



A Guidebook for Veterans Incarcerated in North Carolina

Revised May 2019

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Foreword

Thank you for your dedication and service to our country. The Health Care for Reentry Veterans (HCRV) Program is designed to address the community reentry needs of identified Veterans who are incarcerated and within six months of release from state and federal correctional facilities. HCRV Specialists assist Veterans by providing outreach, assessment, referral, and linkage to services as they transition from incarceration to the community.

This guidebook can be an important tool as you begin to think about and plan for your release. Please review all of the enclosed information thoroughly in order to better understand the opportunities available to you upon your release. When these resources are used properly, they may help you meet and successfully overcome challenges and outside pressures that you may be confronted with upon release. These may include financial issues, relationship difficulties, family stress, unresolved legal issues, gaining social acceptance, and any temptations that may lead you to return to incarceration. This guidebook is a tool for Veterans incarcerated and their families. It contains important resources and information that will enable you to access services that will support you in your efforts to transition successfully to a new and better way of living so that you may again become a successful, productive and valued member of society.

Please be aware that this guidebook is designed to assist veterans incarcerated in the State of North Carolina, as well as their loved ones. It is important to note that resources and regulations may vary from state to state. Therefore, please check your state's resources and regulations for the most accurate information.

Please note that agency information, addresses, phone numbers and website addresses may change. Should you attempt to contact one of the resources in this guidebook and find that the information is not current, please do your best to obtain the current information through telephone information or a web 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to perpetuate the value of this document, we respectfully request that if you discover any incorrect, conflicting, or out-of-date information in this Guidebook please send any corrections to:

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lucas.vrbsky@va.gov **Mobile:** 910.536.0122

We would like to acknowledge and thank:

1) the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans which provided basic concepts and core information for this guide 2) the Veterans Incarcerated Workgroup of Walla Walla, Washington, for the concept of state-specific information in its "Guidebook for Incarcerated Veterans" and for allowing the use of its guide as a template for this publication; 3) Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. for developing the first Veterans incarcerated guidebook, which has inspired and informed subsequent efforts; and 4) any public domain and agency resources included in the guidebook.

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SECTION 1: USING THIS GUIDE AND SEEKING HELP

This guide was developed in order to assist you with planning for your release and to keep as a reference after your release. It includes addresses, phone numbers, and web sites that you can use to find out about programs and other help that may be available after your release. You might want to ask a friend, family member, or staff to help you find the information you need. Keep in mind that **this guide does not include all of the services available**. What is available in one area may be different from what is available in another, so be sure to check with local resources to learn about services in your area. While you are in prison, find out which unit in your facility can help you plan for your release (often programs, education or transfer unit). Classes may be offered so you can work on skills development and prepare for life after release. **You don't want to risk homelessness once you are released, so take advantage of the opportunities available to you.**

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? How do I restart my VA checks or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)? 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 to wear to work.
- I need to find out what benefits I can receive.
- I owe child support.
- I want to get addictions treatment.
- I need medical care.

Think about your 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 you **check your phone book for local, county, and state agencies that know what help is available in your area**. There are many Reentry Councils across the state that may also be able to assist with your transition.

When writing a letter to request information, **be clear**. Keep your letter short, to the point, and write legibly. Include the following information:

- Your name and contact information.
- A brief statement about your current situation.
- Your specific request.
- What you have done so far (I have written to X organization, they suggested I contact you).
- Any restrictions for mailings (Mail with staples or paper clips will not be accepted).

When contacting an agency for help by mail, email or phone, **be persistent and polite** in order to get results. Ask questions if information is not clear. Remember that many organizations are staffed by volunteers who are eager to help, but may not have the answers you are looking for. **If someone cannot help you, ask who can**. The Internet can also be helpful to find information about VA benefits and community resources in your area. This guide includes web addresses, when available. Ask to use a computer in your facility, or visit the public library after release.

