

The background of the entire page is a stylized, wavy American flag. The top left corner shows the blue field with white stars, while the rest of the page is filled with the red and white stripes. The flag appears to be waving in the wind, creating a sense of movement and patriotism.

2015
MICHIGAN
GUIDEBOOK
FOR
INCARCERATED
VETERANS

Thank you for Your Service...

It is indeed a pleasure to serve veterans who gave so much of themselves to preserve the freedoms we enjoy today. Your sacrifices have given us the security of peace in our homeland and abroad, as well as preserved and protected our constitutional right of self-government, for which we are very grateful.

DEAR
VETERAN

This guidebook has been compiled through federal, state, and local agencies especially for veterans to:

- Provide information about benefits and services
- Provide links to direct sources – computer-based and professional – for answers to specific questions
- Educate concerning state, nonprofit, and community providers about benefits and services available through other agencies or service providers
- Assist in a successful reentry

Eligibility for most Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits is based upon a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under all conditions, other than “dishonorable” (OTH), may qualify for VA health care benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (not training only) by a “Federal order” and “completed” the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

Minimum Duty Requirements: Veterans who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans discharged for hardship, early out or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Any Michigan Veteran, or dependent of a Veteran, can request the assistance of a Veterans Service Officer or a County Counselor. The County Veterans Counselors in Michigan and the listing of our Veterans Service Organizations are in this guidebook.

The VA wants to ensure that every eligible incarcerated veteran receive assistance from the VA Reentry Specialist. If you are an eligible veteran who will be paroling or maxing out of prison you may use the contact information below or request that the MDOC staff, who may be assisting you in a needs assessment or discharge planning, make contact with the VA Reentry specialist on your behalf .

To Veterans and their families, Thank you for your service.

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Some Quotes taken From:
Veterans Benefits And Services For Michigan Veterans Who Served In The Military

THANK YOU

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SECTION I

Introduction



FORWARD

- This Guidebook is for Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces confined in either a state or federal correctional facility in the state of Michigan. Almost all who served the U.S. Armed Forces have resources available when released from custody.
- Knowledge about eligibility and access are frequently misunderstood. The contents of this Guidebook explain what you need to know. Often Veterans hear rumors and conclude they are ineligible based on what they heard. Learning the resources that will be available to you at your release begins by taking your time with this publication.
- VA and many other Veteran support organizations are listed within these pages. For example Section V offers a wealth of information about the resources available through the Michigan Department of Veteran Affairs.
- The primary objective of this document is to assist Veterans in preparation for release. Section II focuses on what you can do while incarcerated with later sections focus on information you may need after release. Some of the resources you seek after release provide phone numbers or web addresses. These resources are mostly unavailable while incarcerated so prepare to make contact once you arrive to the community.
- This is your book. Take notes as you look through it to highlight important details to reference later. When you are released **bring this book with you**. Many of your immediate needs can be addressed from the resources and services listed within these pages. Supports are available in your community you just need to know where to find them.
- Information listed in the Guidebook is current as of March 2015. Due to the continuous changes within the community, resources may change at any time. To promote the most accurate detail of resources and services available to you VA has established the VA Reentry Specialist position. Continue to read to learn more about VA Reentry Specialists and the many other supports available to Veterans.

SECTION II

Preparing for Your Release



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Once eligibility is determined you and the HCRV Specialist will go over these needs during your VA HOMES assessment (Homeless Operations Management and Evaluations System). This assessment will go into the National Database and in your VHA health care record and can be accessed by your VHA health care staff.

Please refer to the contact information for your HCRV Specialist (see page 2 of this guidebook), who will be available to begin working with you when you have your parole in hand and/or are you 6 months prior to leaving prison. HCRV services are also available to you for 3-4 months after your release to assist you in accessing VA and community resources.

There are 8 “needs” domains that we will evaluate together during the HOMES assessment. In this guidebook there are names, addresses and phone numbers to VA and community resources specific your geographical area that will assist you in connecting to services in your identified needs:

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Housing | Physical Health | Mental Health | Employment |
| Legal | Substance Abuse | Historical Entitlements | Family Relationships |

Using The Guide To Help You GET ORGANIZED

Making A List To Help You Get Organized

Making Lists

Examples

Needs upon release:

- I need a place to live
- I need help with a security deposit
- I need a job
- I need medical care
- I need clothes to wear to work
- I need addictions treatment
- I owe child support
- I need help getting (or getting on) SSI/SSD
- I need help getting (or getting back) my VA benefits
- I need help with finances
- I need help with legal issues
- I need to write letters

Knowing who Can Help Address Your needs

Resources

Examples

Match Needs with Contact Information
In Your Area:

- Health Care for Homeless Veterans Outreach Worker
- VA Hospitals
- Community Based Outpatient Clinics CBOC
- SSVF Program
- Service Officer
- CWT Program
- State of Michigan Veterans Employment
- Walk-in Clinics

Identifying Your Personal NEEDS AND RESOURCES

| Need | Plan Identified and Providers |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Housing: <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial | |
| Physical Health: <input type="checkbox"/> Medical <input type="checkbox"/> Dental <input type="checkbox"/> Optical | |
| Mental Health: <input type="checkbox"/> PTSD <input type="checkbox"/> Psychiatrist/Medications <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling/Therapy | |
| Substance Abuse: <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Illegal Substances <input type="checkbox"/> AA/NA <input type="checkbox"/> Group Therapy | |
| Historical Entitlements: <input type="checkbox"/> SSD/SSI <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid/Medicare | |
| Employment: <input type="checkbox"/> Employable <input type="checkbox"/> Not Employable <input type="checkbox"/> Educational/Vocational needs <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | |
| Legal: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| Other: <input type="checkbox"/> State ID/Driver's license <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate | |
| Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |

SECTION II

VA Reentry Specialist

- Each region of the U.S. has an assigned Reentry Specialist. They are charged with offering assistance to individuals with a history of U.S. Military service and now preparing for release from state and federal custody. They can assist you in determining your eligibility for resources and assist your access to VA Healthcare. They can assist you with VA Enrollment, VA forms for securing your DD-214, provide you with resource points of contact and linkages to the services for which you are eligible.
- An individual meeting (video conferencing, phone or in person) with the Reentry Specialist occurs as a VA eligible Veteran nears their parole and/or max out release date. VA works in collaboration with the state and federal correctional facilities to identify individuals with a history of U.S. Military Service preparing for release from custody.
- When time is available the Reentry Specialist will also arrange a group meeting for any interested Veterans wishing to learn about any recent Veteran specific updates or have general questions. Please take advantage of the group meetings when they are offered as this opportunity is not available at every visit. Due to their ongoing travel in the field VA Reentry Specialists are unable to address needs by mail. Your family members may call the HCRV specialist or email at any time. The contact information is on page 2 of this guidebook.

Steps To Enroll With VA

- VA Enrollment opens doors to Veteran healthcare, supports and resources. Learning your eligibility for VA is accomplished by completing VA Form 10-10EZ and attaching a copy (not the original) of your DD 214 to the form. To acquire VA Application please contact your facilities point of contact staff listed on page 11. This can be mailed to the address listed on the form.
- If time is limited before you will be leaving prison the prison contact staff I(listed on page 11) and I will work together to ensure that your application is faxed directly to the VAMC in the area that you will be paroling to. This will ensure that it gets entered into the system before you parole or max out as there are eligibility specialists at each VAMC that can help us expedite the process.

