

**VA**



**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs**

*A Guidebook for Incarcerated  
Veterans in the State of  
Alabama*



February 2019

[www.va.alabama.gov/documents/vetguide.pdf](http://www.va.alabama.gov/documents/vetguide.pdf)

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## INTRODUCTION

Dear Veteran:

The VA Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program is designed to address the community re-entry needs of identified incarcerated Veterans at County, State, and Federal correctional facilities who are either within six months of their parole eligibility date or within six months of release from custody. HCRV Specialists assist incarcerated Veterans by providing outreach, assessment, referral, and linkage to services as they transition from incarceration to the community. Short-term case management services may also be provided for up to four months post-release from custody if needed.

The HCRV Program is an essential and critical part of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and is vital for providing a gateway to VA and community supportive services for eligible Veterans who are in process of release from state and Federal prisons. HCRV is a VHA homelessness prevention effort, working to ensure that Veterans released from incarceration transition into productive and safe activity.

This guidebook will be an important tool for you as you begin to think about and plan for your release from custody. Please review all of the enclosed information thoroughly in order to better understand the opportunities available to you. When these resources are used properly, they may help you meet and successfully overcome challenges and other outside pressures that you may be confronted with upon your release from custody. These may include economic or financial issues, homelessness, relationship difficulties, family stress, other unresolved legal matters, gaining social acceptance, and any temptations that may lead you into negative thinking and resulting behaviors that may, in turn, lead you to a return to jail or prison.

This guidebook is a tool for Veterans incarcerated in the State of Alabama, as well as their families. Each state has an equivalent HCRV guidebook for incarcerated Veterans residing in or returning to their home state. These guidebooks may be accessed by your HCRV Specialist and provided to you if needed.

It is also important to note that laws may vary greatly from state to state. Therefore, please check your own state's laws and regulations for the most accurate and appropriate information for you.

Thank you for your dedication and for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Corrections Task Force

It is important to note that agency information, physical addresses, phone numbers, and website addresses may change for various reasons. Sometimes, resources such as shelters or programs may close due to budget cuts or other reasons and it is not always possible to know if or when this has occurred for a particular resource.

If you find that the information provided is not current or accurate, you may be able to discover the current information by reaching out to similar resources by phone or via an internet search. In order to perpetuate the value of this document, we respectfully request that if you discover any incorrect, conflicting, or out-of-date information in this guidebook, please notify us and send any corrections you may have discovered to:

Attn: Health Care Veterans Reentry Coordinator  
Veterans Justice Outreach Program  
1310 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, GA 31906

### **Acknowledgements:**

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”.
- 3) Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. for developing the first Incarcerated Veterans Guidebook, which has inspired and informed subsequent effort.
- 4) All public domain and agency resources included in this guidebook.
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## SECTION I: USING THIS GUIDE AND SEEKING HELP

This guidebook was developed in order to assist you with planning for your release from custody and to keep as a reference after your release. It includes addresses, telephone numbers, and web site information that you can use to find out about programs and other resources after your release. .

Please keep in mind that this guidebook does not include all of the resources or services available. Please also keep in mind that resources available in one area may be different than those available in another, so be sure to check with local resources to learn about services in your area.

While you are incarcerated, find out which unit in your facility can help you plan for your release. Many correctional facilities have re-entry or reintegration staff on site that may be of assistance as you approach your release date. Correctional facilities may also offer classes that can help you improve your skills and prepare for life after release from custody. Please take advantage of any of the opportunities afforded to you before and after your release from custody.

It may be helpful to begin thinking about what specifically you will need upon release. Ask yourself these kinds of questions: Will I need housing? Will I need medical, substance abuse, or mental health care? Do I need to learn a job skill? Do I have any other legal issues, such as child support, probation, or parole requirements? Do I have a discharge that may disqualify me from receiving VA benefits? How do I restart my VA disability checks, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)?

Make a list of your needs. Remember that this is just a tool to help you get organized. A sample list might look like this:

- I need a place to live.
- I need a job.
- I need clothing.
- I need to find out what benefits I am eligible for as a Veteran.
- I want to continue to receive substance abuse and/or mental health treatment.
- I need to engage in primary care treatment.
- I need to work on a military discharge upgrade.
- I owe child support and/or have other unresolved legal issues.
- I need to have my VA disability or Social Security payments reinstated.

Think about this list as you read through this guide. Who do you think can help you with each of your needs? Is there one organization that may be able to work with you on many different things, or do you need to contact several agencies? Keep track of the steps you take, including the dates and names of people you contact for information or assistance. Although this guide provides national and state addresses for many organizations, we recommend that you check your phone book or the Internet for local, county, and state agencies that may have more information about what kind of help is available in your specific area.

A blank sample list to get you started is included on Page 9 of this guidebook. Please feel free to use this sample list or create your own list as needed.

When contacting an agency for help by mail, email, or phone: be clear, persistent, and polite. Write legibly and keep your communication short and to the point. Ask questions if information is not clear to you. Please remember that organizations may be staffed by volunteers who are eager to help you but may not have the answers you are looking for. If someone cannot help you, ask if they know someone who can. In this way, you will be more likely to obtain positive results.

The Internet is another useful tool through which to find information about VA benefits and community resources in your area. This guidebook includes web addresses when available. If computer access is not available at your correctional facility, you may visit the local public library in your community after your release. To find information pertaining to Alabama public libraries, and for a state-wide list including contact information, please contact:

Alabama Public Library Service  
6030 Monticello Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36117  
Phone: 334-213-3900 or 800-723-8459  
[aplsws1.apls.state.al.us/aplsnew/libraries](http://aplsws1.apls.state.al.us/aplsnew/libraries).

Computer access may also be available at through the Alabama Department of Labor's Career Centers. To find a state-wide listing of Career Center locations as well as additional information pertaining to job training and job seeker services, please contact:

Alabama Department of Labor  
649 Monroe Street  
Montgomery, AL 36131  
Phone: 800-361-4524 Press 1  
[www.labor.alabama.gov/CareerCenters.aspx](http://www.labor.alabama.gov/CareerCenters.aspx)

The VA publishes a yearly booklet titled Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors, which is a great resource for VA eligibility and benefits. To download the current guidebook please visit [www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp).

Another very useful guidebook is titled Alabama Laws Affecting Veterans which is published through the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs. To obtain a copy of the guidebook or for more information, please contact:

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs  
P.O. Box 1509  
Montgomery, AL 36102  
Phone: 334-242-5077  
[www.va.state.al.us/pdf/guides/alabamalaws.pdf](http://www.va.state.al.us/pdf/guides/alabamalaws.pdf).

For Veterans who reside in or are returning to more rural areas, there is a very helpful guidebook that is published by the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) in Washington, D.C. titled Resources for Rural Veterans. You may obtain a copy of this guidebook by contacting their Southeast office at:

Housing Assistance Council  
55 Marietta Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303-2869  
Phone: 202-842-8600

[www.ruralhome.org/storage/documents/publications/rrreports/Veterans\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.ruralhome.org/storage/documents/publications/rrreports/Veterans_Resource_Guide.pdf)



### SAMPLE LIST OF NEEDS

Need	Plan Identified and Provider(s)
<b>Housing</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	
<input type="checkbox"/> Residential	
<input type="checkbox"/> Own Place	
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter/Transitional	
<b>Physical Health</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Primary Care	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dental	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vision	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other/Specialty	
<b>Mental Health</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling	
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Treatment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Medication Management	
<input type="checkbox"/> Residential Treatment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Probation/Parole Required	
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling	
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Treatment/AA/NA <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Treatment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Probation/Parole Required	
<b>Benefits/Entitlements</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security (SSI/SSDI) <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid/Medicare	
<input type="checkbox"/> VA Disability or Pension	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistance with upgrading a discharge	
<input type="checkbox"/> Transitional Assistance	
<b>Legal</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Probation/Parole Status	
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Support	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open/Unresolved Cases	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<b>Other</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drivers' License	
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card	
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Needs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing/Basic Needs	

## SECTION II: WHERE TO START

Your post-release success depends greatly upon steps you take while incarcerated. Working in partnership with your county, state, or federal correctional facility re-entry and discharge planning staff, or institutional parole officer if you are parole-eligible, is crucial in order to develop an appropriate re-entry plan. Having a re-entry plan developed prior to your release can help to reduce some of the anxiety you may experience as your release date approaches as well as any challenges you may face upon your release from custody. This guidebook, although it contains important and beneficial resource information, can be more useful if it is used in partnership with programming and resources that may be offered by your correctional facility.

### **A. Basic Eligibility Requirements**

To be considered a “Veteran” eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care benefits, a former service-member must have been discharged “under conditions other than dishonorable.” Under VA regulations, administrative discharges characterized by the armed services as “Honorable” or “General Under Honorable Conditions” are qualifying, and punitive discharges (“Dishonorable” or “Bad Conduct”) issued by general courts-martial are disqualifying. You have left our “Entry Level Separation” which we see a lot of. These are usually give for failure to meet a procurement standard or for failing an initial drug test at boot camp.

In general, individuals who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who received Honorable or General discharge may qualify for VA healthcare benefits. Other Than Honorable, Bad Conduct, or Dishonorable discharges may bar access to VA benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA healthcare benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

Active service, or active duty, means full-time service as a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Active Duty for Training (ADT) does not qualify a service member for VA healthcare benefits or programming unless the service member has applied for, and has been granted, a service-connected disability rating for an injury or illness incurred during training.

Minimum Duty Requirements: Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after October 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.

Women Veterans are eligible for the same VA benefits as male Veterans and the eligibility determination process is the same.

Eligibility requirements are determined by laws set forth by Congress. Each VA medical center has eligibility and admissions specialists who will review your submitted documentation in order to determine your eligibility status as well as what Priority Group you will be placed in for

healthcare services and programming. Another resource for you is the VA Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Specialist who works with your specific correctional facility.

## **B. Other Than Honorable (OTH) Discharges**

If you were given a Bad Conduct Discharge issued by Special Court Martial, an Other Than Honorable Discharge, or an Undesirable Discharge (there is no longer an Undesirable discharge that I am aware of), the VA will determine on a case-by-case basis whether you are entitled to benefits. The Veterans Administration (VA) will consider all the facts surrounding your service and decide if the quality of your service qualifies you for disability compensation and VA health care. This is called a "character of service" determination.

An individual with an "Other than Honorable" discharge that VA has determined to be disqualifying under application of title 38 C.F.R. §3.12 still retains eligibility for VA health care benefits for service-incurred or service-aggravated disabilities unless he or she is subject to one of the statutory bars to benefits set forth in Title 38 United States Code §5303(a). Authority: Section 2 of Public Law 95-126 (Oct. 8, 1977).

VA Health Care Benefits: If an individual presents or makes an application for VA health care benefits and has an "Other Than Honorable" or "Bad Conduct" discharge, eligibility staff may register the individual and place in a Pending Verification Status. A request for an administrative decision regarding the character of service for VA health care purposes must be made to the local VA Regional Office (VARO). This request may be submitted using a VA Form 7131, Exchange of Beneficiary Information and Request for Administrative and Adjudicative Action. In making determinations of health care eligibility the same criteria will be used as are now applicable to determinations of service connection when there is no character of discharge bar.

It is important to note that a discharge found by VA to have been issued under dishonorable conditions does not, in and of itself, bar an individual from receiving VA benefits based on a separate period of service which terminated under honorable conditions. In addition, the law provides for basic eligibility for benefits based on completion of the full term of an enlistment even if no discharge was issued at the completion of that period of service due to enlistment or reenlistment.

For example, if an individual enlisted for three years, completed the three years and reenlisted for two more years, then received a discharge under Other Than Honorable Conditions during the second enlistment, VA benefits may be provided based on the first period of service, even if it is determined that the character of discharge of the second period of service is a bar to benefits. However, disability compensation would be payable only for disabilities incurred during the first period of service, not for disabilities that were incurred during the second period of service,

We need to add in a note that discharge upgrade request take over a year to process so we need to address these issues early on and not wait until someone has months left before their release.

### **C. Enrollment**

For most Veterans, entry into the VA healthcare system begins by applying for enrollment. This includes completion of the VA Form 10-10EZ (Application for Health Benefits) and submission of your DD214 (and your DD215 if you have received a formal change or amendment to your DD214), which documents your service dates and type of discharge. For National Guard or Reserve members, a form NGB-22 or DD214 with notated Title 10 Executive Order activation periods is required to determine eligibility for enrollment in VA healthcare services.

Often, incarcerated Veterans may not have a copy of their DD214. If you do not have a copy of your DD214, you may request a certified copy by completing a VA Form SF-180 (Request Pertaining to Military Records). Alternatively, you may request a copy by contacting the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO ([www.archives.gov/st-louis](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis)). On-line request may be submitted at [vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html](http://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html). You may also wish to include requests for a complete copy of your service personnel file and service medical records for future use.

The SF-180 provides instructions for completing the form and also provides the mailing addresses to which to send your completed form. The Health Care for Re-entry Veterans Specialist who provides release planning services at your correctional facility is another good resource and is able to assist you with completion of the form if needed. It is very important that you complete this form properly and completely. If you do not, your request may be delayed or rejected outright. Please double check your form to make sure that you have completed all sections, signed, and dated it prior to mailing.

VA Form 10-10EZ may be obtained from any VA healthcare facility or VA regional benefits office. It may also be obtained by contacting the VA Health Resource Center at 877-222-8387 or on the Internet at [www.1010ez.med.va.gov](http://www.1010ez.med.va.gov). As with the SF-180, please make sure that you complete the form properly and completely. If it is not, VA will not be able to complete the processing of your enrollment. Please note that income information is for the previous calendar year. If you received no income or entitlements during the past year, please write "0" in the spaces provided. The VA Form 10-10EZ can be completed online at: [www.vets.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction](http://www.vets.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction).

Should you decide to decline enrollment in VA services prior to your release but decide to do so at a later time, you may enroll at any VA site. Please bring a copy of your DD214 and be prepared to complete a form 10-10EZ in order to complete your enrollment.

### **D. VA Benefits While Incarcerated**

There is a 60-day "grace period" following a conviction for a felony when you may still receive full benefits.

To avoid an overpayment, it is important that you notify the VA Regional Office (VARO) immediately when you go to prison if you are receiving payments. If you do not notify the VA and receive an overpayment, you and your family will lose all financial payments until the debt is paid. The VA considers it to be the Veteran's responsibility and fault if this occurs because

the Veteran failed to notify the VA of his or her incarceration. Attempts to obtain a waiver in these situations of overpayment are often unsuccessful.

For Example: Don is a Veteran who receives a VA pension. He commits a crime, is convicted, and is incarcerated. He does not notify the VA of this right away and continues to receive his full pension for six months. After serving his sentence of 18 months, he is released from custody and applies to the VA to have his pension reinstated. He will have an overpayment that must be recovered from the reinstated benefits. Until the overpayment is recovered, Don will likely have to go without that income.

After the 61st day of incarceration, Veterans receiving 20% service-connected benefit or higher prior to incarceration will begin to receive 10% of their service-connected benefit monthly. Veterans receiving 10% service-connected benefit prior to incarceration will begin to receive 5% of their service-connected benefit monthly. This will continue until the completion of the period for which they are incarcerated. Veterans who are in receipt of Non-Service Connected Pension benefits will have their benefits stopped upon incarceration.

Notify the VA of your change in status to avoid an overpayment which will have to be repaid. Complete VA Form 21-4193 (Notice to Department of Veterans Affairs of Veteran or Beneficiary Incarcerated in Penal Institution). Have it signed by a prison official and submit it to the VA Regional Office. Note: This form may also be used to notify the VA of your release. *See Section E Reinstatement of Benefits Upon Release.*

### **Apportionment**

Legally, a Veteran can only receive a portion of the full amount payable for his or her disability rating while incarcerated. However, the remaining balance may be “apportioned to the individual’s dependent family.” This means that your (Beneficiary’s) members (spouse, children, or dependent parents) may be able to receive a part of your benefits while you are incarcerated. VA regulations clearly specify an apportionment amount will only go to family members if they can demonstrate financial need.

To apply for an apportionment, you must submit VA Form 21-0788 and VA Form 21-4138 requesting an apportionment of the veteran’s compensation benefit to the VA Regional Office (VARO) below that identifies you as the Veteran and your spouse, children and/or parent as dependents.