SECTION 2: VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS, SERVICES & ELIGIBILITY

The Department of Veterans Affairs publishes a booklet entitled “**Federal Benefits for Veterans and Their Dependents**” that describes the types of benefits available and lists the contact information for VA facilities nationwide. Write the VA Regional Office to request a copy:

Winston Salem Regional Office Department Of Veterans Affairs
251 N. Main St. Winston-Salem, NC 27155
800.827.1000 or 336.251.0555 (Justice Involved Number)

Who is Eligible for Veteran Affairs Services?

Health Care Eligibility for VA is dependent upon a number of variables, which may influence the final determination of the services for which you qualify. These factors include the nature of a Veteran's discharge from military service (e.g., honorable, other than honorable, dishonorable), length of service, VA adjudicated disabilities (commonly referred to as service-connected disabilities), income level, and available VA resources, among others. Generally, you must be enrolled in VA health care system to receive benefits offered in the Medical Benefits Package. To apply for VA health care benefits, including enrollment, you must fill out an application. The application is used to determine:

- Whether you have qualifying service as a Veteran.
- What your Veteran status is so that you can be placed into one of the priority groups.

Step 1: Determine your qualifying military service

The character of discharge you received from the military can be a factor. It is not an issue if you received: an honorable discharge; a general discharge; a discharge under honorable conditions. The length of your service may also matter. It depends on when you served. There's no length of service requirement for:

- Former enlisted persons who started active duty before September 8, 1980; or
- Former officers who first entered active duty before October 17, 1981

All other Veterans must have 24 months of continuous active duty military service or meet one of the exceptions described below. If you have a different character of discharge, you may still be eligible for care. Contact your Enrollment Coordinator at your local VA health care facility to see if you qualify.

Minimum Service Requirement

You do not have to meet the 24 continuous months of active duty service requirement if you:

- Were a Reservist or National Guard member who was called to Active Duty and who completed the term for which you were called, and who was granted an other than dishonorable discharge; or
- Only request a benefit for or in connection with: a service-connected condition or disability; or treatment, and/or counseling of sexual trauma that occurred while on active military service; or treatment of conditions related to ionizing radiation; or head or neck cancer related to nose or throat radium treatment while in the military.
- Were discharged or released from active duty for a hardship, or
- Were discharged with an “early out”; or

- Were discharged or released from active duty for a disability that began in the service or got worse because of the service; or
- Have been determined by VA to have compensable service-connected conditions; or
- Were discharged for a reason other than disability, but you had a medical condition at the time that was disabling, and in the opinion of a doctor, would have justified a discharge for disability (in this last case, the disability must be documented in service records)

One important requirement for eligibility is that the Veteran has to have been issued either an honorable or general discharge, or would have received one if not for reenlisting. If a veteran had two periods of service, one honorable and the other less than honorable, she or he may still be eligible for VA benefits based on the honorable period of service. If you are not currently eligible for benefits based on the character of your discharge (other than honorable, undesirable), you should contact a Veteran Service Officer upon your release and inquire about requesting a review of your discharge.

Step 2: Enrollment in VA Health Care System

You may enroll by submitting Form 1010EZ, application for health benefits, along with a copy of your DD214, to your local VA medical center. There is a blank 1010EZ and SF180 (request for military records) in the back of this book.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a wide range of benefits for the nation's veterans, service members, and their families.

Benefits and Services Available

Compensation The VA will pay you monthly compensation if you are rated at least 10% disabled as a result of your military service.

Pension You can receive a monthly pension if you are a wartime Veteran with limited income, and you are permanently and totally disabled or at least age 65. There is no time limit to apply for compensation and pension benefits.

Healthcare The VA provides a number of healthcare services.

- Hospital, outpatient medical, dental, pharmacy, and prosthetic services
- Domiciliary, nursing home, and community based residential care
- Sexual trauma counseling
- Specialized healthcare for Women Veterans
- Health and rehabilitation programs for Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Readjustment counseling
- Alcohol and drug use disorder treatment
- Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service during OIF/OEF, the Gulf War, Vietnam, Korea, or WWII, as well as post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation, and other environmental hazards.

Combat Veterans The VA provides free healthcare for Veterans who served in a theater of combat after November 11, 1998 for any illness possibly related to their service in that theater.