Incarceration Veterans MDOC Contact Staff Person

| | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------------|
| Alger Correctional Facility | Ms. Barsch | Administrative Assistant |
| Baraga Correctional Facility (AMF) | Mr. Sackett | ARUS |
| Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility (IBC) | Mr. Bradley | Facility Coordinator |
| Carson City Correctional Facility (DRF) (East) | Ms. Turner | CPC |
| Carson City Correctional Facility (DRF) (West) | Mr. Erskine | CPC |
| Central Michigan Correctional Facility (STF) | Mr. Badgerow | CPC |
| Charles Egeler Reception and Guidance Center (RGC) | Mr. Rudolph | Administrative Assistant |
| Chippewa Correctional Facility (URF) | Mr. Terrian | CPC |
| Cooper Street Correctional Facility (JCS) | Ms. Mickel | Facility Coordinator |
| Detroit Reentry Center (DRC) | Mr. Duke | CPC |
| Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility (LRF) | Mr. Plews | CPC |
| G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility (JCF) | Mr. Price | Facility Coordinator |
| Gus Harrison Correctional Facility (ARF) | Ms. Meek | Facility Coordinator |
| Ionia Correctional Facility (ICF) | Mr. Moore | CPC |
| Kinross Correctional Facility (KCF) | Mr. Oberle | CPC |
| Lakeland Correctional Facility (LCF) | Mr. Schoenfeld | CPC |
| Macomb Correctional Facility (MRF) | Mr. Magley | Facility Coordinator |
| Marquette Branch Prison (MBP) | Mr. Mercier | Facility Coordinator |
| Michigan Reformatory (RMI) | Ms. Ward | CPC |
| Muskegon Correctional Facility (MCF) | Ms. Betts | Prison Counselor |
| Newberry Correctional Facility (NCF) | Ms. King | CPC |
| Oaks Correctional Facility (ECF) | Mr. Smith | Administrative Assistant |
| Ojibway Correctional Facility (OCF) | Ms. Montie | CPC |
| Parnall Correctional Facility (SMT) | Ms. Cady | Facility Coordinator |
| Pugsley Correctional Facility (MPF) | Mr. Reeves | CPC |
| Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility (MTU) | Mr. Traylor | ARUS |
| Saginaw Correctional Facility (SRF) | Ms. Raquepaw | Facility Coordinator |
| Special Alternative Incarceration Facility (SAI) | Mr. Clouse | Analyst |
| St. Louis Correctional Facility (SLF) | Mr. Card | CPC |
| Thumb Correctional Facility (TCF) | Mr. Ruhlman | Facility Coordinator |
| West Shoreline Correctional Facility (MTF) | Ms. Whalen | Facility Coordinator |
| Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility (WHV) | Ms. Smith | Facility Coordinator |
| Woodland Center Correctional Facility (WCC) | Ms. Ortiz | CPC |

SECTION II continued

VA Application for Health Benefits, VA Form 10-10 EZ

You are encouraged to complete the 10-10EZ if any of the following applies to you:

- You don't know if you are eligible for VA Healthcare
- You were told you weren't eligible for VA but don't understand why

VA Health Benefits Renewal Form 10-10 EZR

This does not need to be completed until you have your parole in hand

- You are enrolled with VA but need to update the financial information requested each year
- You were previously ineligible for VA due to income (income limits have adjusted)

Eligibility is based on many factors including when you served, length of active duty, and military discharge type and only VA can provide you with your eligibility and VA Enrollment. Completing VA Form 10-10EZ prior to release ensures problems with enrollment can be sorted out and VA Healthcare and services can start immediately upon release. VA is often able to verify your military service through information provided by the Dept. of Defense. If unable to verify military service VA may require a copy of your DD-214. **This document can be requested, by you, and sent to you, by mail and you can either mail it to the VA or present it when you are released to VA. Many Veterans groups in prison have these forms and prison contacts can also be a source of getting these forms when the HCRV is not at your prison.**

Take care to fully complete VA Form 10-10EZ. If not properly and fully completed VA is unable to finalize your enrollment registration. All blanks on the application must be answered. Unless your eligibility is based on a Service Connected Disability, Purple Heart award or Prisoner of War status, questions asking for financial information must be completed; if your answer is zero please indicate 0 in the spaces provided. N/A or a line cannot be accepted when asking for a dollar figure. Questions not answered could prevent processing of the application and delay your eligibility for VA services. Income information is for the previous calendar year. Most Veterans while incarcerated will meet financial requirements for VA Health services. The results of your VA application for Healthcare Services will be sent to the location you indicated was your permanent address on the 10-10EZ. You must submit a copy of your DD-214 (Military Discharge Papers and Separation Documents) with your VA application to assure your military service is verified. Not doing so can delay the process.

SECTION II continued

Report of Separation DD-214

Report of Separation from your branch of military service is an important document to have in your possession once released. Employment opportunities and community resources are offered to individuals with proof of their military service. This document can also be needed to confirm your eligibility for VA Healthcare. You can write to the National Personnel Records Center, 1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, MO 63138 to request your DD-214. If you do not have the form SF – 180 request a copy of this form and return to the location indicated for your branch of service. Many Veterans have requested their DD-214 while incarcerated and received it within a month of their request.