In deciding whether any apportionment is appropriate, the amount of the apportionment, and to whom it will go to, 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;
- Special needs of any of the family members.

For Example: Jim is rated as 70% service-connected. While incarcerated, he can only receive 10% of his service-connected benefit. However, his family may be apportioned up to

60%, the difference of the 70% rating. Jim would still receive 10% service-connected benefit, and his family would receive 60%.

There is a 60-day “grace period” following a conviction when the Veteran or his/her dependent family may still receive full benefits. If you continue to receive benefits after the 60-day period, it will result in an overpayment. The VA considers it to be your responsibility and fault if this occurs because you failed to notify the VA of your incarceration. 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 recovered completely. (Is this not already covered above?)

It is important to remember that most VA decisions, including those on apportionment, can be appealed to the Board of Veterans Appeals and to the Court of Appeal for Veterans Claims.

VA Regional Offices (VARO’s) may assist with clarifying the eligibility of prisoners, parolees, and individuals with multiple discharge statuses under differing conditions. Contact information for the Alabama VARO is:

Montgomery Regional Benefit Office  
345 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 800-827-1000  
Monday–Friday, 8am–4pm

It is important to note that VA medical care cannot be provided to Veterans while they are in prison. Current regulations restrict VA from providing hospital and outpatient care to an incarcerated Veteran who is an inmate in an institution of another government agency when that agency has a duty to provide the care or services for that Veteran.

### **E. Reinstatement of Benefits upon Release**

Upon your release from prison, this includes being released at the end of your sentence, released to parole and work release, you will need to have your benefits fully reinstated. The VA Regional Office (VARO) requires formal notification from the correctional facility pertaining to your release in order to reinstate benefits. This means that you will need to bring your release papers to the VARO in person or to your nearest county veterans service office. If being released from an Alabama state prison, this is likely your Receipt of Released Convict (Form C-80). The sooner that documentation is provided to VARO, the sooner VARO is able to begin to process your request for benefit reinstatement. Your award for compensation or pension benefits should resume from the date you are released, as long as the VA receives notice of your release within one year.

Alternatively, you may complete VA Form 21-4193 (Notice to Department of Veterans Affairs of Veteran or Beneficiary Incarcerated in Penal Institution) (may also be used to notify the VA of your incarceration; *see Section D. VA Benefits While Incarcerated*) before your release, have it signed by a prison official, and submit it to the VA Regional Office. Should you decide to pursue this means of reinstating your benefits, please make sure that you make a photocopy of

the form prior to mailing. This will ensure that you still have a copy for your own records or in the event that the mailed form is lost.

#### Fugitive Felons

The Department of Veterans Affairs is prohibited from providing or continuing to provide health care and services, including medications and any care provided in the community, at VA expense or compensation or pension payments to Veterans and beneficiaries identified as fugitive felons. A Fugitive Felon is defined as a person who is:

1. Fleeing to avoid custody or confinement after conviction for an offense which is a felony under the laws of the place from which the person is fleeing, or for an attempt to commit such an offense; and/or
2. Fleeing to avoid prosecution for an offense which is a felony; and/or
3. Violating a condition of probation or parole imposed for committing a felony under Federal or State law.

VA will mail a letter to the Veteran or beneficiary identified as a fugitive felon to inform them of their status and termination of all VA health care benefits. VA staff will take appropriate steps to transition the fugitive felon's health care from VA programs to alternative care outside the VA health care system. VA cannot pay for any of this alternative care. In addition, VA will bill the Veteran and/or beneficiaries for all VA provided care received while in this fugitive felon status.

Persons identified as a fugitive felon must contact the Originating Agency (Court) that issued a felony warrant, not the VA Police, if it is believed:

1. An error was made, such as mistaken identity.
2. The warrant should be cancelled.
3. The warrant has been satisfied by your arrest or surrender.
4. There are other reasons, which would resolve the warrant.

Evidence that the warrant has been satisfied should be provided to your local VARO or to your local county veterans service office.

For additional information concerning the Fugitive Felon Program, please contact the Fugitive Felon Coordinator or Enrollment Coordinator at your local VA medical care facility or contact VA at 877-222-VETS (8387).

#### **F. Discharge Upgrades**

If you are not eligible for VA benefits or services because of the character of your military discharge (such as Other than Honorable, Bad Conduct, or Dishonorable), you may consider applying for a discharge upgrade from the Military Discharge Review Board.

Each of the military services maintains a discharge review board with authority to change, correct, or modify discharges or dismissals that are not issued by a sentence of a general courts-

martial. The board has no authority to address medical discharges. The veteran or, if the veteran is deceased or incompetent, the surviving spouse, next of kin or legal representative may apply for a review of discharge by writing to the military department concerned, using DoD Form 293. This form may also be obtained at a VA regional office, from veterans' organizations. However, if the discharge was more than 15 years ago, a veteran must petition the appropriate service Board for Correction of Military Records using DoD Form 149, which is discussed in the "Correction of Military Records" above. A discharge review is conducted by a review of an applicant's record and, if requested, by a hearing before the board.

Discharges awarded as a result of a continuous period of unauthorized absence in excess of 180 days make persons ineligible for VA benefits regardless of action taken by discharge review boards, unless VA determines there were compelling circumstances for the absence. Boards for the correction of military records also may consider such cases.

Veterans with disabilities incurred or aggravated during active military service may qualify for medical or related benefits regardless of separation and characterization of service. Veterans separated administratively under other than honorable conditions may request that their discharge be reviewed for possible re-characterization, provided they file their appeal within 15 years of the date of separation. Questions regarding the review of a discharge should be addressed to the appropriate discharge review board at the address listed on DoD Form 293.

Although this process may be complicated and time consuming, it may be worth pursuing. Here are a few important points:

1. Because of the time consuming nature of the discharge upgrade process and the need to collect documentation that will support your request, we strongly suggest that you wait until after your release from incarceration before applying for a discharge upgrade. I disagree with this statement depending on the circumstances of the incarceration the vet should being the process two to three years before their projected release.
2. If and when you do undertake this process, we strongly urge you to obtain assistance. Many of the Veterans Services Organizations listed in this guidebook offer experienced guidance at no cost to you. Please review the information enclosed in this guidebook for contact information.

Be aware that the discharge review process is a very complicated one and assistance should be sought in the preparation of the case to be submitted.

#### **Contacting Military Service Review Boards:**

Mailing addresses for each Service Review Board are also listed on the individual forms.

#### **G. Seeking Help**

If you would like to pursue application for service-connected disability benefits or if you think that you may have a pending claim before the VA, it is likely best to obtain professional help to assist you in this process. There are a number of organizations providing such assistance free of charge.

### **Alabama-Provided Assistance**

The Alabama Department of Veterans' Affairs (ADVA) has Veterans Service Offices located in most counties throughout the State of Alabama. While they do not have an office in every county, they have taken steps to ensure anyone seeking assistance can find it close to their home. Their trained staff is there to assist veterans in filing claims with the federal VA and otherwise accessing federal and state VA benefits.

To find the Veteran Service Officer nearest you, please Contact the Department at:

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs  
P.O. Box 1509  
Montgomery, AL 36102  
Phone: 334-242-5077  
[http://www.va.state.al.us/county\\_select.aspx](http://www.va.state.al.us/county_select.aspx)

### **Veteran Service Organization-Provided Assistance**

Many Veteran Service Organizations 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 may need. The following are some Veteran Service Organizations in Alabama that you may contact for assistance:

#### **American Legion:**

The American Legion is a social and mutual-aid Veterans' organization including members of the United States Armed Forces. The organization was founded in 1919 by Veterans returning from Europe after World War I, and was later chartered as an official American patriotic society under Title 36 of the United States Code. The organization is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, and also has offices in Washington, DC. In addition to organizing commemorative events and volunteer Veteran support activities, the American Legion is active in issue-oriented U.S. politics. Its primary political activity is lobbying on behalf of the interests of Veterans and service members, including support for Veterans benefits such as pensions and the Veterans Affairs hospital system. Alabama's accredited American Legion service officer is Paul Sullivan. He is specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families. While the majority of a service officer's work involves application for VA disability benefits, these compassionate professionals also provide information, referrals and resources on education, employment and business, death benefits and other important topics.

Paul Sullivan  
345 Perry Hill Road  
P.O. Box 1391  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-213-3320 or 800-433-3318  
Fax: 334-279-8086  
[www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)

#### **AMVETS:**

As one of America's foremost Veterans service organizations, AMVETS (or American Veterans) has a proud history of assisting veterans and sponsoring numerous pro-grams that serve our

country and its citizens. The helping hand that AMVETS extends to Veterans and their families takes many forms. One of the most visible is their network of trained national service officers (NSOs) accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Funded by the AMVETS National Service Foundation, these dedicated men and women can be found in close to 40 states, providing sound advice on compensation claims at no charge to the Veteran.

Jose Carrillo  
345 Perry Hill Road  
P.O. Box 1391  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-213-3442 or 301-459-6181 ext. 4071  
Email: [jose.carrillo2@va.gov](mailto:jose.carrillo2@va.gov)  
[alamvets.org](http://alamvets.org)

**Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Montgomery National Service Office:**

DAV staff are highly trained, professional experts who have undergone comprehensive training program in Veterans' affairs. NSOs function as attorneys-in-fact, assisting veterans and their families in filing claims for VA disability compensation and pension; vocational rehabilitation and employment; education; home loan guaranty; life insurance; death benefits; health care and much more. DAV NSOs represent more clients than all other Veterans' groups at the highest level of appeal within the Department of Veterans Affairs. What's more, all services provided by DAV NSOs are free of charge.

345 Perry Hill Road, Rm. 1-116  
P.O. Box 1391  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-213-3365  
[www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)

**Military Order of the Purple Heart:**

The Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Program exists to assist veterans, ALL veterans, in working with the VA and filing claims for the many benefits that are available. You do NOT need to be a member of the Purple Heart Organization or a recipient of the medal to seek assistance. The program provides veterans' benefits experts at various veterans administration regional offices, hospitals, vet centers, and state and county veteran facilities.

Robert Clayton  
215 Perry Hill Road, Rm. GA-118  
Montgomery AL 36109  
Phone: 334-272-4670 Ext: 4662  
Fax: 334-725-2845  
[www.purpleheart.org](http://www.purpleheart.org)

**Paralyzed Veterans of America Montgomery National Service Office:**

Since 1946, Paralyzed Veterans of America has been a leading advocate for quality health care, spinal cord research and education, veterans benefits, and civil rights for veterans and all people

with disabilities. A veteran with a disability and their family members can get assistance with filing VA benefit claims and other services from Paralyzed Veterans of America – free of charge. Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury and Disease (SCI/D), Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), and other service-connected injuries or conditions can seek help by contacting the Veterans Benefits Department within one of our National Service Offices. We have over 70 office nationwide for your convenience.

Anthony Steele  
345 Perry Hill Road, Rm. 1-123  
P.O. Box 1391  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-213-3433 or 800-795-3581  
Fax: 334-260-8999  
[www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org)

**Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW):**

As the largest organization of combat veterans, VFW understands the frustrations that can arise with making a VA claim. Their skilled VFW Veterans Service Officers help you through this process, offering you a better opportunity to get the disability claim you deserve. You do not need to be a VFW member to take advantage of this free service.

345 Perry Hill Road, Rm. 1-124  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-213-3439  
Fax: 334-213-3689  
Email: [vbmapvfw.vbamgy@va.gov](mailto:vbmapvfw.vbamgy@va.gov)  
[www.alvfw.org](http://www.alvfw.org)

**National Veterans Foundation:** 888-777-4443 or [nvf.org](http://nvf.org)

The National Veterans Foundation serves the crisis management, information and referral needs of all U.S. Veterans and their families through: management and operation of the nation’s only toll-free helpline for all veterans and their families. Public awareness programs shine a consistent spotlight on the needs of America’s veterans. Outreach services provide veterans and families in need with food, clothing, transportation, employment, and other essential resources. They can help you locate a Veteran Service Officer near you.

**H. Seeking Benefits on Your Own**

Although we encourage you to seek the aid of a Veterans’ service representative, you may choose to apply for VA benefits on your own. Write to your local VA Regional Office (VARO) or online at [www.benefits.va.gov](http://www.benefits.va.gov). You may also apply for certain benefits online at [www.va.gov/onlineapps.htm](http://www.va.gov/onlineapps.htm).

## **I. Alabama VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, Vet Centers, and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics**

### **Medical Centers**

**Birmingham VAMC**  
700 South 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-933-8101

**Tuscaloosa VAMC**  
3701 Loop Road, East  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
Phone: 205-554-2000 or 888-269-3045

**Central Alabama Veteran Health Care System East Campus**  
2400 Hospital Road  
Tuskegee, AL 36083  
Phone: 334-727-0550 or 800-214-8387

**Central Alabama Veteran Health Care System West Campus**  
215 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-272-4670 or 800-214-838

### **Outpatient Clinics**

**Dothan, AL Mental Health Clinic**  
3753 Ross Clark Circle Suite 4  
Dothan, AL 36303  
Phone: 334-678-1933  
Fax: 334-678-0977

**Selma Outpatient Clinic**  
206 Vaughan Memorial Drive  
Selma, AL 36701  
Phone: 205-554-2000 X 6601 or 205-554-2000 X 6607  
Fax: 334-875-9073

### **Vet Centers**

**Birmingham Vet Center**  
400 Emery Drive, Suite 200  
Hoover, AL 35244  
Phone: 205-212-3122 or 877-927-8387  
Fax: 205-989-6415

**Mobile Vet Center**  
3211 Springhill Avenue Building 2, Suite C  
Mobile, AL 36607  
Phone: 251-478-5906  
Fax: 251-478-2237

**Huntsville Vet Center**  
415 Church Street, Bldg. H, Suite 101  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-539-5775 or 256-539-5775  
Fax: 256-533-1973

**Montgomery Vet Center**  
4405 Atlanta Highway  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-273-7796 or 877-927-8387  
Fax: 334-277-8376

## **Community-Based Outpatient Clinics**

### **Anniston/Oxford CBOC**

96 Ali Way Creekside South  
Oxford, AL 36203  
Phone: 256-832-4141  
Fax: 256-832-4153

### **Bessemer CBOC**

975 9th Avenue, SW-Suite 400 at UAB  
West Medical Center West  
Bessemer, AL 32055  
Phone: 205-428-3495  
Fax: 205-428-9240

### **Birmingham VA Clinic**

2415 7th Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-933-8101

### **Childersburg CBOC**

151 9th Avenue NW  
Childersburg, AL 35044  
Phone: 256-378-9026  
Fax: 256-378-3371

### **Dothan CBOC**

2020 Alexander Drive  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 334-673-4166  
Fax: 334-673-4170

### **Gadsden CBOC**

206 Rescia Avenue  
Gadsden, AL 35906  
Phone: 256-413-7154  
Fax: 256-413-7813

### **Guntersville CBOC**

101 Judy Smith Drive  
Guntersville, AL 35976  
Phone: 256-582-4033  
Fax: 256-582-4215

### **Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System-Mobile**

1504 Springhill Avenue  
Mobile, AL 36604  
251-219-3900

### **Montgomery VA Clinic**

8105 Veterans Way  
Montgomery, AL 36117  
Phone: 800-214-8387

### **Shoals Area CBOC**

422 DD Cox Boulevard  
Sheffield, AL 35660  
Phone: 256-381-9055  
Fax: 256-381-6101

### **VA Outpatient Clinic Monroeville**

159 Whetstone Street  
Monroeville, AL 36400  
Phone: 251-743-5861 or 251-743-5862  
Fax: 251-743-3412

### **VA Wiregrass Clinic**

301 Andrews Avenue  
Fort Rucker, AL 36362  
Phone: 800-214-8387 X 7831  
Fax: 334-503-7869

## **J. Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program**

The Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program provides outreach and re-entry planning via VA HCRV Specialists to eligible Veterans who are within six months of release from incarceration. The goals of this program are to educate incarcerated Veterans about VA services and benefits, to conduct assessments pertaining to Veterans' needs, to optimize a Veteran's chances for success in the community through comprehensive release planning, and to provide linkage to VA services.

