



Post-Deployment Resources for Veterans

This document is intended for use as an electronic resource guide with hyperlinks and can also be used as a printed resource with visible URL addresses. It is relevant for Veterans and their families, caseworkers, clinicians, and service providers who work with Veterans.

The following resources are examples of services that may be helpful to Veterans and their families. The Pacific Southwest Mental Health Technology Transfer Center does not endorse services; Veterans and their care team are encouraged to assess resources on a case-by-case basis for potential benefits and risks (e.g., read customer reviews; check state licenses, industry certifications, and bonds, where applicable).

Veteran Crisis Resources

- Veterans Crisis Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255), press option 1. Veterans and their loved ones can reach “caring, qualified responders” through this crisis line that is supported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Confidential services are available 24/7 and include voice, chat, text, and support for Deaf and hard of hearing Veterans.
<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>
- KnowAVet is a California-based nonprofit that serves Veterans, families, and caregivers by maintaining a database of resources and providing information across a range of mental health and wellness topics. The site also houses brief videos that feature Veterans with personal stories of mental health challenges and recovery.
<https://www.knowavet.org>

Veteran Family Resources

- The Veteran Parenting Toolkit: Together Building Stronger Families offers age-specific information for young Veteran parents, their partners, and their providers. Sample topics include talking to children about deployment in age-appropriate ways and reconnecting with children after a deployment has ended.
<https://www.mirecc.va.gov/VISN16/VeteranParentingToolkit.asp>
- Give An Hour provides free, confidential clinical services to Veterans, active military members, and family members (including those not typically eligible for support) outside of the care provided by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) or VA.
<https://giveanhour.org/military>
- Veteran Families United is an all-volunteer organization that provides information and resources related to: mental and physical health challenges that Veterans experience, alternative or complementary health and wellness strategies, and how to access help (e.g., Veterans benefits, financial assistance, scholarships, legal assistance).
<https://veteransfamiliesunited.org>
- PTSD Coach App for Families is a free download for Apple and Android systems with tips and strategies to help the loved ones of those suffering from PTSD. It includes tools to manage stress, mindfulness exercises, and the ability to track stress levels over time.
<https://mobile.va.gov/app/ptsd-family-coach>



- American Legion Troop and Family Support Center offers financial and other family supports for the families of active-duty and Veteran service members.
<https://www.legion.org/family>
- National Military Family Association funds financial grants to military families for childcare, scholarships, and camps. Their website also provides information on a variety of topics (e.g., adoption, Paid Family Leave), customized for military families.
<https://www.militaryfamily.org>
- Our Military Kids provides enrichment grants to children of deployed National Guard and Reserve personnel, as well as children of severely injured service members, for activities such as sports, STEM or arts programs, tutoring, drivers ed, and more.
<https://www.ourmilitarykids.org>
- Children of Fallen Patriots provides college scholarships and educational counseling to military children who have lost a parent in the line of duty. They strive to make the application process easy and streamlined, and students up to age 33 may apply.
<https://www.fallenpatriots.org/#home>

Veterans Family Resources: Organizations that Offer Camps, Retreats, & Activities for Couples and Families

- Operation Purple Programs (National Military Family Association) bring children and families of servicemembers together for peer connection, reconnecting after separation, and togetherness after injury. Offerings include a free week of summer camp for military kids and free retreats for families.
<https://www.militaryfamily.org/programs/operation-purple>
- National Veterans Wellness and Healing Center provides free, weeklong retreats for Veterans, Active Duty Military, and Reservists who have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress and their partner or other support person. The Wellness Retreats integrate both traditional and non-traditional healing activities.
<http://veteranswellnessandhealing.org/retreats>
- Hope For The Warriors uses a wraparound support strategy for military members and their family. In addition to their programs for Veterans and members of the military, they host family wellness events, provide caregiver support services, and award partner scholarships.
<https://www.hopeforthewarriors.org/health-wellness/family-wellness-programming>
- Semper Fi Fund Service Member and Family Support provides assistance for wounded, critically ill, and other catastrophically injured military members and their families. Services include caregiver retreats, bedside financial support, housing assistance, transportation, wellness programs, transition support, and more.
<https://semperfifund.org/what-we-do/family-support>
- Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS) offers a range of prevention strategies for military service members and their loved ones, including Resilience Training, Skill Building Groups, workshops, consultations, and more. In the Pacific Southwest region, FOCUS is offered at military bases in Arizona, California, and Hawaii (August 2021).
<https://focusproject.org>
- Healing Warrior Hearts offers no-cost couples retreats nationwide. Participants learn about how PTSD can impact their relationship and communication, and learn tools to build intimacy and compassion with their partner.
<https://www.healingwarriorhearts.org/couples>