You have five years from the date of your discharge from active duty to apply. Remember, the Vet Center provides readjustment counseling to Combat Veterans of all eras.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment The VA provides assistance to Veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment. For Veterans with serious service-connected disabilities, the VA also offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. There are five service delivery options available: Re-employment, Rapid access to employment, Self employment, Employment through long-term services, Independent living.

Education and Training VA pays benefits to eligible veterans, reservists, and active duty service members while they are in an approved education or training program. Benefits are based on the type of military service.

- **The Post-9/11 GI Bill** provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Additional information is available at <http://www.gibill.va.gov> or you can call 1.888.GIBILL1.
- **Benefits:** The school will report a Veteran's status as incarcerated on the certification and note whether the federal, state, or local government is paying all or part of the cost for tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies and the amounts paid.
- **Time Limits:** Benefits are available for up to 15 years from the last period of active duty of at least 90 consecutive days. This also applies if released for a service-connected disability after at least 30 days of continuous service.

Home Loans The VA offers a number of home loan services to eligible Veterans, some military personnel, and certain surviving spouses.

Dependents and Survivors Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

DIC is payable to certain survivors of:

- Service members who died on active duty
- Veterans who died from service-related disabilities
- Certain veterans who were being paid 100% VA disability compensation at time of death.
- **Death Pension** is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime veterans. The benefit is based on financial need.
- **Parents' DIC** is payable to some surviving parents. The benefit is based on financial need.

Burial and Memorial benefits are available for eligible service members, Veterans, Reservists, National Guard members, and eligible family members. Services include interment, headstones and markers, and Presidential memorial certificates.

Eligibility for VA Benefits During Incarceration Veterans incarcerated and incarcerated dependents may apply for the same compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) – service connected death benefits – and pension benefits as Veterans who are not

incarcerated. It is important to remember that most VA decisions, including those on apportionment, can be appealed to the Board of Veterans Appeals and, if need be, to the Court of Appeal for Veterans Affairs. However, Congress restricts the amount of benefits that may be paid to a veteran or dependent while he or she is incarcerated. These benefits are institutionalized as part of law: *38 U.S.C Sec 5313 (a), 38 C.F.R., Sec. 3.665 (a), (d)*, which reads as follows:

If a veteran is incarcerated as the result of a “felony” conviction as defined by law: “Any offense punishable by death or imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, unless specifically categorized as a misdemeanor under the law of the prosecuting jurisdiction.” Then, the amount paid to a veteran incarcerated for a service-connected disability is generally limited by law to the 10 percent disability rate, or half the amount of the ten percent rate if the veteran’s disability rating is 10 percent. (If the veteran is rated before incarceration as 20 percent disabled or higher, she or he will receive only the amount payable to a 10 percent disabled veteran.) Incarcerated DIC recipients will receive one-half the amount paid to a veteran receiving compensation payments for a 10 percent-rated disability. A veteran may not receive non-service connected VA pension benefits, or any portion of these benefits, while incarcerated for a felony or misdemeanor. However, the family may receive an apportionment of such benefits under the procedure described above. (See 38 C.F.R. Sec.3.666)

VA Medical Care cannot be provided to Veterans in prison, but VA health facilities may provide care to you after your release. Veterans incarcerated do not forfeit their eligibility for medical care; however, current regulations restrict VA from providing hospital and outpatient care to a Veteran who is incarcerated when that agency has a duty to give care. VA may provide care once the Veteran has been unconditionally released from the penal institution. Veterans interested in applying for enrollment into the VA healthcare system should contact the nearest VA healthcare facility upon their release. *Contact 1-877-222-8387 to find the medical center nearest you.*

VA Benefits During Incarceration There is a 60-day grace period following conviction where the Veteran receiving Service Connected Disability Compensation or Pension Benefits, or recipient of Dependents and Survivors Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), may still receive full benefits. If the Veteran continues to receive benefits after the 60-day period, it will result in an overpayment. According to the VA, it is the recipient’s responsibility to notify the VA of his or her incarceration. Attempts to obtain a waiver in these situations of overpayment are often unsuccessful. As a rule, the Veteran loses most, if not all, financial benefits until the entire overpayment is recovered by the VA. It is also a standard procedure that the family will not be entitled to receive an apportionment until the debt is completely recovered. **VA Form 21-4193** needs to be filled out at the time of incarceration to notify the Veterans Benefits Administration.