HCRV Specialists work in partnership with correctional facilities to identify incarcerated Veterans and to coordinate visits to the facilities in order to meet with identified eligible Veterans prior to their release. HCRV Specialists work closely with correctional facility re-entry and discharge planning staff in order to develop release plans based upon the Veteran's identified needs, goals, and available services. Services typically include assistance with shelter/transitional housing as well as treatment services for primary care, mental health, or substance abuse services.

The lead HCRV Specialist for Alabama is:

Marguerita D. High, Health Care for Re-entry Veterans Specialist  
1310 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Columbus, GA. 31907  
Phone: 334-558-8505  
Email: Marguerita.High@va.gov

If you are within six months of release from custody, please speak with your facility case manager, re-entry staff, or discharge planner. Many correctional facilities ask newly incarcerated individuals whether they have served in the military or are Veterans. This question assists correctional staff with communicating with HCRV program staff when a Veteran is within six months of release. Many facilities also offer Veteran-focused activities and groups on-site. However, some Veterans may not choose to divulge their Veteran status for various reasons.

In order for the HCRV program to assist you, it is important to let correctional facility staff know of your Veteran status. The HCRV Specialist can provide you with information and linkage to important services that can assist you upon your release from custody.

#### **K. Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program:**

The purpose of the Veterans Justice Outreach initiative is to prevent homelessness among justice-involved Veterans. The VJO program works with Veterans in effort to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved Veterans have timely access to VHA services as clinically indicated. Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists are responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved Veterans in local courts and jails and liaison with local justice system partners. The VJO program targets Veterans with known or suspected service-related mental health conditions that demonstrate some correlation to their legal issue. VJO staff work with Veterans who are pre-trial or on probation and also attend court sessions in effort to dialogue with court staff (judges, attorneys, etc.) to propose treatment options that may be considered in lieu of incarceration of the Veteran.

For Alabama, the current VJO Specialists are as follows:

- Birmingham VA Medical Center, Ahmad Brewer, 700 S. 19th Street, Birmingham, AL 35233

- Mobile/South Alabama, VA Gulf Coast Health Care System, David Neslen, 400 Veterans Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39531
- Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center, William Adams 3701 Loop Road, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404
- Columbus, Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CBOC), Marguerita High, 1310 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Columbus, GA. 31907

## **L. Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program**

Initially serving as a mechanism to contract with providers for community-based residential treatment for homeless Veterans, many HCHV programs now serve as the hub for a myriad of housing and other services which provide VA a way to outreach and assist homeless Veterans by offering them entry to VA care.

Outreach is the core of the HCHV program. The central goal is to reduce homelessness among Veterans by conducting outreach to those who are the most vulnerable and are not currently receiving services and engaging them in treatment and rehabilitative programs.

Contract Residential Treatment Program ensures that Veterans with serious mental health diagnoses can be placed in community-based programs which provide quality housing and services.

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, as well as 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 877-222-8387 or see the information below:

Birmingham Area:  
700 S. 19th Street  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-933-8101 ext. 6751

Montgomery/Tuskegee Area:  
2400 Hospital Road  
Tuskegee, AL 36083  
Phone: 334-725-2838 ext. 2838

Mobile Area:  
400 Veterans Avenue  
Mobile, AL 39531  
Phone: 225-523-5018

Tuscaloosa Area:  
3701 Loop Road  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
Phone: 205-554-2000 ext. 4403



## **SECTION III: HELP FOR VETERANS**

This section includes Veteran-specific as well as community-based resources that may help you get back on your feet upon your release from custody. Please remember to check the phone book yellow pages or Internet for local, county, and state agencies that know what specific services are available in your area to assist you. You may start by looking under “Homelessness” or “Social Services Organizations” for a listing of local organizations that offer various services, including clothing, public transportation tokens or vouchers, emergency shelter, and more. If using a phone book, government agencies are typically listed in the blue pages found near the front of the book. If using the Internet, please visit [www.yellowpages.com/state-al](http://www.yellowpages.com/state-al) to start your search or use web-based search engines such as Yahoo ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)) or Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)). As information found on the Internet may be outdated or inaccurate, please make sure to contact the program or resource directly to ensure that the information located is indeed current.

It is important to be aware that some organizations and programs may have wait lists, require an interview, or have specific rules or criteria regarding the population they serve. It may be a good idea to begin inquiring about services and their specific requirements now so that you will be better prepared when you are released. Some programs may allow you to be placed on their wait list as you get closer to your release date. Your designated correctional facility re-entry or reintegration staff at county correctional facilities or Housing Support Specialist (HSS) at AL Department of Corrections facilities is a good point of contact for resources and guidance.

Another important consideration to take is regarding whether or not you want to enroll in VA healthcare or programming. Although many incarcerated Veterans have received VA services or programming previously, many have not. Sometimes this is because they may have not realized that they were eligible for care, have not felt that they wanted or needed these services in the past, or felt that they would prefer to let other Veterans who may be in perceived greater need of these services have access to them. The VA may be a positive starting point for you upon your release from custody and has a wide array of services and programming to assist you.

Please remember that as a Veteran who has dedicated himself or herself to service of this country, and who has honorably served, you may be eligible for services through the VA healthcare system. There may be a sense of security in knowing that you have access to healthcare and services upon your release that is specifically focused on Veterans and their needs. It is a system of care that is there for you, is dedicated to serving Veterans, and is proud and honored to serve you.

Some guidance is included below, but your local service organizations are your best resource. Remember, it never hurts to ask!

### **IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND WEB SITES**

If you are using a phone book, crisis and toll-free numbers are typically listed in the front cover or first few pages. You may also want to check under “Social Services” in the blue or yellow pages for hotlines and local numbers. This information is also readily available online.

**REMEMBER TO ALWAYS CALL 911 FOR MEDICAL OR PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCIES!**

**Veterans Crisis Line 800-273-8255 Press 1 Preventing Veterans Suicide**

**A. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ([www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov))**

**Veterans Health Administration**

A listing of Alabama VA medical centers, Outpatient Clinics, Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers is available on Pages 19-21 of this guidebook.

Phone: 877-222-8387

[www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp](http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp).

**Veterans Benefits Administration**

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides a variety of benefits and services to Service members, Veterans, and their families. VBA has been undergoing a major transformation that is people-centric, results-oriented, and a forward-looking integration of solutions that will ensure total lifelong engagement with Service members, Veterans, and their families. This telephone number is for the VA national helpline for information pertaining to a full range of VA benefits, including Disability Compensation and Pension, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, Education, Burial Benefits, Death Pension, Home Loan Guarantee, and GI Bill.

Please note that call wait times may be long, depending upon the time of day you are calling. There is an option to request a return call from helpline staff and you will not lose your place in line if you elect to receive a return call. It is important, however, that you remain near the telephone should you elect this option. You may also visit a location in order to make an appointment. Their webpage can be found at [www.benefits.va.gov/benefits](http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits).

The VA regional office (VARO) for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) in Alabama is located at:

VA Regional Office  
345 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109.  
Phone: 800-827-1000  
Monday–Friday, 8am–4pm

**National Cemetery Administration**

The mission of the National Cemetery Association (NCA) is to honor Veterans and their families with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our Nation. NCA provides burial space for Veterans and their eligible family members, maintains national cemeteries as national shrines, sacred to the honor and memory of those interred or memorialized there, marks Veterans' graves with a Government-furnished headstone, marker, or medallion, provides Presidential Memorial Certificates in

recognition of their service to a grateful nation, and administers grants for establishing or expanding state and tribal government Veterans cemeteries.

Phone: 800-535-1117

[www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov).

If you would like to pursue the process of applying for service-connected disability benefits or if you think that you have a pending claim before the VA, it is likely best to obtain professional help to assist you in this process.

Many Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) s 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. The following are some VSO's in Alabama that you may contact for assistance:

### **B. Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs**

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs' provides Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) provide assistance in most of the counties throughout the State of Alabama. VSOs provide assistance in seeking veteran-specific benefits from both the federal and state VA. For those with less than honorable discharges, they also offer assistance in getting your discharge upgraded. To find your nearest VSO or for more information, please contact the Department at:

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

P.O. Box 1509

Montgomery, AL 36102

Phone: 334-242-5077

[www.va.alabama.gov/county\\_select.aspx](http://www.va.alabama.gov/county_select.aspx).

### **C. National Help Lines**

#### **American Veterans for Equal Rights**

Phone: 718-849-5665

Email: [info@aver.us](mailto:info@aver.us)

#### **Department of Defense Safe Helpline**

The DoD Safe Helpline is a groundbreaking crisis support service for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. Safe Helpline provides live, one-on-one specialized support and information, and is confidential, anonymous and secure. Safe Helpline services are available worldwide, 24/7 — providing victims with the help they need anytime, anywhere.

Phone: 877-995-5247

#### **Focus On Recovery Helpline**

A 24-hour national alcohol and drug abuse addiction and treatment hotline.

Phone: 800-374-2800 or 800-234-1253

**GLBT National Hotline**

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) National Hotline provides telephone, online private one-to-one chat, and email peer support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States. Hours are M-F 4 PM to Midnight (Eastern Time), Saturday Noon to 5 PM (Eastern Time).

Phone: 888-THE-GLNH (888-843-4564)

**Military OneSource**

Phone: 800-342-9647 (for 24/7 counseling and resources)

**National AIDS Hotline**

Talk to someone who knows about HIV / AIDS and can tell you about AIDS services in your city or state.

Phone: 800-342-2437

**National Alliance to End Homelessness**

Phone: 202-638-1526

Fax: 202-638-4664

[www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org)

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans**

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) has founded a National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at-risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless Veterans and their families, VA Medical Centers, federal, state and local partners, community agencies, service providers and others in the community.

Phone: 877-4AID VET (877-424-3838).

**National Center for Homeless Education**

Supporting the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Phone: 800-308-2145

[www.center.serve.org/nche](http://www.center.serve.org/nche)

**National Coalition for Homeless Veterans**

NCHV

333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue SE

Washington, DC 20003-1148

Phone: 800-VET-HELP (800-838-4357)

[www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org).

**National Coalition for the Homeless**

Phone: 202-462-4822

[www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

**National Health Care for the Homeless Council**

Phone: 615-226-2292

Fax: 615-226-1656

[www.nhchc.org](http://www.nhchc.org)

**National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty**

Phone: 202-638-2535

[www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org)

**National Veterans Foundation**

The National Veterans Foundation's Mission is to serve the crisis management, information and referral needs of all U.S. veterans and their families through:

- Management and operation of the nation's only toll-free, vet-to-vet helpline for all veterans and their families.
- Public awareness programs that shine a consistent spotlight on the needs of America's veterans.
- Outreach services that provide veterans and families in need with food, clothing, transportation, employment and other essential resources.
- Contact information for a Veteran Service Officer near you.

Phone: 888-777-4443

[nvf.org](http://nvf.org)

**Persian Gulf War Helpline**

Phone: 800-749-8387

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**

Also known as, the Treatment Referral Routing Service, this Helpline provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery in English and Spanish.

Phone: 800-662-HELP (800-662-4357)

TTY: 800-487-4889

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

This 24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide prevention hotline is available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call is routed to the nearest crisis center in the national network of more than 150 crisis centers.

Phone: 800-273-TALK (8255) or TTY: 800-799-4889

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

## **Transgender American Veterans Association**

[www.tavausa.org](http://www.tavausa.org)

## **Vet Center Combat Call Center**

This is an around the clock confidential call center where combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life. The staff is comprised of combat Veterans from several service eras as well as family members of combat Veterans.

Phone: 877-WAR-VETS (877-927-8387)

## **Veterans Crisis Line**

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis as well as their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans' Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. This line also provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and 365 days a year.

Phone: 800-273-TALK (800-273-8255) and Press 1  
Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.  
Text a message to 838255  
Chat online at [www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat)

## **24/7 Outreach Center for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury**

Phone: 866-966-1020  
Email: [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org)

## **American Ex-Prisoners of War**

Phone: 817-649-0109  
[www.axpow.org](http://www.axpow.org)



## **SECTION IV: RE-ENTRY SERVICES FOR ALL**

### **A. Alabama Re-entry Services**

The following is a listing of some Alabama re-entry services which you may find helpful as you transition back to your community.

#### **Alabama Non Violent Offenders Organization**

Helps close the past life to create a brighter future by assisting non-violent offenders that are in good standing in community in the city of Huntsville, AL, the state of Alabama and surrounding counties. Assists them with getting their voting rights reinstated and their records pardoned or expunged and we also help with housing, education and employment.

701 Andrew Jackson Way, Suite 221  
Huntsville, AL 35801

#### **Community Ministry Services**

Provides food/clothing benevolence for qualified individuals. Furniture vouchers for fire victims. Operates a thrift store for clothing and furniture. Re-entry program for men coming out of prison. Auto donations/sales repairs-call for details.

1804 6th Avenue North  
Bessemer, AL 35020  
Phone: 205-424-2400

#### **New Beginnings Pre-Release Services**

Referral service for ex-offenders returning to society.

305 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: 334-220-6519

#### **Aid to Inmate Mothers – Pre-Release Services**

Provides services to incarcerated mothers as well as their children to include parenting education, life skills and job readiness, domestic violence education and self-esteem classes among many other rehabilitative classes at the prison. Also operates a group home for newly released inmates. Can provide school supplies and very limited financial assistance to households with an incarcerated mother. Visitation Program helps children without transportation see their mother on a monthly basis. The program is child friendly and involves a private meeting with activities, a meal, toys and pictures.

660 Morgan Avenue  
Montgomery, AL  
Phone: 800-679-0246  
Hotline: 334-262-2245  
Fax: 334-647-1833

**Starting Point – Prison Re-Entry Program**

This agency offers transition services to women who are leaving the prison system.

103 North Memorial Drive  
Prattville, AL 36067  
Phone: 205-294-5772

**The Caring Center: First Baptist Church Community Ministries**

This agency offers the following assistance on a walk-in basis ONLY: Appliances, Burial/Cremation, Financial Assistance, Clothing, Driver's License/State ID Fee Assistance, ESL Classes (Teach English Classes), Furniture, Household Items, and Prescriptions Assistance.

52 Adams Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
9:00 am-3:00 pm, Monday-Thursday

**The Ordinary People Society Community Ministry Services**

This agency provides assistance with the following programs: The Criminal Rehabilitation and Reintegration Program, Early Intervention and Mentoring Program, Drug Prevention and Addiction Assistance Program, After School Program, Adult Literacy Program, Hunger and Homelessness Prevention, The Mentoring Program/ Big Brother Big Sister – Togetherhood, City Prayer Watch, Counseling Ministries, Youth Ministry, Widows' Ministry, Elderly Project, Residential Discipleship Programs, Tent Revivals, Prison/Jail Ministry, Radio Ministry, Ex-Felons Voters Rights Restored, and Domestic Violence Counseling.

403 West Powell Street  
Dothan, AL 36303  
Phone: 334-671-2882  
9:00 am-6:30 pm, Monday-Friday

**B. Other Useful Contacts (Agencies and Services Provided)****Aid to Inmate Mothers**

P.O. Box 986  
Montgomery, Alabama 36101  
Phone: 334-262-2245 or 888-679-0246  
Fax: 334-647-1833  
[www.inmatemoms.org](http://www.inmatemoms.org)

**AIDS Service Organizational Network of Alabama**

HIV specific medical and dental care, social services, case management and treatment services for persons living with the virus.

AIDS Alabama South:  
4321 Downtowner Loop N

Montgomery Aids Outreach  
2900 McGehee Road

Mobile, Alabama 36609  
Phone: 251-471-5277  
Fax: 251-471-5294

Montgomery, Alabama 36111  
Phone: 334-281-1818

**Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles**

Community supervision, applying for a pardon, restoration of voting rights, felony gun laws.

301 South Ripley Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
Phone: 334-353-7771  
[www.pardons.alabama.gov](http://www.pardons.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Cooperative Extension System**

Information on community services and resources offered through social service agencies, businesses and corporations.

5340 Atlanta Highway  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-270-4014

**Alabama Department of Children's Affairs**

Information on services available for children ages 0-19.

35 S Union Street, Suite 215  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
Phone: 334-353-2700  
[www.children.alabama.gov](http://www.children.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs**

Community resource network, career resource centers, job and employment services, vocational and apprenticeship programs, GED testing

P.O. Box 5690  
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690  
Phone: 334-242-5100  
[www.adeca.alabama.gov](http://www.adeca.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Department of Human Resources**

Modifications of child support payments, termination of parental rights, family assistance, food stamps, and childcare subsidy programs

Center for Communications  
Gordon Persons Building, Suite 2104  
50 North Ripley Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
Phone: 334-242-1310

Fax: 334-353-1115  
[www.dhr.state.al.us](http://www.dhr.state.al.us)

**Alabama Department of Labor**

Information on tax incentives and credits for employers that hire ex-offenders.

