

## List of Participants and phone numbers

Agency	Phone
American Legion	(949) 859-3515
Color Guard	(949) 457-3567
Application for Health Benefits	(714)-567-7450
Blind Vets	(888) 771-8387 #5696
Braille Institute of America	(714) 821-5000
Cass & Johansing Insurance	(949) 837-2800
Jewish War Veterans of the USA and its Ladies Auxiliary.	(949) 458-3916 Aux: (949)-830-2869
Lifeline of Southern California	(949)-273-6465
Orange County Veterans Services	(714) 567-7450
Saddleback College Foundation	(949) 582-4479
Saddleback Outreach	949-380-8144
VA Caregiving	Toll Free (877) 820-8820 or (562) 826-8000 ext 4735
VA Clinic South Orange County	(949) 269-0700
VA Telehealth Program,	(562) 826-8000 ext 4702



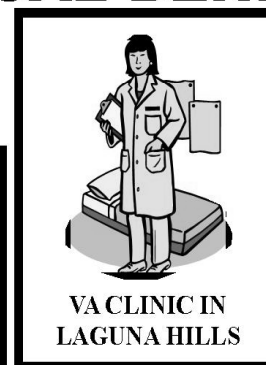
# Community Civic Association

Of Laguna Woods Village

Thursday, September 25, 2008 Clubhouse 5 from 1:15 to 3:30

**WHAT IS NEW IN VETERANS AND THEIR SPOUSES**

## MEDICAL BENEFITS?



**Come and  Just ASK!**

Everyone is Welcomed! Guests may donate \$2.00 at the door.

Compiled by Denise D. Welch for CCA

Printing courtesy of:

**Lifeline of Southern California** 

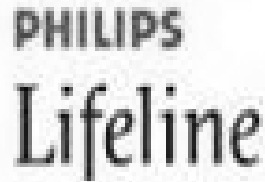


## CCA 2008 Board of Directors

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Jo Ann Leuck	Denise Welch
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CCA Booklets will be on my new website

<http://dennywelch.info/>



### Lifeline of Southern California

**949-273-6465 or 800-818-6150**

Live Safely and Independently at home. Never be alone or stranded. With a press of a button that is 100% waterproof, Lifeline is here for you 24 hours a day 7 days a week. For Non-Emergency; family, neighbor or local fire department is called. For an Emergency; Paramedics are called to help. Enhanced sensitivity for hearing impaired. Automatic Daily Self Test to ensure Peace of Mind.

**Free installation for Laguna Woods Residents;  
\$36.95per month; No Contract**



### Community Based Outpatient Clinic

**VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
South Orange County  
25292 McIntyre Street  
Laguna Hills, CA 92653**

Business hours: Mon.— Friday 8a.m — 5 p.m.  
Visit our webpage at [VACBOCS.com](http://VACBOCS.com)

Take **Bus 188** to Transportation Center and transfer to **Bus 91** to La Paz-McIntyre. Takes about 30 minutes . Cost 50 cents 1 way or \$1.00 day pass.

**Telephone: 1-800-310-5001 OR (949) 269-0700**

#### ENROLLMENT SERVICES

- Assistance with completing required VA enrollment forms
- Enrollment usually within 4 days for completed applications

#### •PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

- Physical Examinations
- On Site Laboratory
- Prescriptions
- Medical Care (Diabetes, COPD, Hypertension, Coronary Arterial Disease, etc.)
- EKGs
- Immunizations (Flu, Pneumonia, etc.)
- X-rays
- Scheduled appointments
- Free Parking within a few feet of clinic entrance

#### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- PTSD Groups
- Smoking Cessation
- Weight Counseling
- A Grief Counseling (Loss of Spouse, Parents, Brothers and Sisters, Close Friends)
- Life Events Counseling (Caring for Spouse or a Loved One WITH Alzheimer's or terminal illness)

#### DIGITAL X-RAY

Digital X-ray images transferred immediately to the VA Medical Center Radiology Department.

#### COMPUTERIZED EKGs

EKGs are transferred immediately to the VA Medical Center Cardiology Department.



