



South Central VA Health Care Network

VISN 16



ARKANSAS GUIDEBOOK FOR INCARCERATED VETERANS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Development of this guidebook represents a tremendous undertaking on behalf of incarcerated veterans. It is always our goal to insure that we work diligently to meet the needs of all veterans facing the possibility of homelessness. To that end, we hope that this guide will be of some benefit to those in need of our assistance. We can only imagine the amount of work that went into “Planning for Your Release,” the first guide that was developed by the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV), to address the needs of veterans who are incarcerated. This book served as the blueprint for the development of our State Guide. We are hopeful that our veterans will find the guide to be both informative and useful in their efforts to reintegrate back into mainstream society.

We congratulate and offer our thanks to NCHV for producing a comprehensive national resource guide that other providers of services to homeless veterans could follow. We, likewise, express our appreciation to Arkansas Supportive Housing Network and Bowman Internet Systems, LLC, for the superb and comprehensive nature of ARACCESS for the ease created by this network for locating statewide homeless shelters and coalitions. We express our appreciation to the State of Washington for developing the first state specific guide for incarcerated veterans and sharing that guide with VA facilities in other states. Thanks to Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. for developing the first incarcerated veterans guidebook, which has inspired and informed subsequent efforts. Finally, thanks to any public domain and agency resources included in the guidebook.

Because of the preliminary efforts of these “bridge builders,” the development of our Arkansas Guidebook for Incarcerated Veterans was a great success.

Thank you,

Arkansas Workgroup for

Veterans that are Incarcerated

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I: Using the Guide and Seeking Help	1-2
SECTION II: Help for Veterans	3-24
Where to Start	3
Toll-Free Numbers	3-4
Other Helpful Numbers	5-6
Housing	7-13
Finding & Keeping a Job	14-18
Health Care	19-21
Mental Health Services	22
Alcohol - Substance Abuse Treatment & Counseling	22
Financial Help	23
Legal Help	23-24
Women Veterans	24
SECTION III: Seeking Federal Benefits	25-30
Eligibility for Benefits While Incarcerated	25-26
Benefits Payments while Incarcerated	26
Apportionment	27-28
Help Seeking Benefits	28-30

SECTION IV: Replacing Personal Records	31
APPENDICES	32-40
Checklist	32
Arkansas Facility Types and Locations	33
Resource Web Sites	34-35
Incarcerated Veterans Fact Sheet	36-37
Pre-Release Work Sheets	38-40

FOREWORD

A report from the Department of Justice by C. J. Mumola (January 18, 2000) on "Veterans in Prison or Jail," found that while there was a nine percent decrease in the number of veterans in the U.S. between 1985 and 1998, there was a 46 percent increase in the number of veterans who had been incarcerated. These veterans were more likely to have been first time offenders who had been employed full-time, prior to incarceration. However, their sentences were more than four years longer than non-veterans, and they reported a higher incidence of homelessness prior to incarceration. This combination of first time offenders with longer sentences and pre-existing social problems reflect a need for special services among veterans leaving incarceration.

This guidebook is designed to help veterans identify options for addressing those special needs and to ease the transition from state and federal prisons or local jails, for veterans who are incarcerated and their families. It is meant to serve as a reference tool for veterans who are interested in gaining access to services at the federal, state or local level. It identifies federal benefits for which he/she may be eligible and provides a framework for filing claims for benefits or seeking reinstatement of benefits for which he/she may have already been determined eligible. Finally, it provides addresses for resources or links to web sites that may be beneficial, and a checklist for use in preparing for his/her release. It is our hope that this guidebook will support re-entry efforts, ease the quest for reunification with family and friends, identify resources for medical, mental health or substance abuse treatment, and employment, training, or rehabilitation.

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SECTION I

USING THE GUIDE AND SEEKING HELP

This booklet is for your use as a pre-release planning guide or a post-release reference guide, for various resources. It includes addresses, phone numbers, and web sites that you can use to find out about programs and other help available after your release. You may want to ask a friend or family member to help you find the information you need if you don't have access to a phone or the Internet. Keep in mind that this guidebook primarily identifies resources that are available in this state, to support your transition from incarceration. What is available in one area may be different from what is available in another, so be sure to check with local providers to learn about services in your area.

While you are in prison, find out which unit in your facility can help you plan for your release. Classes may be offered so you can work on skills development and prepare for life after release. You don't want to risk homelessness once you are released, so take advantage of the opportunities available to you.

Begin thinking about what specifically you will need upon release. Ask yourself these kinds of questions: Will I need housing? Will I need medical, substance abuse, or mental health care? Do I need to learn a job skill? Do I have legal issues, such as child support? How do I restart my VA checks or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

Make a list of your needs. Remember that this is just a tool to help you get organized. A sample list might look like this:

- I need a place to live.
- I need a job.
- I need clothing to wear to work.
- I need to find out what benefits I can get as a veteran.
- I want to get addictions treatment.
- I owe child support.

Think about your list as you read through this guide. Who do you think can help you with each of your needs? Is there one organization that may be able to work with you, on many different things, or do you need to contact several agencies? Keep track of the steps you take, including the dates and names of people you contact for information or assistance. Although this guide provides *national and state* addresses for many organizations, we recommend you check your phone book for local, county, and state agencies that know what help is available in your area.

When writing a letter to request information, be clear. Keep your letter short, to the point, and write legibly. Include the following information:

- Your name and contact information.
- A brief statement about your current situation.
- Your specific request.
- What you have done so far (Example: I have written to _____ organization and they suggested I contact you).
- Any restrictions for mailings (Example: Mail with staples or paper clips will not be accepted by my prison facility).

When contacting an agency for help by mail, email, or phone, be persistent and polite in order to get results. Ask questions if information is not clear to you. Remember that many organizations are staffed by volunteers who are eager to help, but may not have the answers to your questions. If someone cannot help you, ask if there is someone who can.

The Internet can also be helpful to find information about VA benefits and community resources in your area. This guide includes web addresses, when available. If computer access is not available at your facility, you can visit the public library after release. Computer access may also be provided at WorkForce Development locations, and Employment Security Department offices (referred to as Job Service Centers or Unemployment Offices).

SECTION II

HELP FOR VETERANS

This section includes resources that can help you get back on your feet. Some organizations may have waiting lists, require an interview, or have specific rules about whom they serve. It is best if you **start asking about services and requirements now**, so that you will be prepared when you are released. You may even ask if your name can be put on a waiting list when you get closer to your release date.

WHERE TO START

Check the local phone book yellow pages under "Homeless" or "Social Service Organizations" for a list of many local organizations that offer different services, which may include clothing, public transportation tokens, emergency shelter, and more. You may need to contact several agencies to find all the services you need. Services provided by government agencies, are listed in the blue pages found near the front of the phone book. Check with your local Public Assistance Office to find out what programs are available and what their guidelines are. We have included some guidance below, but your local organizations are your best resources.

