



VETERANS AFFAIRS



Serving Our Veteran Community

Dear Veterans, Families, and Members of Our Community,

As we move through the final weeks of summer, our office continues to stay busy serving Veterans, their families, and survivors throughout Indiana County. August provides several meaningful opportunities to honor those who have served while connecting Veterans with the resources they've earned.

On Friday, August 7, we observe Purple Heart Day, a day dedicated to honoring the brave men and women who were wounded or made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our nation. The Purple Heart is one of America's oldest and most distinguished military decorations, symbolizing extraordinary courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to defending our freedoms. We extend our deepest gratitude to all Purple Heart recipients and their families.

We also invite the community to join us for the Indiana County Veterans Brick Unveiling Ceremony on Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Indiana County Courthouse. This special ceremony recognizes the next group of Veterans whose personalized honor bricks have been added to the Veterans Memorial Wall outside of the courthouse. Family members, friends, and community members are encouraged to attend as we celebrate these Veterans' service and preserve their legacy for future generations.

Be sure to stop by and visit the Indiana County Department of Veterans Affairs during this year's Indiana County Fair. As a proud member of the Indiana County Veterans Providers Group (VPG), our office will be sharing a table with our VPG partners to provide Veterans, family members, caregivers, and community members with information about the many benefits, programs, and services available throughout Indiana County.

Outreach and education remain a top priority for our office because many Veterans and their families are still unaware of the benefits and resources available to them. We encourage you to stop by our shared Veterans Providers Group table during the fair to ask questions, learn about available services, and meet the organizations dedicated to serving our local Veteran community. We look forward to seeing you at the fair!

Jessica
Jessica Walker
Director

Highlights

Veterans Lunch
& Learn

Veterans Market
Vouchers

Veterans Expo

New Mobile App
Features

Elder Fraud

Miles of Honor

Women Veterans
Health

Indiana County Department of Veterans Affairs presents a

Veterans Lunch and Learn series

3rd Thursday of each month

11:30-1:00 PM
County Forensics Center
220 Airport Road
Indiana, PA

Bring a lunch!

18 JUNE Tobacco Cessation
Presented by Adagio Health

16 JULY Veterans Benefits 101
Presented by Jessica Walker,
Director, Indiana County Veterans Affairs

20 AUGUST Military to Civilian Transition
Presented by Chaplain Burney

Reserve your spot! Call 724-465-3815 or [click here!](#)

James E. Van Zandt VAMC Heroes Food Hub

WHEN:
The 4th Wednesday of the month:

- June 24th
- July 22nd
- August 26th
- September 23rd
- October 28th
- November 25th
- December 23rd

TIME:
10am-2pm
WHERE:
Room 2C04
2nd Floor
Auditorium

Have you recently cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
Did the food you bought not last and you did not have enough money to get more?
If so, come to the Heroes Food Hub!

Who is Eligible?
Any Veteran experiencing food insecurity

What to Expect?
A variety of non-perishable food items for you to choose as a way to supplement your own pantry stock

VA Resources Available at the Heroes Food Hub:

- Nutrition and Food Services
- Social Work Services
- Whole Health Services
- Enrollment Services

For more information please call: 1-877-626-2500 and ask for your PACT Team Dietitian or PACT Social Worker

Community Partner: Military Families Ministry USA, Inc

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

adagio health

VETERAN VOUCHERS

Have you or anyone in your household served in the Military?

You can receive up to \$10 in Veteran Vouchers to purchase locally-sourced produce. These vouchers can ONLY be used at the Indiana County Farmers' Market for fresh fruits and vegetables on certain days until allocated funds are depleted.

Community Health Days
9:00 AM-12:00 PM
8th & Church St. Indiana, PA 15701
June 20th, July 18th, August 15th

VETERAN READY CERTIFIED

VETERANS EXPO

BATTLE BREW COFFEE GROUP
9:00-10:00 AM
RSVP ONLY

★ FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6 ★
KCAC, 711 Pratt Drive, Indiana, PA

10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

SERVICES WILL INCLUDE:

- COMMUNITY VENDORS
- HEALTHCARE SCREENING/VACCINES
- VA HEALTHCARE SERVICES
- FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES
- EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

FREE HAIRCUTS ★ STATIC DISPLAYS ★ LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ★ RAFFLES

FREE LUNCH SERVED
11:30 - 1:00 PM

SUPPLY DISTRIBUTION TO AT-RISK VETERANS
BEGINNING AT 1:30 PM

PROOF OF VETERAN STATUS REQUIRED

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:

- VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Labor VETS Grant
- VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Financial support also provided by the PADMVA VET Grant

SCAN ME

★★★ **RSVP/QUESTIONS? CALL 724-465-3815** ★★★

VA News and Information



New App Features

More than 4.6 million Veterans use the VA Health and Benefits mobile app to manage their care and benefits, and new features make it even more useful. Veterans can now view lab results in the Health section as soon as they are available and access detailed medical records from their phone. The app also allows users to view and manage VA benefit overpayment debts, including checking balances, making payments, requesting financial assistance, and disputing debts. Additional features include scheduling appointments, messaging care teams, refilling prescriptions, checking claims status, uploading documents, viewing payment history, updating contact information, displaying digital proof of Veteran status, and locating nearby VA facilities. [Read More](#)



