



Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment Act of 2020 (COMPACT)

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT DOES COMPACT ACT, SECTION 201, MEAN FOR VETERANS?

VA will now:

- Provide or pay for treatment of eligible individuals' emergent suicide care, including transportation costs, at a VA or non-VA facility (up to 30 days of inpatient and 90 days of outpatient care, unless extended by VA).
- Make appropriate referrals for care following the period of emergent suicide care.
- Determine eligibility for other VA services and benefits.
- Refer eligible individuals for appropriate VA programs and benefits following the period of emergent suicide care.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR COMPACT ACT RELATED SERVICES?

Veterans who served prior to September 7, 1980, are eligible if they were discharged from the military under a condition that is not dishonorable or the result of a general court martial.

Veterans who enlisted or were commissioned after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have received a military discharge under a condition that is not dishonorable or the result of a general court martial after serving 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty, unless:

- They were discharged for a disability that was caused – or made worse – by their active-duty service.
- They were discharged for a hardship or “early out.”

Veterans who were discharged under other than honorable conditions are eligible for this benefit if they:

- Served 100 cumulative days in a combat zone or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location.
- Were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

The final element to unlock this benefit must be performed by a trained crisis responder or health care provider. A Veteran can only be determined as eligible for this benefit based on their military service and a clinical determination.

DOES A VETERAN NEED TO BE ENROLLED IN THE VA SYSTEM TO RECEIVE COMPACT-RELATED EMERGENCY CARE WHEN IN AN ACUTE SUICIDAL CRISIS?

No. Any Veteran diagnosed as being in acute suicidal crisis who meets the military service eligibility criteria is eligible for COMPACT-related care and treatment provided or paid for by VA regardless of their enrollment status.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF AN ACUTE SUICIDE CRISIS?

An acute suicidal crisis is determined by a trained crisis responder or health care provider when an individual is determined to be at imminent risk of self-harm. Imminent risk may be determined if an individual states desire and intent of self-harm as well as other pertinent information like the responder or provider's knowledge of an individual's past or present behaviors that signal a risk of self-harm, including past suicide attempts.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Integrated Veteran Care

WHAT IS EMERGENT SUICIDE CARE?

Emergent suicide care ensures, to the extent possible, immediate safety for the individual and reduces the severity of distress, need for urgent care, or likelihood that the severity of distress or need for urgent care will increase during transfer of that individual from the facility where they received care.

WHAT INFORMATION DO VETERANS NEED TO PROVIDE TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STAFF TO LET THEM KNOW THEY ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VA TO PAY FOR OR PROVIDE THEIR CARE?

If a Veteran is enrolled in VA health care, they should let the emergency department staff know they receive their care from VA.

If a Veteran is not enrolled, they need to tell emergency department staff they are a Veteran as soon as possible to determine what benefits they are eligible for.

Once emergency department staff are notified of a Veteran's status, they should contact VA using the Emergency Care Reporting portal, <https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov> or by calling 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842) to authorize their care and begin care coordination or transfer to a VA facility, if necessary.

HOW WILL VA DETERMINE WHETHER AN INDIVIDUAL VETERAN IS ELIGIBLE FOR COMPACT?

If an eligible Veteran arrives at a VA emergency department, the local VA enrollment and eligibility team can determine eligibility by confirming details contained in the Veteran's service record while they are receiving emergent suicide care. Episodes of Veterans reporting to a community emergency department for treatment, however, should be reported to VA as soon as possible using VA's Emergency Care Reporting portal, <https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov>, or by calling 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842) to establish the Veteran's COMPACT eligibility and begin care coordination or transfer to a VA facility.

ARE AMBULANCE BILLS COVERED UNDER COMPACT ACT?

Yes, for initial transport.

WHAT SHOULD A VETERAN DO IF THEY ARE BILLED FOR COMPACT-RELATED CARE?

If a Veteran receives a bill for community care after receiving emergency care during or after a suicidal crisis that they believe should be covered by VA, the Veteran should contact the VA customer service center as soon as possible. The customer service center, toll free number is: 877-881-7618.

DOES A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT NEED AN AGREEMENT WITH VA TO BE PAID FOR COMPACT-RELATED CARE?

No. COMPACT does not require an existing contract or agreement between VA and a community emergency department for VA to pay for authorized treatment and follow-on care. Veterans are encouraged to immediately seek care at the nearest emergency department during a medical or mental health emergency. During a suicidal crisis, time taken to find an "approved" community emergency department could endanger the Veteran.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Integrated Veteran Care

FOLLOWING AN ACUTE SUICIDE CRISIS EPISODE AND THE 90-DAY OUTPATIENT TIME PERIOD - IF A VETERAN WANTS TO CONTINUE PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH AN OUT-OF-NETWORK PROVIDER, WOULD THE VETERAN BE RESPONSIBLE TO PAY FOR THAT PSYCHOTHERAPY THEMSELVES?

If the individual is eligible for VA services, and VA can provide the care, the individual may choose to continue psychotherapy at an out-of-network provider under their other health insurance or private pay. If the individual is not eligible for VA services, ongoing care following an acute suicide crisis would have to be arranged through other health insurance or private pay.

CAN VETERANS USING VA'S FOREIGN MEDICAL PROGRAM RECEIVE COMPACT-RELATED CARE?

No. COMPACT does not cover services rendered by foreign, non-VA physicians. However, Veterans with service-connected disabilities living or traveling abroad can receive certain health care services under VA's [Foreign Medical Program](#).



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Integrated Veteran Care