Remember, it never hurts to ask!

TOLL-FREE NUMBERS

Crisis and other toll-free numbers are often listed in the front cover or first few pages of the phone book. You may also want to check under "Social Services" in the blue or yellow pages for hotlines and local numbers.

US Department of Veterans Affairs

- Benefits – 1-800-827-1000
- VA Medical Center Help Line – 1-800-224-8387
- Life Insurance – 1-800-669-8477
- Education (GI Bill) – 1-888-442-4551

- Health Care Benefits – 1-877-222-8387
- Income Verification and Means Testing – 1-800-929-8387
- Mammography Helpline – 1-888-492-7844
- Gulf War / Agent Orange Helpline – 1-800-749-8387
- Status of Headstones and Markers – 1-8000-697-6947
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) – 1-800-829-4833

For additional VA numbers go to: [HTTP://WWW.VA.ORG/BENEFITS/VATOLLFREE.HTM](http://www.va.org/benefits/vatollfree.htm)

Non-VA Toll-Free Numbers

- Focus On Recovery Helpline – A 24-hour national alcohol and drug abuse addiction and treatment hotline: 1-800-888-9383
- National AIDS Hotline – Talk to someone who knows about HIV/AIDS and can tell you about AIDS services in your city or state: 1-800-822-7422
- Alcoholic Anonymous – 1-800-234-1253
- Crisis Center for Women – 1-800-359-0056
- Advocates for Battered Women – 1-800-332-4443
- Area Agency on Aging – 1-800-432-9721
- The Crisis Center 1-888-274-7472
- First Call for Help – Local Information and Referral Services – 1-800-278-1848
- Social Security Administration 1-800-772-1213
- Ozark Legal Services – 1-800-234-3544
- VAMC Fayetteville – 1-800-691-8387
- National Coalition for Homeless Veterans – 1-800-838-4357
- National Suicide Support Number – 1-888- 784-2433 (1-888-SUICIDE)

OTHER HELPFUL NUMBERS

Red Cross Chapter Locations and Telephone Numbers

- Benton County, AR; telephone (479)-271-9115
- Chickasawba District; telephone (870) 763-4481
- Faulkner County, AR; telephone (501) 329-3571
- Garland County, AR; telephone (501) 623-9321
- Greater AR; telephone (501) 748-1000
- Jefferson County, AR; telephone (870) 534-7312
- Joplin, MO; telephone (417) 624-4411
- Mid South AR; telephone (901) 726-1690
- River Valley AR; telephone (479) 968-3498
- South AR; telephone (870) 863-8196
- Springfield, MO; telephone (417) 832-9500
- Valley AR; telephone (870) 246-2682
- Washington County, Northwest AR; telephone (479) 442-4291
- White County, AR; telephone (501) 268-2691

United Way - provides a variety of services through local organizations. Please contact the United Way in you local county or city as follows:

- Benton County: Bentonville, AR 72712, telephone (479) 273-1306; Siloam Springs, AR 72761, telephone (479) 524-6639
- Boone County; Harrison, AR 72602; telephone (870) 741-6555
- Clark County; Arkadelphia, AR 71923; telephone (870)-246--3737
- Columbia County; Magnolia, AR71754; telephone (870) 234-7466
- Drew County; Monticello, AR 71655;-0757; telephone (870) 367-2411
- Faulkner County; Conway, AR 72033-0489; telephone (501) 327-5087
- Fort Smith Area, Inc.; Fort Smith, AR 72901; telephone (479) 782-1311
- Garland County; Hot Springs, AR 71913-3724; telephone (501) 623-2505
- Gentry; AR 72734; telephone (501) 736-8384
- Jackson County Newport, AR 72112-1192; telephone (870) 523-2750

- Greater Blytheville; Blytheville, AR 72316-0866; telephone (870) 763-7522
- Greater Jonesboro; Jonesboro, AR 72403; telephone (870) 935-3658
- Greater Texarkana; Texarkana, AR; (903) 794-3105
- Hempstead County; Hope, AR 71802-0015; telephone (870) 777-8798
- Hot Springs County; Malvern, AR 72104-0392; telephone (501) 332-5267
- Independence County; Batesville, AR 72501; telephone (870) 793-5991
- Pulaski County; Little Rock, AR 72201; telephone (501) 376-4567
- River Valley; Russellville, AR72811-0836; telephone (479) 968-5089
- Saline County; Benton, AR72018; telephone (501) 315-0209
- South Mississippi County; Osceola, AR 72370; telephone (870) 563-3733
- Southeast Arkansas; Pine Bluff, AR 71611; telephone (870) 534-2453
- Union County; El Dorado, AR 71730; telephone (870) 862-4904
- Van Buren County; Clinton, AR 72031; telephone (501) 745-2244
- Washington County. Springdale Arkansas 72764; telephone (479) 750-1221
- White County; Searcy, AR 72145-0907; telephone (501) 268-7489

HOUSING

It is important to know that you have a place to go when released. The first step in returning to the community is finding a place to stay. This section includes ways to locate emergency shelter, transitional programs, and permanent housing assistance. Transitional or temporary housing can serve as a step toward full independence upon your release. However, there are often waiting lists for housing assistance programs, so you should ask about applying as soon as possible. If you are released and find yourself homeless, emergency assistance is available. If you are interested in locating in the Little Rock area, please contact the VA Drop-In Day Treatment Center; 1101 West 2nd Street; Little Rock, AR 72201. You may also call the HCHV Program Coordinator at (501) 257-4499.

National Coalition for the Homeless has a directory of shelters and homeless assistance programs online. This does not list every program in the country, so be sure to check your phone book for local programs. The following are those listed for the State of Arkansas.

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/local/local.html>.

- **Arkansas Supportive Housing Network** – This organization provides scattered site tenant-based subsidized supportive permanent housing to homeless and at-risk individuals and families with disabilities throughout Arkansas. Supportive services include substance abuse relapse prevention interventions, mental health counseling, intensive case management and service coordination.

P. O. Box 165858
Little Rock, AR 72116;
Telephone (501) 372-5543
Fax: (501) 372-5457
Email: administrator@ashn.org.

- **North Arkansas Human Services System, Inc.** – The North Arkansas Human Services System provides assistance to homeless and at-risk individuals and families in a 10-county area of northern Arkansas. Preference is given to mentally ill persons and substance abusers, but others are assisted as well.

P. O. Box 2578
Batesville, AR 72503
Telephone: (501) 612-9366
Email: edwiles@cei.net

Local churches and faith-based organizations, such as Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, and Volunteers of America, may have a variety of programs to assist you. Find these organizations by calling your county or city Department of Human Services or check the blue pages of the phone book for the number.

Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing

Look in the phone book yellow pages under "Social Service Organizations" for local shelters or organizations that may be able to help.

