



Delaware Guidebook for Incarcerated Veterans



Serving those who served

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Forward

This handbook is intended to provide current information to assist incarcerated veterans in accessing benefits through the Veterans Administration. Information for housing, treatment for substance abuse, mental health, medical, employment information and more is included in this booklet. Since it will take a significant amount of time to gather all the necessary documents it is recommended that the veteran begin immediately. To help the veteran develop this plan, phone numbers, addresses and web sites are included.

We would like to recognize and thank:

1) the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans which provided basic concepts and core information for this guide through its "Planning for Your Release" guide funded by the U.S. Department of Labor; 2) the Veterans Incarcerated Workgroup of Walla Walla, Washington, for the concept of state-specific information in its "Guidebook for Incarcerated Veterans" and for allowing the use of its guide as a template for this publication; 3) Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. for developing the first incarcerated veterans guidebook, which has inspired and informed subsequent efforts; and 4) any public domain and agency resources included in the guidebook.

Agency staff names and addresses, phone numbers and website addresses change. If you attempt to contact one of the resources in this guidebook and it is not current, do your best to obtain the current information through phone information or a Google web search. If you discover any incorrect, conflicting, or out-of-date information in this Guidebook please send the discrepancies, and updated information if you have it, to:

HCHV Program
VAMC Wilmington
1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805

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Incarcerated Veterans

Introduction

This document should be used as a guide to help the incarcerated Veteran gain access to VA and community services upon release from incarceration. Information included in this document is intended to assist incarcerated veterans by providing meaningful information on topics that include the following: housing, substance abuse, mental health, medical assistance, and employment. It will take a time to gather the necessary documents; therefore, it is recommended access to VA services is initiated as soon as practical.

SECTION I

ELIGIBILITY

To determine eligibility for VA health care, contact the Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-8387. For VA benefits eligibility, contact a VA benefits office at 1-800-827-1000 from any location in the United States.

Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions. Active service means full-time service as a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard.

Honorable and general discharges qualify a veteran for most VA benefits. Dishonorable and bad conduct discharges issued by general courts-martial may bar VA benefits. Veterans in prison and parolees may be eligible for certain VA benefits. VA regional offices can clarify the eligibility of prisoners, parolees and individuals with multiple discharges issued under differing conditions. VA benefits will not be provided to any veteran or dependent wanted for an outstanding felony warrant.

Those seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, DD-215, or for WWII veterans, a WD form), which documents service dates and type of discharge, or give their full name, military service number, branch and dates of service.

To apply for services veterans must complete a VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits. The form may be obtained from any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, or by calling the VA Health Benefits Service Center toll-free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). It is also available through the World Wide Web (<http://www.va.gov/1010ez.htm>). Veterans may complete the form in person at a VA health care facility, or at home and mail it to a local VA health care facility for processing. Once enrolled, a veteran is eligible to receive services at VA

facilities anywhere in the country. Additional information can be found on the VA Web site <http://www.va.gov/elig/>

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. This handbook contains important information, phone numbers and explanations regarding benefits. The VA Federal Benefits booklet and other VA information is available at <http://www.va.gov/>

Wilmington VA Medical & Regional Office Center

VA Medical & Regional Office Center
1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805
302-994-2511 or 1-800-461-8262

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

Veterans Center

Wilmington Vet Center #0215
1601 Kirkwood Hwy., Bldg. Three
Wilmington, DE 19805
302-994-1660

VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic

214 W. DuPont Highway
Millsboro, DE 19966
302-934-0195

VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic

VA Primary Care Clinic
121 South Front Street
Seaford, DE 19973
302- 628-8357

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 reenlisting. 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.

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 entire overpayment is recovered by the VA. 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 (attention SR list) 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 and, if need be, to the Court of Appeal for Veterans Affairs.

DEBT REDUCTION

To avoid an overpayment of VA benefits and creation of a debt, beneficiaries must report immediately to VA any change in their status, such as the amount of their income or net worth, the number of dependents, divorce, or withdrawal from school.

All debts must be repaid to VA. VA may assess interest and administrative fees, which will be added to the original amount of the debt until the debt is cleared.

Failure to repay a debt will affect one's credit. Collection of the debt may be turned over to a collection agency, or the debt may be offset by withholding federal income tax refunds or other federal payments, including federal pay and pension.

Gulf War Veterans

Gulf War

Period:

Beginning August 2, 1990, and ending on a date to be established by Presidential proclamation or by law. Active-duty personnel and reservists called to active duty during this period are eligible for the full range of wartime benefits after 90 days of active duty service.

Compensation:

Gulf War veterans with an undiagnosed illness of at least six-month duration that manifests itself by Dec. 31, 2006, may be eligible for compensation.