LGBTQ Veteran Resources

- American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) is the oldest and largest chapter-based, all-volunteer national LGBT Veterans Service Organization in the U.S. AVER offers an email discussion group, national conference, and local chapters, and members can contact AVER with questions about benefits eligibility and rights.
<http://aver.us>



- Modern Military (formerly OUTServe/SLDN) is dedicated to advancing fairness and equality for the LGBTQ military and Veteran community. They offer free legal services, a support program for military families with LGBTQ youth, a military spouse scholarship, and more.
<https://modernmilitary.org>
- Transgender American Veterans Association is a grassroots advocacy organization. They offer guidance and resources for Transgender Veterans on their rights.
<https://transveteran.org>
- Healing Warrior Hearts offers no-cost LGBT retreats nationwide, offering empathy and compassion for the unique pain, injustices, and discrimination that LGBTQ Veterans have experienced in and after service
<https://www.healingwarriorhearts.org/LGBTfocus>

LGBTQ Veteran Resources: Institution-Specific

- Knights Out (West Point Alumni) provides mentors and mentoring to rising junior officers who identify as LGBTQ.
<http://knightsout.org>
- USNA OUT (U.S. Naval Academy Alumni) is an American nonprofit, membership-based organization of LGBTQ alumni of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.
<http://usnaout.org>
- Blue Alliance (U.S. Air Force Academy Alumni) facilitates professional networking and mentorship for LGBT+ cadets, alumni, Veterans, and employees of USAFA and the US Air Force.
<http://blue-alliance.org>

Techniques for Managing Pain, Mental Health, and Stress

- **A. Complementary and Integrative Health**
 - The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH, under the National Institutes of Health) hosts a library of resources for Veterans, military members, and health care professionals who work with them, with many resources focused on pain management. Sample resources include:
 - “8 Things to Know About Mind and Body Approaches for Health Problems Facing Military Personnel and Veterans” <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/tips/things-to-know-about-mind-and-body-approaches-for-health-problems-facing-military-personnel-and-veterans>
 - “Pain: Considering Complementary Approaches” <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/pain-considering-complementary-approaches-ebook>
 - “Mind and Body Approaches for Health Problems in Military Personnel and Veterans: What the Science Says” <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/providers/digest/mind-and-body-approaches-for-health-problems-in-military-personnel-and-veterans-science>
 - Veterans Medical Benefits cover a variety of Complementary and Integrative Health (CIH) approaches through their Whole Health model, such as acupuncture, meditation, Tai Chi, and yoga. All Veterans Health Administration facilities offer CIH approaches, whether on site, through telehealth, or through community approaches.
 - The VA’s War-Related Illness and Injury Study Centers (WRIISC) offer Integrative Health and Wellness (IHW) programs such as yoga and meditation classes that can be accessed by phone or video.
<https://www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/clinical/integrative-health/index.asp>



- **B. Acupuncture**

- The Veterans Project is a search tool for Veterans and their families to find acupuncture treatments for free or low-cost that may help relieve pain and reduce stress.
<http://veteransproject.net>

- **C. Yoga**

- The Veterans Yoga Project provides daily, free online courses in yoga for Veterans and first responders. They also host a library of resources and offer evidence-based Mindfulness Resilience trainings to address compassion fatigue and trauma recovery.
<https://www.veteransyogaproject.org>
- Yoga for Vets created a community and worldwide database for Veterans to find quick access to free yoga classes and other Veteran-specific yoga resources.
<https://www.yogaforvets.org/>
- Watch this video about a Veteran's transformation with yoga to learn more about the benefits of yoga for the mind and body.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qX9FSZJu448>

