



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is responsible for providing military veterans and their survivors with the benefits, care, and support they have earned through sacrifice and service to the Nation. The President's 2024 Budget for VA honors the Nation's sacred obligation to veterans by: investing in world-class healthcare, including enhancing veterans' general well-being and mental health; increasing support for family caregivers; improving delivery of benefits, including disability claims processing; prioritizing veteran mental health services and suicide prevention programs; supporting efforts to end veteran homelessness; and bolstering other benefits to enhance veterans' prosperity.

The Budget requests \$137.9 billion in discretionary budget authority for 2024, a \$3 billion increase over the 2023 enacted level. In addition, the Budget requests \$20.3 billion in mandatory budget authority for the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund (TEF) in 2024. The budget also includes advance appropriations of \$112.6 billion in discretionary budget authority and \$21.5 billion in mandatory budget authority for the TEF for VA medical care programs in 2025.

The President's 2024 Budget:

- **Expands Healthcare, Benefits, and Services for Environmental Exposures.** The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 (PACT Act) represents the most significant expansion of VA healthcare and disability compensation benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits and other environmental exposures in 30 years. As part of the PACT Act, the Congress authorized the TEF to fund increased costs above 2021 funding levels for healthcare and benefits delivery for veterans exposed to a number of environmental hazards—and ensure there is sufficient funding available to cover these costs without shortchanging other elements of veteran medical care and benefit delivery. The Budget provides \$20.3 billion for the TEF in 2024, which is \$15.3 billion above the 2023 enacted level. This amount includes: \$17.1 billion for medical care; \$1.8 billion for disability benefits claims processing and automation strategies; \$1.2 billion for information technology support; \$90 million for support services, including stakeholder outreach, hiring initiatives, and legal services; \$46 million for research activities; and \$4 million for claims appeals.
- **Prioritizes VA Medical Care.** The Budget provides a total of \$121 billion in discretionary medical care funding in 2024, \$2.3 billion above the 2023 enacted level, together with \$17.1 billion in the TEF. In addition to fully funding inpatient, outpatient, mental health, and long-term care services, the Budget supports programs that enhance VA healthcare quality and delivery, including a \$5 billion investment for non-recurring maintenance to improve medical facility infrastructure, and continued efforts to address the opioid and drug overdose epidemic. The Budget reiterates that medical care for veterans should be considered

separately from other appropriations categories in order to ensure that the needs of veterans are never traded off against other national priorities.

- **Supports the President's Cancer Moonshot Initiative.** The Budget invests \$94 million within VA research programs, together with \$215 million within the VA Medical Care program, for precision oncology to provide access to the best possible cancer care for veterans. This funding also supports research and programs that address cancer care, rare cancers, and cancers in women, as well as genetic counseling and consultation that advance tele-oncology and precision oncology care.
- **Prioritizes Veterans' Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention.** The Budget invests \$139 million within VA research programs, together with \$16.6 billion within the VA Medical Care program, to increase access to quality mental healthcare and lower the cost of mental health services for veterans, with the goal of helping veterans take charge of their treatment and live full, meaningful lives. This effort includes support for the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019, clinical trials, and epidemiological studies on risk and prevention factors. In addition, the Budget provides \$559 million to further advance the Administration's veteran suicide prevention initiatives, including continued expansion of the Veterans Crisis Line's 988 and additional support for VA's *National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide*.
- **Supports Women Veterans' Healthcare.** The Budget invests \$12.6 billion for women veterans' healthcare, including \$1 billion toward women's gender-specific care. More women are choosing VA healthcare than ever before, with women accounting for over 30 percent of the increase in enrolled veterans over the past five years. Investments support comprehensive specialty medical and surgical services for women veterans, increase access to infertility counseling and assisted reproductive technology, and eliminate copayments for contraceptive coverage. The Budget also improves the safety of women veterans seeking healthcare at VA facilities by supporting implementation of the zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and assault.
- **Bolsters Efforts to End Veteran Homelessness.** The Budget invests \$3.1 billion for veterans' homelessness programs, with the goal of ensuring every veteran has permanent, sustainable housing with access to healthcare and other supportive services to end current veteran homelessness and prevent veterans from becoming homeless in the future. In addition, the Budget for the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides \$13 billion in mandatory funding to incrementally expand the Housing Choice Voucher program for 450,000 extremely low-income veteran families, paving a path to guaranteed assistance for all who have served the Nation and are in need.
- **Invests in Caregivers Support Programs.** Recognizing the critical role family caregivers play in supporting the health and wellness of veterans, the Budget provides robust funding for the Program of General Caregivers Support Services. The Budget also specifically provides \$2.4 billion for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, which includes stipend payments and support services to help empower family caregivers of eligible veterans.
- **Invests in Overdose Prevention and Treatment Programs.** The Budget invests \$715 million toward opioid use disorder prevention and treatment programs, such as VA's Stratification Tool for Opioid Risk Mitigation, the VA Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution program, and programs authorized in the Jason Simcakoski PROMISE Act.

- **Honors the Memory of All Veterans.** The Budget includes \$480 million to ensure veterans and their families have access to exceptional memorial benefits. These funds maintain national shrine standards at the 158 VA-managed cemeteries and provide the initial operational investment required to continue or begin activation to open three new cemeteries.
- **Invests in Critical Veteran Medical Facilities.** The Budget proposes \$1.6 billion in discretionary funding and \$1.9 billion in mandatory funding for construction and expansion of critical infrastructure and facilities, in addition to a \$5 billion investment in discretionary medical care for non-recurring maintenance to improve medical facility infrastructure. The Budget also provides \$164 million for grants for construction of State extended care facilities to deliver high-quality healthcare, benefits, and services for veterans.
- **Modernizes VA Information Technology.** The Budget provides an additional \$619 million above the 2023 enacted level, for a total of \$6.4 billion, for VA's Office of Information Technology (IT) to continue upgrades to the VA IT systems. The Budget also provides \$1.9 billion to continue modernizing VA's Electronic Health Record to ensure veterans receive world-class healthcare well into the future.