## American Legion Post 257, Laguna Woods

**American Legion Post 257, Laguna Woods-** is one of some 1,200 Legion posts from France to Manila. The Legion has 2.7 million vets as members, the local post numbers 205 mostly living in Laguna Woods. The local post also has a Ladies Auxiliary. Programs supported by the American Legion include scholarships, assistance to needy and disabled vets, high school Americanism education, plus many others.

Two divisions of the American Legion Are the Ladies Auxiliary and The SALs (Sons of American Legionnaires). Post 257 also provides an Honor Guard for flag and special ceremonies. Post Commander is Ed Brockett.

**Honor Guard members-** Commander: Aubrey Coleman- Bugler: Dick Hatfield- guardsmen--Mario Fernandez, John Scofield, Adam Scoccia, Jim McNally, Joe Rainey, Jim Shaffer, Mara Hodgkins, Cindy Roman, Clay Peterson.

### Call For information or to join contact

**John Pruitt at 949-470-9765**  
**and Ladies Auxiliary Mara Hodgkins at 949-770-7561.**

CCA is proud to be a sponsor of BOTH:

**Saddleback Outreach program, 949-380-8144**

**Disaster Preparedness Task Force 949)-597-4237**

## Chapter 1 VA Health Care

VA operates the nation’s largest integrated health care system with more than 1,400 sites of care, including hospitals, community clinics, nursing homes, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities. For additional information on VA health care, visit: <http://www.va.gov/health>

### Basic Eligibility

A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

### Minimum Duty Requirements:

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 they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to veterans discharged for hardship, early out or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

### Enrollment

For most veterans, entry into the VA health care system begins by applying for enrollment. To apply, complete VA Form 10-1 0EZ, Application for Health Benefits, which may be obtained from any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, on line at <http://www.va.gov/1010ez.ht> or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387). **In Laguna Woods call the Laguna Hills Clinic at 949-269-0700.** Once enrolled, veterans can receive health care at VA health care facilities anywhere in the country.



## VIST – Summary

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The VIST program is designed to improve quality of life for participants through the development and enhancement of skills and capabilities needed for:

- Personal independence and safety
- Adjustment to vision loss
- Successful reintegration into the community and family environment.

## VIST – For More Information

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If you are a veteran with a visual impairment (or know a veteran), and would like more information about the Visual Impairment Services program, please contact: Linda Fitzgerald, VIST Coordinator Located in the VA Long Beach Eye Clinic, Room 213A

**Phone:** **562.826.5696**

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## Jewish War Veterans of the USA "Major Gary Grant Post 680" and its Ladies Auxiliary.

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We as a non-sectarian organization are involved in many programs. First of all for over twenty years now we make our monthly visits to the VA Hospital in Long Beach. Together with our Ladies Auxiliary, we bring sandwiches, cake, cookies, drinks, phone cards and px cards to the veterans in two wards,

Also about four times a year we visit the Naval Hospital in Camp Pendleton, where we meet with the Commanding Officer and Chaplain. Our Ladies Auxiliary knits outfits for the newborn, blankets and crutch covers. We also donate (via the Chaplain) Commissary Books to the families of servicemen who barely get along without our help.

To say that our work is appreciated would be putting it very mildly!

**Call Emil Weldon (949) 458-3916 or Aux (949)-830-2869**

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**Group 4:** Veterans receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits and/or veterans determined by VA to be catastrophically disabled.

**Group 5:** Veterans receiving VA pension benefits or eligible for Medicaid programs, and nonservice-connected veterans and noncompensable, zero percent service-connected veterans whose gross annual household income and net worth are below the established VA means test thresholds.

**Group 6:** Veterans of World War I; veterans seeking care solely for certain conditions associated with exposure to radiation; for any illness associated with combat service in a war after the Gulf War or during a period of hostility after Nov. 11, 1998; for any illness associated with participation in tests conducted by the Department of Defense (DoD) as part of Project 112/Project SHAD; and veterans with zero percent service-connected disabilities who are receiving disability compensation benefits.

**Group 7:** Nonservice-connected veterans and non-compensable, zero-percent service-connected veterans with household income and/or net worth above VA's national income threshold, but whose household income is below the geographically-based income threshold for their resident location.

**Group 8:** All other nonservice-connected veterans and zero percent, non-compensable service-connected veterans who agree to pay copays. (Note: Effective Jan. 17, 2003, VA no longer enrolls new veterans into priority group 8).

