone, they or the person acting as their Power of Attorney (POA) must sign and date the form. If an applicant's POA signs and dates the form the applicant must submit a copy of the POA with the form.

If the applicant signs with an "X," then two people that they know must witness the applicant's signature on the form. They must also sign and print their names on the form.

After application is received

Once a completed application is received, the VHA will determine eligibility for enrollment.

Once an application for enrollment is approved, VHA will send a veterans Benefits Handbook welcoming them to the VHA and will provide them with details of the specific benefits they are eligible for, their Enrollment Priority Group assignment, co-pay status and other helpful information as a new enrollee. If an applicant is unable to be enrolled or they disagree with the enrollment decision, they may appeal the decision.

The VHA handbook will contain information on the appeal process and if they are not able to be enrolled, VHA will notify them by letter or the reason why they cannot be enrolled. The letter will contain information and instructions on how to appeal the decision if they do not agree with it.

Co-pays

While many veterans qualify for free healthcare services based on a VA compensable service-connected condition or other special eligibilities, most veterans are required to complete a financial assessment or means test at the time of enrollment to determine if they qualify for free health care services. Veterans whose income exceeds VA income limits as well as those who choose not to complete the financial assessment at the time of enrollment must agree to pay required co-pays for health care services to become eligible for VA healthcare services.

Co-pay Rates as of 1/1/2015:

Outpatient co-pays

- Primary Care Services: \$15
- Specialty Care Services: \$50
- Prescriptions:
 1. 30-day or less supply for Veterans in Priority Groups 2-6 for treatment of non service-connected condition : \$8
 2. For those in Priority Groups 2-6 there is a \$960 annual cap
 3. 30-day or less supply for Veterans in Priority Groups 7 and 8 for treatment of nonservice-connected condition: \$9
 4. For those in Priority Groups 7 and 8 there is no annual cap

Inpatient Co-pays

There are two inpatient co-pay rates, the full rate and the reduced rate. Priority Group 7 and certain other veterans are responsible for paying 20 percent of VA's inpatient co-pay rate

- Inpatient co-pay for the first 90 days of care during a 365-day period.....\$252
- Inpatient co-pay for each additional 90 days of care during a 365-day period.....\$126
- Daily Charge.....\$2/day

Priority Group 8 and certain other Veterans are responsible for VA's full inpatient co-pay rate.

- Inpatient co-pay for the first 90 days of care during a 365-day period.....\$1,260
- Inpatient co-pay for each additional 90 days of care during a 365-day period.....\$630
- Daily Charge.....\$10/day

Veterans living in high cost areas may qualify for a reduced inpatient co-pay rate. For more information contact VA toll-free at 877-222-VETS (8387).

Veterans can use the [Health Benefits Explorer](#) to see what co-pays may apply to their health care plan.

Geriatrics and Extended Care

Long term care co pays are based on three levels of care:

- Inpatient: Up to \$97 per day (Community Living (Nursing home), Respite, Geriatric Evaluation)
- Outpatient: \$15 per day (Adult Day Health Care, Respite, Geriatric Evaluation)
- Domiciliary: \$5 per day

**Copayments for Long-Term Care services start on the 22nd day of care during any 12-month period — there is no copayment requirement for the first 21 days. Actual copayment

charges will vary from veteran to veteran depending upon financial information submitted on VA Form 10-10EC.