649 Monroe Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36131  
Phone: 800-361-4524

*See Section X: Employment Assistance for additional contacts.*

**Alabama Department of Mental Health**

Inpatient and outpatient substance abuse programs, NA / AA self-help meetings, certified mental health centers

P.O. Box 301410  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1410  
Phone: 800-367-0955  
[www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Department of Public Health**

Applying for a birth certificate, health screenings, STD treatment, clinic and primary health care referrals, WIC, and family planning services

Physical Address:  
The RSA Tower  
201 Monroe Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 334-206-5300 or 800-ALA-1818  
[www.alabamapublichealth.gov](http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov)

Postal Address:  
P.O. Box 303017  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-3017

Hotlines/Toll-Free Numbers:

General Information.....	1-800-ALA-1818
ALL Kids.....	1-888-373-KIDS
Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection.....	1-877-252-3324
Complaints - Assisted Living Facilities.....	1-866-873-0366
Complaints - Health Care Facilities.....	1-800-356-9596
Emergency Preparedness.....	1-866-264-4073
Epidemiology.....	1-800-338-8374
Family Planning.....	1-800-545-1098
Healthy Beginnings Help Line.....	1-800-654-1385

Hepatitis C.....	1-800-338-8374
HIV/AIDS Hotline.....	1-800-228-0469
Home and Community Services.....	1-800-225-9770
Immunization.....	1-800-469-4599
Indoor Air Quality/Lead.....	1-800-819-7644
Info Connection Line (Family Planning/Sexual Health)...	1-800-545-1098
Minority Health.....	1-800-255-1992
Newborn Screening.....	1-866-928-6755
Plan First.....	1-888-737-2083
Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) .....	1-800-225-6998 (8)
Primary Care and Rural Health.....	1-800-255-1992
Radiation Control.....	1-800-582-1866
Runaway Switchboard (Runaway/At-Risk Youth)...	1-800-RUNAWAY
Sexual Assault Hotline.....	1-800-656-HOPE
Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Hotline.....	1-800-227-8922
Suicide Prevention.....	1-800-273-TALK
Tobacco Prevention and Control.....	1-800-252-1818
Tobacco Quit line.....	1-800-QUIT-NOW
Toxicology.....	1-800-201-8208
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).....	1-888-WIC-HOPE
Women's Health.....	1- 800-255-1992
Zoonotic.....	1-800-677-0939

**Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services**

Vocational Counseling, career planning, education assistance, job placement and assistive technology

602 S. Lawrence Street  
 Montgomery, AL 36104  
 Phone: 334-293-7500 or 1-800-441-7607  
 TTY 1-800-499-1816  
 Fax: 334-293-7383  
[www.rehab.alabama.gov](http://www.rehab.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Department of Senior Services**

Medicaid information, caregiver resources and services available to seniors.

770 Washington Avenue  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 334-242-5743  
[adss.alabama.gov](http://adss.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs**

Assistance is available to veterans in filing for veteran federal and state benefits.

100 N Union Street, Suite 850  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 334-242-5077  
[www.va.alabama.gov](http://www.va.alabama.gov)

**Alabama Healthy Marriage & Relationship Initiative**

Roberta Jackel  
Project Manager  
Phone: 334-844-3227  
[www.alabamamarriage.org](http://www.alabamamarriage.org)

**Alabama Justice Ministries Network**

Ministry, mentoring and supportive services.

589b Shades Crest Road  
Birmingham, Alabama 35226  
Phone: 205-979-1034

**Alabama Law Enforcement Agency - Alabama Department of Public Safety Program**

Personal identification cards, non-drivers identification, driving laws

General Phone Numbers

ALEA General Information: 334-517-2800  
Driver License: 334-242-4400  
Drug "HELP" Line: 800-392-8011  
[www.alea.gov](http://www.alea.gov)

**American Red Cross**

Community referrals for clothing and social services

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Central Alabama  
5015 Woods Crossing  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
Phone: 334-260-3980

Mid-Alabama

East Alabama  
206 26th Street  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone: 334-749-9981

North Alabama

700 Caldwell Trace  
Birmingham, AL 35242  
Phone: 205-439-7800

South Alabama  
35 North Sage Avenue  
Mobile, AL 36607  
Phone: 251-544-6110

1101 Washington Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-536-0084

West Alabama  
2130 Paul W. Bryant Drive, Suite B  
Tuscaloosa , AL 35401  
Phone: 205-758-3608

**Center for American Progress-Center for Extended Families**

1333 H Street NW 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: 202-682-1611  
Fax: 202-682-1867

[www.extendedfamilysupport.org](http://www.extendedfamilysupport.org) or [www.americanprogress.org](http://www.americanprogress.org)

**Community Partnerships for Reentry and Recovery, Alabama Justice Ministries Network**

Comprehensive faith based and community reentry programs

507 Whitmore Drive  
Birmingham, Alabama 35221  
Phone: 205-601-2941

**Feeding the Gulf Coast/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

5248 Mobile South Street  
Theodore, AL 36582  
(251) 653-1617

[www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/](http://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/)

**Just The Facts (Healthy You, Inc.)**

113 N. Herring Street  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 800-656-7197

[www.jtfstraighttalk.com](http://www.jtfstraighttalk.com)

**National Stepfamily Resource Center**

Provides information on stepfamilies and best practices as well as a list of trained therapist.  
Charges may apply for any services received.

[www.stepfamilies.info](http://www.stepfamilies.info)

**New Beginnings Community Foundation**

Comprehensive two year faith-based prison reentry preparation program called Pathway to Freedom. Administers a web resident referral database for reentry support services statewide.

305 S. Perry Street  
Montgomery, Alabama. 36104-4233

Phone: 334-220-6519

**The Ordinary People Society**

Mentoring, job skills, life skills, housing and transitional services.

403 W Powell Street  
Dothan, Alabama 36303  
Phone: 334-671-2882

**Parenting Assistance Line**

P.O. Box 870157  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
866-962-3030  
[www.pal.ua.edu](http://www.pal.ua.edu)

**Renascence Re-Entry Community**

Family Support and Re-Integration Services. Renascence is a six to twelve month residential reentry program for nonviolent, non-sex offense men on probation or parole.

215 Clayton Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 334- 832-1402  
Fax 334-832-2927  
Email [inbox.renascence@outlook.com](mailto:inbox.renascence@outlook.com)

**Salvation Army**

Food, clothing, and emergency shelter services

900 Maxwell Boulevard  
Montgomery, AL 3610  
Phone: 334-265-0281  
[salvationarmyalm.org/montgomery](http://salvationarmyalm.org/montgomery)

**A Second Chance Resource Center Network United, Inc.**

Physical Address:	Mailing Address:
3236 Landmark Drive, Suite 100	P.O. Box 40605
North Charleston, S.C 29418	North Charleston, S.C. 29423
Phone: 843-552-1928	
Fax: 844-836-2383	
Email: <a href="mailto:asecondchance@asecondchanceresourcecenter.org">asecondchance@asecondchanceresourcecenter.org</a>	

**Sheriff's Department**

Felony identification cards; driving laws and ex-felon laws; and they can search for outstanding warrants so that you can resolve any pending charges.

Each county in Alabama has a sheriff's department. To locate one for a specific county, look in the blue pages found near the front of the phone book or look them up on the internet.

### **Social Security Administration**

Obtaining social security cards, applying for SSI/SSDI benefits

Albertville Office  
412 Martling Road  
Albertville, AL 35951  
Phone: 800-521-0073

Alexander City Office  
63 Aliant Parkway.  
Alexander City, AL 35010  
Phone: 877-405-0483

Andalusia Office  
24467 Alabama Highway 55  
Andalusia, AL 36420  
Phone: 877-405-7657

Bessemer Office  
5475 Academy Way  
Bessemer, AL 35022  
Phone: 800-772-1213

Birmingham Office  
1972 Gadsden Highway  
Birmingham, AL 35235  
Phone: 800-772-1213

Birmingham Office  
1200 Rev Abraham Woods Jr Boulevard  
Birmingham, AL 35285  
Phone: 800-772-1213

Cullman Office  
1908 Commerce Avenue NW  
Cullman, AL 35055  
Phone: 877-803-6323

Decatur Office  
717 Mcglathery Lane SE  
Decatur AL, 35601  
Phone: 888-289-9185

Dothan Office  
1778 Whatley Drive  
Dothan AL, 36303  
Phone: 877-452-4192

Florence Office  
203 South Walnut Street  
Florence, AL 35630  
Phone: 855-884-3407

Gadsden Office  
204 Enterprise Drive  
Gadsden, AL 35904  
Phone: 877-316-4418

Huntsville Office  
4970 Research Drive, NW  
Huntsville, AL 35805  
Phone: 866-593-0665

Jackson Office  
4249 N College Avenue  
Jackson, AL 36545  
Phone: 877-476-4484

Jasper Office  
501 The Mall Way  
Jasper, AL 35504  
Phone: 877-575-5199

Mobile Office  
550 Government Street  
Mobile, AL 36602  
Phone: 866-593-1922

Montgomery Office  
4344 Carmichael Road  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
Phone: 866-593-0914

Opelika Office  
1800 Corporate Drive  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone: 877-512-3857

Selma Office  
120 Executive Park Lane  
Selma, AL 36701  
Phone: 877-628-6541

Fairhope Office  
101 Courthouse Drive  
Fairhope, AL 36532  
Phone: 866-837-5964  
[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

Talladega Office  
736 North Street East  
Talladega, AL 35160  
Phone: 877-619-2854

**United Way of Alabama**

Special need services including food, clothing, shelter and social services throughout Alabama.

8 Commerce Street, Suite 1140  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 334-269-4505



## SECTION V: RE-ENTRY MYTH BUSTERS!

Reentry MythBusters are a first product of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council. They are essentially fact sheets, designed to clarify existing federal policies that affect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families in areas such as public housing, access to benefits, parental rights, employer incentives, Medicaid suspension/termination, and more. Some federal laws and policies are narrower than is commonly perceived, as is the case with public housing and food assistance benefits. In several policy areas, states and localities have broad discretion in determining how policies are applied and/or have various opt-out provisions for states. In some cases, statutory barriers do not exist at all or are very limited, as is the case with federal hiring. In fact, some federal policies and practices contain incentives for assisting the formerly convicted population (i.e., federal bonding and tax incentives for employers hiring formerly convicted individuals).

These Fact Sheets can be found on-line at:

[csgjusticecenter.org/documents/0000/1090/REENTRY\\_MYTHBUSTERS.pdf](http://csgjusticecenter.org/documents/0000/1090/REENTRY_MYTHBUSTERS.pdf)

However, we have provided a summary of the fact sheets below:

**MYTH:** Individuals who have been convicted of a crime are “banned” from public housing

**FACT:** Public Housing Authorities have great discretion in determining their admissions and occupancy policies for ex-offenders. While PHA’s can choose to ban ex-offenders from participating in public housing and Section 8 Programs, it is not HUD policy to do so. In fact, in many circumstances, formerly incarcerated people should not be denied access. There are only two convictions for which a PHA **MUST** prohibit admission:

- If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program
- If any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing

**MYTH:** People with criminal records are automatically barred from employment.

**FACT:** An arrest or conviction record will **NOT** automatically bar individuals from employment.

If an employer is aware of a conviction or incarceration, that information should only bar someone from employment when:

- The conviction is closely related to the job after considering the nature of the job
- The nature and seriousness of the offense, and the length of time since it occurred
- Advice: Be honest on your application. While having a conviction on your record does not bar you from employment, hiding it from your prospective employer can make you seem dishonest.

**MYTH:** The Federal Government’s hiring policies prohibit employment of people with criminal records.

**FACT:** The Federal Government does not have a policy that precludes employment of people with criminal records from all positions. The principle issues for agencies as they consider hiring people with criminal records involve making determinations related to:

- An individual's character traits and conduct to determine whether employment would or would not protect the integrity and promote the efficiency of the federal service
- Whether employment of the individual in the department or agency is consistent with the interests of national security
- The nature, seriousness, and circumstances of the criminal activity and if there has been efforts toward rehabilitation

MYTH: An employer can get a copy of your criminal history from companies that do background checks without your permission.

FACT: According to the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), employers must get one's permission, usually in writing, before asking a background screening company for a criminal history report. If one does not give permission or authorization, the application for employment may not get reviewed. If a person does give permission but does not get hired because of information in the report, the potential employer must follow several legal obligations.

MYTH: Child welfare agencies are required to terminate parental rights if a parent is incarcerated.

FACT: Important exceptions to the requirement to terminate parental rights provide child welfare agencies and states with the discretion to work with incarcerated parents, their children and the caregivers to preserve and strengthen family relationships.

MYTH: Non-custodial parents who are incarcerated cannot have their child support orders reduced.

FACT: Three quarters of the States have the ability to suspend orders during periods of incarceration and 25 States have implemented formalized initiatives or processes to reduce orders during incarceration. However, the process is not automatic. In most states, incarcerated non-custodial parents have to initiate a request for a review of their order before any adjustment or modification can be made

MYTH: A parent with a felony conviction cannot receive TANF/Welfare.

FACT: The 1996 Welfare ban applies only to convicted drug felons, and only eleven states have kept the ban in place in its entirety. Most states have modified or eliminated the ban

MYTH: Individuals convicted of a felony can never receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits.

FACT: This ban only applies to drug felons, and only thirteen states have kept the ban in place in its entirety. Most states have modified or eliminated the ban.

MYTH: An individual cannot apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program) benefits without a valid State-issued identification card.

FACT: A person can get SNAP benefits even if he or she does not have a valid State Identification Card. Acceptable documents include:

- A birth certificate
- An ID card for health benefits or another assistance program (such as VA ID)
- A school or work ID card, wage stubs containing the applicant's name.

**MYTH:** Incarceration exempts individuals from the requirement to file taxes, halts the accumulation of federal tax debts, and prohibits the receipt of tax credits and deductions upon release.

**FACT:** Incarceration neither changes one's obligation to pay taxes and tax debts nor prohibits the receipt of tax credits and deductions upon release.

**MYTH:** Medicaid agencies are required to terminate benefits if an otherwise eligible individual is incarcerated.

**FACT:** States are not required to terminate eligibility for individuals who are incarcerated based solely on inmate status. States may suspend eligibility during incarceration, enabling an individual to remain enrolled in the state Medicaid program, thereby facilitating access to Medicaid services following release.



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## SECTION VI: SHELTER AND HOUSING

It is important to know that you have a place to go upon release. One of the first and most important steps in returning to the community is finding a place to stay. This section includes both VA and community-based resources that can assist you with locating emergency shelters, transitional housing 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 may want to ask about applying to programs as soon as possible.

As you approach your release date, it is important to work with correctional facility re-entry and discharge planning staff. It is also important to take advantage of any re-entry planning classes or workshops offered by the correctional facility. Facility staff has access to valuable information regarding shelters and other community resources to assist you with your housing needs. If you are released and do find yourself homeless, emergency assistance is available.

### A. Emergency Housing and Shelter

If using a phone book, look in the yellow pages of your phone book under “Social Service Organizations” for local shelters or other organizations that may be able to help you. You may also look in the blue pages of your phone book under local, city, or county government Department of Social Services or “Human Services” for additional resources and information.

**National Resources:** Here are some national resources that may be able to help you with resources and information:

- **The National Coalition for the Homeless** is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to a single mission, which is to prevent and end homelessness while ensuring the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness are met and their civil rights protected. The National Coalition for the Homeless has a directory of shelters and homeless assistance programs.  
Phone: 202-462-4822  
[www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)
- **The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans** is the resource and technical assistance center for a national network of community-based service providers and local, state and federal agencies that provide emergency and supportive housing, food, health services, job training and placement assistance, legal aid and case management support for hundreds of thousands of homeless veterans each year. To find out if there are homeless Veteran service providers in your area, contact them at:  
National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV)  
333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue SE,  
Washington, DC 20003-1148  
Phone: 800-VET-HELP (800-838-4357),  
[www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org)

- **The Department of Veterans Affairs** has founded a National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at-risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless Veterans and their families, VA Medical Centers, federal, state, and local partners, community agencies, services providers, and others in the community.
  - Call for yourself or someone else.
  - Free and confidential.
  - Trained VA counselors available to assist.
  - Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
  - Information about VA homeless programs and mental health services in your area that can help you.