- **D. Massage**

- This article from the American Massage Therapy Association describes how massage can help Veterans experiencing pain and stress.
<https://www.amtamassage.org/resources/massage-and-health/veterans/>

- **E. Chiropractic**

- All Veterans are eligible for chiropractic care through the standard Medical Benefits Package. Learn more about chiropractic services for Veterans and the VA facilities where they are offered on-site.
<https://www.rehab.va.gov/PROSTHETICS/chiro/index.asp>
- The Patriot Project is a grassroots movement to provide free chiropractic care to Veterans with service-related disabilities, active military members, and their families. Search the Patriot Project's "Participants" list to find chiropractors in your state.
<https://www.patriot-project.org>

- **F. Tai Chi**

- The VA recognizes Tai Chi as a component of its Whole Health program. The following videos from the VA and the Veterans Health Administration discuss Tai Chi for Veterans and go through a series of exercises
Introduction to Tai Chi for Veterans: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyIY_GBhsk
#LiveWholeHealth Tai Chi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWPPzdpceWI>

- **G. Meditation and Mindfulness**

- The VA's National Center for PTSD developed the Mindfulness Coach 2 app to help Veterans, service members, and others learn how to practice mindfulness. The app provides a self-guided training program with exercises, goal tracking, and more.
<https://mobile.va.gov/app/mindfulness-coach>
- The Veterans Health Administration produced this video to help Veterans learn how to begin practicing mindfulness.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zr42pt0kuZE>

- **H. Mood Regulation and Mental Health**

- The Virtual Hope Box (VHB) is a smartphone app designed for use by Veterans and others who may be experiencing depression or at risk for suicide. The Veteran sets up their VHB with photos and recordings of loved ones, music, games, relaxation reminders, reasons for living, and other coping tools to use in moments of distress.
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/virtual-hope-box/id825099621>



- After Deployment is a wellness website from the VA, offering self-care solutions related to depression, anger, sleep, post-traumatic stress, relationships, and other challenges.
<https://www.afterdeployment.org>
- The VA has an online hub for learning about mental health challenges commonly faced by Veterans, how their families and loved ones can help, and how Veterans can access mental health benefits and treatment.
<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov>
- Anger and Irritability Management Skills (AIMS) is a free online course from the VA designed to help Veterans gain control over their reactions to frustrating events.
<https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/index.asp>
- **I. Insomnia**
 - CBT-i Coach is an app designed to complement Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-i). It guides users through the process of learning about sleep, developing positive sleep routines, and improving their sleep environments.
<https://mobile.va.gov/app/cbt-i-coach>
 - Path to Better Sleep is the VA's free, 24/7 online course on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-i), which can reduce stress and promote better sleep. The website also includes a sleep diary and other resources.
<https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/insomnia/index.asp>
- **J. Veteran Art**
 - The Veterans Art Project (VETART) is a California-based organization is dedicated to serving Veterans through creative self-expression. The pop-up café is a statewide creative arts engagement event with an emphasis on mental health and wellness for Veterans and their families.
<https://www.vetart.org/>
 - Veterans have access to creative arts therapies to help with a variety of needs, including mental health, neurological, medical, orthopedic, and surgical conditions and rehabilitation. Learn more at the VA links below.
<https://www.rehab.va.gov/PROSTHETICS/factsheet/RecTherapy-Creative-Arts-FactSheet.pdf>
<https://www.rehab.va.gov/rectherapy>
- **K. Service Dogs**
 - K9s For Warriors is the nation's largest provider of service dogs for veterans. They provide highly trained service dogs to military Veterans at no cost, focusing on Veterans with service-related diagnoses of PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and/or Military Sexual Trauma. Visit the website to apply for the program
<https://www.k9sforwarriors.org>
 - There are many organizations in the Pacific Southwest that provide service dogs at no cost for Veterans. Use the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) search function to find programs in your state (you can filter by "Active-Military" or "Veterans").
<https://assistancedogsinternational.org/resources/member-search>
 - The VA provides a veterinary health insurance benefit and other benefits in support of service dogs to maximize the life and utility of these specialized dogs. The VA also provides financial support for the Veteran to attend handler training.
<https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/factsheet/PSAS-FactSheet-ServiceDogs.pdf>