## Special Access to Care

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**Service Disabled Veterans:** Veterans who are 50 percent or more disabled from service-connected conditions, unemployable due to service-connected conditions, or receiving care for a service-connected disability receive priority in scheduling of hospital or outpatient medical appointments.

**Combat Veterans:** Effective Jan. 28, 2008, veterans discharged from active duty on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible for enhanced enrollment placement into Priority Group 6 (unless eligible for higher enrollment

Priority Group placement) for 5 years post discharge. Veterans with combat service after Nov. 11, 1998, who were discharged from active duty before Jan. 28, 2003, and who apply for enrollment on or after Jan. 28, 2008, are eligible for this enhanced enrollment benefit through Jan. 27, 2011.

Veterans, including activated reservists and members of the National Guard, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998, and, have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

Veterans who enroll with VA under this “Combat Veteran” authority will retain enrollment eligibility even after their five-year post discharge period ends. At the end of their post discharge period, VA will reassess the veteran’s information (including all applicable eligibility factors) and make a new enrollment decision. For additional information, call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

### **Financial Assessment**

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Most veterans not receiving VA disability compensation or pension payments must provide information on their gross annual household income and net worth to determine whether they are below the annually adjusted financial thresholds. Veterans who decline to disclose their information or have income above the thresholds must agree to pay copays in order to receive certain health benefits, effectively placing them in Priority Group 8. VA is currently not enrolling new applicants who decline to provide financial information unless they have a special eligibility factor.

This financial assessment includes all household income and net worth, including Social Security, retirement pay, unemployment insurance, interest and dividends, workers’ compensation, black lung benefits and any other income. Also considered are assets such as the market value of property that is not the primary residence, stocks, bonds, notes, individual retirement accounts, bank deposits, savings accounts and cash.

VA also compares veterans’ financial assessment with geographically based income thresholds. If the veteran’s gross annual household income is above VA’s national means test threshold and below VA’s geographic means

## **Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST)**

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### **VIST Purpose**

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The Visual Impairment Services Team ensures that veterans are referred to services and programs that can assist with the adjustment to sight loss.

### **VIST – Eligibility**

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Be eligible for VA health care (general or honorable discharge from active duty military service).

Be enrolled in the VA Healthcare System.

\*\*\*You may be eligible for VIST services whether you lost vision during or after active duty.

Meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) Legal blindness: Best corrected central visual acuity in the better-seeing eye less than or equal to 20/200, or visual field dimension in the better-seeing eye less than or equal to 20 degrees, even if central visual acuity is better than 20/200.
- (2) Functional loss due to severe low vision where comprehensive treatment is needed for appropriate restoration of the individual's safety or functional independence or for establishment of their personal or social adjustment to vision loss.

### **VIST – Services**

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- Assistance with eligibility and enrollment
- Assessment of the individual’s rehabilitation and training needs
- Veteran and family education and counseling
- Review of individual’s needs for adaptive aids and equipment
- Review of veteran’s benefits
- Comprehensive in-patient rehabilitation services

## **Home Telehealth**

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VHA defines Care Coordination as "the wider application of care and case management principles to the delivery of health services using health informatics, disease management, and telehealth technologies to facilitate access to care and to improve the health of designated individuals and populations with the specific intent of providing the right care in the right place at the right time".

**Home Telehealth** utilizes disease self management strategies combined with informatics and telehealth technologies to support care for veterans in their homes. Programs are patient centered, are supported by licensed care coordinators, and have a focus on patient self-management. Goals include the medical, functional, psychosocial, and spiritual needs of the patient and family. Program staff works closely with the patient, their family and other caregivers to contribute to patient health. VA Care Coordination models have been shown to increase healthcare access for veterans, reduce emergency room visits, reduce hospital bed days of care, reduce nursing home bed days of care, and reduce staffing and administrative costs.

**Mission:** To coordinate the right care in the right place at the right time.

**Vision:** Health care for veterans at home by way of integration of Care Coordination and Home Telehealth programs into existing care standards and through enhancing partnership with the veteran, the provider, the caregiver, and the community.