Homelessness Declines

The [2025 Point-in-Time Count](#) found that 32,495 Veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2025, the lowest number recorded since tracking began in 2009. Veteran homelessness has declined 56.1% since 2010 and decreased 1.2% since 2023, with the greatest improvement seen among unsheltered Veterans. Despite this progress, rising housing costs and increased demand for assistance continue to create challenges. During Fiscal Year 2025, VA permanently housed nearly 52,000 Veterans—the highest total in seven years—and moved more than 25,000 unsheltered Veterans into interim or permanent housing. VA continues working with community partners, improved data tracking, and targeted housing programs to achieve its goal of ending Veteran homelessness. [Read More](#)



Extreme Heat Safety

Extreme heat can cause serious illness or death, but simple precautions can help keep you safe. Stay indoors during the hottest hours, wear light clothing, drink plenty of water, and avoid strenuous outdoor activities. Seek air-conditioned spaces when temperatures exceed 90°F, as fans alone may not prevent heat-related illness. Never leave children or pets in vehicles, and check on older adults and other vulnerable individuals. Learn to recognize signs of heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke, and move to a cool location immediately if symptoms occur. Stay informed through weather alerts, prepare for power outages, and develop a Heat Action Plan. VA also offers resources to help Veterans stay safe during extreme heat. [Read More](#)



Level Up Your Transition

Transitioning from military to civilian life can be both exciting and challenging. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) helps service members and their families prepare for this change by providing information on available benefits, resources, and planning tools. A key part of TAP is the online VA Benefits and Services (BAS) 6.0 course, which equips participants with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions during their transition. The course includes six modules covering VA benefits, health care, disability compensation, career readiness, housing, community resources, and next steps. Developed with input from VA, partner agencies, and Veterans Service Organizations, BAS 6.0 reflects the needs of today's military community. In the first quarter of FY26, more than 3,100 participants enrolled, with nearly 96% saying they would apply what they learned and 93.9% reporting greater confidence in navigating civilian life. The updated course also explains VA's transition to Login.gov for secure access to online VA services. [Read More](#)



Stopping Elder Fraud

VA is committed to helping Veterans, especially older adults, recognize and prevent fraud. Scammers often use phone calls, texts, emails, social media, fake websites, and letters to pressure victims into sharing personal or financial information. Veterans can protect themselves by remembering that VA will never threaten to suspend benefits, file lawsuits, or demand immediate action. Always verify requests for personal information, never share banking details with strangers, and avoid payment requests involving cryptocurrency, wire transfers, gift cards, or prepaid debit cards, as these are common scam tactics. Be cautious of urgent messages, suspicious social media requests, and fake profiles impersonating friends or organizations. Use strong, unique passwords and update them regularly. If you receive a suspicious call, hang up and contact the organization using its official phone number. If you suspect fraud, notice suspicious activity with your VA benefits, or miss an expected payment, contact VA immediately. Veterans age 60 and older who experience fraud can also seek assistance through the National Elder Fraud Hotline. [Read More](#)

Resources



Veteran Suicide Awareness Training

Why you may hear "22 Veterans a day": The often-quoted statistic that "22 Veterans die by suicide each day" comes from a VA analysis using older data (primarily 1999–2011). It has not reflected the current official estimate for several years. The current official VA estimate is 17.5 Veteran suicides per day based on 2023 data. The Suicide Task Force is proud to offer a new training in partnership with Miranda Cymbor, a local counselor in Indiana, on Veteran Suicide Awareness! If you are interested in having the training for your organization, please contact Miranda directly via email at mirandalc5038@gmail.com or by phone at 814-215-0013.



Your Mental Health Matters

Women Veterans may experience unique mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, trauma, eating disorders, and concerns related to reproductive health. Hormonal changes, pregnancy, menopause, infertility, pregnancy loss, chronic pelvic pain, and reproductive cancers can all impact emotional well-being.

The VA provides specialized, compassionate mental health care designed specifically for women Veterans. Every VA facility has experienced mental health professionals—including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, and peer specialists—who understand the unique needs of women Veterans and offer treatment for a wide range of reproductive mental health concerns.

If you or someone you know could benefit from support, contact your [local VA Women's Veterans Program Manager](#) to learn about available services and connect with specialized care. You are not alone, and help is available. [Read More](#)

Thank you for reading!

Indiana County Department of Veterans Affairs	(724) 465-3815
https://www.indianacountypa.gov/departments/veteran-affairs/	825 Philadelphia Street Second Floor, Court House Indiana, PA 15701

You Served Our Country

We're Here When You Need a Ride

I-GO Mobility Works & IndiGO are proud to introduce Miles of Honor.

We may be able to help with rides if you:

- Are a Veteran age 18+
- Live in Indiana County
- Need help with transportation

724-465-2140
indigobus.com

Miles of Honor is a program of I-GO Mobility Works, a nonprofit created by IndiGO to expand transportation access.

Generous Support provided by:
Indiana County Endowment
Indiana Midday Rotary
Marcello Charitable Trust



What Veterans Should Know

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs when a bump, blow, jolt, or penetrating injury to the head disrupts normal brain function. TBIs can range from mild to severe, and while not every head injury causes a TBI, they are common among Service Members and Veterans. Between 2000 and 2019, more than 400,000 U.S. Service Members experienced a TBI.

Symptoms vary depending on the severity of the injury and may include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, nausea, sleep problems, memory and concentration issues, mood or personality changes, blurred vision, and ringing in the ears. More severe TBIs can cause prolonged loss of consciousness, seizures, repeated vomiting, slurred speech, weakness, or numbness. These symptoms require immediate emergency medical attention.

The VA provides mandatory TBI screening for Veterans who served in combat operations. A brief four-question screening helps identify those who may have experienced a TBI, followed by a comprehensive evaluation and referral for additional care if needed. Early diagnosis and treatment can help reduce long-term effects and improve recovery. [Read More](#)