Loss of Military Service Records due to 1973 fire at National Personnel Records Center
On July 12, 1973, a disastrous fire at NPRC (MPR) destroyed approximately 16-18 million Official Military Personnel Files. The affected record collections are described below.

| BRANCH | PERSONNEL AND PERIOD AFFECTED | ESITMATED LOSS |
|----------|--|----------------|
| ARMY | Personnel discharged November 1, 1912, to January 1, 1960 | 80% |
| AIRFORCE | Personnel discharged, September 25, 1947, to January 1, 1964 (with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E.) | 75% |

The National Archives and Records Administration has developed NA Form 13055, Request for Information needed to Reconstruct Medical Data for those records destroyed in the 1973 fire. You may inquire about use of that form by writing directly to the National Archives:

National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

SECTION II continued

VA Service Connected Disability Compensation and VA Pension

If you have been awarded a Service Connected Disability or VA Pension the amount may have been suspended or reduced to the 10% payment level while you are in custody. If your disability Compensation is at the 10% level, your benefit while incarcerated is half of what you received prior to incarceration. Please see page 27 for more information on this.

If you have not done so, you need to report your incarceration within the time allotted, you will need to complete VA Form 21-4193 and mail it to the Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office found in Section IV of this Guidebook. You will need a counselor or other MDOC official to complete item #6 - #16 of this form.

ADDRESS TO MAIL THE FORM TO:
ATTN: EVIDENCE INTAKE CENTER
PO Box 4444
Newman, GA 30271

In the event you have incurred an overpayment which means payments of your benefit while incarcerated, you will be required to repay the overpayment or receive an approved re-payment plan with the Veterans Benefits Administration before your benefits will restarts. Arrangements for addressing overpayments must be addressed with the Veterans Benefits Administration at the Regional Office or by calling at 1-800-827-1000.

Preparing for Parole Board Hearing

Let the parole board know you are working with the VHA representative on accessing the 8 domains of resources for veterans seen on page 9. Use the worksheet to write down what you want to tell the parole board or page 9 can be used to help keep you on track by filling it out and taking it with you. At times, an generic one, with your paroling counties information, can be emailed to the prison contact staff. Let them know you would like one. When they email this HCRV, along with the county of release information, I will email on back to them. Normally however, this is emailed, to your MDOC staff, just before you leave prison.

MAKE SURE WHEN YOU HAVE A PAROLE IN HAND (or are maxing out) – you request that your prison contact staff notify HCRV so we can complete the final assessments via phone, video or in person. Before you leave prison, at the 6th month mark, is when we begin our work together.

Veterans Choice Program

Connecting you to timely and convenient access
to health care in your community.

- **About the Program** (The criteria is currently being looked at in Washington and may be revised. I will update veterans at group meetings as information becomes available)
- Many Veterans will now have the option to receive non-VA health care rather than waiting for a VA appointment or traveling to a VA facility.
- Beginning November 5, 2014, the new Choice Program will begin to cover non-VA care for eligible Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare. Veterans are eligible if any of these situations apply to you:
- You have been told by your local VA medical facility that you will need to wait more than 30 days from your preferred date or the date medically determined by your physician
- Your current residence is more than 40 miles from the closest VA health care facility
- You need to travel by plane or boat to the VA medical facility closest to your home
- You face an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to a VA medical facility based on the presence of a body of water (including moving water and still water) or a geologic formation that cannot be crossed by road

FOR MORE INFORMATION FACT SHEETS ARE FOUND AT:

http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/factsheets_and_details.asp

- **OR Call 1-866-606-8198 to make sure you qualify and schedule an appointment.**

When you call, we will walk you through the following steps:

- You will be asked to enter your **ZIP code**, and **first and last name**.
- We will **check to make sure you are eligible** for this program.
- We will **check which of your needs are covered by the VA**.
- You will be asked for **your address and the name of your preferred non-VA provider**. Unfortunately, not all providers will be covered so if your preferred provider is not available, we will recommend other providers in your area.
- We will then work with you to **schedule an appointment**.

SECTION III

Veteran Resources Available in the Community



SECTION III

VA Medical Centers

IN MICHIGAN

There are 4 main VAMC in lower Michigan and one in the UP. I will need to know what VAMC you will be going back to, even if you will be using a CBOC in your hometown. It is through one of these VAMC's that I look up your records and put in my notes. I do not access the UP records as that region belongs to another HCRV. I do communicate your information to her and/or other states HCRV's before you leave prison.