What will happen when I call?

- You will be connected to a trained VA staff member.
- Hotline staff will conduct a brief screening in order to assess your needs.
- Homeless Veterans will be connected with the Homeless Point of Contact at the nearest VA facility.
- Family members and non-VA providers calling on behalf of a homeless Veteran will be provided with information regarding the homeless programs and services available.
- Contact information will be requested, so staff may follow up.

Phone: 877-4AID VET (877-424-3838)

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

- **The Homeless Shelter Directory** ([www.homelessshelterdirectory.org](http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org)) was started as a list of homeless shelters. It provides listings for homeless shelters, homeless service organizations, monetary assistance, transitional housing, free clinics (dental and medical), low cost and free treatment centers, outreach centers, day shelters, relief organizations, women's shelters, and battered women's services, food pantries, soup kitchens, and food banks. Click on your state on the map located at the top of the page and you will be taken to a page with state-specific resources and information.

### **Veteran Specific Transitional Housing and Shelter Resources**

- **Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center**  
The Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center operates the Homeless Domiciliary Residential Rehabilitation Treatment (DRRTP) Program to provide coordinated, integrated rehabilitative and restorative clinical care in a bed-based program, with the goal of helping eligible veterans achieve and maintain the highest level of functioning and independence possible.

3701 Loop Road East  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404

- **Alabama Veterans Network** (AlaVetNet) [alavetnet.alabama.gov](http://alavetnet.alabama.gov)  
 The AlaVetNet website connects Veterans with resources and services tailored to their unique needs. AlaVetNet created a searchable database of resources for Veterans based on the areas they live. On the Resources for Veterans page, Veterans can browse local service providers that fit their needs. Veterans can search for as many as ten different types of services in the areas they live. Each of the resources listed on this website have been vetted for legitimacy and relevance. Additional resources will be added four times each year. The intent is to make it easy for Alabama's Veterans, Service Members, and their families to readily locate service providers who are well-capable of delivering the benefits and services which have been earned, often at great price.
- **Three Hots and a Cot**  
 Provides shelter services for homeless veterans

300 81st Street South  
 Birmingham, AL 35206  
 Phone: 205-202-5124  
 8:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday
- **Veteran Stand Downs** are one part of the Department of Veterans Affairs' efforts to provide services to homeless veterans. Stand Downs are typically one to three day events providing services to homeless Veterans such as food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, VA and Social Security benefits counseling, and referrals to a variety of other necessary services, such as housing, employment and substance abuse treatment. A list of Stand Downs across the country can be found at : [www.va.gov/homeless/events.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/events.asp)
- **Community Residential Care** 205-504-0163  
 Community Residential Care (CRC) is a program designed to provide a form of enriched care for Veterans that are not 100% able to care for themselves. The CRC Program consists of independently owned homes or facilities that provide 24 hour care for these Veterans. The Veterans are responsible for paying the monthly board rate for the care they receive.

**Alabama Shelter Resource, Referral, and Advocacy Resources**

It is impossible to list all of the housing resources in the state; however, the following are some local resources in Alabama to get you started. Take note that many of these are open to the public, not just veterans.

- **Alabama 2-1-1 by United Way**  
 2-1-1 is a free, easy to remember number to dial for information about health and human service organizations in your community. By dialing 2-1-1, information is much easier to find. 211 Can Help Callers Access the Following Types of Services:

  - Basic Human Needs Resources: food banks, clothing, shelters, rent assistance, utility assistance

- Government information: City, County, State services and programs. Many people are not sure what government office to contact and so 211 helps point them in the right direction.
- Health and Mental Health Resources: health insurance programs, maternal health, medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation
- Employment Support: financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance, education programs
- Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities: adult day care, congregate meals, Meals on Wheels, respite care, home health care, transportation, homemaker services
- Volunteer Opportunities and Donations: community involvement, volunteer centers, disaster relief
- Military and Family Support: programs that serve veterans and their families, community resources, mental health resources, counseling

8 Commerce Street, Suite 1140  
 Montgomery, AL 36104  
 Phone: 211

- **The Salvation Army**

Some shelter locations have been listed below, however, services can also be located by contacting the Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Divisional Headquarters.

Phone: 601-969-7560  
[salvationarmyalm.org](http://salvationarmyalm.org)

- Anniston, Alabama Corps  
 Men's Emergency Shelter

An emergency/transitional shelter for men opens nightly at 4:00 pm. An evening meal and a continental breakfast is provided. The first three nights in a twelve month period is free and then a fee of \$10 per night must be paid. Cold weather nights (below 40 degrees) and extreme heat weather nights (above 95 degrees) are exceptions and no fees charged nor id's required on those nights.

Women's & Children's Emergency Shelter

An emergency/transitional shelter for women and children opens nightly at 4:00 pm.

418 Noble Street  
 Anniston, AL 36201  
 Phone: 256-525-5644

- Birmingham Area Command

The Salvation Army is the only shelter in the Birmingham area serving men, women, children, families and veterans in one building. We offer emergency services that include food, shelter, clothing, and counseling. If you've lost your housing and need

immediate help, please call or come to The Salvation Army Social Services Building for assistance.

2015 26th Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35234  
Phone: 205-328-2420

- The Salvation Army of Coastal Alabama Area Command  
The Salvation Army of Coastal Alabama provides overnight and short-term shelter for homeless men. Clients receive two meals a day, showers, clothing and lodging. During their stay, they also have the opportunity to receive social, emotional and spiritual guidance. Men may stay in the transient shelter for up to a week within 60 day intervals.

1009 Dauphin Street  
Mobile, AL 36604  
Phone: 251-438-1625

- Salvation Army – Montgomery  
Homeless Shelter Offers: Daytime Bathing Facilities, Emergency Shelter (Check-in 4:30 pm), Emergency Assistance for FIRE VICTIMS (furniture and food), Food Pantry (9:00 am-11:00 am, Mon & Wed), Soup Kitchen (lunch).

900 Maxwell Boulevard  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: 334-265-0281

- **American Red Cross**

To find your local American Red Cross contact your nearest chapter office or go online at [www.redcross.org/local/alabama](http://www.redcross.org/local/alabama)

Mid Alabama/Regional Headquarters  
700 Caldwell Trace  
Birmingham, AL 35242  
Phone: 205-439-7800

Central Alabama Headquarters  
5015 Woods Crossing  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
Phone: 334-260-3980

North Alabama Headquarters  
1101 Washington Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-536-0084

East Alabama Headquarters  
206 26th Street  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone: 334-749-9981

West Alabama Headquarters  
1622 Lurleen Wallace Boulevard  
Northport, AL 35476  
Phone: 205-758-3608

South Alabama Headquarters  
35 North Sage Avenue  
Mobile, AL 36607  
Phone: 251-544-6110

- **Shepura Men's Center**

3420 2nd Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
Phone: 205-323-5878  
9:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday

- **Dent Transitional Program**

This program is a homeless shelter for men ages 19-30. The men also get assistance with food, clothing and finding a job.

Phone: 205-633-4100 or 205-246-5655

- **First Stop, Inc.**

Services to the homeless, including survival packs, lockers, blankets, payee assistance and access to telephone, showers, AA meetings and laundry. Additional services include housing counseling, employment counseling, and transportation for medical and dental care. Breakfast and lunch are provided, just show up. For current First Stop clients, they may be eligible for supportive housing.

206 Stokes Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-533-3391  
8:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday

- **LIFE Resource Services**

The Daytime Warming Center provides a warm & safe daytime warming center to homeless/ near homeless. TV Room is available.

Case Management provides case management to help people gain access to permanent housing and links individuals to emergency resources and assist individuals to obtain and maintain adequate financial income through job placement, continuing education or other benefits they may be entitled to.

Provides showers, laundry facilities, a hair salon, work clothing, a food pantry for clients, a library, a computer lab, help with housing applications, pays fees to replace identification year round.

304 South Andrews Street  
Scottsboro, AL 35768  
Phone: 256-437-6606  
Case Management 8:00 am-3:30 pm, April 1–November 30  
Daytime Warming Center 8:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday, December 1-March 31  
Soup Kitchen Open Daily 11:30 am-12:30 pm; December 1-March 31

- **Homeless Services: New Life Church of God in Christ**

Homeless shelter for men, women, and children. Provides one meal in the evening and can assist with transportation and job hunting.

5000 Patterson Road  
Montgomery, AL 36116  
Phone: 334-868-5653  
5:00 pm-7:00 am

- **YWCA Interfaith Hospitality House for Families**

A haven for keeping qualified families together as a unit during homelessness. Provides comfort and hope through temporary housing and supportive services.

5916 1st Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35212  
Phone: 205-322-9922

- **Christian Mission Centers-Men's Shelter**

This agency may provide shelter programs for men over the age of 18 for up to 72 hours.

231 Geneva Highway  
Enterprise, AL 36330  
Phone: 334-393-2607  
8:45 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday

- **Ark Dothan Inc. – Men's Shelter: Homeless Shelter for men. Discipleship Program.**  
Program includes live-in program for disciples. Please call for more information.

475 W Main Street  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 334-794-7223  
9:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Saturday

- **Dothan Rescue Mission – Men's Shelter: Provide men with a clean and safe living environment giving them the personal necessities to seek and obtain employment for their re-entry into the community**

211 East Washington Street  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 334-794-4637  
4:00 pm-8:00 am, Daily

- **Mission Point - Dale County Rescue Mission – Men's Shelter**

182 Martin Street  
Ozark, AL 36360  
Phone: 334-774-6553

- **Breakaway Ministries**

Provides housing for men who are homeless or who have just gotten out of jail who have nowhere to live. Provides clothes and a job. Show and tell them about the love of Christ and hopefully help them transition out of Breakaway and into a place of their own.

225 S 5th Street  
Gadsden, AL 35901  
Phone: 256-543-8008

- **Downtown Rescue Mission**

Faith based organization that provides emergency shelter to homeless men, women and families, which includes a 12 month Biblically-based recovery program, work and social programs, as well as providing counseling, food, lodging and other community assistance. Male and female dorms are available at three different levels: Emergency Shelter for transients, Transitional Shelter, and Residential Shelter along with separate mothers with children lodging.

1400 Evangel Drive NW  
Huntsville, AL 35811  
Phone: 256-536-2441  
8:30 am-4:30 pm, Monday-Friday

- **Jesus Way Homeless Shelter**

2681 24th Street  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
205-759-9771

## **B. Permanent Housing**

Finding permanent housing may be challenging to find immediately upon your release. However, it is still worthwhile to begin to have a sense of available resources when the time comes for you to take this very important step. Please bear in mind that these programs have eligibility guidelines and program requirements, so be sure to contact these programs directly in order to learn more upon your release from custody. You may also contact your local VA medical center for additional information and/or programs. Find contact information in Section H - Seeking Benefits on Your Own.

### **HUD-VASH Program**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development – 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 across the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

## Who May Be Eligible?

Veterans who are homeless, as defined by the McKinney Act:

An individual (or family group) who lacks a fixed regular and adequate night time residence and who has a primary night time residence that is:

- a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for mentally ill;
- an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
- a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Homeless Veterans who are eligible for a full range of VA services.

Homeless Veterans who are in need of intensive case management and are willing to accept this as a part of their rehabilitation process.

Homeless Veterans or family members who are NOT subject to a lifetime registration under a state sex offender registration program.

Highest priority for this program is for chronically homeless disabled Veterans and families (defined as consistently homeless for one year or 4 episodes of homelessness in past 3 years).

For specific information, please contact one of the HCHV Coordinators identified on Page 23 of this guidebook.

## **Supported Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program**

Under the SSVF program, VA awards grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives who can provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees provide eligible Veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include: health care services; daily living services; personal financial planning services; transportation services; fiduciary and payee services; legal services; child care services; housing counseling services. In addition, grantees may also provide time-limited payments to third parties (e.g., landlords, utility companies, moving companies, and licensed child care providers) if these payments help Veteran families stay in or acquire permanent housing on a sustainable basis.

SSVF focuses on homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing. Homelessness prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are imminently at-risk of becoming literally homeless but for SSVF assistance. SSVF rapid re-housing assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are literally homeless and may remain literally homeless but for SSVF assistance. Targeting SSVF assistance in this manner helps ensure limited SSVF resources are directed to Veteran families most in need of assistance to prevent or end their homelessness.

### Who May Be Eligible?

Tenants: Veterans may be single or part of a family in which the head of the household or spouse is a Veteran and the discharge status must be under conditions other than dishonorable. Participants must be very low-income, meaning they earn less than 50 percent of the area median income (AMI).

Eligible Veterans living in permanent housing must be at-risk of becoming homeless if not for SSVF assistance, or Veterans must be currently homeless but scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location of permanent housing, or Veterans must have exited permanent housing within the previous 90 days in order to seek housing that better fits with their needs.

The only SSVF provider in Alabama is the United Way of Central Alabama. You may contact the United Way by calling 2-1-1.

### Community-Based Programs

**Community Action Agencies:** [www.communityactionpartnership.com](http://www.communityactionpartnership.com)

Community Action Partnership is a national, nonprofit membership organization that provides technical assistance, training and other resources to Community Action Agencies, nonprofit and public groups funded by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), a federal program that allocates funding to states to combat poverty across the United States. The resources provided to Community Action Agencies across the country by Community Action Partnership allow our Agencies to stay up-to-date on the latest best practices to fight poverty and empower low-income individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. We are committed to strengthening, promoting, representing and serving our Network of Agencies to assure that the issues of poverty are effectively presented and addressed.

CAAs provide emergency assistance to people in crisis; address the causes of poverty through programs that fight unemployment, inadequate housing, poor nutrition, and lack of educational opportunity; and provide training in advocacy skills.

CAAs provide basic support and training services. If you need any of the services that CAAs provide, please call the CAA closest to you. (For a complete listing of all Alabama CAAs go to their website and visit the “Find Your CAA” tab.)



## **SECTION VII: MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

Although your upcoming release from custody may be exciting to think about, it may also be a source of a large amount of anxiety for you. You may be excited about how your life will be different “this time,” but there may be challenges that you may be confronted with. You may have to reestablish ties with family, return to high-risk places or communities, look for work, and secure some sort of viable and legitimate income. Sometimes incarcerated individuals have inconsistent or even poor work histories and now have a criminal record to contend with that may make securing any type of employment even more difficult.

For incarcerated Veterans who have a history of mental health and/or substance abuse, facing these and other stressors without the sometimes needed structure and support, especially as they return to the community after what may have been a long period of incarceration, may become overwhelming and increase your risk of relapse. Programs are available to eligible Veterans through the Department of Veterans Affairs to help them transition from incarceration to the community by providing continued structure, support, and services so that they may obtain assistance during a very important and stressful time.

Should you be eligible for parole, it may be stipulated by the parole board that you enter some sort of long-term residential program. Please be aware that this is not an extensive listing of available resources. However, this list should provide you with at least some resources and programs that may be of benefit to you. Please also refer to the resources previously listed in this guidebook for other programming. Many of these resources are available to both men and women.

### **A. VA Programming**

#### **VA Medical Centers**

Birmingham VAMC  
700 South 19th Street  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-933-8101

Tuscaloosa VAMC  
3701 Loop Road, East  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
Phone: 205-554-2000  
or 888-269-3045

Central Alabama Veteran Health  
Care System East Campus  
2400 Hospital Road  
Tuskegee, AL 36083  
Phone: 334-727-0550  
or 800-214-8387

Central Alabama Veteran Health  
Care System West Campus  
215 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-272-4670  
or 800-214-8387

## **Vet Centers**

[www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov)

Vet Centers provide individual, group and family counseling to all veterans who served in any combat zone. Services are also available for their family members. Vet Centers understand and appreciate Veterans' war experiences while assisting them and their family members toward a successful post-war adjustment in or near their community. The following is a list of Alabama Vet Centers.