Look in the phone book blue pages under local, city, or county government Department of Social Services or "Human Services" or call the County Commissioner's Office for information about local low-income housing coalitions or homeless advocacy groups who may know what is available.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/cont/coc/ar/index.cfm>

To find a list of emergency shelters and emergency housing in Arkansas for men, women and families by county, go to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), or search online at:

<http://www.hud.gov/local/ar/homeless/shelters.cfm>

Salvation Army Emergency Shelter Listings

419 S. Madison St.
El Dorado, AR
(870) 862-7149

209 S. Oak St.
Jacksonville, AR 72076
(479) 985-1331

501 East 12th St.
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
(870) 534-0504

219 W. 15th St.
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 521-0857 or
(479) 521-2151

125 S. Fisher St.
Jonesboro, AR 72401-3028
(870) 932-3785

3305 S. W. I St.
Bentonville, AR
(479) 271-9545

504 N. D Street.
Fort Smith, AR 72901
(479) 783-2340

1111 W. Markham St.
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 374-9296

115 Crescent St.
Hot Springs, AR 71901
(501) 321-0821

121 Highway 201 North
Mountain Home, AR 72653
(870) 508-4889

Other Night Shelters and Treatment Facilities

Black Community
Developers, Inc.
4000 West 13th Street
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 663-7223

Community Outreach
Services
317 West Walnut Street
Paris, AR 72855
(501) 963-3300

Courage House
P.O. Box 924
Arkadelphia, AR 71923
(870) 246-3122

Dove House
P.O. Box 806
Clinton, AR 72031
(501) 745-5657

Genesis House, Inc.
1030 East Ashley Street
Siloam Springs, AR 72761
(479) 549-3438

Harmony House, Inc
106 West Stephenson
Harrison, AR 72602
(870) 743-3393

Health Resources of AR, Inc.
25 Gap Road
Batesville, AR 72501
(870) 743-3393

Homeless Opportunities
Partnership Exchange
P.O. Box 762
Harrison, AR 72601
(870) 741-2121

Hope Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 89
Marshall, AR 72650
(870) 448-2273

Hope In Action
606 West Third
Hope, AR 71801
(870) 777-8227

Independence Inn
1355 E. Main Street
Batesville, AR 72501
(870) 793-2311

Jefferson Comprehensive
Care System, Inc.
1101 Tennessee
Pine Bluff, AR 71613
(870) 543-2380

Jefferson Comprehensive
Care System, Inc.
113 River Road
Redfield, AR 72132
(501) 397-2261

Johnson County Helping
Hands
805B West Cherry Street
Clarksville, AR 72830
(479) 754-3985

Mission Outreach of
Northeast Arkansas, Inc.
901 East Lake Street
Paragould, AR 72370
(870) 236-8080

Our House I- Emergency
Shelter
400 South Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 375-2416

Randy Sams Outreach
Shelter
408 Hazel Street
Texarkana, AR 71854
(501) 772-0988

Searcy County Homeless
Shelter
Rt. 1 Box 659C
Pindall, AR 72633
(870) 439-2137

Union Rescue Mission
Transient Lodge
615 N. Magnolia Street
North Little Rock, AR 72214
(501) 376-8470

Souls Harbor
Rogers, AR
(479) 631-7878

Gospel Rescue Mission
Van Buren, AR
(479) 474-4163

Seven Hills Center
1561 W. Sixth Street
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 251-7776

Springfield Victory Mission
Springfield, MO
(417) 831-6387

Day Centers and Shelters

St. Francis House Day Center
509 Scott Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

VA Drop-In Day Treatment Center
1101 W. 2nd Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Vet Center (Conflict Zone Counseling)
201 W. Broadway
North Little Rock, AR 72114

Long-term or Permanent Housing

Public housing waiting lists can be long, but the length of time can vary from city to city. Even if you are not sure where you want to live, apply to get on the waiting list, so that you have as many options as possible. To apply, contact the local housing authority. Contact the HCHV Coordinator for information on VA referrals to permanent housing.

VA Programs for Homeless Veterans in Little Rock

Comprehensive Homeless Center – The Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS) has one of seven Comprehensive Homeless Centers (CHCs) with a broad range of programs and services to meet the needs of homeless veterans.

- **Domiciliary Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program** – This program is a bio-psycho-social treatment center with 60 residential treatment beds. It has a multidisciplinary treatment team and uses a problem-oriented rehabilitation approach to treatment.
- **Veterans Industries-Transitional Residence (VI-TR) Program** – The Transitional Residence Program is a long-term vocational rehabilitation program for persons recovering from chemical dependency.

- **Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill (HCMI)** – This is an outreach and case management oriented program that provides community based residential treatment to homeless veterans with a history of mental illness, including substance abuse.
- **Housing and Urban Development-VA Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) Program** – This program provides intensive case management and HUD subsidized Section 8 housing vouchers to clinically stable eligible homeless veterans.
- **Health Care for Homeless Veterans/Grant and Per Diem (HCHV/GPD) Program** – Provides long-term case management and community based residential treatment services to homeless veterans.
- **Drop-In Day Treatment Center** – This Center provides person-centered treatment and supportive services, including clinical case management and personal care services. The Center is located at 1101 West 2nd Street in Little Rock.
- **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)** – The HCHV Program in Little Rock is housed at the Day Treatment Center. This Program provides assistance with residential treatment and transitional housing as well and long-term permanent housing. The HCHV Coordinator at Little Rock can be reached at (501) 257-4499.
- **Special Needs** – The Special Needs Chronically Mentally Ill (SN-CMI) Program provides time-limited intensive case management services to homeless veterans with chronic mental illness through a continuum that spans outreach, inpatient treatment, community based residential treatment and permanent housing. This program may encompass other co-occurring illnesses.

For more information on VA Homeless Programs at call (501) 257-4499 or go to:

<http://vaww.little-rock.med.va.gov/MentalHealth/homeless.html>

VA Programs for Homeless Veterans in Fayetteville

- **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (Fayetteville, AR)** – The HCHV Program in Fayetteville is located at the VA Medical Center, at 1100 N. College Avenue in the Ozark Mountains of Northwest Arkansas. This program offers residential treatment beds to veterans through a community-based program for veterans in Joplin, Missouri. The HCHV Coordinator can be reached at (479) 443-4301.
- **Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA)** provides assistance with Veterans benefits & entitlements information, VA claims process, representation and advocacy, Trauma (PTSD) counseling, Veterans Homes for those in need of nursing care, and employment assistance. Each County in Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma has a Veterans Service Officer.
- **The House, Inc.** – Is a long-term transitional housing program located at 24706 State Hwy. 171, in Webb City, Missouri, telephone (417) 623-8179.
- **Quality Life Associates** – Is a program for veterans, that is located at 2592 N. Gregg Ave. Suite 1, Fayetteville, AR 72703; telephone (479) 571-4455.
- **Seven Hills Center** – is located at 1561 W. sixth St., Fayetteville, AR 72701, telephone (479) 251-7776.

