

Frequently Asked Questions

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

i. What does COMPACT Act, section 201, mean for Veterans?

VA will now:

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

ii. Who is eligible for COMPACT Act related services?

Regardless of VA enrollment status, COMPACT-eligible individuals are:

- Former members of the armed forces who were discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months of active service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces, including reserve service members, who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

iii. Does a Veteran need to be enrolled in the VA system to receive COMPACT-related emergency care when in an acute suicidal crisis?

No, any Veteran who was discharged from the armed forces with more than 24 months of active duty; any former active or reserve service member who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable; or any former member of the armed forces who was the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces is eligible to receive COMPACT-related care and treatment provided or paid for by VA.

iv. What is the definition of an acute suicide crisis?

An acute suicidal crisis is determined by a trained crisis responder or health care provider when an individual is determined to be at imminent risk of self-harm. Imminent risk may be determined if an individual states desire and intent of self-

harm as well as other pertinent information like the responder or provider's knowledge of an individual's past or present behaviors that signal a risk of self-harm, or past suicide attempts.

v. What is emergent suicide care?

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

vi. What information do Veterans need to provide to emergency department staff to let them know they are eligible for VA to pay for or provide their care?

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

If a Veteran is not enrolled, they should tell the emergency department staff that they are a Veteran as soon as possible to determine what benefits they are eligible for – either directly if they are a VA employee or by contacting the nearest VA medical facility using VA's Emergency Care Reporting portal, <https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov>, or by calling 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842).

vii. How will VA determine whether an individual Veteran is eligible for COMPACT?

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

viii. What should a Veteran do if they are billed for COMPACT-related care?

VA has developed an expedited review process specific to COMPACT to eliminate any additional stress during Veterans' time of need. If a Veteran receives a bill for COMPACT related care at a VA medical facility, they should contact their local VA patient advocate and ask for a clinical review with an appropriate provider. Veterans can also contact the number on their bill to initiate this process.

Veterans who received COMPACT-related care at a community emergency department should submit a signed, written request for reimbursement to their local VA medical facility community care office along with an after-visit summary/medical documentation and a billing statement from the rendering provider showing diagnosis code information and an itemized list of charges.

Veterans can use the [VA Facility Locator](#) to find their closest VA medical facility.

ix. Does a community emergency department need an agreement with VA to be paid for COMPACT-related care?

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

x. Can Veterans using VA’s Foreign Medical Program receive COMPACT-related care?

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