**Call for more information** **(562) 826-8000 ext 4702**

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test threshold, or is below both the VA national threshold and the VA geographically based threshold, but their gross annual household income plus net worth exceeds VA's ceiling (currently \$80,000) the veteran is eligible for an 80-percent reduction in inpatient copay rates.

## **VA Medical Services and Supplies Requiring Copays**

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Some veterans must make copays to receive VA health care.

**Inpatient Care:** Priority Group 7 and certain other veterans are responsible for paying 20 percent of VA's inpatient copay or \$204.80 for the first 90 days of inpatient hospital care during any 365-day period. For each additional 90 days, the charge is \$102.40. In addition, there is a \$2 per diem charge.

Priority Group 8 and certain other veterans are responsible for VA's inpatient copay of \$1,024 for the first 90 days of care during any 365-day period and \$10 per day. For each additional 90 days, the charge is \$512 plus a \$10 per diem charge.

**Extended Care:** For extended care services, veterans may be subject to a copay determined by information supplied by completing a VA Form 10-1 0EC. VA social workers can help veterans interpret their eligibility and copay requirements. The copay amount is based on each veteran's financial situation and is determined upon application for extended care services and will range from \$0 to \$97 a day.

**Medication:** Most veterans are currently charged \$8 for each 30-day or less supply of medication provided by VA for treatment of conditions that are not service-connected. For veterans enrolled in Priority

Groups 2 through 6, the maximum copay for medications that will be charged in calendar year 2008 is \$960. The following groups of veterans are not charged medication copays: veterans with a service-connected disability of 50 percent or more; veterans receiving medication for service-connected conditions; veterans whose annual income does not exceed the maximum annual rate of the VA pension; veterans enrolled in Priority Group 6 who receive medication under their special authority;

veterans receiving medication for conditions related to sexual trauma related to service on active duty; certain veterans receiving medication for treatment of cancer of the head or neck; veterans receiving medication for a VA-approved research project; and former POWs.

NOTE: Copays apply to prescription and over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin, cough syrup or vitamins, dispensed by a VA pharmacy. However, veterans may prefer to purchase over-the-counter drugs, such as aspirin or vitamins, at a local pharmacy rather than making the copay. Copays are not charged for medications injected during the course of treatment or for medical supplies, such as syringes or alcohol wipes.

**Outpatient Care:** A three-tiered copay system is used for all outpatient services. The copay is \$15 for a primary care visit and \$50 for some specialized care. Certain services are not charged a copay.

### **Outpatient Visits Not Requiring Copays**

Copays do not apply to publicly announced VA health fairs or outpatient visits solely for preventive screening and/or immunizations, such as immunizations for influenza and pneumococcal, or screening for hypertension, hepatitis C, tobacco, alcohol, hyperlipidemia, breast cancer, cervical cancer, colorectal cancer by fecal occult blood testing, education about the risks and benefits of prostate cancer screening, and smoking cessation counseling (individual and group). Laboratory, flat film radiology, and electrocardiograms are also exempt from copays.

### **Private Health Insurance Billing**

VA is required to bill private health insurance providers for medical care, supplies and prescriptions provided for treatment of veterans' non service-connected conditions. Generally, VA cannot bill Medicare, but can bill Medicare supplemental health insurance for covered services.

All veterans applying for VA medical care are required to provide information on their health insurance coverage, including coverage provided under policies of their spouses. Veterans are not responsible for

## **CAREGIVERS TELEPHONE SUPPORT GROUP for VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY**

Caregiving and Southern Caregiver Resource Center invite you to join our Telephone Support Group from the comfort of your home or office. Learn about strategies for effectively coping with the role of providing care to Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury.

When: Second Thursday of each month

Time: 10 to 11:00 AM

Facilitators: Andrea Cangiano, LCSW & Marianna Randolph, LCSW  
Family Consultants at Southern Caregiver Resource Center

\*There is no fee to participate in this group

**Southern California:** This Telephone Support Group is open to caregivers residing in the following counties: Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura.

**Northern California:** A separate Telephone Support Group is available for caregivers living in the northern half of the state. Please contact Mountain Caregiver Resource Center at (800) 995-0878.