To gain access to a listing of non-VA treatment programs or shelters in Arkansas, go to

www.araccess.org.

National Programs for Homeless Veterans

- **National Coalition for Homeless Veterans** – To find out if there are homeless veteran service providers in your area, call 1-800- VET-HELP, write to NCHV, 333½ Pennsylvania Ave., SE Washington, DC 20003-1148, or go to www.nchv.org/.
- **HUD Veteran Resource Center**
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/hudvet/index.cfm>
www.artistshelpingchildren.org/shelters.html

Arkansas Homeless Coalitions

AR River Valley Homeless Asst. Network
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 450-6110

Central AR Team Care for the Homeless
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 918-3940

Delta Hill Continuum of Care
Batesville, AR 72501
(870) 793-8900

Eastern Arkansas Continuum of Care
West Memphis, AR 72301
(870) 735-5527

Mississippi County Continuum of Care
Osceola, AR 72370
(870) 563-2660

North Arkansas Housing Coalition
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 571-8577

Northeast Arkansas Continuum
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72403
(870) 933-4635

Northwest AR Housing Coalition
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 571-8577

Old Fort Homeless Coalition
Fort Smith, AR 72914-4069
(870) 785-2303

South AR Homeless Continuum of Care
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
(870) 543-1820

Southwest Arkansas Partnership
Arkadelphia, AR 71923
(870) 246-3122

Texarkana Homeless Coalition
Texarkana, AR 71854
(870) 774-2701

FINDING & KEEPING A JOB

Finding a job may be hard and can seem overwhelming, but it is possible and very important! When released you may find that you have to start over. You should ask for job counseling and training while incarcerated so you are prepared to work when released. Don't wait until you get out to start thinking about what you will do. Start planning now. Check the National H.I.R.E. Network for information on employment in your state. The Mission of this network is "to increase the number and quality of job opportunities available to people with criminal records by improving public policies, practices, and public opinion." Go to <http://www.hirenetwork.org/index.html>.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

State-level employment resources:

The U.S. Department of Labor's web-based directory has the complete listing of the Veteran's Training and Employment Service on a state-by-state basis. States are aggregated by DOL Regions. Scroll down till you find your region and state. These Directory listings include names and phone numbers of state representatives. Go to <http://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/notice.htm>.

The staff listed for your state can be a resource for you to figure out the best way to approach employment services for your state. The DVOP will know where such a state listing for the "WorkForce One Stop Centers" can be found on the Internet. WorkForce has a very useful database of employment service providers such as DVOPS and other service professionals. It can also be used to help veterans locate needed local employment resources.

The Little Rock WorkForce Investment Board database is simple to use, has people's names, addresses, and phone numbers and is regularly updated. To find resources in a given area, you can even insert a partial or complete zip code, city, and/or state.

<http://dvoplverlocator.nvti.cudenver.edu/>

WorkForce Centers provide all the information, technology and services business needs to thrive; and job seekers need to achieve successful careers. They represent a unique concept in the labor market - everything in one place. WorkForce Center Services are delivered to customers in a variety of ways, including:

- Self-directed efforts, such as kiosks or via the Internet
- Group programs and activities, such as workshops
- One-on-one consultations
- Training programs and business consultations

WorkForce Affiliates serve special populations and are electronically linked to the system. All affiliates offer self service resource rooms and job search activities. Services for job seekers include:

- Free use of computers, copiers, phones, faxes and other career resources
- Internet access to jobs
- Job referral and placement
- Classes on how to get and keep a job
- Information on the fastest growing jobs and wages
- Referral to training and other community services
- Access to Unemployment Insurance
- Translation services

WorkForce is a joint venture of organizations dedicated to addressing employment needs.

Local Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOPS) assigned by the State Employment Security Department to help veterans find and keep jobs, are located at the local WorkForce Centers. They assist with developing job and training opportunities for veterans with service-connected disabilities, linking them with employers and making sure follow-up services are provided. To find a DVOP near you, visit your state employment service office listed in the phone book blue pages under the State Employment Security Division or go to www.lrwib.org.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) can save an employer as much as \$2,400 in taxes when they hire a worker who historically has had a hard time landing a job. And it's easy. All an employer has to do is hire a qualified worker, fill out the Pre-Screening Notice (8850) and Individual Characteristics Form (9061) and drop them in the mail within 21 calendar days from the start date of employment. An ex-felon who has a hiring date, which is not more than one year after the last date on which they were convicted or released from prison, and is a member of an economically disadvantaged family is qualified for WOTC.

An employer can get a tax break of 40 percent up to the first \$6,000 of the wages paid to a qualified worker who worked at least 400 hours during the first year of employment. That adds up to a \$2,400 tax credit for filling a job they planned to fill anyway. However, if the new employee only works 120 to 399 hours an employer can still receive a credit of up to 25 percent of the qualified first year wages up to \$6,000. This allows a credit amount up to \$1,500. The Employment Security Department is the "Right Connection" to the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. If an employer wants more information and forms, they can call the WOTC Unit at (501) 682-3749 or contact their local WorkForce Center.

Arkansas State Bonding Program

Purpose—Bonding is a unique and innovative tool for marketing an applicant to an employer. As an employer incentive, it conveys a businesslike approach. The employer gets the worker's skills, abilities and knowledge without taking risk of potential employee dishonesty. There are no forms or other papers for the employer to sign, and no processing to delay matters – the insurance can be put into effect instantly. The bond insurance can apply to any job and covers any employee dishonesty that occurs on or away from the employer's work facility. Full or part-time employees' paid wages (with federal taxes automatically deducted from pay) can be bonded; these Fidelity Bonds cannot cover self-employment.

Why bonding is needed – Job seekers who have in the past committed a fraudulent or dishonest act, or who have demonstrated other past behavior which casts doubt upon their credibility or honesty, often experience a special barrier to gaining employment due to their personal backgrounds. Such persons are routinely classified as “at-risk” job applicants when their past life experience raises an obstacle to their future ability to secure employment. More specifically, *employers view these applicants as being potentially untrustworthy workers*. This fear is further heightened by the fact that Fidelity Bond insurance commercially purchased by employers to protect against employee dishonesty usually will not cover those at risk – these persons are designated by insurance companies as being “NOT BONDABLE.” As a result, at risk job applicants are routinely denied employment.

Ex-offenders, including anyone with a record of arrest, conviction, or imprisonment, and anyone who has ever been on probation or parole, are at-risk job applicants. Others, similarly at risk and NOT BONDABLE are ex-addicts (persons with a history of alcohol and drug abuse), persons having a poor credit record, or who have declared bankruptcy, economically disadvantaged persons who lack a work history, and individuals who were dishonorably discharged from the military. Other job seekers also can be classified as at-risk if bonding can eliminate the barrier to their employment.

