

Patient Care Services

VHA LGBTQ+ Health Program

Pride Counts at VA



LGBTQ+ Veterans

Hear VA staff talk about why Pride Counts at VA

VA is committed to creating a welcoming environment and improving healthcare for everyone, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) Veterans. VA staff play a critical role in ensuring that LGBTQ+ Veterans receive the care they need and have earned in service to our country.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) welcomes all Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivor beneficiaries, including diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. “LGBTQ+” refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer identities. The “+” sign captures identities beyond LGBTQ, including but not limited to questioning, pansexual, asexual, agender, gender diverse, nonbinary, gender-neutral, and other identities. LGBTQ+ Veterans have faced bias and discrimination, which can affect health.

At Veterans Health Administration (VHA), we aim to make sure that LGBTQ+ Veterans know that they are welcome. Find patient education about LGBTQ+ Veteran Health Care here: **[Patient Education, Resources, & Outreach Materials \(https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/VA_LGBT_Outreach.asp\)](https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/VA_LGBT_Outreach.asp)**.

LGBTQ+ Health Program

Mission Statement

Provide national leadership through policy, education, advocacy, and innovative data-driven programs to promote LGBTQ+ Veteran health and well-being.

Vision Statement

Build a VA that LGBTQ+ Veterans trust to provide affirming care and services to help them thrive.

LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinators (VCCs)

There is an **LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator** ([/LGBT/VAFacilities.asp](#))(LGBTQ+ VCC) at every facility to help you get the care you need. VHA policies require that your health care is delivered in an affirming and inclusive environment and that VHA employees respect your identity. **Contact the LGBTQ+ VCC** ([/LGBT/VAFacilities.asp](#)) at your nearest facility.

LGBTQ+ VCCs are important resources at every VA medical facility and help to:

- Create a safe and affirming environment throughout the VA medical facility
- Spread knowledge about LGBTQ+ Veteran services
- Educate and train staff
- Build a network of allies and partners within VA and the community

LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinators (VCCs) Talk About Care

Veteran Care Coordinators on Transgender and Gender Diverse Visibility at VA



LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinators (<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.patientcare.va.gov%2FLGBT%2FVAFacilities.asp&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cab0247bc384>) share personal insights about the work they do and the importance of LGBTQ+ visibility at VA.

Discharged for your Sexual Orientation? You May Be Eligible for VA Benefits

A change in policy means Veterans who were discharged for their sexual orientation may now be eligible for VA healthcare and other benefits. This flyer can help you learn more about your eligibility and how to apply for VA care, services, and benefits.

Visit our website **OTH Enrollment | ChooseVA** (<https://choose.va.gov/health/oth-enrollment>) or call us today at **877-222-8387** (tel: +18772228387) to learn more. Or to apply **How To Apply For A Discharge Upgrade | Veterans Affairs** ([va.gov](https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/)) (<https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/>)

[↓](#) ([/LGBT/docs/2024/Flyer_Discharge-Upgrades-Info.pdf#](#)) **Other than Honorable Discharge VA Benefits Flyer (with dog tags)** ([/LGBT/docs/2024/Flyer_Discharge-Upgrades-Info.pdf#](#))

**SERVED BUT DISCHARGED
BECAUSE OF WHO YOU LOVE?**



[\(/LGBT/docs/2024/Flyer_Discharge-Upgrades-Info.pdf#\)](#)

[↓ \(/LGBT/docs/2024/Flyer_Discharge-Upgrades-Info-no-Pride-Dog-Tags.pdf#\)](#) **Other than Honorable Discharge VA Benefits Flyer (without dog tags)** [\(/LGBT/docs/2024/Flyer_Discharge-Upgrades-Info-no-Pride-Dog-Tags.pdf#\)](#)

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Why Does VA Focus on LGBTQ+ Veterans?

Research shows that LGBTQ+ Veterans expect to experience discrimination in VHA facilities which may prevent engagement in care. Research also shows that due to stigma, stress, and discrimination, LGBTQ+ Veterans as a group experience higher rates of several health conditions compared to non-LGBTQ+ Veterans, including higher risk for suicide. Therefore, VA is working to reduce minority stress and engage sexual and gender minority Veterans in order to provide health care that addresses their needs.

Contact 'Ask VA' online

You can send questions through the secure Ask VA (or AVA) online tool. A VA representative who's familiar with the topic you're asking about will respond. We encourage you to create an account. With an Ask VA account, a VA representative can communicate with you securely about your question. **Contact us online through Ask VA (<https://ask.va.gov/>)**

Gender-Affirming Surgeries in VA Health Care Coverage



VA provides gender-affirming care to transgender Veterans, with the exception of gender-affirming surgery. VA has moved methodically in its consideration of a potential change in coverage to provide gender-affirming surgery because it must be implemented in a manner that has been thoroughly considered and ensures that the services made available to Veterans meet VA's rigorous standards for consistent and quality health care nationwide. VA remains committed to providing care to transgender Veterans and will continue to take steps to consider any potential changes to the provision of medical care to that important population.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Queer Veterans: Introduction



*Link will take you outside of the Dept of Veterans Affairs (VA) Website. VA does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of the linked websites. The link will open in a new window for the content of the linked websites.

Transgender and Gender Diverse Veterans: Introduction