### **To register please contact:**

Southern Caregiver Resource Center 800-827-1008

or email: [scrc@caregivercenter.org](mailto:scrc@caregivercenter.org)

### **For more information about:**

**VA California Offices on Caregiving**

**Call - Toll-Free**

**877-820-8820**

## VA Caregivers

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Caregivers contribute significant time and energy providing care for veterans. Many family and informal caregiver's provide-lifelong care. Though caring for others can lead to personal growth and satisfaction sometimes the role and responsibilities of family and informal caregivers can be demanding and stressful or affect personal health and future well-being. Caregivers need and deserve support.

Department of Veterans Affairs, VISN 21 and VISN 22 have partnered with the State of California caregiver Resource Centers to coordinate outreach, education and support for VA family and informal caregivers of veterans. This collaboration between government and community will serve as a means to expedite access to resources, provide and promote quality education and to encourage the self care and support necessary to avoid crisis that may occur when providing long-term care for others.

### Services for Caregivers

- Tele-Educational Conferences
- Tele-Support Groups
- Powerful Tools for Caregiving--a six week community based educational intervention caregiver Self Management Training a six week web based educational intervention
- Stress and Burden Assessment
- Assistance Gaining Access to Ser-vices such as Counseling, Support Groups, Specialized Care or Respite
- Linkages for Home Modifications or Assistive Technologies
- Peer Based Support Systems:.

**For further information call: Toll-Free (877) 820.8820**

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paying any remaining balance of VA's insurance claim not paid or covered by their health insurance, and any payment received by VA may be used to offset "dollar for dollar" a veteran's VA copay responsibility.

## Reimbursement of Travel Costs

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Certain veterans may be provided special mode travel (e.g. wheelchair van, ambulance) or reimbursed for travel costs when traveling for approved VA medical care. Reimbursement is paid at 28.5 cents per mile - and is subject to a deductible of \$7.77 for each one-way trip and \$15.54 for a round trip; with a maximum deductible of \$45.62 per calendar month. Two exceptions to the deductible are travel for C&P exam and special modes of transportation, such as an ambulance or a specially equipped van. These deductibles may be waived when their imposition would cause a severe financial hardship.

**Eligibility:** Payments may be made to the following:

1. Veterans whose service-connected disabilities are rated 30 percent or more.
2. Veterans traveling for treatment of service-connected conditions.
3. Veterans who receive a VA pension.
4. Veterans traveling for scheduled compensation or pension examinations.
5. Veterans whose gross household income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate.
6. Veterans whose medical condition requires a special mode of transportation, if they are unable to defray the costs and travel is pre-authorized. Advance authorization is not required in an emergency if a delay would be hazardous to life or health.

## VA Medical Programs

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### Veteran Health Registries

Certain veterans can participate in a VA health registry and receive free medical examinations, including laboratory and other diagnostic tests

deemed necessary by an examining clinician. VA maintains health registries to provide special health examinations and health-related information. To participate, contact the nearest VA health care facility or visit <http://www.va.gov/environagents/>

**Gulf War Registry:** For veterans who served in the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

**Depleted Uranium Registries:** VA maintains two registries for veterans possibly exposed to depleted uranium. The first is for veterans who served in the Gulf War, including Operation Iraqi Freedom. The second is for veterans who served elsewhere, including Bosnia and Afghanistan.

**Agent Orange Registry:** For veterans possibly exposed to dioxin or other toxic substances in herbicides used during the Vietnam War, while serving in Korea in 1968 or 1969, or as a result of testing, transporting, or spraying herbicides for military purposes.

**Ionizing Radiation Registry:** For veterans possibly exposed to atomic radiation during the following activities: atmospheric detonation of a nuclear device; occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki from Aug. 6, 1945, through July 1, 1946; internment as a prisoner of war in Japan during World War II; serving in official military duties at the gaseous diffusion plants at Paducah, Ky.; Portsmouth, Ohio; or the K-25 area at Oak Ridge, Tenn., for at least 250 days before Feb. 1, 1992, or in Longshot, Milrow or Cannikin underground nuclear tests at Amchitka Island, Alaska, before Jan. 1, 1974; or treatment with nasopharyngeal (NP) radium during military service.