Birmingham Vet Center  
400 Emery Drive, Suite 200  
Hoover, AL 35244  
Phone: 205-212-3122 or 877-927-8387  
Fax: 205-989-6415

Montgomery Vet Center  
4405 Atlanta Highway  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-273-7796  
or 877-927-8387  
Fax: 334-277-8376

Huntsville Vet Center  
415 Church Street  
Bldg. H, Suite 101  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-539-5775  
or 256-539-5775  
Fax: 256-533-1973

Mobile Vet Center  
3211 Springhill Avenue  
Building 2, Suite C  
Mobile, AL 36607  
Phone: 251-478-5906  
Fax: 251-478-2237

## **B. National Help Lines and Resources**

**Vet Center Combat Call Center** - 877-WAR VETS (877-927-8387) is an around the clock confidential call center where combat Veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life. The staff is comprised of combat Veterans from several eras as well as family members of combat Veterans.

**Focus On Recovery Helpline** is a 24-hour national alcohol and drug abuse addiction and treatment hotline.

Phone: 800-374-2800 or 800-234-1253

**Military OneSource** offers 24/7 counseling and other resources.

Phone: 800-342-9647

**Persian Gulf War Helpline**

Phone: 800-749-8387

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

This 24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide prevention hotline is available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call is routed to the nearest crisis center in the national network of more than 150 crisis centers.

Phone: 800-273-TALK (8255)  
TTY: 800-799-4889  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**Veterans Crisis Line** - The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis as well as their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans' Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. This line also provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

Phone: 800-273-TALK (800-273-8255) and Press 1  
Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.  
Text a message to 838255  
Chat online at [www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat)  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year

**24/7 Outreach Center for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury**

Phone: 866-966-1020  
Email: [resources@dcoeoutreach.org](mailto:resources@dcoeoutreach.org)

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Helpline**

Phone: 800-950-6264  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

**National Mental Health Association**

Phone: 800-969-NMHA  
[www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)

**Alabama Department of Mental Health**

Phone: 800-367-0955  
[www.mh.alabama.gov](http://www.mh.alabama.gov)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**

Phone: 800-662-4357  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

**National Drug & Alcohol Treatment Hotline –**

Also known as, the Treatment Referral Routing Service, this Helpline provides 24-hour free and confidential treatment referral and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery in English and Spanish.

Phone: 800-662-HELP (800-662-4357)  
TTY: 800-487-4889.

**African American PTSD Association**

Phone: 253-589-0769  
[www.aaptsdassn.org](http://www.aaptsdassn.org)

## **Make the Connection**

Make the Connection is a public awareness campaign by the Department of Veterans Affairs that provides personal testimonials and resources to help Veterans and their families and friends learn from each other's experiences and discover ways to improve their lives.

[www.maketheconnection.net](http://www.maketheconnection.net)

## **Addiction Center**

The Addiction Center connects individuals who wish to overcome their addiction with resources and rehab facilities in their area.

Phone: 855-993-0542

[www.addictioncenter.com](http://www.addictioncenter.com)

## **C. Community Resources**

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Find a local meeting by contacting one of the locations listed below.

[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

Andalusia, Alabama  
District 11 - Alabama  
[www.district11aa.com](http://www.district11aa.com)

Baldwin County, Alabama  
Answering Service: 800-477-1104  
[www.gulfcoastaa.org](http://www.gulfcoastaa.org)

Birmingham, Alabama  
Birmingham Intergroup  
Phone: 205-290-0060  
[www.birminghamaa.org](http://www.birminghamaa.org)

Daphne, Alabama  
Eastern Shore AA Hotline  
Answering Service: 251-301-6773  
Spanish Hotline: 251-301-6882  
[www.easternshoreaa.org](http://www.easternshoreaa.org)

Dothan, Alabama  
Wiregrass Intergroup  
Phone: 334-792-3422  
[www.district11aa.com](http://www.district11aa.com)

Hartselle, Alabama  
North Central Dist. 2 Intergroup  
Phone: 800-658-7576  
[www.the12traditions.com](http://www.the12traditions.com)

Huntsville, Alabama  
Huntsville Intergroup  
Phone: 256-885-0323  
[www.aahuntsvilleal.org](http://www.aahuntsvilleal.org)

Mobile, Alabama  
Southwest Alabama Central Office, Inc.  
Phone: 251-479-9994 (24-hr)  
[www.mobileaa.org](http://www.mobileaa.org)

Montgomery, Alabama  
Montgomery Area Intergroup  
Answering Svc: 334-264-4122 (24-hr)  
[www.centralalaa.org](http://www.centralalaa.org)

Muscle Shoals, Alabama  
District 01  
Phone: 256-386-0663  
[www.shoalsaa.org](http://www.shoalsaa.org)

Opelika, Alabama  
Area 1 District 9 24 Hour Phone Line  
Phone: 334-521-2676 (24-hr)  
[www.aaauburn.org](http://www.aaauburn.org)

### **Community Mental Health Centers**

Alabama Council of Community  
Mental Health Boards  
160 Yeager Parkway, Suite103  
Pelham, AL 35124  
Phone: 205-664-2114  
Fax: 205-278-5380

Altapointe Health Systems  
5750 A Southland Drive  
Mobile, AL 36617  
Phone: 251-251-450-5901  
Fax: 251-666-7537

Baldwin County Mental Health Center  
372 South Greeno Road  
Fairhope, AL 36532  
Phone: 251-990-4211  
Fax: 251-928-0126

The Bridge, Inc.  
3232 Laysprings Road  
Gadsden, AL 35901-9669  
Phone: 256-546-6324  
Fax: 256-456-1460

Cahaba Mental Health Center  
417 Medical Center Parkway  
Selma, AL 36701  
Phone: 334-875-2100  
Fax: 334-418-6540

Calhoun/Cleburne  
Mental Health Center  
P.O. Box 2205  
Anniston, AL 36202  
Phone: 256-236-3403  
Fax: 256-238-6263

Cheaha Mental Health Center  
P.O. Box 1248  
Sylacauga, AL 35150  
Phone: 256-245-1340  
Fax: 256-245-1343

Cherokee, Etowah, DeKalb  
Mental Health Center  
425 5th Avenue NW  
Attalla, AL 35954  
Phone: 256-492-7800  
Fax: 256-494-5536

Chilton-Shelby Mental Health Center  
P.O. Drawer 689  
Calera, AL 35040  
Phone: 205-663-1252  
Fax: 205-663-3175

Drug Education Council  
3000 Television Avenue  
Mobile, AL 36606  
Phone: 251-478-7855  
Fax: 251-478-7865

East Alabama Mental Health Center  
2506 Lambert Drive  
Opelika, AL 36801  
Phone: 334-742-2700  
Fax: 334-742-2707

East Central Alabama  
Mental Health Center  
200 Cherry Street  
Troy, AL 36081  
Phone: 334-566-6022  
Fax: 334-566-5346

Eastside Mental Health Center  
129 East Park Circle  
Birmingham, AL 35235  
Phone: 205-836-7283  
Fax: 205-836-9594

Glenwood Autism &  
Behavioral Health Centers, Inc.  
150 Glenwood Lane  
Birmingham, AL 35242  
Phone: 205-969-2880  
Fax: 205-969-0611

Western Mental Health Center  
1701 Avenue "D" Ensley  
Birmingham, AL 35218  
Phone: 205-788-7770  
Fax: 205-788-7552

Indian Rivers Mental Health Center  
P.O. Box 2190  
1924 Seventh Street  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35403  
Phone: 205-391-3131  
Fax: 205-391-3135

Jefferson/Blount/St. Clair  
Mental Health Authority  
940 Montclair Road, Suite 200  
Birmingham, AL 35213  
Phone: 205-595-4555  
Fax: 205-592-3539

Mental Health Care of Cullman  
P.O. Box 2186  
Cullman, AL 35055  
Phone: 256-734-4688  
Fax: 256-734-4694

Mental Health Center of  
Madison County  
(dba Huntsville MHC)  
4040 South Memorial Parkway  
Huntsville, AL 35802  
Phone: 256-533-1970  
Fax: 256-532-4112

Mental Health Center of  
North Central Alabama  
1316 Somerville Road SE, Suite 1  
Decatur, AL 35601-4317  
Phone: 256-260-7300  
Fax: 256-355-6092

Montgomery Mental Health Authority  
P.O. Box 3223  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-279-7830  
Fax: 334-277-8862

Mountain Lakes Behavioral Healthcare  
2409 Homer Clayton Drive  
Guntersville, AL 35976  
Phone: 256-582-3203  
Fax: 256-582-4161

Northwest Alabama  
Mental Health Center  
1100 7th Avenue North  
Jasper, AL 35501  
Phone: 205-387-0541  
Fax: 205-302-9002

Riverbend Center for Mental Health  
P.O. Box 941  
Florence, AL 35631  
Phone: 256-764-3431  
Fax: 256-582-4161

South Central Alabama  
Mental Health Board  
P.O. Box 1028  
Andalusia, AL 36420  
Phone: 334-222-2525  
Fax: 334-222-4660/427-8563

Southwest Alabama  
Mental Health Center  
P.O. Box 964  
Monroeville, AL 36461  
Phone: 251-575-4203  
Fax: 251-575-9459

SpectraCare Mental Health Systems  
P.O. Drawer 1245  
Dothan, AL 36302  
Phone: 334-712-2720  
Fax: 334-712-2727

West Alabama Mental Health Center  
P.O. Box 260  
Demopolis, AL 36732  
Phone: 334-289-2410  
Fax: 334-289-2416

UAB Comprehensive Community  
Mental Health Center  
UAB Community Psychiatry  
908 20th Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35294  
Phone: 205-934-4108  
Fax: 205-975-8950



## SECTION VIII: WOMEN VETERANS

Women Veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of the Veteran population. Of the 22.7 million living Veterans, more than 1.8 million are women. They comprise nearly 8 percent of the total Veteran population and 6 percent of all Veterans who use VA healthcare services. Women Veterans are eligible for all of the programs male veterans are, however they also have access to female specific care.

### **A. Women's Programs through the Department of Veterans Affairs**

A Women Veterans Program Manager advises and advocates for women Veterans. She can help coordinate all the services you may need, from primary care to specialized care for chronic conditions or reproductive health. A listing of all VAMC locations in Alabama is listed on Pages 19-21 of this guide. Contact your local Women's Coordinator using the following phone numbers:

- For the CAVHCS Montgomery-West Campus Women's Coordinator call:  
334-272-4670 ext. 4782
- For the CAVHCS Tuskegee-East Campus Women's Coordinator call:  
334-727-0550 ext. 3930
- For the Tuscaloosa VAMC Women's Coordinator call:  
205-554-2000 ext. 4250
- For the Birmingham VAMC Women's Coordinator call:  
205-933-8101 ext. 5446 or 5447

VA health care for women Veterans includes:

#### **Primary Care**

- General care includes health evaluation and counseling, disease prevention, nutrition counseling, weight control, smoking cessation, and substance abuse counseling and treatment as well as gender-specific primary care, such as cervical cancer screens (Pap smears), breast cancer screens (mammograms), birth control, preconception counseling, Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, menopausal support (hormone replacement therapy).
- Mental health includes evaluation and assistance for issues such as depression, mood, and anxiety disorders; intimate partner and domestic violence; sexual trauma; elder abuse or neglect; parenting and anger management; marital, caregiver, or family-related stress; and post-deployment adjustment or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Women-and men as well-may experience repeated sexual harassment or sexual assault during their military service. Special services are available to women who have experienced MST. VA provides free, confidential counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to MST. More information is available about MST from the national Women Veterans Health Care program and the VHA Office of Mental Health.

#### **Specialty Care**

- Management and screening of chronic conditions includes heart disease, diabetes, cancer, glandular disorders, osteoporosis, and fibromyalgia as well as sexually transmitted diseases

such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Reproductive health care includes maternity care, infertility evaluation and limited treatment; sexual problems, tubal ligation, urinary incontinence, and others. VA is prohibited by legislative authority from providing either in-vitro fertilization or abortion services.

- Rehabilitation, homebound, and long-term care. VA referrals are given to those in need of rehabilitation therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, exercise therapy, recreational therapy, and vocational therapy. Homebound and long-term care services are available as well, limited to those meeting specific requirements.

### **Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC)**

The WVCC staff is trained to provide women Veterans, their families, and caregivers about VA services and resources. We are ready to respond to your concerns. The call is free, and you can call as often as you like until you have the answers to your questions.

Phone: 855-VA-WOMEN

8:00 am-10:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday

8:00 am-6:30 pm ET, Saturday

[www.womenshealth.va.gov](http://www.womenshealth.va.gov)

## **B. National Programs for Women Veterans**

### **Service Women's Action Network [www.servicewomen.org](http://www.servicewomen.org)**

SWAN is a member-driven community network advocating for the individual and collective needs of service women. SWAN is guided by the priorities of its members, who include thousands of women and men, service members and civilians alike. They are committed to seeing that all service women receive the opportunities, protections, benefits and respect they deserve. Their goal is to ensure all service women have access to the information, tools and support they need to reach their personal and professional goals during and following their years of service.

### **Grace After Fire [www.graceafterfire.org](http://www.graceafterfire.org)**

The mission of Grace After Fire is to provide the means for women Veterans to gain self-knowledge and self-renewal.

## **C. Shelter/Transitional Housing Resources for Women**

### **Damascus Way – Valley Rescue Mission**

A temporary emergency shelter for women and children. The transitional program gives women the opportunity to resolve issues they may be having and re-enter society with a positive mind set and lifestyle. The addiction recovery program is a six phase developmental recovery program designed for women to break their dependence on drugs, alcohol or destructive relationships.

Phone: 706-653-2061

### **Jessie's Place**

2305 5th Avenue North

Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-323-0170  
9:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday-Friday

### **Pathways**

Day Center: day activities and services for female emergency shelter and street homeless clients.  
Safe Haven: permanent supportive housing for homeless women with serious mental illness.  
Parson Place: transitional shelter for women w/o children referred by emergency shelters,

Anchor: transitional housing for women and their children,

New Beginnings: rapid re-housing program for women and children in emergency shelter or street homeless,

Invest In You accompanied by Children's & Youth Evening Program: four evening classes provided once a month to equip women to prepare for a career path and organized activities to assist their children in developing effective social skills.

409 North Richard Arrington Boulevard N  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-322-6854

### **Hannah Bethany Home**

Bethany Hannah Home is a residential shelter located in Jefferson County for homeless women and women with children. These women are given loving support in a Christian home setting to assist them in becoming stable and independent.

1615 Cullom Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35205  
Phone: 205-930-0144  
8:00 am-4:30 pm, Monday-Friday

### **Friendship Mission North**

Program provides long-term shelter for women and women with children. An extensive array of services are provided to the residents including case management, help finding employment, parenting classes, and other services to help homeless women sustain long-term housing. This shelter is also an emergency shelter for homeless women and women with children.

312 Chisholm Street  
Montgomery, AL 36110  
Phone: 334-356-6412  
8:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday

### **Christian Mission Centers – Women and Single Mothers Shelter**

231 Geneva Highway  
Enterprise, AL 36330  
Phone: 334-393-2607  
8:45 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday

**Dothan Rescue Mission – Women, Single Mothers, and Families Shelter**

Provides shelter, clothing, and counseling clients on community resources for Women, Single Mothers, and Families.

209 East Washington Street  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 334-794-4637

**Hope’s Inn: Harvest Evangelism, Inc.**

A short term crisis shelter for women and children.

Phone: 334-864-0890

**House of Love and Mercy Shelter**

Program provides a safe environment for women who need this to recover their lives that have been damaged by drug/alcohol abuse, low self-esteem, pregnancy, domestic violence, etc. The House of Love provides basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, transportation and cleanliness required for healthy living. They also can assist these individuals with substance abuse counseling, job training, and parenting skills.

508 Jordan Avenue  
Tallasse, AL 36078  
Phone: 334-283-8116 or 334-415-0140  
11:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday (Office Hours)

**Mary Ellen’s Hearth Homeless Services**

This shelter provides transitional housing for homeless women and their children. The families can live at the center for up to two years as long as the mothers are working on independence.

1226 Clay Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: 334-264-4108  
8:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday

**McKemie Place**

United Methodist Inner City Mission - Mobile County is an emergency shelter for single women 19 and older.