REMEMBER, you must notify the VA when you are released to restart your payments. It is advisable to ask a Veteran Service Officer or Veteran Service Organization to assist you with reinstating your benefits. Form 21-4138 (Statement in Support of Claim) should be completed and you should have a copy of your release papers. The centralized intake center can be reached:

Family Benefits—Apportionment

Financial Payments to Your Family Although a Veteran can only receive a portion of the full amount payable for his or her disability rating, the remaining balance may be divided among (apportioned) the individual's dependent family. To apply for apportionment, the **dependent** must send a letter, including VA Form 21-0788, to the VA Regional Office that has jurisdiction over the Veteran's case. The dependent is the family member who qualifies to receive the benefits, for example your spouse. It would be advisable to discuss this with a Veteran Service Officer.

VA regulations clearly specify this apportionment amount will only go to family members if they can show financial need. This applies to the spouse, children, or dependent parents who are involved in the application. The VA will decide whether partial payment of benefits is appropriate, the amount of benefits, and who will receive the payments. The VA will consider the following factors:

- The family member's income, living expenses, and needs;
- The amount of compensation available to be apportioned;

Accessing Post 9/11 GI Bill Educational Benefits while Incarcerated Veterans who served after September 11, 2001 and have an honorable discharge may be eligible to access educational benefits while incarcerated. The Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits expire 15 years after discharge from military service. VA Form 22-1990 Application for Education Benefits should be submitted to determine eligibility. While incarcerated this benefit would cover the cost of classes and books. Additional information is available at <http://www.gibill.va.gov> or you can call 1.888.GIBILL1.

Help for Veterans If you are in a state or federal prison, the Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) program is an excellent place to start planning for your release and re-entry to community life. If you are in a local jail, the starting place is the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) program. Use the information on the next page to contact specialists for these programs.

The HCRV specialist visits each correctional facility in North Carolina to provide information to interested Veterans and meets individually with Veterans prior to their release dates. Each VA medical center has an assigned staff to address reentry needs of Veterans. VJO specialists may not be able to meet with you individually but may be able to provide assistance either by phone or in writing. The specialists will provide you with individualized and respectful assistance to enhance your adjustment to the community and to ensure your treatment needs are met. Ask for help from your case worker, counselor, treatment program, jail services officer, or other correctional staff to contact the **HCRV specialist if you are in a state or federal prison** or the **VJO specialist if you are in a local jail**. Please keep in mind that these specialist are not lawyers. Each medical center in NC has an assigned staff member to work with justice involved Veterans.

The VA has programs, treatment, and services that may assist you. Please remember that as a Veteran, you may be eligible for services through the VA health care system. It is a system of care that is dedicated to serving Veterans, and is honored to serve you. However, you may need to practice patience and persistence and stay focused on the goals of you and your loved ones.

Veteran Justice Outreach and Health Care for Reentry Veterans Specialist

Fayetteville VA Medical Center
2300 Ramsey Street **Fayetteville**, NC 28301
Curtis Murrow MSW 800.771.6106 x 7225
Cristen Koslik LCSW 800.771.6106 x 5742
Jason Klein 910.849.6057

W.G. Bill Hefner VA Medical Center
1601 Brenner Ave **Salisbury**, NC 28144
Carolyn Cardwell LCSW 704.213.4055
Kate Sullivan LCSW 704.762.5064

Charles George VA Medical Center
1100 Tunnel Road **Asheville**, NC 28805
Katherine Houghton LCSW 828.713.8356
Kay Holtzinger LCSW

Durham VA Medical Center
508 Fulton St **Durham**, NC 27705
Jeremy Brogden LCSW 919.452.6612
Lucas Vrbsky GED, LCSW 910.536.0122

Seeking Help After Release If you would like to get benefits or think you have a pending claim before the VA, it is best to get professional help to assist you. Many Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) have trained staff who can help you with your VA claim, and can legally represent your claim before the VA. Examples of Veterans Service Organizations include Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Association for Black Veterans, and the American Legion, just to name a few. Each county in NC has a Veteran Service Officer who can help with claims. Visit www.doa.state.nc.us/vets/locations/ to find a Veteran Service Officer near you. There is also a list starting on page 12 of this pamphlet.

