



STATE SAFETY OFFICE
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
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LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110



SAFETY MESSAGE 21-08

August is Veterans Suicide Awareness

The number of military suicides PER DAY has been estimated at 22 (one every 65 minutes). In the United States, an average of 123 people commit suicide each day. That means that 16% of all suicides in the United States are committed by military veterans. The significance of that data is that only 7% of the American population are veterans. The statistics bear out that veterans commit suicide at a rate of more than twice that of the rest of the population. By age group, 31% of suicides are committed by veterans aged 49 and under, while 69% were aged 50 and older. The problem is not related to a single conflict or generation.

If you're a Veteran in a mental health crisis and you're thinking about hurting yourself—or you know a Veteran who's considering this—get help right away. You're not alone.

For an immediate crisis call the Suicide hotline at:

1-800-273-8255

Below please see information pulled from the Veterans Affairs website.

How can I get ongoing support?

You can get ongoing support through your local VA health care facility or regional office:

- **Our specially trained suicide prevention coordinators**—available in each VA medical center across the country—can help you get the counseling and services you need.
- **Our Vet Centers** can help you—and your family—readjust to life at home after you've returned from serving in a combat zone.
- **Our Veterans Benefits Administration offices** can help you access benefits for disability compensation (monthly payments), job training, home loans, and more.

[Find these and other resources near you](#)

You can also find information and support on our websites:

- Get information about suicide prevention and the support we offer.
[Visit our suicide prevention website](#)

- Go to our Make the Connection website to get resources and watch stories of Veterans who've overcome depression and other mental health challenges. [Visit Make the Connection](#)

Information for family, friends, and caregivers

What are the signs that someone may be considering suicide?

Many Veterans don't show any signs of an urge to harm themselves before doing so. But some may show signs of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, or hopelessness, like:

- Seeming sad, depressed, anxious, or agitated most of the time
- Sleeping either all the time or not much at all
- Not caring about what they look like or what happens to them
- Pulling away from friends, family, and society
- Losing interest in hobbies, work, school, or other things they used to care about
- Expressing feelings of excessive guilt or shame, failure, lack of purpose in life, or being trapped

They may also change the way they act, and start to:

- Perform poorly at work or school
- Act violently or take risks (like driving fast or running red lights)
- Do things to prepare for a suicide (like giving away special personal items, making a will, or seeking access to guns or pills)

[Get the full list of signs that someone may be considering suicide](#)

Learn about common suicide myths and realities, Veteran-specific suicide risks, and warning signs.

[Recognize when to ask for help](#)

[Take our Veterans self-check quiz](#)

I want to help a Veteran adjust to life at home, but I don't know how. Can I get support?

Yes. If you're a family member or friend of a Veteran who's having trouble adjusting to life at home, we can help. Through our national Coaching Into Care program, our licensed psychologists and social workers will talk with you by phone, free of charge, to help you find your way around the VA system and figure out the best way to help the Veteran you care about. All calls are confidential (private).

To speak with a VA coach, call [888-823-7458](tel:888-823-7458), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET.

To get tips and resources for spouses, parents, and Veterans, visit the Coaching Into Care website.

[Visit Coaching into Care](#)

How do I talk to my child about a suicide attempt in the family?

Get tips for talking to children of different ages about suicide:

- [Preschoolers](#)
- [School-age children](#)
- [Teenagers](#)
- [All ages](#)

To find previously published Safety Messages go to our NYARNG Safety Website:

<http://dmna.ny.gov/safety/>

New York Army National Guard Safety Office Points of Contact:

Safety and Occupational Health Manager:

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