Phone: 251-432-1122  
4:00 pm-8:00 am, Daily

**Aid to Inmate Mothers – Pre-Release Services**

Provides services to incarcerated mothers as well as their children to include parenting education, life skills and job readiness, domestic violence education and self-esteem classes among many

other rehabilitative classes at the prison. Also operates a group home for newly released inmates. Can provide school supplies and very limited financial assistance to households with an incarcerated mother. Visitation Program helps children without transportation see their mother on a monthly basis. The program is child friendly and involves a private meeting with activities, a meal, toys and pictures.

660 Morgan Avenue  
Montgomery, AL  
Phone: 800-679-0246  
Hotline: 334-262-2245  
Fax: 334-647-1833

**A Day of New Beginnings – Transitional Living Services**

An eight month transitional housing program for homeless women who have been incarcerated.

114-B Brown Avenue  
Rainbow City, AL 35906  
Phone: 256-399-6908



## **SECTION IX – LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDERED VETERANS**

The Department of Veterans Affairs/Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is committed to addressing the special health needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Veterans and reducing health disparities for them and members of other vulnerable communities. VHA's commitment to LGBT Veterans includes:

- Providing information, guidance and education to VHA providers about LGBT health issues.
- Promoting a welcoming health and work environment that is inclusive of LGBT Veterans and employees.

Like many other populations identified as at-risk or disadvantaged, research has demonstrated that LGBT individuals experience disparities not only in the prevalence of certain physical and mental health concerns, but also in care due to a variety of factors, including experiences of stigma, lack of awareness, and insensitivity to their unique needs.

In addition, LGBT patients face other barriers to equitable care, such as refusals of care, delayed or substandard care, mistreatment, inequitable policies and practices, little or no inclusion in health outreach or education, and inappropriate restrictions or limits on visitation. These inequalities may be even more pronounced for LGBT people from racial/ethnic minorities or due to other characteristics such as education level, income, geographic location, language, immigration status and cultural beliefs. Experiences of discrimination and mistreatment have, in many cases, contributed to a long-standing distrust of the health care system by many in the LGBT community and have affected their health in profound ways.

VHA developed the role of LGBT Program Coordinator at the headquarters level to advise on LGBT-related national policy and procedures and to coordinate national initiatives across various clinical program offices. In addition, the LGBT Program Coordinators develop and deliver training to clinical staff on LGBT health care, and maintain the LGBT employee resource websites.

120 VA health care facilities throughout the Nation are participating in the Human Rights Campaign's 2013 Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). Participation in the HEI consists of reporting health care systems' policies and trainings related to LGBT patients and families; it is known as an indicator of an LGBT-positive health care environment. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation skillfully designed the HEI to allow U.S. health care organizations to assess the degree to which they provide LGBT patient-centered care, to identify and remedy any gaps and to make public their commitment to LGBT patients and their families.

Many VA medical centers now have a LGBT Special Emphasis Group and a designated LGBT Special Emphasis Program Manager to assist in increasing LGBT awareness, cultural competency, community outreach, and recruitment and retention efforts. Ensuring that LGBT veterans and employees feel welcomed, respected, and connected is essential to achieving VA's goals of providing patient centric care, and fostering a diverse workforce and inclusive work environment.

## **A. Alabama Hospitals and Medical Centers**

The following is a list of hospitals and medical centers in Alabama which have been recognized by the Human Rights Campaign as having LGBT inclusive services.

- **VA Birmingham Medical Center:**  
700 19th Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-933-8101 Ext. 5963  
Email: [vhabirlgbt@va.gov](mailto:vhabirlgbt@va.gov)  
[www.birmingham.va.gov](http://www.birmingham.va.gov)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 100
- **University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital**  
619 19th Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-934-4011  
[www.uabmedicine.org](http://www.uabmedicine.org)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 100
- **Cooper Green Mercy Health Services**  
1515 Sixth Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-930-3200  
[www.coopergreen.org](http://www.coopergreen.org)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 60
- **VA Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System**  
215 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 334-272-4670  
[www.centralalabama.va.gov](http://www.centralalabama.va.gov)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 55
- **VA Tuscaloosa Medical Center**  
3701 Loop Road  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
205-554-2000  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 50
- **Crestwood Medical Center**  
1 Hospital Drive SW  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-429-4000  
[www.crestwoodmedcenter.com](http://www.crestwoodmedcenter.com)  
Healthcare Equality Index Score 35

## **B. National Resources:**

### **OutServe-SLDN**

OutServe-SLDN is the association for actively serving LGBT military personnel and veterans. We are a non-partisan, non-profit, legal services, watchdog and policy organization dedicated to bringing about full LGBT equality to America's military and ending all forms of discrimination and harassment of military personnel on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. OS-SLDN provides free and direct legal assistance to service members and veterans affected by the repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law and the prior regulatory ban on open service, as well as those currently serving who may experience harassment or discrimination. They also provide assistance with transgender services in regard to the military as well as upgrading and changing discharge paperwork for those who were discharged for "Homosexual Acts" or "Homosexual Conduct."

OutServe-SLDN  
P.O. Box 65301  
Washington, DC 20035-5301  
Phone: 202-328-3244  
Email: [admin@outserve-sldn.org](mailto:admin@outserve-sldn.org)  
[www.sldn.org](http://www.sldn.org)

### **OUTVETS**

OUTVETS is a social and fraternal organization celebrating and honoring the contributions of America's LGBTQ Veterans. It was created to recognize and honor the contributions and sacrifices of LGBTQ Veterans through social interaction and community service and engagement. The organization has no political agenda or affiliation.

OUTVETS  
26 West Eagle Street  
Boston, MA 02128  
Phone: 978-502-5551  
Email: [outvets@gmail.com](mailto:outvets@gmail.com)  
[www.outvetsamerica.org](http://www.outvetsamerica.org)

### **American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER)**

AVER is a non-profit, non-partisan, chapter-based Veterans Service Organization of active, reserve, and veteran service members dedicated to full and equal rights and equitable treatment for all present and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces, especially the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender current and prior military personnel who have been historically disenfranchised by armed forces policy and discriminatory laws governing military service and benefits. The AVER Chapter nearest Alabama is the Georgia Chapter their contact information, as well as the National office contact information is found below.

AVER, Inc. Georgia  
P.O. Box 94376  
Atlanta, GA 30377-0376  
Phone: 678-598-1311  
Email: info@aver.us

AVER, Inc.  
11012 Prospect Avenue NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87112  
Phone: 718-849-5665  
Email: info@aver.us

[www.aver.us](http://www.aver.us)

### **GLBT National Hotline**

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) National Hotline provides telephone, online private one-to-one chat, and email peer support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States.

Phone: 888-THE-GLNH (888-843-4564)  
4:00 pm-12:00 am ET, Monday-Friday  
12:00 pm-12:00 am ET, Saturday

### **Transgender American Veterans Association**

[www.tavausa.org](http://www.tavausa.org)

### **The Trevor Project**

The Trevor Project has trained counselors who are there to support you 24/7. If you are a young person who is in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment-free place to talk, call The Trevor Lifeline now.

Phone: 866-488-7386

### **Trans Lifeline**

Trans Lifeline is a non-profit dedicated to the well-being of transgender people. We run a hotline staffed by transgender people for transgender people. Trans Lifeline volunteers are ready to respond to whatever support needs members of our community might have.

Phone: 877-565-8860

## **C. Community Resources**

### **Montgomery PRIDE-Free2Be**

Montgomery PRIDE created a safe community center for the LGBT community to come together and socialize and provide a base from which to advocate for the human and civil rights of gender and sexual minorities. The community center is called The Bayard Rustin Community Center. Free2Be also address Intimate Partner Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Bullying, and other forms of violence. Support groups are available for youth, young adults, and transgender adults.

2015 East Third Street  
Montgomery, AL 36106

Phone: 334-356-2464  
10:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday-Friday

### **Tennessee Valley LGBT Connection**

Social and support group open to all members of the LGBT community aged 19 or older.

2004 Poole Drive  
Huntsville, AL 35810  
Phone: 256-886-1150  
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Monday-Tuesday

### **Equality Alabama**

Equality Alabama educates about the importance of equal rights for every Alabamian while working to build and participate in collaborations and coalitions with organizations that align with the purpose and mission of Equality Alabama. They also advocate for local and statewide policies, practices, and legislation that impact and protect equal rights for the LGBTQ community — from family equality to nondiscrimination protections, and beyond. As well as, provide support for any issue, question, or challenge our community members face at work, at home, or in the community, connecting them to essential resources and protections.

Phone: 205-530-0045  
[www.equalityal.org](http://www.equalityal.org)

202 Government Street #229  
Mobile, AL 36602

420 20<sup>th</sup> Street N, Suite 2246  
Birmingham, AL 35203

### **Magic City Wellness Center**

MCWC provides primary care services for LGBTQ individuals and their allies. MCWC provides traditional medical services with modern technology and strives to know every patient by name. Our practice concentrates on offering many health and wellness programs for the LGBTQ community including primary care, PrEP, counseling, HIV and STD/STI testing, and Hormone Replacement Therapy.

2500 4th Avenue South  
Birmingham, AL 35233  
Phone: 205-877-8677  
8:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
10:00 am-6:00 pm, Tuesday & Thursday  
CLOSED 12:00-12:30PM for lunch  
Appointments only. No walk-ins.



**We Serve All Who Served**

## SECTION X: EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Often, individuals who are released from incarceration feel as though they are completely starting over, even if they had good jobs and worked steadily in the past. Having a stable income is important for many aspects of daily life, from maintaining your housing, paying bills, buying food, toiletries, and clothing, as well as other necessities that can smooth your transition back into the community.

If available, take advantage of any training or education programming that is afforded to you at the correctional facilities. Your facility case manager or reintegration staff is a good resource for you in regard to locating resources in your area upon release.

In addition, the following resources may be of assistance to you as you transition from incarceration to living in the community:

### **Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program (WOTC) Tax Credit For Hiring Program**

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a Federal tax credit incentive that employers may receive for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. The main objective of this program is to enable the targeted employees to gradually move from economic dependency into self-sufficiency as they earn a steady income and become contributing taxpayers, while participating employers are compensated by being able to reduce their federal income tax liability.

Employers make the hiring decision, and there is no limit to the number of new hires who can qualify the employer for the tax savings, but individuals must be identified as members of one of these targeted groups before a job offer is made. For a list of the targeted groups, go to [www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/eligible.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/eligible.cfm).

### **Amount of the Credit**

The amount of the tax credit is based on a percentage of qualified wages paid to the new employee for the first year of employment only. Both the percentage and the cap on qualifying wages vary based on which target group the new employee falls into. For more details on WOTC benefit amounts, go to [www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/benefits.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/benefits.cfm).

### **PeopleReady**

PeopleReady specializes in filling a wide variety of general labor jobs, ones that typically require basic skills. Pay rates vary from job to job. You will know the pay rate for every job before you accept it.

[www.peopleready.com](http://www.peopleready.com)

### **Federal Bonding Program**

In 1966, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) created the Federal Bonding Program (FBP) as an employer job-hire incentive that guaranteed the job honesty of at-risk job seekers. Federal financing of Fidelity Bond insurance, issued free-of-charge to employers, enabled the delivery of bonding services as a unique job placement tool to assist ex-offenders, and other at-risk/hard-to-

place job applicants (e.g., recovering substance abusers, welfare recipients, poor credit, etc.). Ex-offenders, including anyone with a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment, and anyone who has ever been on probation or parole, are at-risk job applicants. Failure to become employed after release is a major factor contributing to the high rate of recidivism. Having a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment functions as a significant barrier to employment since employers generally view ex-offenders as potentially untrustworthy workers and insurance companies usually designate ex-offenders as being “not bondable” for job honesty.

[www.bonds4jobs.com](http://www.bonds4jobs.com)

### **Alabama Department of Labor**

This state agency can provide assistance with every part of your work career. Whether you are looking for a job, have lost your job due to no fault of your own, or have been injured on the job, the Department of Labor administers a variety of programs that can help you in a time of need. Visit their website to locate a county Employment Office and get further information about services provided by the Department of Labor.

Alabama Department of Labor  
649 Monroe St.  
Montgomery, AL 36131  
Phone: 334-242-8055  
[www.labor.alabama.gov](http://www.labor.alabama.gov)

- **Job Link:** [www.joblink.alabama.gov](http://www.joblink.alabama.gov) allows job seekers to register for work through the Alabama State Employment Service, to create resumes, to search job listings, and to apply for jobs 24 hours a day/7 days a week, without the need to visit an Alabama Career Center. An Alabama JobLink Jobseeker account provides the ability to:
  - Conduct a Job Search
  - Build an on-line Resume
  - Research Career Information
  - Register with Job Service
  - Receive emails on new job openings
  - Access additional details and Jobseeker services
  - Announce Job Fairs in various areas of the state
  
- **Career Centers:** Visit or call an Alabama Career Center for more information about available programs, training, and eligibility. DD 214 is needed to verify eligibility. Incarcerated Veterans are eligible to work with specialized Veteran employment counselors in the Career Center. Veteran Employment and Training staff and Career Center staff are available to explain program mandatory eligibility and veterans' priority of service. Career Center staff can also provide information on the Federal Bonding program that will help Incarcerated Veterans secure employment. A list of centers is available in JobLink at [joblink.alabama.gov/ada/r/contact](http://joblink.alabama.gov/ada/r/contact). A listing of Alabama Career centers with Veterans' Employment Representatives is featured

below. However, there are Career Centers throughout Alabama. For the one nearest you, contact the Alabama Department of Labor at 334-242-8036.

Alabama Veterans' Employment Representatives:

**Bay Minette Career Center**

201 Faulkner Drive  
Bay Minette, AL 36501  
251-937-4161

**Birmingham Career Center**

3440 Third Avenue  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
205-254-1300

**Decatur Career Center**

1819 Bassett Avenue S.E.  
Decatur, AL 35601  
256-355-0142

**Dothan Career Center**

787 Ross Clark Circle  
Dothan, AL 36303  
334-792-2121

**Enterprise Career Center**

2021 Boll Weevil Circle  
Enterprise, AL 35330  
334-347-0044

**Gadsden Career Center**

216 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Gadsden, AL 35901  
256-546-4667

**Huntsville Career Center**

2535 Sparkman Dr.  
Huntsville, AL 35810  
256-851-0537

**Mobile Area Career Center**

515 Springhill Plaza Ct.  
Mobile, AL 36608

**Montgomery Career Center**

1060 E. South Blvd.  
Montgomery, AL 36113  
334-286-1746

**Opelika Career Center**

2300 Frederick Road  
Opelika, AL 36801  
334-749-5065

**Tuscaloosa Career Center**

202 Skyland Blvd.  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35405  
205-758-7591

**Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) programs**

Through the VA, this program offers structured work opportunities and supervised therapeutic housing for at-risk and homeless veterans with physical, mental health and addictions problems. The CWT program partners 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. In Alabama, the VA currently has CWT Programs located at the Birmingham VAMC, Montgomery VAMC, Tuscaloosa VAMC and CAVHCS Tuskegee campus. For further information call 877-222-8387 or go to [www.va.gov/HEALTH/cwt](http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/cwt). The contact information for each individual VAMC CWT Program is listed below.

Contact Information:

- Birmingham: 205-933-8108 x 6751
- Montgomery: 843-789-7202
- Tuscaloosa: 205-554-2000 x 2424
- Tuskegee: 334-727-0550 x 3432

**Still Serving Veterans**

The mission of Still Serving Veterans is to serve and honor Veterans and their families, transitioning service members, and members of the Guard and Reserves by assisting them in securing meaningful employment and the Veteran benefits they have earned. All services are provided at no charge.

North Alabama  
626 Clinton Avenue W, Ste. 200  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-883-7035  
Fax: 256-883-7166

East Alabama  
1206 Broad Street, Suite 102  
Phenix City, Alabama 36867  
Phone: 334-384-9111  
Fax: 334-384-9112

Central Alabama  
135 Gemini Circle, Suite 204  
Birmingham, Alabama 35209  
Phone: 205-670-1955  
Fax: 205-637-7917

Virtual Services  
Phone: 866-778-4645

**The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)**

This program helps people with disabilities find and keep jobs. The types of services available through ADRS are as varied as the people it serves and are designed specifically to meet the needs of each individual. Available through any of the 21 ADRS offices statewide, services can include vocational evaluation, career exploration, guidance and counseling, training, assistive technology, orientation and mobility training, job development and placement, and employment follow-up. To be eligible for services, individuals must have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment and must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work.