### Readjustment Counseling Services

VA provides readjustment counseling services through 207 community-based Vet Centers located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Counseling is designed to help combat veterans readjust to civilian life.

**Eligibility:** Veterans are eligible if they served on active duty in a combat theater during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, or the campaigns in Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Bosnia,



Welcome to VA Long Beach Healthcare System's Website! <http://www.longbeach.va.gov/>

We have designed our site to help you gain access to all the services we offer. We hope you find your visit helpful. As always we welcome your feedback to make your visit better.

We are located in Southern California in the City of Long Beach and are close to the 605, 405, and 22 freeways.

We also have five community based outpatient clinics to serve you in; Laguna Hills, Santa Ana, Anaheim, Whittier/Santa Fe Springs and Villages of Cabillo.

**You may reach us any time by calling [562-826-8000](tel:562-826-8000)**

#### I Want To ...

- [Become a Patient](#)
- [Make or Change an Appointment](#)
- [Create My Own Personal Health Record](#)
- [Search Health Information for a Condition](#)
- [Refill a VA Prescription](#)
- [Get Information from My Medical Record](#)
- [Volunteer My Time or Make a Donation](#)
- [Seek Employment](#)
- Get information on Economic Stimulus Package for Veterans

#### Telephone Care

1-888-769-8387

Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. [1-877-252-4866](tel:1-877-252-4866) 24 hours



**VA Medical Center 5901 East  
7th Street Long Beach, CA 90822  
Phone: (562) 826-8000**

## Orange County Veterans Service Office



**The Orange County Veterans Service Office provides free benefit claims counseling and information and referral assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors.**

- Have a question regarding your entitlement to State and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Veterans Benefits? We have the answer for you.
- Need assistance completing benefit claim paperwork? We will complete, file and follow up on your claim.
- Have you been denied DVA veterans benefits? We can assist you in filing a notice of disagreement and further assist you with the appeal process.
- Need to obtain a verification of eligibility or verification of benefits for financial assistance programs? We can verify and complete necessary paperwork.
- Need assistance understanding DVA decisions or correspondence? Our experienced claims officers work closely with the DVA to make the process of obtaining benefits easy for you.
- We also provide information and assistance on Health Care eligibility, Home Loan Programs, Government Life Insurance, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program for veterans with disabilities.

***Our office is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. No appointments, clients are served on a first come first served basis.***

The Florence Sylvester Senior Center has a free Veterans Counseling Service every third Thursday of the month from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

**Call for reservations:**

**949-380-0155**

Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Global War on Terror. Veterans who served in the active military during the Vietnam Era, but not in the Republic of Vietnam, must have requested services at a Vet Center before Jan. 1, 2004.

**Services Offered:** Vet Center staff provide individual, group, family, military sexual trauma, and bereavement counseling. Services include treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or help with any other military related issue that affects functioning within the family, work, school or other areas of everyday life. Other services include outreach, education, medical referral, homeless veteran services, employment, VA benefit referral, and the brokering of non-VA services.

**Bereavement Counseling:** Bereavement counseling is available to all family members including spouses, children, parents and siblings of servicemembers who die while on active duty. This includes federally activated members of the National Guard and reserve components. Bereavement services may be accessed by calling (202) 461-6530.

For additional information, contact the nearest Vet Center, listed in the back of this book, or visit <http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>

### **Prosthetic and Sensory Aids**

Veterans receiving VA care for any condition may receive VA prosthetic appliances, equipment and services, such as home respiratory therapy, artificial limbs, orthopedic braces and therapeutic shoes, wheelchairs, powered mobility, crutches, canes, walkers, and other durable medical equipment and supplies.

VA will provide hearing aids and eyeglasses to veterans who receive increased pension based on the need for regular aid and attendance or being permanently housebound, receive compensation for a service-connected disability or are former POWs. Otherwise, hearing aids and eyeglasses are provided only in special circumstances, and not for normally occurring hearing or vision loss. For additional information, contact the prosthetic representative at the nearest VA health care facility.

## Home Improvements and Structural Alterations

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VA provides up to \$4,100 for service-connected veterans and up to \$1,200 for nonservice-connected veterans to make home improvements necessary for the continuation of treatment or for disability access to the home and essential lavatory and sanitary facilities. For application information, contact the prosthetic representative at the nearest VA health care facility.