What is a Fidelity Bond? – Fidelity bonding is a form of business insurance usually purchased to indemnify employers’ for loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e. theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement). This “employee dishonesty insurance” is generally considered a good business management practice, and is purchased by many employers. However, while other types of insurance set premiums that vary according to the degree of risk, Fidelity Bond premiums are always set based upon taking no risk. As a result, insurance companies usually will not cover at-risk persons under Fidelity Bonds, a practice that has created a special barrier to employment for the growing large number of persons (i.e. ex-addicts, credit risks, etc.) whose personal credibility is questionable due to other dishonest or deviant past acts. To apply for bonding in Arkansas, contact:

Bonding Services Coordinator
Employment Service Technical Unit
Arkansas Employment Security Department
P.O. Box 2981
Little Rock, AR 72203
Telephone – 501-682-3143
Fax – 501-682-2576
E-Mail: Bert.Pranter.@mail.state.ar.us

Arkansas State Vocational Rehabilitation

The State of Arkansas has a Vocational Rehabilitation program that helps people with disabilities find and keep jobs. Description of program services can be found on the Internet, <http://www.arinfo.org/>. The toll-free number is, 800-330-0632.

VA Vocational Rehabilitation

The VA's **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment** services help veterans with service-connected disabilities by providing job training and counseling to those who have an employment handicap. Services include help finding a job, on-the-job training, job development, and vocational training. If you are not eligible for these services a VA counselor may help you find other options or program. Contact VA Regional Office at: 1-800-827-1000.

Through its **Veterans Industries and Compensated Work Therapy programs**, the VA offers structured work opportunities and supervised therapeutic housing for at-risk and homeless veterans, with physical, mental health and addictions problems. VA contracts with private industry and the public sector for work by these veterans, who learn job skills, re-learn successful work habits, and regain a sense of self-esteem. Veterans are paid for their work and given assistance with employment in the community. In Arkansas, the VA currently has a Veterans Industries Program located at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System in Little Rock.

HEALTH CARE

VA Health Care

We encourage you to enroll in the VA Health Benefits System as soon as you are released. Every VA Medical Center has a Health Care for Homeless Veterans Coordinator who helps veterans and their families find resources inside and outside the VA Health Care system. Call 1-877-222-8387 or go to www.visn16.med.va.gov, to find the medical center nearest you.

Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care

	<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Address & Phone Numbers</i>
VA Medical Centers	Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS)	4300 W Seventh Street Little Rock, AR 72204 (501) 257-4499
	Fayetteville VA Medical Center	1100 N. College Avenue Fayetteville, AR 72703 (479) 443-4301
VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs)	Gene Taylor Community Based Outpatient Clinic	600 N. Main Street Mt. Vernon, MO 65712 (800) 253-8387
	Fort Smith Community Based Outpatient Clinic	1500 Dodson Avenue Fort Smith, AR 72917-7030 (479) 709-6850
	Harrison Community Based Outpatient Clinic	707 North Main Street Harrison, AR 72601 (870) 741-3592
	El Dorado Community Based Outpatient Clinic	460 West Oak Street El Dorado, AR 71730 (870) 862-2489
	Hot Springs Community Based Outpatient Clinic	1661 Airport Road Suite D Hot Springs, AR 71901 (501) 760-1513
	Mena Community Based Outpatient Clinic	1706 Highway 71 North Mena, AR 71953 (479) 394-4800
	Texarkana Community Based Outpatient Clinic	910 Realtor Road Texarkana, AR 71854 (870) 216-2242

Non-VA free or low cost health care

- **Department of Human Services (DHS)** can tell you where to find health care facilities for the homeless. You may also check the phone book for numbers.
- **National Health Care for the Homeless Council** has a list of health care providers working with homeless people across the nation. For a list of providers in your state, go to www.nhchc.org.

Free or Low-cost Community Clinics in Little Rock and North Little Rock

- **St. Vincent's Clinic** – Is free to those who qualify with low income and no insurance. It is located in St. Francis House at 2701 S. Elm St., Little Rock. Telephone: (501) 552-3243
- **River City Ministry** – Is a faith-based community organization dedicated to the poor that is located at, 1021 E. Washington Avenue in North Little Rock. Telephone: (501) 376-6694
- **Open Hands Clinic** – Health and Human Services, Health Care for the Homeless clinic is located at 1225 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Little Rock. Telephone: (501) 244-2121
- **Little Rock Community Health** – Is located at 1522 W. 10th St. Telephone (501) 376-1295
- **College Station Clinic** – Is located 4206 Frazier Pike. Telephone (501) 490-2440

Special Health Information for Veterans:

If you think you may be at risk for AIDS and HIV infection after your release, contact the nearest VA Medical Center to get tested, and seek counseling. Those at highest risk for AIDS and HIV infection are:

- people who share needles or syringes to inject drugs or steroids;
- men who have sex with other men;
- those born to mothers who have HIV
- people who received blood transfusions before 1985;
- anyone who has sex with anyone who is at risk for HIV / AIDS.

Veterans, homeless, and incarcerated people are at high risk for **Hepatitis C** (HCV), a serious disease that can cause cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) and liver cancer. If you think you are at risk after your release, contact the nearest VA Medical Center to get tested and seek HCV counseling.

You are at risk if:

- you ever used a needle to inject drugs;
- you had a blood transfusion or organ transplant before 1992;
- you were a health care worker and had contact with blood;
- you were on long-term kidney dialysis;
- your mother had hepatitis C when she gave birth to you.

VA also recommends testing if:

- you are a Vietnam-era veteran;
- you have had exposure to blood on your skin;
- you have had multiple sex partners;
- you have tattoos or body piercing;
- you have ever snorted cocaine;
- you have liver disease;
- you have a history of drinking a lot of alcohol;
- you have had an abnormal liver function test.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

If eligible for VA Benefits:

- Contact the **Homeless Veteran Services Coordinator** at the local VA Medical Center or Vet Center. Call 1-877-222-8387 to or go to <http://www.visn16.med.va.gov/> to find the medical center nearest you.

Non-VA Benefits Resources:

- **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill** lists community mental health services providers at: www.nami.org or call 1-800-950-6264.
- **National Mental Health Association** offers support groups, rehabilitation, socialization, and housing services through 340 community organizations located across the country. Call 1-800-969-NMHA, or find a local office online at www.nmha.org.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

If eligible for veterans' benefits contact:

- The Addictions Treatment Center at the VA Medical Center or call 1-877-222-838. You may also go to www.visn16.med.va.gov, to find the medical center nearest you.

