



Mental Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention Resources for Veterans and Caregivers

Note: Please maintain proper “physical distancing” of six feet or greater, in accordance with CDC Social Distancing guidelines, while discussing this mental health safety and wellbeing topic.

The return to the workplace has not ended the stress and anxiety of COVID-19. The aftermath of the pandemic will be felt for months. These continue to be trying times for workers and their families. A majority of workers are expressing increased stress, anxiety and worries.

Compounding these worries is the recent civil unrest from protests and marches following the killing of George Floyd (and other minorities) that included law enforcement escalations and national guard activations. This type of unrest can be a real stressor for Veterans and other employees or family members who have experienced the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Under normal circumstances, transitioning from active or reserve duty status to civilian life can be challenging. Friends and family members play a vital role in a Veteran’s life. This is even more the case in time like the pandemic and civil unrest. Being a caregiver for a Veteran can be challenging as well. Employers need to be sensitive to these challenges. Supervisors and coworkers can provide reassurance and support during trying times as well.

These resources provided below are provided to help Veterans and families, friends and coworkers know that specialized help is available. Support is available every day to Veterans, Service Members, and their families and friends (including coworkers) to help connect them with resources to help improve quality of life.

Action Steps:

1. Remind employees regularly about your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the services available to employees, including family members and dependents.
2. Share these resources with you employees. Your company may have workers or their family members who are Veterans and who may find these resources very helpful.
3. Share these resources with your Human Resources Department, as well as any pre-apprenticeship programs for workforce development that your company partners with in your community/region to share with Veterans in job training programs.
4. If you’re a union contractor, share this information with your Union Stewards, the Business Agents and apprenticeship training coordinators assigned to your company.
5. Pre-load contact information into your Smart Phone for the Veteran’s Crisis Line: **800/273-8255 – Press 1 to connect to Veterans Crisis Line**
6. Display construction version of National Suicide Prevention Lifeline posters in your workplace where employees will see them: <https://preventconstructionsuicide.com/Posters>



Crisis Hotline for Mental Health Emergencies:

Veterans Crisis Line: 800/273-8255 – Press 1 to connect to Veterans Crisis Line, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Other Options include:

- **Text HELP** to Veterans Crisis Line at **838255**
- **Online Chat:** <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat>
- **TTY** if you have hearing loss, call TTY: **800-799-4889**.
- **Website:** <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-yourself/veterans/>

Free, anonymous and confidential resource that's available to any Service member, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, and any Veteran, even if they're not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care system.

Veterans Administration (VA) Mental Health Services

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/health-needs-conditions/mental-health/>

How to access VA mental health services for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST), depression, grief, anxiety, and other needs. Access is available to some services even if a Veteran is not enrolled in VA health care.

- Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.
- Call **877-222-8387** to find the right resources for your needs.
- If you have hearing loss, call TTY: **800-877-8339**.

Get Free Mental Health Care for A Year After Separation

- No matter your discharge status, service history, or eligibility for VA health care.
- If you need support for a specific mental health problem or if you're having problems sleeping, controlling your anger, or readjusting to civilian life.

To access free VA mental health services right away – SEE NOTE regarding COVID-19 restrictions.

- **Call or walk into any VA medical center**—anytime, day or night.
[Find your nearest VA health facility](#)
- **Call or walk into any Vet Center** during clinic hours.
[Find your nearest Vet Center](#)

*** NOTE as of June 10, 2020: Due to coronavirus/COVID-19, most facilities are currently open for limited in-person service and screening all visitors for symptoms. For individual and group counseling, we recommend using our telehealth services. If you need to talk with someone confidentially, please call us anytime 24/7 at 877-927-8387.**

Types of Services Typically Offered at VA Vet Centers:

- Individual and group counseling for Veterans, service members, and their families
- Family counseling for military related issues
- Bereavement/grief counseling
- Military sexual trauma counseling and referral
- Community outreach and education
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Employment referral and referral of other VA services

Psych Armor Institute

Free online Training for Caregivers, Friends and Employers of Veterans on Military Culture and

Support Services: <https://psycharmor.org/> -- Registration is required to access the courses

- >200 training courses available at no cost to individual learners in various categories.
- Cornerstone course is *15 Things Veterans Want You to Know*:
<https://psycharmor.org/courses/15-things-veterans-want-you-to-know/>
- **Caregivers:** courses to help caregivers balance their duties and need for self-care.
- **Employers:** courses available for any employer, supervisor, human resources recruiter, co-worker, or anyone else who spends time with Veterans in the workplace.

Hear Stories of Recovery from Veterans Like You. Searchable database of testimonials of hope, help and recovery. Search by: *Service Era; Branch; Combat Experience; and Gender*

<https://maketheconnection.net/>

Resources to Assist Transitioning from Service

Resources include: Treatment Options; Self-Help Tools; Anonymous Screening Assessments; and information to help overcome the challenges of transitioning to civilian life from military life.

<https://maketheconnection.net/events/transitioning-from-service>

National PTSD Center (Department of Veterans Administration)

<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

Military Mental Health Resources from Mental Health America

<https://mhanational.org/military-mental-health>

Tips for National Guard or Reservists Returning to Work:

<https://mhanational.org/returning-work>

Anonymous Mental Health Screening Tools

<https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools>



Wounded Warrior Project – this is a nonprofit organization to help Veterans secure benefits and provide support.

Veterans and service members who incurred a physical or mental injury, illness, or wound while serving in the military on or after September 11, 2001, are eligible to register. Veterans who register and join the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) are called Alumni. Whether you're a warrior, family member, or caregiver, support for veterans starts with the WWP Alumni program. When you register as a veteran or family member, you'll find Veteran help through free programs, services, and events that make healing possible.

Call the Resource Center: 888/997-2586) or 904.405.1213

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 9 am - 9 pm EST
resourcecenter@woundedwarriorproject.org

Free Mental Health Apps for Veterans:

Comprehensive list of various Smartphone apps available free for Veterans

- https://ncgwg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Resources_-_Apps-for-Veterans.pdf
- **The Department of Veteran Affairs App Store:** <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore/all>