VA Whole Health Coaching

- Whole Health is VA's approach to care that supports Veteran health and well-being. The goal is for the health team to get to know you as a person, before working with you to develop a personalized health plan based on your values, needs, and goals.
<https://www.va.gov/wholehealth>



- Start here to make a Personal Health Inventory. This process includes a self-assessment to identify critical health needs and find care strategies to meet them.
<https://www.va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH/phi.asp>
- Access the #LiveWholeHealth blog, which discusses self-care strategies, complementary and integrative health approaches, and resources (e.g., yoga videos).
<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/tag/livewholehealth>
- Find Veterans Whole Health Education Handouts based on the eight domains of self-care around which the program is centered.
<https://www.va.gov/WHOLEHEALTH/veteran-handouts/index.asp>

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- The VA National Center for PTSD offers information about PTSD and treatment options; where to find treatment, including peer supports and programs; apps, videos, and other self-help and coping tools; and information about how to access benefits.
<https://www.ptsd.va.gov>
- The Mayo Clinic is a highly respected leader in medical research and provides both an overview of PTSD and details about symptoms, prevention, treatment, and recovery.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967>
- The VA developed the free PTSD Coach App for those who have, or may have, PTSD. This app provides users with education about PTSD, information about professional care, a self-assessment for PTSD, and other support tools. In English and Spanish.
<https://mobile.va.gov/app/ptsd-coach>
- Published by the VA, “When a Child’s Parent Has PTSD” (click “Read Full Article”) provides information about how a parent’s PTSD symptoms are linked to children’s responses, and strategies to mitigate harmful effects
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/effect_parent_ptsd.asp
- The Semper Fi and America’s Fund Integrative Wellness program helps those with PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) recover through a holistic blend of services and strategies that are available to Veterans and their families.
<https://semperfund.org/what-we-do/integrative-wellness>
- The VA offers Coping with Traumatic Stress Reactions as resource for those wanting simple, easy-to-implement strategies for coping with PTSD, including a better understanding of the causes and consequences of PTSD (click “Read Full Article”).
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/gethelp/coping_stress_reactions.asp

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

- The Traumatic Brain Injury Center promotes state-of-the-science care from point-of-injury to reintegration for service members, Veterans, and their families. The website includes resources for providers, Veterans, and their families or caregivers, addressing topics such as prevention, signs and symptoms, and coping and recovery.
<https://health.mil/About-MHS/OASDHA/Defense-Health-Agency/Research-and-Development/Traumatic-Brain-Injury-Center-of-Excellence>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has an overview of key facts about TBI symptoms, causes, and treatment options.
https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/get_the_facts.html



Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

- **VA-based Resources for MST**
 - This resource page includes a free mobile app for MST survivors that is secure and private, educational resources about MST, and strategies for managing mental health after experiencing MST.
<https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/resources.asp>
 - This article tracks the rate of MST, explains the common effects on Veteran mental and physical health, and provides an overview of MST services offered through the VA.
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/types/sexual_trauma_military.asp
- **Community-based Resources for MST and Other Types of Sexual Trauma**
 - RAINN is the national sexual assault hotline. It provides free, confidential support 24/7 via phone, chat, or text.
<https://www.rainn.org>
 - WINC for All Women Veterans offers retreats for women survivors of MST. To be eligible, you must have a diagnosis of PTSD related to a MST, and currently be in counseling through either the VA or private practice.
<https://wincforall.com/events-and-retreats>
 - Operation Tohidu for MST survivors offers specific programming and a retreat (located in Maryland) to connect female Veterans and survivors with shared experience to one another and to promote a framework for moving on.
<https://melwood.org/veterans-services/operation-tohidu/operation-tohidu-for-mst-survivors>
 - Silver Lining Villages Veteran's Holistic Emotional Health and aquaponics agriculture training program is for Veterans (both men and women) experiencing post-traumatic stress and MST (located in Georgia).
<https://www.silverliningvillages.org/military-sexual-trauma>
 - Healing Warrior Hearts offers retreats nationwide for survivors of MST. All staff of the Healing Warrior Hearts retreats are Veterans who have experienced MST and civilians who have experienced sexual trauma, so that participants feel safe and understood.
<https://www.healingwarriorhearts.org/mst>