VA will compensate Gulf veterans who served anytime from Aug 1, 1990, through July 31, 1991, in the Southwest Asian theater of operations of the Gulf War and develop amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease).

Pension Eligibility:

Provides that service in the Gulf satisfies the service requirements for VA pension program, a needs-based

benefit for wartime veterans who are not able to work, and for the needy survivors of wartime veterans. (See pages 12-14.)

Veterans Health Benefits: Three environment referral centers at VA medical centers have been established to treat Gulf War veterans with unusual symptoms possibly related to environmental contaminants.

Readjustment counseling is offered to Operation Desert Storm/Shield veterans.

Gulf War veterans are eligible for one-time treatment of dental conditions after discharge from service if they have 90 days of active duty

Veterans Housing Loans

Programs: Provides VA guaranteed home loan eligibility after 90 days for active-duty members and members of the Reserves and National Guard activated in connection with the Gulf War.

Pension Benefit: Pension is payable to wartime veterans with limited income and assets who are permanently and totally disabled from non service-connected causes. Veterans age 65 or over need not meet the disability requirement.

Pension Programs: Public Law 73-2, *Old Law*.
Public Law 86-211, *Protected Pension*, effective June 1, 1960.
Public Law 95-588, *Improved Pension*, effective Jan. 1, 1979.
Any application for pension after Jan. 1, 1979, comes under the Improved Pension law.

HELP SEEKING VETERAN 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.

Veterans Service Organizations (VSO)

Many VSOs 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. For more information regarding Veterans Service Organizations contact the Regional Office.

Department of Veterans Affairs

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 or your records before sending your packet to the VARO nearest you.

The following forms can be found on the internet at www.va.gov

- **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 10-10EZ Application for Health benefits.** The form may be obtained from any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, or by calling the VA Health Benefits Service Center toll-free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). It is also available through the World Wide Web (<http://www.va.gov/1010ez.htm>).
- **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 days 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 veteran with one set of his or her records free of charge.

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 the resources available for substance abuse and mental health treatment in your area.
- 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.

National Resource Addresses/Sites

US Dept of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) www.va.gov/

Veterans Health Administration – VISN
<http://www.starsandstripes.med.va.gov/visn4/>

The American Legion – Delaware <http://www.delegion.org/>

Disabled American Veterans
http://www.dav.org/membership/dept_chapt_links.html /

Veterans of Foreign Wars – Post Locations
www.vfw.org/

Vietnam Veterans of America <http://www.vva.org/map2>

Social Security Administration www.ssa.gov/

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans www.nchv.org/index.cfm

HUDVet State and Local Resources - Delaware
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/hudvet/state/de/index.cfm>

FINANCIAL HELP

- The American Legion provides **Temporary Financial Assistance**, (TFA) from its national headquarters to help maintain a stable environment for children of veterans. To obtain an application, look in the phone book to contact a local post, or contact the National Headquarters to find the post nearest you.
- 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 find a list of food stamp hotlines for each state at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/contact_info/hotlines.htm. You can also contact the local Department of Human Services, many drop-in shelters, or legal aid services to ask for an application.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** benefits can be applied for before your release, even though you won't 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, call or your local social security administration office listed in the phone book blue pages, 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 Advocate Service Officer** for help with discharge upgrades, seeking benefits, and filing a VA claim.

Other legal issues:

- Most law is state-specific. Most common legal problems are governed by the law in the state where you live or where the problem occurred. 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 or Legal Aid offices** have staff lawyers to provide free legal help to poor clients. The lawyers are usually experts in the types of problems that poor clients often have. Look in the yellow pages for a local Legal Aid office or check online for the program, nearest you.
- **Pine Tree Legal Assistance** has an online list of organizations across the nation that provides free legal help to clients who qualify. Go to www.ptla.org/links/services.htm.
- Lawyers in private practice sometimes volunteer in "pro-bono" programs to take cases for poor clients free of charge. Check the yellow pages to 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.

LEGAL/PROBATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Office of the Public Defender – 820 N. French Street 3rd Floor
Wilmington DE 19801; 302-577-5160

Federal Probation & Parole – 844 N. King Lock Box #39, Wilmington DE
19801; 302-252-2950

State of Delaware Bureau of Community Custody & Supervision –
Probation/Parole: Georgetown State Service Center, 546 S.
Bedford Street, Georgetown, DE 19947; 302-856-5243

1601 N. Pine Street, Wilmington, DE 19802; 302-577-3443

511 Maple Parkway, Dover, DE 19901; 302-739-5387

Churchman's Industrial Center, 26 Parkway Circle, New Castle, DE
19720; 302-323-6050

Shipley Service Center, 350 Virginia Avenue, Seaford, DE 19973;
302-628-2016

WOMEN VETERANS

- Most VA **Medical Centers** and readjustment offices have a designated Women Veterans Coordinator to assist women veterans in accessing VA benefit programs and healthcare services. Call (302) 994-2511 or 1-800-461-8262 or www.starsandstripes.med.va.gov/visn4/page.cfm?pg=38.
- Many women in prison had similar histories, problems, and personal issues before their arrest and conviction. Mentors with **Women in Community Service** (WICS) help women preparing to leave prison and those who are just getting back into society. WICS' prison programs help women think about their behavior, gain job skills, and build self-esteem. For the Philadelphia Region (**DC, KY, MD, PA, VA, WV**) contact **the U.S. DOL, Job Corps** at 1-800-283-9427 or go to www.wics.org to find the nearest WICS program.