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

2215 Fuller Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
800-361-8387 | 734-769-7100

Saginaw VA Medical Center

1500 Weiss Street
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-497-2500

Battle Creek VA Medical Center

5500 Armstrong Road
Battle Creek, MI 49037
269-966-5600 | 888-214-1247

John D. Dingell VA Medical Center

4646 John R Street
Detroit, MI 48201
313-576-1000

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

325 East H Street
Iron Mountain, MI 49801
906-774-3300

SECTION III

Veteran Resources Available in the Community

COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS

There are many Community Outpatient Clinics in Michigan. If you will be going to one of these the address and contact phone numbers will be provided to you before you leave prison.

VA Housing

If you met with the Reentry Specialist and received instructions for housing proceed with those arrangements. If starting fresh each VA has a Health Care for Homeless Veteran program ready to help you. They have knowledge about housing choices near your location.

Depending on circumstances housing may be available the day you arrive (although rare there are a few exceptions which will be discussed with you during the final HCRV assessment). If the VA Medical Center is a distance from you call the toll free phone number found in Section V or the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline available 24/7 at 1-877-424-3838. There you will find a VA counselor available to help you. You may also request that a HCHV staff can meet you in your area.

VA offers a variety of housing supported programs for Veterans designed to support your individual needs. A HCHV counselor will speak with you about your goals to best determine the resources available to best meet your needs. Housing options include:

- **Grant & Per Diem (GPD) housing:** GPD housing promotes the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services with the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination.

SECTION III

Veteran Resources Available in the Community

- **Health Care for Homeless Veterans Contracts (HCHV):** Provides emergency housing, shelter and treatment through local community providers. Local VA facilities contract with community agencies for beds which are available to Veterans enrolled in VA Healthcare.
- **Supportive Services for Veteran Families Grants (SSVF):** VA grants provided to non-profit organizations to assist homeless and at-risk of homeless Veterans and their families to maintain or return to permanent housing.
- **VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program;** is a joint effort between HUD and VA to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. HUD provides housing assistance through its Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) that allows homeless Veterans to rent privately owned housing. VA offers eligible homeless Veterans clinical and supportive services through its health care system.
- **Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs (MH RRTPs):** MH RRTPs provide state-of-the-art, high-quality residential rehabilitation and treatment services for Veterans with multiple and severe medical conditions, mental illness, addiction, or psychosocial deficits. The MH RRTP identifies and addresses goals of rehabilitation, recovery, health maintenance, improved quality of life, and community integration in addition to specific treatment of medical conditions, mental illnesses, addictive disorders, and homelessness. The residential component emphasizes incorporation of clinical treatment gains into a lifestyle of self-care and personal responsibility.

During the final HCRV individual assessments we will discuss if one of these programs are right for you. If it is determined to be beneficial, we can request that your prison staff contact to assist us in setting up a phone interview with the VAMC to see if you will be accepted into the program based on their assessment criteria. Coordinating this treatment takes time and is another reason that the final 3 assessments at the 6th month mark is a very important time frame.

SECTION III

Veteran Resources Available in the Community

VHA is prohibited by Congress to provide medical or mental health treatment to veterans during incarcerations

Homeless Veteran Dental Program

Veterans receiving at least sixty days of VA residential services addressing their homelessness may be eligible for a one time dental service. Inquiry to this onetime benefit should be addressed with the VA case manager assigned to you in the residential program.

Completing VA Enrollment

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides eligible Veterans a Veterans Identification Card (VIC) for use at VA Medical Facilities. The VIC protects the privacy of Veterans' sensitive information, as it no longer displays the Social Security Number or Date of Birth on the front of the card. The VIC will only display the Veteran's name, picture, and special eligibility indicators - Service Connected, Purple Heart and Former POW, if applicable, on the front of the card. Only Veterans who are eligible for VA medical benefits will receive the card.

Each VA has an Enrollment Office sometimes called the Patient Business Office. If you do not have your VA identification card (VIC Card) you can obtain this important ID there. Bring identification to present your identity. VA personnel will look-up your enrollment information in the VA database and complete your VA Enrollment by taking your picture for your VIC Identification Card. The card can be mailed to you in approximately five business days or you can return to pick-up your card.