## Services for Blind Veterans

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Blind and visually impaired veterans may be eligible for services at a VA medical center or for admission to a VA blind rehabilitation center. In addition, blind veterans enrolled in the VA health care system may receive:

1. A total health and benefits review.
2. Adjustment to blindness training and counseling.
3. Home improvements and structural alterations.
4. Specially adapted housing and adaptations.
5. Automobile grant.
6. Low-vision devices and training in their use.
7. Electronic and mechanical aids for the blind, including adaptive computers and computer-assisted devices such as reading machines and electronic travel aids.
8. Guide dogs, including cost of training for the veteran to learn to work with the dog.
9. Talking books, tapes and Braille literature.

### **Eligible visually impaired veterans (who are not blind) enrolled in the VA health care system may receive:**

1. A total health and benefits review.
2. Adjustment to vision loss counseling and training.
3. Low-vision devices and training in their use.

## Phone Numbers

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Education _____	1-888-442-4551
Headstones and Markers _____	1-800-697-6947
Health Care Revenue Center _____	1-877-222-8387
Life Insurance _____	1-800-669-8477
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline _____	1-800-273-8255
Special Health Issues _____	1-800-749-8387
Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) _____	1-800-829-4833
VA Benefits _____	1-800-827-1000

## Web Sites

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Burial and Memorial Benefits . _____	<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov/">www.cem.va.gov/</a>
Department of Defense _____	<a href="http://www.defenselink.mil/">www.defenselink.mil/</a>
Education Benefits _____	<a href="http://www.gibill.va.gov/">www.gibill.va.gov/</a>
Federal Jobs . _____	<a href="http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/">www.usajobs.opm.gov/</a>
Health Care Eligibility _____	<a href="http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/">www.va.gov/healtheligibility/</a>
Home Loan Guaranty _____	<a href="http://www.homeloans.va.gov/">www.homeloans.va.gov/</a>
Life Insurance _____	<a href="http://www.insurance.va.gov/">www.insurance.va.gov/</a>
Mental Health _____	<a href="http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/">www.mentalhealth.va.gov/</a>
Records _____	<a href="http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/">www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/</a>
Returning Veterans . _____	<a href="http://www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/">www.seamlesstransition.va.gov/</a>
Veterans Employment and Training .. _____	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/vets/">www.dol.gov/vets/</a>
Veterans Preference _____	<a href="http://www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp">www.opm.gov/veterans/index.asp</a>
Voc. Rehabilitation & Employment .. _____	<a href="http://www.vetsuccess.gov/">www.vetsuccess.gov/</a>
VA Benefit Payment Rates _____	<a href="http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/">www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/</a>
VA Forms . _____	<a href="http://www.va.gov/vaforms/">www.va.gov/vaforms/</a>
VA Home Page _____	<a href="http://www.va.gov/">www.va.gov/</a>

care. Specialized services offered are dependent upon the capability of the home to render them.

**Community Nursing Home Program:** VA maintains contracts with community nursing homes through every VA medical center. The purpose of this program is to meet the nursing home needs of veterans who require long-term nursing home care in their own community, close to their families.

**Admission Criteria:** The general admission criteria for nursing home placement requires that a resident must be medically stable, i.e. not acutely ill, have sufficient functional deficits to require inpatient nursing home care, and is assessed by an appropriate medical provider to be in need of institutional nursing home care. Furthermore, the veteran must meet the required VA eligibility criteria for nursing home care or the contract nursing home program and the eligibility criteria for the specific state veterans home.

**Long-Term Care Services:** In addition to nursing home care, VA offers a variety of other long-term care services either directly or by contract with community-based agencies. Such services include adult day health care, inpatient or outpatient respite care, inpatient or outpatient geriatric evaluation and management, hospice and palliative care, and home based primary care. Veterans receiving these services may be subject to a copay (see extended care copay section on page 5).

### **Emergency Medical Care in Non-VA Facilities**

VA may reimburse or pay for medical care provided to certain enrolled or otherwise eligible veterans by non-VA facilities only in cases of medical emergencies where VA or other federal facilities were not feasibly available. Other conditions also apply. To determine eligibility or initiate a claim, contact the VA medical facility nearest to where the emergency service was provided.