SECTION II

This section includes resources that can help you get back on your feet. Remember to check the phone book for local, county, and state agencies that know what services are available in the area to assist you. 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.

NATIONAL 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 — www.va.gov

- Benefits: 1-800-827-1000,
- Medical Centers: 1-877-222-8387, or
<http://www.starsandstripes.med.va.gov/visn4/>
- Persian Gulf War Helpline: 1-800-749-8387

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.

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans — www.nchv.org, 1-800-838-4357

National Suicide Support Number - 1-888- 784-2433 (1-888-SUICIDE)

STATE INFORMATION

Delaware Helpline – Provides information on state government agencies and referrals to community resources: www.delawarehelpline.org 1-800-464-HELP, Rape Crisis www.contactdelaware.org 302-761-9100 (NCC) 1-800-262-9800 (KC/SC), Domestic Violence 302-762-6110 (NCC), 302-442-8058 (KC/SC), Suicide Crisis Intervention 1-800-652-2929 (NCC), 1-800-345-6785 (KC/SC)

State of Delaware – Employment Services Job line:
www.delawarepersonnel.com 302-739-7750

Delaware Health & Social Services Division or public Health – 302-995-8653 (NCC), 302-739-5376 (KC), 1-800-752-9393 (KC&SC)

Division of Motor Vehicles – Drivers License: P.O. Box 698, Dover DE 302-744-2500

Delaware State Vital Records Office – Birth /Death/Divorce/Marriage; Division of Public Health, P.O. Box 637, Dover DE 19903; 302-744-4549

Division of Child Mental Health Services – 302-557-4270 (NCC), 302-674-8211 (KC), 302-442-8013 (SC), 302-739-3712

DuPont Hospital for Children Psychiatry Program- 302-651-4500 (NCC)

Alliance for Mental Illness in Delaware (AMID) – 302-427-0787

Catholic Charities - Crisis intervention, Drug & Alcohol, Domestic violence prevention, AIDS counseling, Residential group homes: – 302-655-9624 (NCC), 302-674-1600 (KC), 302-856-9578 (SC)

CHILD, Inc. – Domestic Violence counseling and shelter, Emergency Shelter for abused, Neglected runaway children, Pregnant/Parenting Teen; 302-762-8989 (NCC), 302-697-0411 (KC), 302-424-1190 (SC), 1-800-742070

ABR Counseling Assoc. – Alcohol/Drug Abuse: 302-697-1701 (KC), 302-436-5868 (SC)

Aquila - Alcohol/Drug Abuse, Day Treatment: 302-999-1106 (KC), 302-856-9746 (SC)

Brandywine Counseling - Drug, Alcohol, Aids Prevention: 302-656-2348

Children & Families First - Respite, Alcohol & Drug abuse, Child abuse/neglect, General counseling: 302-658-5177 (NCC), 302-674-8384 (KC), 302-628-2011

Delaware Family Center – 302-995-9600 (NCC)

Delaware Guidance Services for Children & Youth – 302-652-3948 (NCC), 302-678-3020 (KC), 302-645-5338 (SC)

Latin American Community Center – 302-655-7338 (NCC)

Parents of Children with Disabilities – 302-856-7364 (SC)

Delaware Health and Social Services - Medical Transportation:
1-800-223-9074 www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/medical.html

Delaware Department of Education – John G. Townsend Building, 401 Federal Street, Suite 2, Dover, DE 19901-3639 Phone: 302-735-4000, <http://www.doe.k12.de.us>

Drug-free DELAWARE – www.state.de.us/drugfree/index.htm

The Family & Workplace Connection – www.familyandworkplace.org

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!**

- Every **VA Medical Center** has a **Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Coordinator** who is responsible for helping homeless veterans access 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, long-term transitional residential assistance, case management and employment assistance with linkage to permanent housing. To locate your nearest HCHV Coordinator call 1-800-461-8262 302-994-2511 ext 5311/4805 or go to <http://www1.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=21>.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)** 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 through federal funded reintegration projects. Call 1-800-562-2308 or go to www.va.gov.

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.