Seeking Benefits On Your Own

Although we encourage you to seek the aid of a service representative, you may choose to apply for VA benefits on your own. Write your local VA Regional Office or find the forms online at: www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms1.htm You can also apply for certain benefits online at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>

Applying for VA Health Care and Benefits

To apply for benefits, you will need your DD214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). The programs staff or case managers at your facility may be able to assist you. You may download a copy of the Form SF-180 from <http://www.archives.gov/veterans>. A copy of this form is at the end of this guidebook.

The enrollment document (1010EZ) will determine your eligibility for VA healthcare benefits. This document is attached at the end of this booklet. Eligibility is determined by the character of your discharge from the military, the length of time you were on active duty, and the presence of a service-connected disability. The HCRV/VJO specialist will discuss eligibility with you when you meet and help you complete form 1010EZ. The outcome of your request for enrollment will provide you with facts concerning your eligibility for VA benefits. The HCRV/VJO specialist

will provide you with contact information for the VA medical center nearest you. Refer to the list of VA medical centers in North Carolina in Section 3: Resources.

You will receive a confirmation letter from the VA advising you of the status of your eligibility for benefits. This correspondence will be mailed to the address identified when you meet with the HCRV/VJO specialist. You will be determined as eligible, ineligible, or unable to determine as eligible. If you disagree with the determination, you may appeal the decision and submit documents in support of your claim.

Be sure to obtain a copy of your DD214 since this is an important document to submit if your eligibility is denied or more information is needed to confirm your eligibility for VA healthcare. Keep the original for your records and submit only a copy of your DD214.

If your eligibility is confirmed or if you want to contest the preliminary eligibility determination, visit the VA medical center of your choice to register for care. Make an appointment to meet with the contact person at the VA medical center so he or she can assist you with the registration process. You will need a picture identification in order to register for healthcare. You will be asked to update your information. At the time of registration you may schedule an appointment for primary care. You should also ask to be photographed for a VA identification card.

Make sure you receive an appointment with a primary care physician in a timely manner if you are prescribed medications. Typically the prison or jail will provide you with at least a 30 day supply of medication. In most cases you may be able to see a VA physician within 30 days. In case of an emergency, you may be seen in the emergency department at the VA medical center. Your primary care physician is an essential contact. You may request specialized services such as mental health treatment, substance use treatment, and other assistance from this physician.

Below are listing for the county Veteran Service Officers and Veteran Service Organizations that may be of assistance to you.

American Ex-Prisoners of War 1941 Wayne Lane Fayetteville 28304 910.425.2313

The American Legion 919.832.7506 P. O. Box 26657 Raleigh, NC 27611

336.631.5471 Federal Building, Rm 429 251 N. Main Street Winston-Salem 27155

American Veterans Of WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam(AMVETS)

336.251-0823 AMVETS 251 N. Main St., Room 414 Winston-Salem, NC 27155

Disabled American Veterans 919.833.5567 P. O. Drawer 28146 Raleigh, NC 27611

336.631.5481 Federal Building, Rm 318 251 N. Main Street Winston-Salem 27155

Marine Corps League 828.342.2024 130 Beverly Drive Franklin, NC 28734

Military Order Of The Purple Heart 919.828.2053 2420 Evers Drive Raleigh, NC 27610