Scheduling a Medical Appointment

VA is committed to providing high-quality, clinically appropriate health care - when you want and need it. This commitment includes the ability to make appointments that meet your needs, with no undue waits or delays. We monitor the wait times for scheduled appointments, and give you the opportunity to complete a survey to tell us whether you received an appointment when you wanted one. To schedule a medical appointment call your assigned Primary Care Clinic. The HCRV will arrangements with prison contact staff to ensure that this information is given to you prior to your leaving prison.

SECTION III

Veteran Resources Available in the Community

Medical Care if not eligible for VA Healthcare

National Health Care for the Homeless Council includes thousands of providers and consumers of health care targeted to people without homes, working together to end homelessness by improving health care access and quality. Within their provider network are thousands of community clinics offering care and services to individuals without a healthcare provider. Learn more about resources available in your local area by calling Michigan's 211 information and referral service, dial 211 on your phone.

Addictions Treatment and Mental Health Services

VA offers a wide variety of supports and treatment services to Veterans needing to address their concerns related to addictions and mental health. Also if you are under the supervision of Parole or Probation with a requirement to participate in treatment VA may be an acceptable path to your supervising authority. If you are interested in addressing addictions issues contact the treatment clinic directly or consult with your Primary Care Clinic.

Finding & Keeping a Job

Seeking employment after incarceration can be challenging but there is help. Many incentive programs are available to support Veterans get a job. Incentives are made available to employers in the form of tax deductions for a hiring a Veteran. Training Veterans to be job ready is another approach in use. Each community also sponsors Veteran Job Fairs and other locally sponsored activities to support the hiring of Veterans. Continue to read to learn about other employment support resources targeting Veterans. (See more resources under **Section V: The State of Michigan Veteran Benefits and Resources**)

Compensated Work Therapy Program (CWT) is a therapeutic vocational service available to some Veterans. CWT 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. Check with your VA about other employment support options.

If you are interested in this program let the HCRV know as soon as you get your parole so we can discuss your options. It will be individualized. Addresses and contact numbers will be provided to you at that time.

VHA's Partnership With

Volunteers of America

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

SSVF Program

Volunteers Of America Michigan Is Proud To Announce New Services In Your Area For Veterans And Veteran Families:

Supportive services for veterans families is a homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing program. It compliments VA's current tools to serve homeless veterans, including the grant and per diem (GPD) transitional housing model and permanent supportive housing through the joint department of housing and urban development and VA supportive housing (HUD-VASH) program. SSVF is crucial in serving those veterans families who may only need minor, one-time assistance to prevent or end their homelessness.

- SSVF is intended to be a short-term intervention that will help veterans and/or veteran families keep, or rapidly transition to, permanent housing.
- Provide low-income families with case management services and direct supportive services, including rental assistance, utilities assistance, child care costs, moving costs, transportation expenses, emergency supplies, and security deposits
- SSVF targets families who are in transitional housing, or at risk of being homeless through eviction, or are currently homeless.

Contact Volunteers of America Michigan for more information

TOLL-FREE: 1-877-509-VETS

Volunteers of America SSVF Program

430 N. Larch St., Lansing, MI 48912

www.voami.org

www.facebook.com/voami

AT A GLANCE RESOURCES/CRISIS/ TOLL FREE NUMBERS/WEBSITES

TOLL-FREE NUMBERS

FEDERAL

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 OR call 211 for local resources

- ❑ The Federal Regional VA Michigan Office Hotline is 1-800-827-1000.
- ❑ Veteran's Choice hotline 1-866-606-8198
- ❑ The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text.
 - ❑ Their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, [chat online](#), or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for [deaf and hard of hearing](#) individuals is available.
- ❑ **Benefits:** 1-800-827-1000,
- ❑ **Medical Centers:** 1-877-222-8387,
- ❑ **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 Prevention Hotline** - 1-888-273-TALK (8255)

State of Michigan DMVA

- ❑ The State of Michigan's Veterans Hotline is 1-800-455-5228 or visit the web site at www.michigan.gov/veterans.
- ❑ **"Michigan Works!" Service Centers** - 1-800-285-9675

Websites:

- ❑ **US Department of Veterans Affairs** — www.va.gov
- ❑ **Military Resources** -http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,30991-mil_status_veteran-1,00.html

SECTION IV

Seeking Federal Benefits

For more information Please see VBA booklet provided to prison contacts



SECTION IV

SEEKING FEDERAL BENEFITS

SEEKING FEDERAL BENEFITS

The Department of Veterans Affairs is divided into three administrations: Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Veteran's Benefits Administration (VBA) and National Cemetery Administration.

This section of the Guidebook offers only some information you may need while incarcerated. For more information about the Veterans Benefits you need to obtain a copy of the VBA booklet provided to MDOC staff. Also seek information on the MDOC program in Saginaw Correctional Facility that will assist you with any claim you think you might have.

Administration programs, to include: Disability Compensation and Pension programs, Education Programs, Loan Guaranty (Home Loans), and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment. Benefits offered through these programs are managed by the Regional Office closest to your residence. The two offices in Michigan are:

Eastern Area Office
Ann Arbor Regional Benefits Office
P.O. Box 303
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Phone: 800-827-1000

Detroit Regional Benefits Office
477 Michigan Ave.
Detroit, MI 48226

The programs and resources listed in this section are under the authority of the VBA. Submit your request in writing to VBA and include identifying information such as your File # for a case in process as well as your Social Security Number. Once you have access to a phone you may also speak to VBA by phone, 1-800-827-1000.

Disability Compensation (Service Connected Disability) is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. Compensation may also be paid for post-service disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service. Generally, the degrees of disability specified are also designed to compensate for considerable loss of working time from exacerbations or illnesses.

SECTION IV

SEEKING FEDERAL BENEFITS

VA Pension

VA helps Veterans and their families cope with financial challenges by providing supplemental income through the Veterans Pension benefit. Veterans Pension is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to low-income wartime Veterans.

Eligibility

Generally, a Veteran must have at least 90 days of active duty service, with at least one day during a wartime period to qualify for a VA Pension. If you entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally you must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least one day during a wartime period.

In addition to meeting minimum service requirements, the Veteran must be:

- Age 65 or older, **OR**
- Totally and permanently disabled, **OR**
- A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, **OR**
- Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance, **OR**
- Receiving Supplemental Security Income

Service Connected Disability Compensation and Veterans Pension During Incarceration

Service Connected Disability Compensation and Veterans Pension 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 restricts 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 or misdemeanor. However, his family may receive an apportionment of such benefits under the procedure described above. (See 38 C.F.R. Sec.3.666)

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 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/Jane is a Veteran who receives a VA pension. He/she is convicted of a crime and is incarcerated, but doesn't tell the VA right away and keeps getting paid for 6 months. After serving his/her sentence of 18 months, he/she is released and applies to the VA to have his pension restarted. He/she will have an overpayment which must be recovered from the restarted benefits. Until the overpayment is recovered, Joe/Jane will have to go 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. **Form 21-4193, Notice to Department of Veterans Affairs of Veteran or Beneficiary Incarcerated in Penal Institution, available through your counselors, should be completed before release, signed by a prison official and submitted to VA Benefits Administration.**

Service Connected Disability Compensation and Veterans Pension During Incarceration

Apportionment

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, the Veteran must send a letter that identifies the Veteran and the apportionment claimant and makes it clear they are requesting an apportionment of his/her VA benefits 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 Dependency or Indemnity Compensation (DIC) recipient, may still receive full benefits. If the Veteran continues to receive benefits after the 60-day period, it will result in an “overpayment”. 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 incarcerated Veteran, telephone: 1-800-827-1000 and request a Veterans Service Organization representative or, write to a Veterans Service Organization.

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.

SECTION V

The State of Michigan Veteran Benefits and Resources



Veterans Service Organizations

Emergency Grant Program

The Michigan veterans trust fund (MVTf) is a program used when an unforeseen situation has caused a temporary financial emergency or hardship that a grant, if approved, would resolve and the applicant can show that they will be able to meet future expenses.