4. Electronic and mechanical aids for the visually impaired, including adaptive computers and computer-assisted devices such as reading machines and electronic travel aids, and training in their use.

## **Mental Health Care Treatment**

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Veterans eligible for VA medical care may apply for general mental health treatment including specialty services such as PTSD and sub-stance abuse treatment. Contact the nearest VA health care facility to apply.

### **Suicide Prevention Hotline**

Veterans experiencing an emotional crisis or who need to talk to a trained mental health professional may call the National Suicide toll-free hotline number, 1-800-273-TALK (8255). The hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers are immediately connected with a qualified and caring provider who can help.

### **Work Restoration Programs**

VA provides vocational assistance and therapeutic work opportunities through several programs for veterans receiving VA health care. Each program offers treatment and rehabilitation services to help veterans live and work in their communities.

Participation in the following VA Work Restoration Programs cannot be used to deny or discontinue VA compensation or pension benefits.

**Incentive Therapy** is a pre-vocational program available at 70 VA Medical Centers and frequently serves as a mainstay for seriously disabled veterans for whom employment is not considered viable in the foreseeable future. Participants receive a token payment for services provided.

**Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)** is a vocational program available at 141 VA Medical Centers. Veterans receive an individualized vocational assessment, rehabilitation planning and work experience with the goal of job placement in the community. The program works closely with community-based organizations, employers and state and federal agencies to establish transitional work experiences, supported employment

opportunities, direct job placement and supportive follow-up services.

**CWT/Transitional Residence** provides work-based, residential treatment in a stable living environment. This program differs from other VA residential bed programs in that participants use their earnings to contribute to the cost of their residences and are responsible for planning, purchasing and preparing their own meals. The program offers a comprehensive array of rehabilitation services including home, financial and life skills management.

### **Domiciliary Care**

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Domiciliary care provides rehabilitative and long-term, health-care for veterans who require minimal medical care but do not need the skilled nursing services provided in nursing homes. A Domiciliary also provides rehabilitative care for veterans who are homeless.

**Eligibility:** VA may provide domiciliary care to veterans whose annual gross household income does not exceed the maximum annual rate of VA pension or to veterans the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines have no adequate means of support. The copays for extended care services apply to domiciliary care. Call your nearest benefits or health care facility to obtain the latest information.

### **Outpatient Dental Treatment**

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VA outpatient dental treatment includes the full spectrum of diagnostic, surgical, restorative and preventive procedures. The extent of care provided may be influenced by eligibility category.

**Eligibility: The following veterans are eligible to receive dental care:**

1. Veterans with service-connected, compensable dental conditions.
2. Former POWs.
3. Veterans with service-connected, non-compensable dental conditions as a result of combat wounds or service injuries.

4. Veterans with nonservice-connected dental conditions determined by VA to be aggravating a service-connected medical problem.
5. Veterans with service-connected conditions rated permanently and totally disabling or 100 percent by reason of permanent unemployability.
6. Veterans in a VA vocational rehabilitation program.
7. Certain enrolled homeless veterans.
8. Veterans with nonservice-connected dental conditions who received dental treatment while an inpatient in a VA facility.
9. Veterans requiring treatment for dental conditions clinically determined to be complicating a medical condition currently under treatment.
10. Recently discharged veterans who served on active duty 90 days or more and who apply for VA dental care within 180 days of separation from active duty, may receive a one time dental treatment if their certificate of discharge does not indicate that they received necessary dental care within the 90-day period prior to discharge.

### **Nursing Home Care**

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VA limited provides nursing home services to veterans through three national programs: VA owned and operated nursing homes, state veterans' homes owned and operated by the states, and the community nursing home program. Each program has admission and eligibility criteria specific to the program.

**VA Nursing Homes:** VA owned and operated nursing homes typically admit patients requiring short-term care, in need of placement for a service-connected disability, or those who have a 70 percent or greater service-connected disability. All others are based on available resources.

**State Veterans' Home Program:** The state veterans' home program is a cooperative venture between the states and VA whereby the states petition VA for matching construction grants and once granted, VA pays a portion of the per diem. States establish eligibility criteria for short and long term