336.251.0837 Federal Building, Room 104 251 N. Main Street Winston-Salem, NC 27155

Paralyzed Veterans Of America

336.251.0833 Federal Building, Room 424 251 N. Main Street Winston-Salem 27155

Veterans of Foreign Wars

336.251.0819 Federal Building, Rm 427 251 N. Main Street Winston-Salem 27155

Vietnam Veterans of American 910.673.4562 361 Longleaf Drive West End, NC 27376

Catholic War Veterans 828.298.7911 x 5331 VAMC 1100 Tunnel Road Asheville 28805

National Association for Black Veterans

910.346.4565 113D N. Marine Blvd. Jacksonville 28540

LISTING OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

County	Phone	Mailing	City	Zip
Alamance	336.570.6763	217 College St, Suite D	Graham	27253
Alexander	828.632.5411	621 Liledoun Rd, Box 8	Taylorsville	28681
Alleghany	336.372.4850	PO Box 366	Sparta	28675
Anson	704.694.4418	111 North Greene St.	Wadesboro	28170
Ashe	336.846.5575	150 Government Circle, Suite 2100	Jefferson	28640
Avery	828.733.8211	PO Box 640	Newland	28657
Beaufort	252.946.8016	1308 Highland Drive, Suite 104	Washington	27889
Bladen	910.862.6781	PO Box 512	Elizabethtown	28337
Brunswick	910.253.2233	PO Box 249	Bolivia	28422
Buncombe	828.250.6546	PO Box 7408	Asheville	28802
Burke	828.430.7136	301 East Meeting Street, Suite 2	Morganton	28655
Burke	828.439.4376	PO Box 219	Morganton	28680
Cabarrus	704.920.2869	PO Box 707	Concord	28026
Caldwell	828.757.1345	PO Box 2200	Lenoir	28645
Carteret	252.728.8440	3710-B John Platt Dr.	Morehead City	28557
Caswell	336.694.4141	PO Box 187	Yanceyville	27379
Catawba	828.322.6616	1985 Tate Blvd. S.E. Suite 113	Hickory	28602
Catawba	828.465.8255	PO Box 389	Newton	28658
Chatham	919.542.8202	15 South Street	Pittsboro	27312
Cherokee	828.835.8663	75 Peachtree Street	Murphy	28906
Clay	828.389.3355	PO Box 18	Hayesville	28904
Cleveland	704.484.4803	PO Box 1210	Shelby	28151
Columbus	910.640.6638	805 Pinckney Street	Whiteville	28472
Craven	252.636.6611	2818 Neuse Blvd. Suite 15	New Bern	28562
Cumberland	910.486.1551	255 Green St, Suite 903	Fayetteville	28306
Cumberland	910.677.2970	PO Box 1829	Fayetteville	28302
Cumberland	910.482.4131	214 Cochran Avenue	Fayetteville	28301
Davidson	336.242.2037	913 Greensboro St. Suite 101	Lexington	27292
Davie	336.753.6225	277 Meroney Street	Mocksville	27028
Duplin	910.296.2114	PO Box 950	Kenansville	28349
Durham	919.560.6672	115 Market St, Suite 205	Durham	27701
Durham	919.560.8387	414 E. Main St, 3rd Floor	Durham	27701
Edgecombe	252.641.7846	201 St. Andrews Street	Tarboro	27886

