

COVID-19 Related Resources for Veterans and Military in Frederick County

The Frederick County Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) has compiled this information from a variety of sources. Please contact the VAC at VAC@FrederickCountyMD.gov to add a resource or to make any corrections.

1. General Information on COVID-19 for all County Residents:

- Frederick County has established the [COVID-19 Joint Information Center](#) as the clearinghouse for all county agency activity.
- The Governor's Order on face coverings went into effect 7am on Saturday April 18 for all of Maryland.
- All Maryland public schools including Frederick County public schools will remain closed through Friday, May 15, 2020. FCPS will post any updates at www.fcps.org/update.
- The Governor issued an emergency order that prohibits Maryland courts from ordering the eviction of any tenant who can show that their failure to pay rent was the result of COVID-19. Examples include losing unemployment, needing to care for a school-aged child, or being diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - An additional emergency order prohibits electric, gas, water, sewage, phone, cable TV, and internet service provider companies from shutting off any residential customer's service or charging any late fees.
 - For additional assistance with housing needs, utility shutoffs, family or financial issues, Frederick County tenants should contact Maryland 2-1-1 by calling 211 or visiting 211md.org.
- [Frederick County Workforce Services](#) provides intensive services such as case management, career counseling, transition assistance, individual job development and referrals to employment for individuals affected by COVID-19.
 - The Maryland Department of Labor Veterans Employment Specialist for Frederick County is Teresa Spruill and she may be reached at Teresa.spruill@maryland.gov.
- If you don't have a primary care provider, Frederick Health Hospital can provide assistance in accessing medical attention at www.Frederickhealth.org (scroll down for Virtual Visit).
- Older adults in Frederick County can stay engaged and connected through new online offerings from the Frederick County Senior Services Division's 50+ Community Centers. Beginning Monday, April 20, enhanced virtual lessons and activities will be available from the Virtual 50+ Community Center at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/virtual50.
- Frederick County 2-1-1 has compiled a [list](#) of all non-profit organizations in the County and what services they are currently able to offer. **Here are some additional resources specific to Veterans and military families:**
 - Platoon 22 is able to provide financial support in certain circumstances (grocery gift cards, meals, etc.) as well as support groups. The Platoon has a large community and during this time of distancing can certainly offer mentoring, support groups, accountability/check-ins. Also, if there is a need that comes

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across that isn't covered under an organization, please let them know by contacting Niki Falcone at niki@Platoon22.org.

- ServingTogether Peer Navigators are available Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 4:30 pm to conduct intakes and make curated referrals to providers in your communities. Peer Navigators can be reached at 301-738-7176 or you can fill out a Get Assistance Form at www.servingtogetherproject.org.
- Maryland's Commitment to Veterans is accepting calls 24 /7 at 1-877-770-4801.
- The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Easterseals offers telehealth counseling. Staff are available if you have any questions at 240-847-7500 or email info.mfc@eseal.org.
- Keri Keefer of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs is available via phone (leaving a message at 301-600-2155) or [email](#) to assist with claims Monday thru Friday, 8am-4pm.

2. Department of Veterans Affairs – please also refer to the COVID-19 one-pager on the [VAC website](#) under Resources

a. Health

- Effective April 20, 2020, the Martinsburg VA Medical Center and Community Based Outpatient Clinics are now requiring face covers for everyone entering the campus including employees, Veterans, volunteers, vendors, contractors and tenants.
- All visitors to Ft. Detrick without a DoD ID card or PIV card must use the Nallin Farm Gate for access.
 - The Ft. Detrick CBOC is screening all Veterans and Visitors upon entering the facility.
- The Medical Center is operating an Influenza-like illness (ILI) clinic outside by the screening station 24/7 for all Veterans displaying influenza-like symptoms.
 - The VAMC has also moved selected outpatient services outside, including Anti-Coagulation visits and Pharmacy prescription pick-up.
 - Curbside pickup is only for urgent and emergent medication pickup that cannot wait for mail. Veterans should contact the Pharmacy by telephone if they believe the refill is urgent and cannot be mailed. All other refill requests can be made using the automated refill line and My HealthVet and will be mailed to the Veteran Pharmacy Pick-Up will be Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the Anti-Coagulation clinic will be open 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 - There will also be a new, temporary urgent care located in the O Lot for Veterans from 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., seven days a week. Veterans with urgent needs who are not experiencing influenza-like symptoms will be triaged by a nurse and seen by a provider.
- VA Perry Point Medical Center is closed to all visitors.