Eligibility

Honorable discharge

180 days during a period of war

180 days of active duty with award of armed - forces/navy expeditionary medal

Less than 180 days of wartime service due to service-incurred disability

Dependents can apply if veteran is eligible under certain circumstances

How to Apply

Must apply in county where you reside

Call and make appointment and insure you bring all required documents and information to complete the application

What is Needed

Military discharge document (DD214 or other)

Proof of residence

Documents for dependents

Proof of income and expenses

Other documents depending on types of assistance

MVTf Main Office
P.O. Box 30104
Lansing, MI 48909
517-284-5299



Michigan Veterans



The Workforce Development Agency's [Veterans' Services Division](#) works with employers to find and match appropriately skilled and trained veterans for employment opportunities. Veterans assist veterans in making successful transitions to civilian employment, in addition to certifying post-secondary education and training programs and facilities for veterans' educational benefits.

For Veteran Job Seekers, information is available to help you [find a job](#) and find [education and training](#) opportunities, as well as other valuable [resources](#).

For Employers, find out about the great qualities and benefits that veterans can bring to your organization, as well as programs that are available for [hiring veterans](#).

If you are a veteran looking for information concerning education, health, pension, survivor, and burial benefits, please visit the [Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency](#) for more information.

For additional information on training and employment services available to veterans, please call the State of Michigan Veterans Hotline at 1-517-284-5298 or email veteransservices@michigan.gov.



Michigan Works! Service Centers also have Veterans Employment Service representatives, who provide additional employment services to veterans and disabled veterans. For more information: www.michigan.org.

FINANCIAL EMERGENCIES VETERANS RESOURCES

Programs - State Of Michigan

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program

Financial assistance may be available to certain Michigan veterans serving at least 180 days of active duty in a wartime period who were discharged under honorable conditions.

The program assists with an unforeseen situation that causes a temporary or short-term financial emergency or hardship that a grant will resolve. Examples of such needs include delay

in unemployment benefits or other income or unexpected hospitalizations that cause reductions in income to meet household needs.

The grants may assist with housing, utilities, car payments or insurance or medical assistive devices. Coordination is made with other agencies that may also assist with these types of needs.

For more information contact your County Veterans Affairs Office at 1-800-455-5228 or visit the web site at www.michigan.gov/veterans.

Soldiers Relief Commission

In some counties, emergency relief grants are available to Michigan veterans who do not meet Michigan Veterans Trust Fund criteria.

Funds are limited, so the commission makes an effort to refer veterans who are eligible to other sources of financial assistance. Contact your county V.A. office.

Contact a **County Veterans Counselor** at www.macvc.net for assistance.

You may consult your local phonebook for county government. Usually this is handled by the office of Veteran Affairs.

The **Michigan Association of County Veterans Counselors (MACVC)** may be able to assist veterans and their families in obtaining county, state, and federal benefits to which they are entitled. Visit the MACVC web site at www.macvc.net which contains links to the county counselors and other information.

HEALTH CARE

The State Of Michigan Operates Two Veterans Homes At The Following Locations:

Grand Rapids Home For Veterans
3000 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
(616) 364-5300 - 1 (800) 642-4838

D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans
425 Fisher
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 226-3576 – 1 (800) 433-6760

SECTION V FORMS

Please request forms from your MDOC contact person (page 11) if HCRV is not at your facility
Some prisons have veterans groups who also have these forms



VA FORMS

- ❑ VA Form 21-526 - Application for Compensation or Pension- must be filed to apply for compensation or pension. Mail your DD-214 and the following forms to the VARO nearest your release destination 30 to 45 days before your release.

- ❑ VA Form 21-4138 - Statement in Support of Claim –PLEASE SEEK OUT information on the program in the prison through Saginaw prison. They will help you apply for service connected disabilities and are able to take you to the Saginaw VSMC to get the evaluation that you must have completed. If you choose to do this on your own it may delay the process. This form 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. This can be done at the Saginaw MDOC with Ms. Raquepaw.

- ❑ 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 VAF 21-4142 giving permission for release of medical records to the VA. The HCRV uses this ROI to be able to discuss your case with the MDOC, various VA and community resources needed to help you.

- ❑ 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 10-10 EZR – If you were enrolled in VHA services prior to incarceration this will update your in the system. This means test will only need to be done once before your release and then the VA will go off your income tax from or other Federal income reporting agency in the future.

- ❑ 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 21-4193 – Is needed by any incarcerated veteran who needs to report his/her incarceration. Please see page 14 for more information.