



## VA Fast Facts

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the second largest federal agency. The VA is comprised of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), and the Office of Information Technology (OIT)—each headed by an Under Secretary who reports to the VA Secretary.

The **VBA** is the largest benefits system in the country and oversees 55 percent of VA's annual budget (\$146.7 billion in 2023). Its staff of 27,000 employees process claims filed by veterans and their dependents seeking healthcare, pensions, disability compensation, and educational benefits under the G.I. Bill.

The **VHA** runs the largest and only fully integrated, publicly funded U.S. healthcare system. The system employs more than 380,000 staff, including physicians, nurses, and other medical and mental health staff, as well as transport workers, plumbers, dieticians, groundskeepers, clerks, and other support staff.

The VHA, which both pays for and delivers care, has some of the **best health outcomes in the nation**. The VHA has developed advances in patient safety, team-based care, as well as geriatric and end-of-life care. It has pioneered the [integration of mental health and primary care](#) and worked diligently to [prevent veteran suicide](#). It is also a leader in the effort to promote [healthcare equity](#).

The VHA takes a holistic public health approach to veteran's problems, dealing with homelessness, veterans'

legal problems (through the **Veterans Justice Outreach Program** and **Veterans Treatment Courts**) as well as other issues with employment and readjustment to civilian life.

In April of 2023, scientists released a [review](#) of 53 studies published between 2015–2023 that contrasted VA to non-VA healthcare. The review concluded that, “VA-delivered care was as good as or better than Veterans received from VA-paid community care.”

The **majority of veterans are very satisfied with the care** they receive at the VHA. In 2017, for example, a [VFW survey](#) found that 92% of veterans wanted the system to be improved not dismantled. As the report stated, “when asked how they would improve their health care system, veterans overwhelmingly reported that they believe VA must fix current deficiencies; that VA is already improving; or that there is nothing to improve in VA when compared to private sector health care.”