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b. Benefits

- If you're currently receiving GI Bill benefits, payments will continue automatically. You don't have to do anything. VA knows that many schools have changed to online classes in response to COVID-19. **You'll continue to receive the same monthly housing allowance payments you received for resident training until December 21, 2020, or until your school resumes normal operations.**
 - If you have specific questions, you can contact the Education Call Center toll-free at 888-442-4551, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET.
- VA has temporarily closed all 56 regional offices for in-person visits. Regional office staff is still available by phone and through the [online customer service tool](#).
 - Any Veteran, their Spouse or Dependent requiring assistance with a VA Claim can contact Ernie Unger with DAV by calling (301) 842-2562 between 8am and 6pm Monday through Saturday. You can also reach him by email at michelobqt@yahoo.com.
- VA announced that it is working directly with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and U.S. Treasury Department to ensure delivery of '[Economic Impact Payments](#)' to Veterans and survivors who receive Compensation and Pension (C&P) benefit payments from VA without additional paperwork or IRS filings.
 - Economic Impact Payments will be automatic for non-tax filing VA beneficiaries as well as those who filed a Form1040 for 2018 or 2019. These individual can track the status of their payments on the Get My Payment tool on <http://www.irs.gov>. For non-tax filing VA beneficiaries, please note their information will be loaded on this tool within the next few weeks.
 - **For VA beneficiaries who didn't file a tax return in 2018 or 2019 and have a dependent, you must use the special non-filer tool on <http://www.irs.gov/> to request the payment.**
 - Any money received as part of the COVID-19 stimulus package will not count as income for VA pension or parent Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) beneficiaries. This means your payments will stay the same.
- As of April 3, 2020, VA has stopped collection on newly established Veteran debt. If you are having trouble paying your VA-backed home loan directly or indirectly because of COVID-19, you can request forbearance from your mortgage company.

3. Department of Defense

- Army personnel with Common Access Cards are expiring on or before Sept. 30 may update their cards online. Eligible card-holders may log onto ID Card Office Online at https://pki.dmdc.osd.mil/self_service/ to update the certificates on their CACs, Uniformed Services ID Card, and Volunteer Logical Access Credentials within 30 days of the expiration date. For additional information, including step-by-step instructions, visit <https://www.cac.mil/coronavirus>.
- The US Army COVID-19 Information Hotline may be reached at 1-800-984-8523.
- Testing for COVID-19 may only be authorized based on the clinical judgment of a provider, exposure, travel history and symptoms. You must have an in-person or virtual telephone/video visit with a provider who will arrange testing, the location of which would depend on your TRICARE coverage. If in-network, the cost of the test is covered in the cost of the visit itself.
 - Copays will be waived retroactively to March 18 for approved COVID-19 diagnostic testing and office visits related to the testing. If you paid any copays for testing related to COVID-19 and the resulting office visits with a network or non-network provider, you may file a claim for reimbursement.
- The [TRICARE Pharmacy Program](#) gives you three ways to get up to a 90-day supply of your covered prescriptions, including delivery right to your door.
- TRICARE beneficiaries served by Barquist Army Medical Clinic have 24/7 access to a Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-874-2273, option 1.
- To maximize social distancing and enhance pharmacy services, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center has added weekend hours and a curbside pick-up service at the America Pharmacy (Bldg. 19).
- The Navy Lodge Bethesda is open and taking reservations for approved official travel. Call 1-800-628-9466 or 301-654-1795 for assistance.