If not eligible for VA Benefits contact:

- **The Department of Health and Human Services Drug and Alcohol Treatment Referral Routing Service** can refer *you* to local programs. Call 1-800-662-4357.
- **Focus On Recovery Helpline** – A 24-hour national alcohol and drug abuse addiction and treatment hotline: 1-800-888-9383.
- **Recovery Centers of Arkansas** – Community based residential, outpatient substance abuse treatment for adults and chemical free-living program. (501) 372-4611
- **Serenity Park, Inc.** – Community based residential, outpatient substance abuse treatment for adults and chemical free-living program. (501) 663-7627

FINANCIAL HELP

- The **Arkansas Veterans' Child Welfare** provides temporary financial services for children of veterans. They can be contacted at: (501) 324-9299.
- If you are unemployed with little or no income, you may be able to get food stamps. A person may normally qualify for \$85 to \$100 worth of food stamps per month. Call the toll-free information number at 1-800-221-5689, or Arkansas Department of Human Services <http://www.arkansas.gov/dhs/esources/index.php>. Food stamp applicant information can also be found at http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/ebt/ebt_status_report.htm#Arkansas or at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants/2004/2005-summary.htm>. The Arkansas Delta food stamp grant site is <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/states/arkansas.htm>. State food stamp hotlines can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/contactinfo/hotlines.html. You can also contact the local Department of Human Services.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** benefits can be applied for before your release, even though you will not receive the benefits until after you are released. Food Stamps can be applied for together with SSI. Normally, it takes about three months to review an application, so apply well before your release date. It is best to get help filling out the application. For detailed information or assistance, call 1-800- 772-1213, for your local social security administration or go to: <http://www.ssa.gov/notices/supplemental-security-income/>.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** has a program called Emergency Food and Shelter Program to help prevent homelessness. Contact the local Office of the Mayor or United Way to ask who awards this money in your area and what the rules are.

LEGAL HELP

Veteran status issues:

- You should talk to a Veterans Service Officer for help with discharge upgrades, seeking benefits, and filing a VA claim (call 1-800-562-2308 for the nearest Service Officer).

Other legal issues:

- **Most law is state-specific.** The law in the state where you live or where the problem occurred governs most common legal problems. When looking for legal help, make sure that information you find applies to your state, or that the lawyer or other service provider is qualified to work in your state.
- The **American Bar Association** has a web site with guidelines about free legal services and links to directories of legal aid offices and pro-bono programs. Go to: www.abanet.org.
- **Legal Services offices** have staff lawyers to provide free legal help to families. These lawyers are usually experts in handling non-criminal problems experienced by families that are poor. The telephone number for Legal Services Center for Arkansas is (501) 376-3423.
- **Lawyers** in private practice sometimes volunteer in "pro-bono" programs to take cases for poor clients free of charge. Contact your Local Bar Association to learn if there is a pro-bono program in your community, or go to www.abanet.org/barserv/stlobar.html.

WOMEN VETERANS

- Most VA **Medical Centers** and readjustment offices have a designated Women Veterans Program Manager to assist female veterans with accessing VA benefits and healthcare services. Call 1-877-827-1000 or go to www.visn16.med.va.gov and click on veteran's services to find the women's program nearest you. The Women Veterans Coordinator can be reach at (479) 587-5840 in Fayetteville and (501) 257-6725 in Little Rock.
- **The Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs** has a designated Women Veterans Coordinator to help women veterans. Call 1-800-827-1000 or (501) 370-3820.
- Many women in prison had similar histories, problems, and personal issues before their arrest and conviction. The Women's Project has a MIWATCH Project that works to help women in prison with maintaining contact with their children. They can be contacted at (501) 372-5113 or www.womens-project.org.
- **Second Genesis Ministries** is dedicated to meeting the transitional housing and treatment needs of women leaving prison. Call (501) 666-6831, or go to <http://www.2ndgenesis.com>.

SECTION III

SEEKING FEDERAL BENEFITS

The Department of Veterans Affairs publishes a booklet called "**Federal Benefits for Veterans and Their Dependents**" that describes the types of benefits available and lists the addresses and phone numbers for VA facilities nationwide. Write the VA Regional Office (VARO) to request a copy.

U.S. Dept Of Veterans Affairs Regional Office

2200 Ft. Roots Drive, Building 65

North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114

Call 1-800-827-1000 or find information about benefits at www.vba.va.gov/benefits.

ELIGIBILITY FOR VA BENEFITS DURING INCARCERATION

Veterans incarcerated and incarcerated dependents may apply for the same compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) – service connected death benefits – and pension benefits as veterans who are not incarcerated. However, Congress has greatly restricted the amount of benefits that may be paid to a veteran or dependent while he or she is incarcerated. These benefits are institutionalized as part of law: 38 U.S.C Sec 5313 (a), 38 C.F.R., Sec. 3.665 (a), (d), which reads as follows:

If a veteran is incarcerated as the result of a "felony" conviction as defined by law: "Any offense punishable by death or imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, unless specifically categorized as a misdemeanor under the law of the prosecuting jurisdiction,"

Then, the amount paid to a veteran incarcerated for a service-connected disability is generally limited by law to the 10 percent disability rate, or half the amount of the ten percent rate if the veteran's disability rating is 10 percent. (If the veteran is rated before incarceration as 20 percent disabled or higher, he will receive only the amount payable to a 10 percent disabled veteran.) Incarcerated DIC recipients will receive one-half the amount paid to a veteran receiving compensation payments for a 10 percent-rated disability.

A veteran may not receive non-service connected VA pension benefits, or any portion of these benefits, while incarcerated for a felony. However, his family may receive an apportionment of such benefits under the procedure described above. (See 38 C.F.R. Sec.3.666)

One important requirement for eligibility for VA benefits is that the veteran has to have been issued either an honorable or general discharge, or would have received one if not for re-enlisting. If a veteran had two periods of service, one honorable and the other less than honorable, he may still be eligible for VA benefits based on the honorable period of service.

VA Medical Care is not provided to veterans in prison, but VA health facilities may provide care to you after your release. Contact 1-800-827-1000 to find the medical center nearest you.

BENEFITS PAYMENTS WHILE INCARCERATED

There is a 60-day "**grace period**" following a conviction when you may still receive full benefits. **To avoid an overpayment**, it is important that you notify the VARO immediately when you go to prison if you are receiving payments. If you do not notify the VA and receive overpayment, you and your family will lose all financial payments until the debt is paid.

*For example, Joe is a veteran who receives a VA pension of \$807 per month. He commits a crime and is incarcerated, but doesn't tell the VA right away and keeps getting paid for 6 months. **Joe is overpaid a total of \$4,872.** After serving his sentence of 18 months, he is released and applies to the VA to have his pension restarted. The new pension rate is \$830 per month, but the VA will use that amount to start repaying the \$4,872 debt. **Joe's first real check will start 5 months after he is released and will be for \$30!** Joe has to go at least 5 months without that income.*

Your award for compensation or pension benefits should resume from the date you are released, as long as the VA receives notice of release within one year. This includes placement in a community treatment center or halfway house. **Remember, you must notify the VA when you are released to restart your payments.**

APPORTIONMENT

Although legally, the veteran can only receive a portion of the full amount payable for his or her disability rating, the remaining balance may be “apportioned to the individual’s dependent family”. To apply for apportionment, send a letter to the VA Regional Office (VARO) that has jurisdiction over the veteran’s case. VA regulations clearly specify this apportionment amount will only go to family members if they can show financial need for such amount. This applies to the spouse, children, or dependent parents who are involved in the application.