Apply for these services immediately after your release. Look in the phone book for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) to locate the office closest to you call 800-441-7607, TTY 800-499-1816 or go to [www.rehab.alabama.gov](http://www.rehab.alabama.gov).

**United States Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) Program**

The Veterans Employment & Training Services (VETS) program is provided with grant funding from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The grant allows the Department of Career Services (DCS) to provide Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) at One-Stop Career Centers across the state.

The purpose of the VETS grant is to ensure the provision of a full range of employment and training services to veterans. Since veterans are given priority of service status under the law, it is particularly important for LVERs and DVOPs to be connected with all Veterans coming into the Career Centers. In addition, LVERs and DVOPs maintain up-to-date information about all the programs and services available to assist Veterans at the federal, state, and local level.

For additional information, please contact:

U.S. Department of Labor  
Veterans' Employment and Training Service  
649 Monroe Street, Room 2218  
Montgomery, AL 36131-0001  
Phone: 334-242-8116  
Fax: 334-265-6551  
[www.dol.gov/vets](http://www.dol.gov/vets)

### **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services**

Help veterans with service-connected disabilities by providing job training and counseling to those who have an employment handicap. Services include help finding a job, on-the-job training, job development, and vocational training. If you are not eligible for these services, a VA counselor may help you find other options, goals, or programs. Contact your VA Regional Office (VARO) at:

Montgomery Regional Benefit Office  
345 Perry Hill Road  
Montgomery, AL 36109  
Phone: 800-827-1000  
8:00 am- 4:00 pm, Monday–Friday  
[www.vba.va.gov](http://www.vba.va.gov)

### **Supportive Employment**

Contact Person: Monica Williams 205-276-5809

Supported Employment helps veterans with serious illnesses secure and maintain meaningful employment in the community. Participation based on zero exclusion criteria. Employment specialists closely coordinate with other rehabilitation and clinical treatment practitioners, creating a comprehensive treatment program. Employment specialist's helps veterans with a serious mental illness find jobs in the open labor market that pay at least minimum wage and that anyone could have, regardless of their disability status. Once a job is found, employment specialists provide ongoing support and guidance, as needed. Choices about work are based on veteran's preferences, strengths, and experiences.

### **A Cut Above the Rest – Re-Entry and Career Development Services**

The agency provides 6 to 8 week classroom and hands on training within the heavy equipment field and commercial lawn care to ex-felons, displaced workers and veterans re-entering society. The ability to become NCCER core certified helps the agency assist in locating employment once training is completed.

1601 Dewey Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: 334-801-9948 or 256-690-4787



## SECTION XI – LEGAL ASSISTANCE

In seeking legal assistance or legal advice, it is important to remember that most state law is state-specific, and the law in the state in which you live or where the legal issue occurred governs most common legal problems. When looking for legal help, make sure that the information you find applies to your state and that the lawyer or other service provider is qualified to practice in your state. Below are some resources to get you started on your legal journey.

### A. Legal Assistance

#### Legal Services of Alabama -

Legal Services Alabama (LSA) has seven offices and a centralized intake call center working together to fulfill its mission statement: To serve low-income people by providing civil legal aid and by promoting collaboration to find solutions to problems of poverty. These offices are located in Birmingham, Dothan, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, Selma and Tuscaloosa and their contact information can be found below.

LSA offices handle civil cases only. Each office has lawyers licensed to practice in Alabama and other staff who know how to help low-income people resolve their legal problems.

#### Call Center –

Legal Services Alabama  
LSA's Statewide Call Center is based  
in Montgomery, AL 36116  
Phone: 866-456-4995  
[www.legalservicesalabama.org](http://www.legalservicesalabama.org)

Huntsville Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
1115 Church Street NW, Suite F  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: 256-536-9645  
or 888-741-7129

Birmingham Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
1820 Seventh Avenue North  
Suite 200  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-328-3540  
or 800-819-768

Mobile Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
104 Saint Francis Street, Suite 700  
Mobile, AL 36602  
Phone: 251-433-6560  
or 800-403-4872

Dothan Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
224 West Main Street  
Dothan, AL 36301  
Phone: 334-793-7932  
or 800-701-0926

Montgomery Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
2567 Fairlane Drive, Suite 200  
Montgomery, AL 36116  
Phone: 334-832-4570  
or 800-844-5342

Selma Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
801 Alabama Avenue, Suite 250  
Selma, AL 36701  
Phone: 334-872-1355  
or 800-644-6028

Tuscaloosa Office –  
Legal Services Alabama  
2315 9th Street, Suite 3A  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
Phone: 205-758-7503  
or 888-440-3256

Low Income Tax Payer Clinic (LITC) - Legal Services Alabama  
2567 Fairlane Drive, Suite 200  
Montgomery, AL 36116  
Phone: 866-456-4995

### **Alabama Legal Help**

Offers resources about different legal issues as well as directs you to legal help in your area. The following is a list of legal aid resources in Alabama.

[www.alabamalegalhelp.org](http://www.alabamalegalhelp.org)

### **American Bar Association**

Provides information for attorneys and the public including a Lawyer Referral and Information Service.

Phone: 800-285-2221

[www.americanbar.org](http://www.americanbar.org)

### **Alabama Bar Association**

Provides information for attorneys and the public including a Lawyer Referral and Information Service. Navigate to the bottom of the page and select “Need Legal Help” For information on attorneys and other legal help which may be available to you.

415 Dexter Avenue,  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
Phone: 800-354-6154

[www.alabar.org](http://www.alabar.org)

### **Alabama State Bar – Volunteer Lawyers Project**

- **Volunteer Lawyers Program Alabama State Bar**  
P.O. Box 671  
Montgomery, AL 36101  
Phone: 334-269-1515 or 888-857-8571  
[www.alabar.org/for-the-public/need-legal-help](http://www.alabar.org/for-the-public/need-legal-help)
- **Birmingham Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program**  
2021 Second Avenue North

Birmingham, AL 35203  
Phone: 205-250-5198  
[www.vlpbirmingham.org](http://www.vlpbirmingham.org)

- **Madison County Volunteer Lawyers Program**  
P.O. Box 2913  
Huntsville, AL 35804  
Phone: 256-539-2275  
[vlpmadisoncounty.com](http://vlpmadisoncounty.com)
- **Montgomery County Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program**  
P.O. Box 644  
Montgomery, AL 36101  
Phone: 334-265-0222 ext. 2  
[www.montgomeryvlp.org](http://www.montgomeryvlp.org)
- **South Alabama Volunteer Lawyers Program**  
56 St. Joseph Street, Suite 312  
Mobile, AL 36602  
Phone: 251-438-1102 or 855-997-2857  
[www.savlp.org](http://www.savlp.org)

### **Alabama State Bar Referral Service**

The Lawyer Referral Service is a state bar program which helps members of the public who can afford to pay a lawyer find an attorney who handles their type matter. Attorneys who participate in the ASB Lawyer Referral Service agree to charge not more than \$50 for an initial 30 minute consultation; the fee for any additional work must be agreed-upon by the client and lawyer. Call 800-392-5660 for more information or to get a referral.

*If you live in Jefferson County, the Birmingham Bar Association operates its own lawyer referral service. Call 205-251-8006 for more information or to get a referral.*

**How Does the Lawyer Referral Service Work?**

When you call the Lawyer Referral Service's toll free number (800-392-5660) you will be asked to briefly state your problem. All information will be held in the strictest confidence. After listening to your problem, the Lawyer Referral Service representative will ask for your name, address, telephone number and any other necessary information. You will then be given the name of one lawyer located near you, if one is available, who practices in the area of law that relates to your problem. The service does not have attorneys who handle all types of legal problems in all areas of the state. The service does not provide lists of attorneys.

When you request and receive a referral through the Alabama State Bar's website, you must agree to the Terms of Service and choose the area of law and the type of problem. You must enter your name, address and email address, and you must indicate the county in which you are having the legal problem. You will receive the name and phone number for one lawyer who practices in the county you indicated if one is available. The service does not have attorneys who handle all types of legal problems in all areas of the state.

When you receive a referral, it is your responsibility to contact the lawyer to make an appointment to discuss your legal problem. The Lawyer Referral Service cannot make

appointments for callers. When you call to make your appointment with the lawyer, be sure to tell him or her that the Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service has referred you.

When is the Lawyer Referral Service Open?

The Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral Service's toll free number (800-392-5660) operates Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Referrals through this website are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

Lawyer Referral Service members will sometimes include many counties in their coverage area. If you feel that you need a lawyer closer to the site of your legal problem, please call us at 800-392-5660 and we will attempt to narrow down your search.

### **Criminal Court Appointed Attorneys**

If you cannot afford a private attorney, you have a right to a public defender appointed by the court. While public defenders seem to get a bad reputation, they shouldn't because they are held to the same ethical standards as private attorneys and since they work in the courthouse more frequently than some private attorneys, they may have a better relationship with the judge.

### **B. Veteran Treatment Court**

If you find yourself in the predicament where you acquire another criminal charge, you may be eligible to enter a Veterans Treatment Court instead of going through the usual criminal channels. Be sure to inform your attorney that you are a Veteran.

The Veterans Treatment Court is designed to divert select members of the Veteran population, charged with non-violent misdemeanor and felony crimes, away from jail and into appropriate rehabilitative programs. Many of these Veterans have medical, mental health and other problems, including those resulting from their military service. While the programs vary by court, the ideal is to provide access to VHA mental health and substance use services when clinically indicated and other VA services and benefits as appropriate. Where the Veteran may not be eligible for certain VA benefits, community resources may be available. By addressing the root cause for the criminal behavior, those involved seek to improve the lives of the offending Veterans and promote public safety by supporting sobriety and law-abiding behavior through reducing relapse and recidivism for moderate risk individuals. Through the VTC, the Court, probation, prosecution, defense, treatment professionals, and VJO Specialists (Veteran Justice Outreach Specialists) will work collaboratively to provide a direct link between a Veteran in VTC, the court and treatment resources at the VA.

The following counties in Alabama feature a Veterans Court. If the court you are in does not offer a Veterans Treatment Court, you may request a change of venue to one of the courts who does have a Veterans Treatment Court.

Autauga	Calhoun	Covington
Baldwin	Chilton	Dale
Barbour	Coffee	Dallas

Elmore

Etowah

Geneva

Jefferson

Lee

Macon

Madison

Marengo

Marshall

Mobile

Montgomery

Russell

Shelby

St. Clair

Tuscaloosa

Walker



## CHECKLIST

### USING THIS GUIDE:

- Make a list of your needs.
  
- Address bad discharges early and work on corrections/upgrades
  
- Obtain proof of skill obtained while incarcerated or programs completed (GED, Drug Rehab, work related skills learned, etc.) These show a pattern of self-improvement skill acquisition which cannot be underestimated in society.
  
- Ask about classes or resources to help plan for release.
  
- Learn about available housing options in your local area.
  
- Learn about homeless services.
  
- Learn about job resources and create a plan to find a job. [Look at options while incarcerated for skill development and training.] READ BOOKS
  
- Learn about health care programs and what services are available to you.
  
- Learn about the resources for substance abuse and mental health treatment in your area.
  
- Learn about your options to get financial assistance
  
- Begin to take care of other legal issues. (Child support, divorces, etc.)
  
- Make a list of who may be able to help you.
  
- Contact organizations about what services they have to offer.
  
- Write down the steps you take so that you do not repeat them.
  
- Learn about resources for women / LGBTQ+ Veterans.
  
- Prior to leaving the facility in which the veteran was incarcerated they need to obtain a complete copy of ALL medical records that have been kept during their incarceration. WE may need to talk to DOC about helping with this as part of a transitioning veterans program or assistance.

**VETERANS BENEFITS:**

- [ ] If you are not currently receiving benefits, find out if you can or should be.
- [ ] Know where to call toll-free for help
- [ ] Contact a Veterans Service Organization to represent you and help you file a claim.
- [ ] If you are receiving benefits, notify the VA when you go to prison to avoid an overpayment.
- [ ] Apply for an apportionment so that some of your benefits may be given to eligible family members. This is done when the vet is beginning his/her incarceration not on the way out.
- [ ] Notify the VA immediately when released to reinstate your receipt of benefits. (Guard your release documents like they are Gold, they are very hard to replace if lost or misplaced.)

## **FORMS:**

Below are brief descriptions of forms needed to file for certain VA benefits. Be sure that you use a return address where mail will get to you as quickly as possible. Make photocopies of all forms for your records before sending your packet to the VA Regional Office (VARO) nearest you. Your pre-release/re-entry coordinator can get copies of the forms for you. Your HCRV Specialist will also be able to obtain these forms for you as needed and will be able to assist you with completion of them when you are preparing for your release from custody. The forms may also be found by visiting [https://www.va.gov/vaforms/search\\_action.asp#searchform](https://www.va.gov/vaforms/search_action.asp#searchform).

- VA Form 21-4193 – Notice to Department of Veterans Affairs of Veteran or Beneficiary Incarcerated in Penal Institution: Must be filed to notify the VA of your incarceration in order to avoid an overpayment. May also be used to notify the VA of your release in order to get your full benefits reinstated.
- VA Form 21-526EZ – Application for Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits: Must be filed to apply for compensation or pension benefits. Mail your DD-214 and the following forms to the VARO nearest your release destination 30-45 days before release.
- VA Form 21-4142 – Authorization to Disclose Information to the Department of Veterans Affairs: If you have received medical or mental health care that may be relevant to your claim from anyone other than a VA Medical Center, you need to fill out this form for each care provider you have received treatment at giving permission for release of medical records to the VA. We do not recommend the use of this form.
- VA Form 21-0788 – Information Regarding Apportionment of Beneficiary's Award: This is the form that must be submitted to pay a portion of the veteran's benefit to a dependent (spouse, child, or parent). Where the veteran's disability compensation award is reduced due to incarceration, a portion of the whole benefit may be paid to the dependent.
- VA Form 10-10EZ – Application for Health Benefits: This is the form that you need to submit, along with a copy of your DD214, in order to initially enroll in VA healthcare. Complete the form and bring it with you to your nearest VA medical center where you wish to receive treatment.
- VA Form 10-10EZR – Health Benefits Update Form: This is the form that you need to update your personal, insurance, or financial information after you are enrolled in VA healthcare. The information provided will be used by VA to determine your continued eligibility for medical benefits. This form should be completed on a yearly basis.
- VA Form 10-10HS – Request for Hardship Determination: This is the form that you need to submit, along with financial information, to show that your income versus your allowable expenses places you below the VA threshold and exempt you from paying hospital and medical co-pays and qualifies you for enrollment in Priority Group 5.

- DD Form 293 – Application for the Review of Discharge From the Armed Forces of the United States: This is the form that you will need if you are requesting review of your military service for possible upgrade in discharge status. This form is used if you separated from service within the last 15 years.
- DD Form 149 – Application for Correction of Military Record under the Provisions of Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 1552 – This is the form that you will need if you are requesting review of your military service for possible upgrade in discharge status if you separated from service over 15 years ago.
- SF-180 – Request Pertaining to Military Records: This form will need to be completed if you need to request a certified copy of your DD214 from your branch of service or from the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. As noted we recommend the electronic version of this request.
- VA Form 21-22 – Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant’s Representative: This form gives the appointed organization the authorization to review the claimants VA files and submit paperwork and supporting documentation on behalf of the veteran.
- Example of Hardship Letter: This is a template that may be used to request an amount owed to the VA be reduced and/or forgiven or for the payment plan to be adjusted.

{Your Name}  
 {Your Address}  
 {Your Phone #}  
 {Case #}

{Date}

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is {Name} and my case number is {number}. On {date}, I received a letter from Veterans Affairs notifying me that I had been overpaid and was being charged {monetary amount}. I would like to request a waiver based on extreme financial hardship.

I received the notice of overpayment and subsequent charges on {date}. However, the amount charged to me was paid as part of my benefits over the last {amount of time}. I have already spent the money on {necessary expenses}. If I am forced to pay back the amount, I will be forced to {consequences}.

I am attaching my payment stubs, receipts, {additional documentation of mortgage, medical bills, etc.} and bank account information to prove the full extent of my hardship. I will not be able to cope with a disparity this large in my finances.

Please consider the difficult situation that these circumstances have put me in when reviewing my case. Thank you for your consideration and understanding.

Sincerely,

{Sender Name}