Veterans Not Required To Make Co pays

Some Veterans qualify for free healthcare and/or prescriptions based on special eligibility factors including but not limited to:

- Former Prisoner of War status
- 50% or more compensable VA service-connected disabilities (0-40% compensable service- connected may take co-pay test to determine prescription co-pay status)
- Veterans deemed catastrophically disabled by a VA provider

Services Exempt from Inpatient and Outpatient Co pays

- Special registry examinations offered by VA to evaluate possible health risks associated with military service
- Counseling and care for military sexual trauma
- Compensation and Pension examinations.
- Care that is part of a VA research project
- Care related to a VA-rated service-connected disability
- Readjustment counseling and related mental health services
- Care for cancer of head or neck caused by nose or throat radium treatments received while in the military
- Individual or Group Smoking Cessation or Weight Reduction services
- Publicly announced VA public health initiatives, for example, health fairs
- Care potentially related to combat service for Veterans that served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998.
- Laboratory and electrocardiograms
- Hospice care

Doctor appointment

An applicant may request a doctor's appointment at the time they apply for enrollment by checking 'yes' to the question asking if they want an appointment on the application. An applicant will be contacted by telephone to schedule an appointment with a VA doctor or provider and the applicant may also receive a reminder via mail of the appointment. If an applicant needs health care before a scheduled appointment, they may contact the Enrollment Coordinator, Urgent Care Clinic or the Emergency Room at the local VAMC.

VA Long Term Care

It depends. Applicants for Long Term Care benefits, including community nursing home care, domiciliary care, adult day health care, geriatric evaluation, and respite care may also need to complete VA Form 10-10EC, Application for Extended Care Services. The form is required for non service-connected and zero percent service-connected enrolled veterans with income over the single rate. [VA Form 10-10EC, Instructions and form for Completing Application for Extended Care Services](#). An applicant can indicate on the application form if they desire an appointment at the same time they apply.

Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC)

Only Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system may receive a VHIC. If a Veteran is not currently enrolled, they may apply online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387). They may also apply for enrollment in person at the [local VA medical facility](#). Once an application for enrollment is verified, contact the local VA medical center Enrollment Coordinator to arrange to have a picture taken for the new VHIC, or an enrollee may request a new VHIC at the next VA health care appointment. For more information about the VHIC card, please visit the [VHIC web page](#).

Update information

Veterans already enrolled in VHA health care can update their personal information such as income, address and insurance information, by completing [VA Form 10-10EZ](#).

Renewal Application for Health Benefits, available online, by visiting their local VA or by calling 1-877-222-VETS 8am to 8pm Mon through Friday, EST. Enrollees are required to update their information annually.

Locate a VHA facility

Go to <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp?dnum=1> and click on your location. A list will appear and you can click on the closest VHA location to where you live to get an address and telephone number, or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday-Friday, 8 am to 10 pm Mon-Fri, 11 am to 3pm Sat, EST.

Other VHA Resources

Veterans Crisis Line – 1-800-273 TALK (8255)

National Call Center for Veterans Homeless Services – 1-877-424-3838

Transplant Services – See your Primary Physician

VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) 1-877-222-VETS (8387)

Other services the VHA may provide include: Hospice; Respite; Domiciliary; Medical Foster Home; Adult Day Health Care; Community Living Center; Medical related travel, lodging and per diem; Hotel services; Fisher Houses; Housing (SAH/SHA) and Automobile Adaptation grants; Clothing Allowance – See a Primary Care Physician for a referral to Specialty Clinics and Services

As an NVA or VSO trainee you should refer all potential applicants to a seasoned VSO or National Veterans Service Organization (NVSO) as the potential beneficiary may be entitled to additional local, state or federal benefits.

This concludes the “*Introduction to VHA Programs*” module.

END OF LESSON

Important note: Information provided throughout this module may change over time. It is recommended that all persons completing this module regularly check the websites identified in the module for current information.

You may now proceed to a fifteen (15) question multiple choice [quiz](#).

Upon completion of the quiz, with a passing score of 70% or above, you will be asked to complete a [course evaluation](#).

Once the course evaluation is complete you will be able to print your [Certificate of Completion](#).