In deciding whether any apportionment is appropriate, the amount of the apportionment, and to whom it will go, the following factors are considered:

- The family member’s income and living expenses;
- The amount of compensation available to be apportioned;
- The needs and living expenses of other family members; and
- Special needs of any of the family members.

For example: a veteran incarcerated rated as 80 percent disability can only receive the amount he or she would get if he or she were 10 percent disabled. However, his or her family may be apportioned up to 70 percent, the difference of the 80 percent rating. (DIC may also be apportioned with similar restrictions.)

There is a 60-day “**grace period**” following conviction where the veteran, or DIC recipient, may still receive full benefits. If the veteran continues to receive benefits after the 60-day period, it will result in an “over-payment”. The VA considers it to be the recipient’s responsibility and fault if this occurs because the recipient failed to notify the VA of his or her incarceration. Attempts to obtain a waiver in these situations of overpayment are often unsuccessful. As a rule, the veteran loses most, if not all, financial benefits, until the VA recovers the entire overpayment. It has also been a standard procedure that the family will not be entitled to receive an apportionment until the debt is completely recovered.

For more information concerning VA debt collection rules that may affect the veteran incarcerated, telephone: 1-800-827-1000 and request a Veterans Service Organization representative or, write to a Veterans Service Organization at the address listed on page seventeen, in this document.

It is important that each disabled veteran receiving compensation or DIC payments promptly notify the VARO. Regular full benefit payments should begin upon release, providing the VA is notified of the veteran's release, including placement within a community treatment center or halfway house in the community, within one year of release.

One other relevant restriction on veteran's incarcerated eligibility for service connected disability compensation is that: "No total disability rating based on un-employability, may be assigned to an incarcerated veteran."

It is important to remember that most VA decisions, including those on apportionment, can be appealed to the Board of Veterans Appeals or the Court of Appeals for Veterans Affairs.

HELP SEEKING BENEFITS

If you would like to get benefits or think you have a pending claim before the VA, it is best to get professional help, to assist you.

Many Veterans **Service Organizations** have trained staff who can help you with your VA claim, and can legally represent your claim before the VA. Some also help homeless and at-risk veterans find the support services they need. You can contact any VSO listed below to see if there is a service representative near you.

National & Department Service Officers are located at the VARO in North Little Rock, unless otherwise noted. Address correspondence as follows:

[Service Organization Name]
Department of Veterans Affairs
Regional Office
2200 Fort Roots Dr. Bldg 65
North Little Rock AR 72114-1756

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA)	Room 119	(501) 370-3820
ADVA covers AMVETS, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Fleet Reserve Assn., American Ex-Prisoners of War, Blinded Veterans Assoc., Marine Corps League, Jewish War Veterans, Veterans of World War I, Noncommissioned Officers Association, and Vietnam Veterans of America. All offices are located in room 119)		or 1800 827-1000
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)	Room 121	(501) 370-3838
Military Order of the Purple Heart (Part of ADVA)	Room 101	(501) 370-3861
Paralyzed Veterans of America	Room 116	(501) 370-3757

Although we encourage you to seek the aid of a service representative, you may choose to apply for VA benefits on your own. Write the VARO or find the forms online at: <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>. You can also apply for certain benefits online at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>.

Below are brief descriptions of forms needed to file for certain VA benefits. Be sure you use a return address where mail will get to you as quickly as possible. Make photocopies of all forms for your records before sending your packet to the VARO nearest you.

- **Standard Form-180 – Request Pertaining to Military Records** - is used to get copies of your Record of Discharge (DD-214), military personnel and medical records. You will need a copy of your DD-214 when applying for any benefits. Requests may also complete online at <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>.
- **VA Form 21-526 - Application for Compensation or Pension**- must be filed to apply for compensation -or pension. This form, along with your DD-214 and the following forms should be mailed directly to the VARO nearest your release destination 30 to 45 days before our release.
- **VA Form 21-4138 - Statement in Support of Claim** - lets you explain why you deserve the benefits you are asking for because of your disability or disorder. It is best to have an experienced service representative help you complete the form.

- **VA Form 21-4142 - Authorization for Release of Information** - If you have received medical or mental health care, that may be relevant to your claim, from anyone other than a VA Medical Facility, you need to fill out a **VA Form 21-4142** giving permission for release of medical records to the VA.
- **VA Form 10-10EZ - Enrollment for Medical Benefits** - is used by the VA to determine if you can receive medical benefits. Complete the form and bring it with you to the VA medical facility where you will seek evaluation for treatment.
- **VA Form 28-1900 - Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans** - is needed to apply for the vocational rehabilitation program to help veterans who were disabled during their service reach maximum independence in daily living, to learn the skills needed to get a job, and to find and keep a job. Send Form 28-1900 to the VARO in your area 10 to 15 day's before your release.
- **VA Form 70-3288 - Request for and Consent to Release of Information from Claimant's Records** - is used to get records relevant to your claim from VA facilities (regional offices, medical centers, outpatient clinics, and vet centers). Request a fee waiver under section 38 C.F.R. Sec.1.526 (h), which requires the VARO to provide a veteran with one set of his or her records free of charge.

Special Note: Veterans, who served in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan or Operation Iraqi (OIF) in Iraq, are entitled to medical treatment for two years following their return from activation. They will need to contact the nearest VA Medical Center or VA Regional Office for determination of eligibility.

SECTION IV

REPLACING PERSONAL RECORDS

In order to receive services at the Department of Veterans Affairs you must be able to verify that you are an honorably discharged veteran, eligible for VA services. You must also have certain forms of identification in order to receive shelter services, apply for employment, rent an apartment, or receive other social services. The following are personal records you may need and instructions for obtaining those records in the state of Arkansas.

- **Photo ID** – Contact the eligibility department at closest VA Medical Center for a copy of your VA photo identification card. To obtain a copy of state identification, go to the local Revenue office. There is usually a \$5.00 fee associated with this request.
- **DD 214** – Homeless veterans are entitled to one copy of their service records free of charge. Requests can be made to the National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records at 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. Homeless veterans should contact your local DVOP or HCHV Coordinator to fax a request for an expedited copy of your DD 214 to (314) 801-9201. The requestor should write “homeless veteran” clearly across the top of the form.

Navy Veterans discharged after December 31, 1994 and Marine Corps veterans discharged after September 30, 2001, should send requests to Navy Personnel Command, PERS 312E, 5720 Integrity Drive, Millington, TN 38055-3120. Veterans may also submit their requests online at <http://www.dd214.org/>.

Some veterans have copies of their records filed with their county office. You may also check with the State Department of Veterans Affairs or go to www.nasdva.com for state contact information.