Legal Aid and Social Security

- The Veteran's Consortium provides resources and free legal services to Veterans and their families to file appeals with the Board of Veterans Affairs, assist with discharge upgrade program claims, and pursue naturalization.
<https://www.vetsprobono.org>
- Military service members can receive expedited processing of disability claims from Social Security. Benefits available through Social Security are different than those from the VA and require a separate application.
<https://www.ssa.gov/people/veterans>

Readjustment to Civilian Life After Deployment

- Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services, including professional readjustment counseling, to eligible Veterans. Veterans can also access individual, group, marriage, and family counseling and referral to outside services through Vet Centers.
<https://www.vetcenter.va.gov>
- Military OneSource provides free, confidential, 24/7 counseling to help Veterans readjust to civilian life. It also offers a wide range of individualized consultations, coaching, and non-medical counseling for Veterans experiencing transitions.
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil>



- After Deployment is an online resource supporting service members, their families, and Veterans with common post-deployment concerns. The website provides self-care solutions related to PTSD, depression, anger, sleep, relationship concerns, and other mental health challenges and stressors.
<https://www.afterdeployment.org>
- The Mission Continues is a national nonprofit organization that connects military Veterans with new volunteer missions in under-resourced communities. Veterans are able to share their skills, connect with other Veterans, and work together with people of different backgrounds.
<https://www.missioncontinues.org/>
- Moving Forward: Overcoming Life's Challenges is a free online course (also available as an iOS app) from the VA to help Veterans with managing stress, adjustment issues, relationship challenges, and more.
<https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/movingforward/index.asp>
- In Transition is a free, confidential program that offers specialized coaching and assistance with accessing mental health care when relocating to another assignment, returning from deployment, transitioning to reserve, or preparing to leave military service.
<https://www.pdhealth.mil/resources/intransition>
- The VA offers this guide returning Veterans to understand common reactions to trauma, the experiences to expect at home, strategies for coping with transition, and where to go for assistance.
https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/transitioning-service/docs/Guide_for_Military_Personnel.pdf

Employment

- VA Jobs is a central job site that helps Veterans enter the civilian workforce after they leave active duty. The site offers access to a full complement of Veterans employment support, including education, placement, and housing.
<https://www.va.gov/jobs>
- The Department of Labor provides information about the Veterans' Preference qualification that make some Veterans preferential hires for the federal government. It explains eligibility, explains how to search and apply for federal jobs, and lists contacts who can help Veterans identify whether this is the right fit for them.
<https://www.dol.gov/general/jobs/veterans>
- Helmets to Hardhats is a national nonprofit program that connects transitioning active-duty military service members, Veterans, National Guard, and Reservists with skill training and career opportunities in the construction industry. The program is designed to help military service members successfully transition back into civilian life.
<https://helmetstohardhats.org>
- Marine Corps Community Services provides a user-friendly single portal that provides constant and unwavering support to Marines, Veterans, and their families. MCCS delivers goods and services at over 2,250 facilities, including recreation, social activities, employment assistance, counseling and mental health supports, and much else.
<https://usmc-mccs.org/services>
- Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program helps all eligible transitioning soldiers discover knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to be competitive and successful in the global workforce, and offers employment counseling and assistance for making informed career decisions.
<https://www.sfl-tap.army.mil>
- GI Jobs hosts a job board specifically for Veterans to be matched with potential civilian employers; they also provide information about education and franchise opportunities. An annually updated report explores which employers are better for Veterans.
<https://www.gijobs.com>
- Show Your Stripes provides local support to Veterans preparing to enter the civilian job market by helping with resume writing, interview practice and tips, and connections to local and national employers who are committed to hiring Veterans.
<https://showyourstripes.org>