Congratulations - end of lesson reached

COURSE QUIZ

1. The following persons may obtain a Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC): _____.

Select one:

- a. non-service connected veterans with excessive income and net worth
- b. only veterans already enrolled in the VA Health Care System
- c. only 100% service connected veterans
- d. only former Prisoners of War

2. If a veteran wants to apply for VA health care services, the veteran must complete, sign and submit _____.

Select one:

- a. VA Form 21-1990
- b. VA Form 10-10EZ
- c. VA Form 21a
- d. VA Form 21-686c

3. Priority Groups can be found _____.

Select one:

- a. in the VHA handbook
- b. on the VA website
- c. at the VA Medical Centers Eligibility Department
- d. All of the above

4. To qualify for VA Health benefits, veterans must have served in the active military, naval, or air service and separated _____.

Select one:

- a. under an administrative discharge
- b. with any type of discharge
- c. under any conditions other than honorable
- d. under any conditions other than dishonorable

5. If a veteran needs assistance filling out a VA Health Care application they can _____.

Select one:

- a. call the VA or ask a Veterans Service Officer for assistance
- b. call the Social Security Administration for assistance
- c. call the local non-VA medical facility for assistance
- d. call the local social services for assistance

6. To enroll in VA health care, an applicant must submit all of the following required documents and application information except _____.

Select one:

- a. wage and financial information
- b. health insurance information
- c. birth certificate
- d. proof of military discharge papers such as DD-214 or equivalent

7. VHA outpatient co-pays are as follows: _____.

Select one:

- a. Primary Care service \$ 15 / Specialty Care service \$ 50
- b. Primary Care service \$120 / Specialty Care service \$160
- c. Primary Care service \$100 / Specialty Care service \$300
- d. Primary Care service \$ 8 / Specialty Care service \$150

8. Applicants for VHA Long Term Care benefits, including community nursing home care, domiciliary care, adult day health care, geriatric evaluation, and respite care may also ____.

Select one:

- a. need to complete VA Form 10-10EZ
- b. need to complete VA Form 10-10EC
- c. need to complete VA Form 21-22
- d. need to complete VA Form 21-0781

9. Many veterans may be eligible for VHA health care. Enrollment in VHA health care satisfies _____.

Select one:

- a. the Affordable Care Act
- b. the ability to receive treatment at any non-VA hospital
- c. the Affordable Housing Act
- d. the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

10. A veteran can apply for enrollment in VA health care through all means listed below except _____.

Select one:

- a. in person
- b. online
- c. regular mail
- d. Face book or Twitter

11. In order to receive a Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC), a veteran must be enrolled in VA health care. If a veteran is not currently enrolled _____.

Select one:

- a. they can apply online at the VA website or on eBenefits
- b. they can apply at their local Post Office
- c. they can complete and submit VA Form 21-686c
- d. they can call the Veterans Health Identification Card Section to schedule an appointment to pick up their card

12. Veterans not required to make medical co-pays include all except _____.

Select one:

- a. veterans deemed catastrophically disabled by a VA provider
- b. veterans with excessive income and net worth without any service connected disabilities
- c. veterans with 50% or more compensable VA disabilities
- d. those who have former prisoner of war status

13. Priority Group 3 includes all groups listed below except: _____.

Select one:

- a. veterans who are Former Prisoners of War (POWs)
- b. veterans awarded a Purple Heart medal (PH)
- c. veterans awarded the Medal Of Honor (MOH)
- d. veterans awarded the Army Commendation Medal (ACM)

14. Once an application for enrollment is verified by the VHA, an applicant can contact the local VA Medical Center Enrollment Coordinator _____.

Select one:

- a. to arrange for transportation to and from each scheduled appointment
- b. to request a current copy of his/her DD214 or equivalent
- c. to arrange to have a picture taken for the new VHIC, or an enrollee may request a new VHIC at the next VA health care appointment
- d. to request an application

15. Veterans who have served in combat-zones, _____, may visit VA's many community-based Vet Centers, which provide no-cost counseling, outreach, and referral services to help the whole family adjust to life after deployment.

Select one:

- a. and their friends
- b. and their families' friends
- c. and their neighbors
- d. and their family members