- **Birth Certificate** – Contact the Bureau of Vital Records at the State Health Department located at 4815 W. Markham St., 72205 in Little Rock; telephone (501) 661-2336.
- **Social Security Card** – You may apply for your social security card, social security disability, or supplemental security income benefits at the Social Security Administration located in the federal building at 701 Pulaski in Little Rock; telephone (501) 682-3030.

APPENDICES

CHECKLIST

Using This Guide

- Ask about classes or resources to help you plan for your release.
- Make a list of your needs.
- Make a list of who may be able to help you.
- Write letters and/or contact organizations by phone or email.
- Write down the steps you take so that you do not repeat them.

Just for Veterans

- Know where to call toll-free for help.
- Contact organizations about what services they have to offer.
- Think about your housing needs and gather information about what is available locally.
- Learn about job resources and create a plan to find a job.
- Learn about health issues, and what services are available.
- Learn about local resources available for substance abuse and mental health treatment.
- Learn about your options to get financial help.
- Begin to take care of other legal issues.
- Learn about homeless veterans services.
- Learn about resources for women veterans
- If you are not currently receiving benefits, find out if you can or should be.
- If you are receiving benefits, notify the VA when you go to prison to avoid an overpayment.
- Contact a veteran service representative to represent you and help you file a claim.
- Apply for apportionment so that some of the money withheld may be given to eligible family members.

ARKANSAS VA FACILITY TYPES AND LOCATIONS

The **Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS)** is one of the largest VA medical centers in the country. It has two divisions, one in Little Rock and one in North Little Rock. The John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans Hospital, located at 4300 West 7th Street in Little Rock, is a 181-bed tertiary care facility. The Eugene J. Towbin Healthcare Center, located at 2200 Fort Roots Drive in North Little Rock, is a 395-bed facility that provides primary, extended, rehabilitative and mental health care. This facility is affiliated with Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Mountain Home, El Dorado, Hot Springs, Mena and Texarkana, Arkansas.

The **VA Regional Office (VARO)** is located at 2200 Fort Roots Dr., in Building 65, on the North Little Rock campus. This office determines entitlements for compensation and pension, vocational rehabilitation, survivor and other benefits for veterans in Arkansas and Texarkana, Bowie County, Texas.

Fayetteville VA Medical Center is located in the Ozark Mountains of Northwest Arkansas, at 1100 N. College Avenue. This 51-bed facility provides primary and secondary levels of care. This medical center is affiliated with Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Ft. Smith and Harrison, Arkansas and in Mt. Vernon, Missouri.

Every **VA Medical Center** has a **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Coordinator** who is responsible for helping homeless veterans gain access to VA and community-based care to end homelessness among veterans. The HCHV program provides outreach, clinical assessments and referrals for medical and mental health care, case management, residential treatment, and employment assistance, with linkages to permanent supported housing. To locate the closest HCHV Coordinator, call 1-877-222-8387.

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) provides assistance with Veterans benefits & entitlement information, VA claims process, representation and advocacy, Trauma (PTSD) counseling and Veterans Homes for those in need of nursing or domiciliary care. Call 1-800-827-1000 or (501) 370-3820.

RESOURCE WEB SITES

Arkansas Access State Community Services Directory

www.araccess.org.

Arkansas Supportive Housing Network (ASHN)

administrator@ashn.org.

Arkansas Veteran Service Organizations

<http://www.vetfriends.com/organizations/directory.cfm?state=AR>

Central Arkansas Veterans HealthCare System

<http://vaww.little-rock.med.va.gov/>.

First Step (resource site for homeless individuals and providers)

Health and Human Services: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/homeless/index.shtml>

Housing and Urban Development: <http://www.hud.gov/homeless/index.cfm>

Food Stamp Sites

Arkansas Department of Human Services

<http://www.arkansas.gov/dhs/esources/index.php>.

Food stamp applicant information

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/ebt/ebt_status_report.htm#Arkansas

Food stamp Outreach Grant Site in the Arkansas Delta

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants/2004/2005-summary.htm>

Food Stamp Hotlines for each state

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/states/arkansas.htm>

You may also call toll free at: 1-800-221-5689

Incarcerated Veterans document

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/milsvc/Docs/Incarcer.doc>.

Little Rock Work Force Investment Board

www.lrwib.org.

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans

www.nchv.org.

South Central Veterans Health Care System

www.visn16.med.va.gov

Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/handbook/handbook-toc.html

www.ssa.gov/

US Dept of Veterans Affairs

www.va.gov.

Veteran's Benefits

www.vba.va.gov/pubs/formsl.htm

www.vba.va.gov/pubs/formsl.htm

Will's House for formerly incarcerated men

bcdinc@aristotle.net

www.bcdinc.org

INCARCERATED VETERANS FACT SHEET



Incarcerated Veterans Benefits

Can A Veteran Receive VA Benefits While In Prison?

VA can pay certain benefits to veterans who are incarcerated in a Federal, state or local penal institution. However, the amount we can pay depends on the type of benefit and reason for incarceration. This fact sheet provides information about the benefits most commonly affected by imprisonment.

How Will Your Imprisonment Affect The Payment Of:

VA Disability Compensation

Your monthly payment will be reduced beginning with the 61st day of your imprisonment for a *felony*. If your payment before you went to prison was \$210 or more, your new payment amount will be \$108. If you were getting \$108 before you were imprisoned, your new payment will be \$54.

Note: If you are released from incarceration – participated in a work release or halfway house program, paroled, and completed sentence, your compensation payments will not be reduced.

VA Disability Pension?

If you are imprisoned in a Federal, State or local penal institution as the result of conviction of a felony or misdemeanor, such pension payment will be discontinued effective on the 61st day of imprisonment following conviction.

Are You Eligible For VA Medical Care While Imprisoned?

While incarcerated veterans do not forfeit their eligibility for medical care, current regulations restrict VA from providing hospital and outpatient care to an incarcerated veteran who is an inmate in an institution of another government agency when that agency has a duty to give the care or services.

However, VA may provide care once the veteran has been unconditionally released from the penal institution. Veterans interested in applying for enrollment into the VA health care system should contact the nearest VA health care facility upon their release.

Can Your Spouse, Children Or Dependent Parent(s) Receive Any Of The Money Not Paid To You Because Of Imprisonment?

VA can take all or part of the amount of compensation you are not receiving and apportion it to your spouse, child or children and dependent parents on the basis of individual need. They should contact the nearest VA regional office for details on how to apply. They will be asked to provide income information as part of the application process.

Will Your Benefits Be Automatically Resumed When You Get Out Of Prison?

Your award for compensation or pension benefits shall be resumed the date of release from incarceration if the Department of Veterans Affairs receives notice of release within 1 year from following release. Depending on the type of disability, VA may schedule you for a medical examination to see if your disability has improved. You will need to visit or call your local VA regional office for assistance.

**For More Information Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
Or Visit Our Web Site At <http://www.va.gov>**

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