To find a list of emergency shelters for men, women and families in every state, check the **Department of Housing and Urban Development** online at www.hud.gov/homeless/hmlsagen.cfm

Public housing waiting lists can be long, but the length of time can vary from place to place. Even if you are not sure where you want to live yet, apply to get on the waiting list so that you have as many options as possible. To learn how to apply, contact the local housing authority listed in the phone book blue pages under "Local Government Public Housing Authority."

Emergency/Transitional and Long-term or Permanent Housing for Delaware

Central YMCA

501 W. 11th Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
302-571-6950

The Shepherd Place

For Homeless Families and Single Adult Women
1362 S. Governors Ave.
Dover, DE 19904
302-678-1909

The Sunday Breakfast Mission Inc.

Faith Based Shelter for Homeless Men
110 N. Popular Street
P.O. Box 352
Wilmington, DE 19899
www.sundaybreakfastmission.org

Friendship House

For Homeless Men and Women
226 N. Walnut Street
Wilmington, DE 19899
302-652-8278
www.freindship-house.org

The Ministry of Caring

Ecumenical organization that serves poor Homeless and Disadvantaged
506 N. Church Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
302-652-5523

302-428-3702
www.ministryofcaring.org

Sojourners' Place
For Homeless Men and Women
2901 Northeast Blvd
Wilmington, DE 19802
302-764-4713
www.sojourners.org

Casa San Francisco
Provides services to assist low income residents of Sussex County DE
P.O. Box 38
127 Broad Street
Milton, DE 19968
www.cdow.org/casasanfran.html

Home of the Brave Foundation
6632 Sharps Rd., Vet Shelter
Milford, DE 19963
P 302-424-1681
F 302-424-4739

Gateway House
For Homeless Men
121 North Poplar Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
302-571-8885
www.gatewayhouse.ws

DIRECTORY OF HOMELESS & HOUSING AND ADVOCACY COALITIONS

The following is a list of Homeless and Housing Advocacy Coalitions. Not all of these coalitions provide direct services, but they may be able to tell you about local programs or services.

United Way - provides a variety of services through local organizations. Check the phone book for a local post or locate local organizations online at www.unitedway.org.

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 Social Services. Check the blue pages of the phone book for the number.

Delaware Federal Sector:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Delaware State Office
920 King St., One Rodney Sq. Suite 404
Wilmington, DE 19801-3016
P 302-573-6300
F 302-573-6259

Veterans Benefits Administration

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Wilmington Regional Office
1601 Kirkwood Hwy., Bldg. Three
Wilmington, DE 19805
P 302-994-1660
F 302-633-5250
Public Info # 800-827-1000

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Wilmington Regional Office

1601 Kirkwood Hwy., Bldg. Three

Wilmington, DE 19805
P 302-994-1660
F 302-633-5250
Public Info # 800-827-1000

Veterans Center

Wilmington Vet Center #0215
1601 Kirkwood Hwy., Bldg. Three
Wilmington, DE 19805
P 302-994-1660
F 302-633-5250

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless

Veterans Program

1601 Kirkwood Hwy.
Wilmington, DE 19805
P 302-633-5286
F 302-633-5266

Veterans Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education & Network Groups (CHALENG)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Administrative Medical and Regional Office/Office of Social Work Services
1601 Kirkwood Hwy., Veterans Medical & Regional Offices

Wilmington, DE 19805
P 302-633-5286
F 302-633-5266

Delaware State Sector:

State Contacts for Homeless Issues State of Delaware Office of
Community Services
1901 N. Dupont Hwy.
New Castle, DE 19720
P 302-577-4965
F 302-577-4973

State of Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs
802 Silver Lake Blvd., Robbins Bldg., Suite 100
Dover, DE 19904
P 302-739-2792
F 302-739-2794

State Veterans Homes State of Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs
802 Silver Lake Blvd., Robbins Bldg., Suite 100
Dover, DE 19904
P 302-739-2792
F 302-739-2794

State Job Service Agencies

State of Delaware Department of Labor
4425 N. Market St., Fourth Floor
Wilmington, DE 19802
P 302-761-8000
F 302-761-6621

State of Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs
802 Silver Lake Blvd., Robbins Bldg., Suite 100
Dover, DE 19904
P 302-739-2792
F 302-739-2794

Statewide Homeless and Housing Advocacy State of Delaware
Housing Coalition
840 Walker Rd.
Dover, DE 19903-1633
P 302-678-2286
F 302-678-8645

We encourage enrollment 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. ***If ineligible for veteran's benefits, free or low-cost health care may be available from the following sources:***

- **Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)** can tell you where to find health care facilities for the homeless. Check the phone book blue pages under local, city, or county government for the number.
- **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 clinics** are run by many local organizations and communities. Look in the phone book blue pages under "Public Health" to contact local government office for clinics in your area.

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.
 - The Veterans Health Administration 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.