

# COVID-19

## Guidance for Community Providers

### Sources of assistance for a Veteran

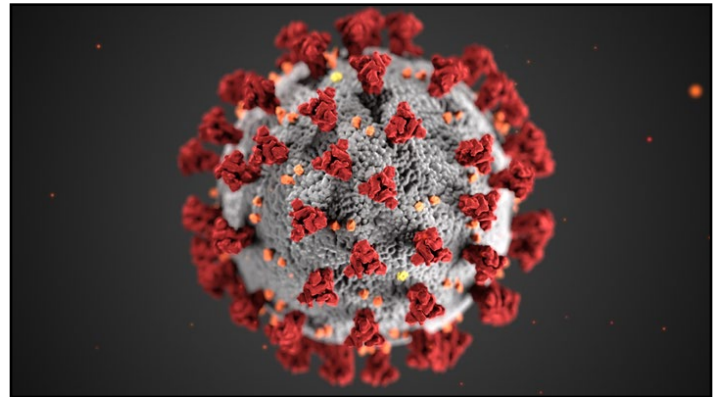
- Veterans can call their local VA medical Center and request to speak to their care team directly. If the closest VAMC is unknown, a Veteran can call MyVA311 (844-698-2311) for any questions or concerns. When connected to MyVA311, Veterans can press 3, when prompted, to be connected to their local VA medical center (VAMC).
- You may also refer to the VA.Gov site for Veteran information regarding Coronavirus at: <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/>.

### What are VA facilities doing to contain potential infections?

- All VA medical facilities are in the initial stages of implementing screening measures for signs of respiratory illness and exposure to COVID-19. Via telehealth services, VHA will provide a first line of defense using virtual screening for symptoms or potential exposure. Standardized screening questions are in place for all administrative call centers and Clinical Contact Centers (CCC). Onsite at medical facilities, VHA is instituting screening at all points of entry and following escalation pathways for positive screening. Facilities will use standardized screening questions at appointment check in and during initial clinical screening. In addition, facilities will use a two-tiered system with an “active” COVID-19 zone and a “passive” zone for standard care unrelated to COVID-19.

### What resources is VA making available for Veterans during the pandemic?

- If a Veteran has flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath, please direct the Veteran to call their local VA medical center or MyVA311 (844-698-2311) **before** sending a Veteran to your local VA medical center or clinic.



This illustration, created at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), reveals ultrastructural morphology exhibited by coronaviruses. Note the spikes that adorn the outer surface of the virus, which impart the look of a corona surrounding the virion, when viewed electron microscopically. **Source:** <https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=2871>

- When calling MyVA311, (844-698-2311), Veterans can press 3 when prompted to be connected to their local VAMC.
- In addition to calling first, Veterans may contact their VA health care team to learn about VA's telephone and video care options, as well as My HealtheVet Secure Messaging.

### Will VA cover the cost of COVID-19 testing?

- The current test available in the United States is the one provided by the CDC and some state public health departments at no charge. Any new COVID-19 tests that meet the required standards will be covered in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- If a Veteran has flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath, or otherwise screens suspected positive for coronavirus, please follow your local instructions for testing. **Do not** send a Veteran to VA directly. If there are any questions, please direct the Veteran to call their local VA medical center or MyVA311 (844-698-2311) before sending them to your local VA medical center or clinic. When calling MyVA311, (844-698-2311), Veterans can press 3 when prompted to be connected to their local VAMC.



### Will VA cover the cost of COVID-19 care?

- Right now there is no specific treatment or vaccine for COVID-19, but VA will cover medically indicated symptom treatment.
- VA will cover authorized provider visits in the same way that we cover other provider visits through the Veterans Community Care Program or other reimbursement authorities.
- Urgent care visits through the VA contracted network will be covered based on Veteran eligibility.
- VA will cover emergency department visits, associated inpatient admissions, and urgent care visits the same way that we cover other acute needs.
  - Providers that are contracted with a VA Third Party Administrator (TPA) should continue to submit claims directly to the TPA. Emergency room and/or inpatient care providers must call within 72 hours of care being processed to get an approved referral so they can be paid.
  - For providers that are not contracted with a TPA, emergency care is covered but with specific eligibility per Veteran (e.g. enrolled in VA, seen in VA or through VA community care in the last 24 months, no VA emergency services are reasonably available, care is emergently needed). Suspected coronavirus or similar infection symptoms will be presumptively considered Emergent Care, but other eligibility criteria does need to be met in order for payment to be made by VA.
- For coding purposes, please follow Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidance found at <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>

### For Additional Questions within the Optum Network:

- Contact CCN Provider Services for your region:
  - Region 1: 888-901-7407
  - Region 2: 844-839-6108
  - Region 3: 888-901-6613
- CCN Provider Services is available from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. provider's local time, Monday – Friday, excluding federal holidays.

### For Additional Questions within the TriWest Network:

- Contact PC3 Provider Services
  - 855-722-2838
- Contact CCN Provider Services for CCN Region 4
  - 866-286-4174
- TriWest Provider Services is available by phone from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. MST, Monday – Friday, excluding federal holiday.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, text to 838255, or chat online at <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat>