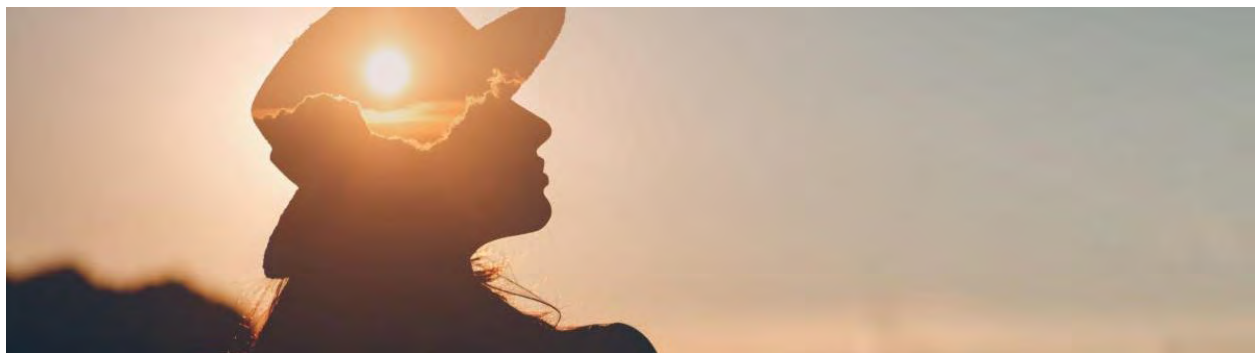


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MARCH SPOTLIGHTS



\$52.5 Million to Help Prevent Veteran Suicide

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced [\\$52.5 million in grants](#) to help fund community-based organizations that provide or coordinate suicide prevention services for veterans and their families, including conducting veteran mental health screenings, providing case management and peer support services, delivering emergency clinical services, reaching out to veterans at risk of suicide, and providing education on suicide risk and prevention to families and communities.

\$5.6 Billion in Annual Grants for Homeless Assistance and Affordable Housing

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that [more than 2,400 grants totaling \\$5.6 billion](#) will go to 1,200 communities for a wide range of activities, including homeless assistance and affordable housing. The grants will provide \$1.5 billion to 664 participating jurisdictions to produce affordable housing and \$290 million to 359 states and localities to address homelessness.





Updated Mask Requirements for Staff and Patients at Most VA Medical Facilities

As of March 3, 2023, the VA announced it has [relaxed the masking requirement](#) at VA medical facilities in order to ensure the safety of veterans while accommodating individual masking preferences and aligning with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

The VA will now base its masking guidelines on the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) COVID-19 health protection levels (low, medium, and high) and each healthcare facility's individual conditions. When health protection levels are high, masking will remain required. However, when levels are low or medium, medical center leadership will determine if it is appropriate for masking to be optional in certain areas at their facility. Previously, masking had been required at all times in VA medical facilities, regardless of health protection levels.



Veterans Can Now Receive up to \$500,000 in Life Insurance Coverage

Starting this month, the VA has increased the maximum amount of life insurance coverage available to veterans and service members from \$400,000 to \$500,000 for

[Veterans' Group Life Insurance \(VGLI\)](#) and [Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance \(SGLI\)](#). The increase reflects the current cost of living and helps ensure the families of veterans and service members will have the financial support they need after their loved one passes away.

[Updated Life Insurance Information](#)

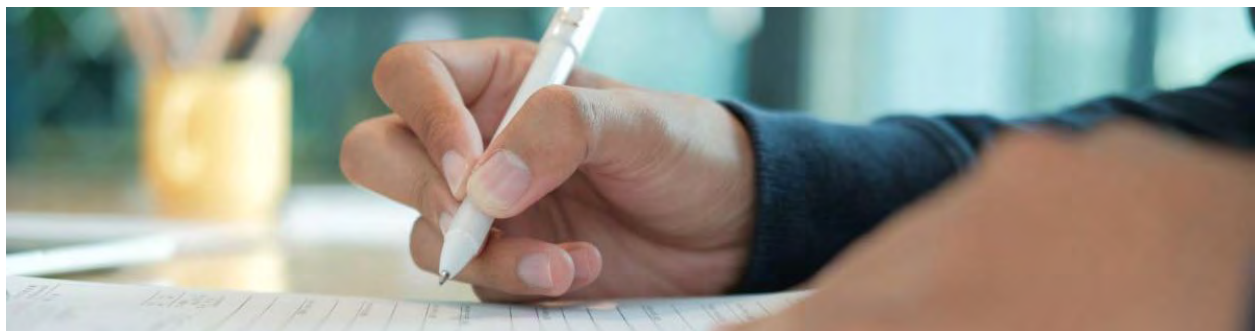


A Concerning Number of Incarcerated Veterans According to National Panel

The Council on Criminal Justice (CCJ) Veterans Justice Commission released its first set of recommendations earlier this month, revealing that the justice system fails to consistently identify veterans and steer them away from incarceration.

Only 11 percent of jails and nine out of 18,000 law enforcement agencies use available methods to identify veterans based on the data. Furthermore, only 36 of 2,300 district attorney's offices have veteran-specific diversion programs. Former Defense Secretary, U.S. Senator, and head of the commission Chuck Hagel stated, "Too many veterans are ending up in our criminal justice system, and while they must be held accountable for their behavior, our nation has a responsibility to honor their service and help them address the factors that often drive them to break the law."

[CCJ Findings](#)



Reminder: Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Is Now Available

This employment-focused competitive grant program is designed to give America's veterans experiencing homelessness the ability to reach their full employment potential

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and obtain high-quality career outcomes. If your organization has experience providing veteran and/or employment-related services, you may be interested in applying for this HVRP grant.

The [Prospective Applicant Webinar](#) is now available to watch online. It provides potential applicants with an overview of the HVRP program and elements of the FOA, including eligibility requirements, the application process and deadlines, and FOA contact information.

The applications must be submitted electronically no later than **11:59 p.m. ET on March 30, 2023.**

[HVRP FOA](#)

SUCCESS STORY



The following is a Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) success story of a veteran told from the grantee's perspective. The name of the veteran has been changed to protect their identity.

On Course to Become a Virginia Armed Security Guard

Alex has been an HVRP participant since March 2022. Alex has struggled with self-sabotage and familial issues, and, at times, he became distant. Despite the hurdles he faced, Alex continued to insist he wanted to do security training. He identified the course and training facility he wanted to attend, and after many pep talks, Alex successfully completed the first part of his training to secure his certification as a Virginia Armed Security Guard. He was the best shot in his class and finished with one of the highest scores. Alex is looking forward to the future and stated, "I feel like I am getting back to my old self."

Do you have a success story you would like to share? If you are a grantee who helped a veteran who is struggling with housing or employment, we would love to hear from you. Please share your stories by emailing us at contact@nvtac.org, and you may be featured in one of our newsletters.

RESOURCES



National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) Podcast Covering Affordable Housing for Veterans

The weekly podcast by the NCHV titled “The Road Home” covers all things housing for veterans, including several projects across the country, housing best practices, and how affordable housing availability is critical to ending veteran homelessness. Topics of discussion from recent episodes included aging and the elderly, gender identity and sexual orientation, and race and equity.

[NCHV Podcast](#)



Veterans Can Now Access their Disability Benefit Decisions Online

Since January 17, 2023, veterans can log in to VA.gov [and check the status of their claim](#) to access their disability benefit claim decision notice letters electronically, allowing them to quickly and easily see their disability decisions. Before this option was available, veterans had to wait to receive a hard copy of their decision in the mail. While previous iterations of VA.gov allowed veterans to access benefits summary letters, they

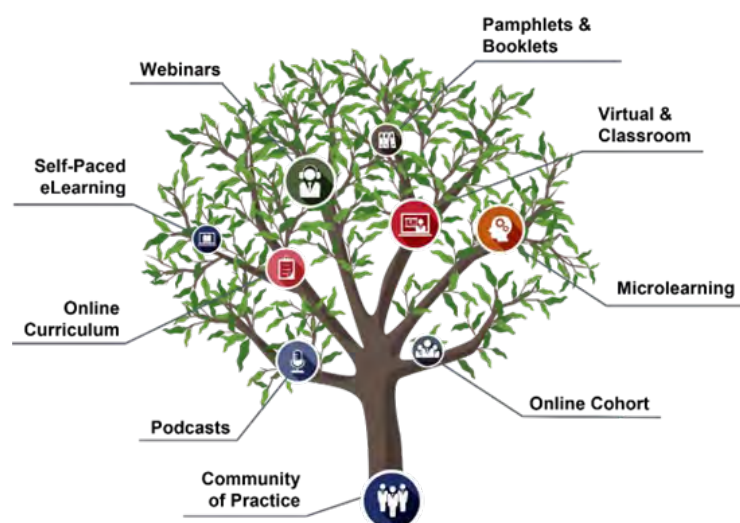
could not access the full copy of these decision notification letters from their electronic claims folders.

EVENTS



Virtual Homeless & Justice-Involved Veteran Outreach Symposium

Guest speakers will provide information on the various programs and resources within their organization that are available to ensure veterans who are at risk or experiencing homelessness receive the support they deserve. The [symposium](#) will take place on Thursday, March 30, 2023, 12 – 4 p.m. ET.



What's on the Horizon for the National Veterans' Training Institute's (NVTI) Learning Ecosystem?

Despite the drastic growth of NVTI's Learning Ecosystem over the past year, NVTI still has several significant additions planned for this year. One of the most exciting additions is the inclusion of a new population group to the 9610: Career

Coaching for Special Populations series aimed to serve veterans with substance use disorders. This new course is already in the works and is scheduled to pilot later this

year. Furthermore, NVTI's course developers are currently working on a foundational asynchronous prerequisite for the 9610 course series that will allow veteran service providers to acquire the preparatory skills necessary to enroll in more targeted special population courses. These courses will be offered as targeted, one-day offerings instead of the current three-and-a-half-day schedule to better fit your busy schedules.

The NVTI team is also working on a new course for State Veteran Coordinators arriving later this year, an updated Indirect Cost 101 webinar and a podcast discussing burnout and secondary trauma for veteran service providers in spring, and so much more! Keep an eye on NVTI's "On Demand Learning" and "Training" pages on [NVTI.org](https://www.nvti.org) to stay up to date on all of NVTI's new learning resources planned for this year.



Free Mountain Retreats for Veterans

The American Warrior Association (AWA) offers free mountain retreats in Colorado and Georgia for members of the military, veterans, and first responders. The retreats allow participants to confront and heal moral injuries. The AWA offers teaching sessions, prayer and meditation, horseback riding, outdoor adventure, and time for reflection.

[Program Schedule](#)

