



VA expands mandate for COVID-19 vaccines among VHA employees

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 12, 2021 9:15 am

WASHINGTON — Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough will expand his previous COVID-19 vaccine mandate Friday, Aug. 13, to apply to most Veterans Health Administration employees and volunteers and contractors who work in VHA facilities, visit VHA facilities or otherwise come into contact with VA patients and healthcare workers as part of their duties.

Under the expanded mandate, employees who will need to be vaccinated include Hybrid Title 38 and Title 5 VA health care personnel — such as psychologists, pharmacists, social workers, nursing assistants, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, peer specialists, medical support assistants, engineers, housekeepers and other clinical, administrative and infrastructure support employees who come into contact with VA patients and healthcare workers.

“We’re now including most VHA employees and volunteers and contractors in the vaccine mandate because it remains the best way to keep Veterans safe, especially as the Delta variant spreads across the country,” Secretary McDonough said. “This pandemic is not over and VA must do everything in our power to protect Veterans from COVID-19. With this expanded mandate, we can once again make — and keep — that fundamental promise.”

The department’s decision is supported by numerous medical organizations, including the [American Hospital Association](#), [America’s Essential Hospitals](#) and a [Multisociety group of the leading Infectious Disease Societies](#). The American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American College of Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, Association of American Medical Colleges, and National Association for Home Care and Hospice also [endorsed mandating COVID-19 vaccination for health care workers](#).

As with the previous mandate, directive affected employees will have eight weeks to provide proof of vaccination to their local VHA Occupational Health Office.

All VA employees are eligible to be vaccinated at no personal expense at any of our [facilities](#) and would also receive four hours of paid administrative leave after demonstrating they have been vaccinated.

To learn more about the vaccine, its safety and effectiveness visit the [VA COVID-19 information page](#).



Reporters and media outlets with questions or comments should contact the Office of Media Relations at vapublicaffairs@va.gov



Veterans with questions about their health care and benefits (including GI Bill). Questions, updates and documents can be submitted online.

[Contact us online through Ask VA](#)



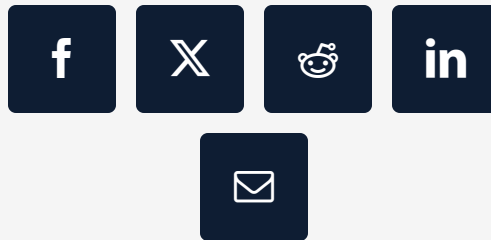
Veterans can also use our chatbot to get information about VA benefits and services. The chatbot won't connect you with a person, but it can show you where to go on VA.gov to find answers to some common questions.

[Learn about our chatbot and ask a question](#)



[Subscribe today](#) to receive these news releases in your inbox.

LET OTHERS KNOW ABOUT
THIS



More from the Press Room

NEWS RELEASES

SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

VA processes 3 million disability benefits claims in record time – again

More than three million VA disability benefits claims for Veterans have been processed in fiscal

NEWS RELEASES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

VA announces insurance premium holiday that will save Veterans nearly \$150 million

Veterans nearly \$150 million in insurance premium payments starting in November,

NEWS RELEASES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

VA awards \$1.17 billion in grants to fight Veteran homelessness

A record high of \$1.17 billion in VA grants awarded to 680 organizations across the country to help Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

year 2026 as of Sept. 18, 2026, faster than ever before.

when VA implements the first-ever premium holiday for the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program.

The grants, which will be distributed in FY2027, come after VA housed 51,936 homeless Veterans in fiscal year 2025, the most in seven years.

Last updated August 12, 2021



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420
[1-800-698-2411](tel:1-800-698-2411)

VA News

An official website of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

[VA.gov](https://www.va.gov)

[ChooseVA](#)

[DiscoverVA](#)

[DigitalVA](#)

[VA Outreach Events](#)

[VA Forms](#)

[VA Publications](#)

[About VA](#)

[VA mobile apps](#)

[Accessibility at VA](#)

[No FEAR Act data](#)

[Whistleblower Protection](#)

[Office of the Inspector
General](#)

[VA plans, budget, finances,
and performance](#)

[Agency Financial Report](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

[FOIA requests](#)

[Disclaimers](#)

[Open data](#)

[Vulnerability disclosure
policy](#)

Looking for U.S. government information and services? [Visit USA.gov](#)