

Situation Update

As of Tuesday, March 17, 2020 5:53 PM EDT

Veterans, visitors, volunteers and partners, please help us limit the spread of COVID-19, the flu, and other illnesses by following these precautions...

If you have flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath, please call us at 401-457-3336 before visiting the Providence VA Medical Center or one of our community clinics. You may also use virtual care options such as [telehealth](#) or [My HealthVet Secure Messaging](#).

If you are tested for the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) at a community healthcare facility or are contacted by local healthcare officials, please let them know you receive care through the VA Providence Healthcare System.

The Providence VA Medical Center and its community clinics are operational and continuing to provide Veterans with the health care and services you have earned. As a precaution to safeguard everyone, we are doing the following to reduce the possibility of spreading illnesses at the medical center and our clinics. In accordance with state and federal guidance, **we are rescheduling non-urgent, elective procedures until sometime after May 1. We will be calling Veterans who need to be rescheduled**, but you may always contact your clinic with questions. A list of clinic phone numbers can be found at https://www.providence.va.gov/contact/phone_directory.asp

Arrival Information

As a precaution to safeguard everyone, **we are directing everyone to the medical center's main entrance for a brief screening.**

- **Both Regent Ave. gates are closed. Please enter the main campus from Chalkstone Ave. or Valley St.**
- Screening will look for symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath, or possible exposure due to travel.
- The screening process has shown minimal delay for those who do not need further evaluation, but please allow for extra time to get to your appointment.
- Additional instructions and evaluation will be provided for those who need it.
- **Valet service is closed. Transportation assistance will be provided from the parking garage to the main entrance, when needed.**
- **Clinics in other buildings and locations are screening at their facilities.**

Pharmacy Information

The Pharmacy is now only using the mail-order system for prescription refill requests. Emergency prescriptions, including post-surgical, emergency department and discharge medication needs will still be provided on location by the Pharmacy. For other medications and supplies, Veterans should **request refills and renewals by:**

- **Calling the Pharmacy Call Center at 866-400-1241**
- **Mailing in refill slips**
- **Requesting through [My HealtheVet](#)**

Please allow 7-10 days for prescription delivery. Veterans may request expedited shipments and may request changing routine medications from 30-day to 90-day fills by:

- Calling the Pharmacy Call Center at 866-400-1241
- Using [My HealtheVet](#) and choosing "Ask a Pharmacist."

Note that the VA Pharmacy cannot send patients 90-day fills of controlled substances, some supply items and certain high-risk medications. The pharmacy will not fill more than 90 days' supply of maintenance medications or honor early refills.

Visitor / Guest Restrictions

To safeguard our patients, the staff who provide their care and others who use the facility, the following visitation and guest safeguards are in place:

- **Inpatients will not be allowed visitors, except under rare and extenuating circumstances**, such as patients who are in critical condition or end-of-life situations. In these instances, please call the operator at 401-273-7100, dial 0, give the inpatient/Veteran's name and ask to speak to their care unit.
- **Families and friends can always call to speak with inpatients by calling the operator at 401-273-7100, dial 0, and asking for the inpatient/Veteran by name.**
- Outpatients should come to VA appointments alone, if possible.
- **Only one person may accompany a Veteran to an outpatient appointment or Emergency Department visit.**
- **No one under the age of 18, unless a caregiver, will be able to attend a patient appointment.**

Other Services

Along with other volunteer-provided services, **DAV van service has been temporarily suspended.** Other transportation options can be found at <https://www.providence.va.gov/services/Transportation.asp>. Please contact the Travel Office with questions at (401) 273-7100 ext. 3550, or call the applicable healthcare clinic to discuss alternative care-delivery options. A list of clinic phone numbers can be found at https://www.providence.va.gov/contact/phone_directory.asp.

Providence VA Shuttle services to VA Boston and Eagle Square will continue as normal.

The Hyannis VA Clinic Shuttle is canceled.

The Canteen and Coffee Shop remain open during their regular hours, but there is no seating – grab & go only. The Canteen Store is open as normal. The Barbershop and Library are closed.

As an additional precaution, the VA Providence Regional Benefits Office is suspending VA benefits services at the VA community clinics in Hyannis and New Bedford, Mass., and Middletown, R.I. This will not affect health care and mental health operations at these locations. To learn more about VA benefits or file a claim, Veterans, claimants, beneficiaries and representatives may:

- Call 800-827-1000, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
- Visit [va.gov](https://www.va.gov)

General Information

Everyone is encouraged to take simple preventive actions to avoid being exposed to viruses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home if you are sick or becoming sick.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- If you have symptoms or have been exposed to someone with symptoms, please call before going to a VA facility.

Any changes will be announced as soon as we have information to share. We will continue to update the Operating Status page of our

website, <https://www.providence.va.gov/emergency/index.asp>, as well as our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) feeds, but we also encourage you to sign up for our “EMAIL UPDATES” on our homepage at the bottom left under “CONNECT,” if you haven’t done so already.

We greatly appreciate your understanding and flexibility during this time. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the VA New England Healthcare System are paying special attention to Veteran health due to the Novel Coronavirus. This effort is being coordinated between VA, the Veterans Health Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and other federal agencies. The latest information on the new Coronavirus is available at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/>