Forsyth	336.766.1496	2511 Neudorf Rd, Suite I	Clemmons	27012
Franklin	919.496.1939	PO Box 128	Louisburg	27549
Gaston	704.866.3606	965 Roberts Drive	Gastonia	28054
Graham	828.479.7961	12 North Main Street	Robbinsville	28771
Granville	919.693.1484	PO Box 906	Oxford	27565
Greene	252.747.7320	4144 Fort Run Rd.	Snow Hill	28580
Guilford	336.641.2957	201 W. Market St, Suite 108	Greensboro	27401
Guilford	336.641.7929	325 E. Russell Avenue, Rm 145	High Point	27260
Halifax	252.583.1688 x 2263 or Option 3	P.O. Box 646	Halifax	27839
Harnett	910.893.7574	P.O. Box 232	Lillington	27546
Haywood	828.452.6634	215 N. Main Street	Waynesville	28786
Haywood	828.646.6937	120 Main Street	Canton	28716
Henderson	828.697.4817	1200 Spartanburg Hwy, Suite 200	Hendersonville	28792
Hoke	910.875.2147	PO Box 152	Raeford	28376
Hyde	252.926.5280	PO Box 152	Swan Quarter	27885
Iredell	704.878.3135	PO Box 788	Statesville	28687
Iredell	704.664.3869	610 E Center Ave	Mooresville	28115
Jackson	828.631.2231	100 County Services Park	Sylva	28779
Johnston	919.989.5067	PO Box 1144	Smithfield	27577
Jones	252.448.1121	PO Box 424	Trenton	28585
Lee	919.776.0501 x 2209	1615 South 3rd Street	Sanford	27330
Lenoir	252.522.5050	1136 Hwy 258 N- Suite 101	Kinston	28504
Lincoln	704.736.8506	115 W. Main Street	Lincolnton	28092
Lumbee Tribe	910.522.2210	PO Box 2709	Pembroke	28372
Macon	828.349.2151	104 E. Main St, Suite 5	Franklin	28734
Madison	828.646.6937	120 Main Street	Canton	28716
Martin	252.789.4398	PO Box 882	Williamston	27892
McDowell	828.659.0833 x 233	100 Spaulding Road	Marion	28752
Mecklenburg	704.563.2037	5500 Executive Center Dr Suite 132	Charlotte	28212
Mecklenburg	704.336.3783	700 N. Tryon Street	Charlotte	28202
Mitchell	828.688.2200	130 Forest Service Dr. Suite C	Bakersville	28705
Montgomery	910.576.4711	203-A West Main St.	Troy	27371
Moore	910.947.3257	PO Box 905	Carthage	28327
Nash	252.977.3350	121 S. Fairview Road	Rocky Mount	27801
New Hanover	910.251.5704	3240 Burnt Mill Dr, Suite 2	Wilmington	28403
New	910.798.7611	230 Government Center Dr, Suite 36	Wilmington	28403

Hanover				
Northampton	252.534.2621	P.O. Box 74	Jackson	27845
Onslow	910.347.3309	521 Mill Avenue	Jacksonville	28540
Orange	919.245.2890	PO Box 8181	Hillsborough	27278
Pamlico	252.745.4086	828 Alliance Main Street	Bayboro	28515
Pender	910.270.5005	18676 US Hwy. 17	Burgaw	28443
Pender	910.259.1203	PO Box 177	Burgaw	28425
Person	336.597.7891	325 South Morgan St	Roxboro	27573
Pitt	252.355.9052	3740 South Evans St, Suite A	Greenville	27858
Pitt	252.902.3090	1717 West 5th St.	Greenville	27834
Polk	828.894.0003	75 Carmel Lane	Columbus	28722
Randolph	336.318.6909	158 Worth Street	Asheboro	27203
Richmond	910.997.8232	PO Box 504	Rockingham	28380
Robeson	910.671.3070	113 W. Eighth Street	Lumberton	28358
Rockingham	336.342.8449	PO Box 202	Wentworth	27375
Rowan	704.216.8138	1120A S Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave	Salisbury	28144
Rowan	704.638.4200 x2304	PO Box 599	Salisbury	28145
Rutherford	828. 287.6185	303 Fairground Rd.	Spindale	28160
Sampson	910.592.2862	PO Box 731	Clinton	28329
Scotland	910.277.2597	PO Box 489	Laurinburg	28353
Stanly	704.986.3694	1000 N. First St. Suite 6	Albemarle	28001
Stokes	336.593.2468	Courthouse, Room 156	Danbury	27016
Surry	336.783.8820	1218 State Street, Suite 700	Mt. Airy	27030
Swain	828.488.9273 x2205	PO Box 1183	Bryson City	28713
Transylvania	828.884.3276	203 E Morgan St, Room 237	Brevard	28712
Tyrrell	252.796.0000	P.O. Box 449	Columbia	27925
Union	704.283-3807	500 North Main St Suite 629	Monroe	28112
Vance	252.438.4619	300 South Garnett St, Rm 115	Henderson	27536
Wake	919.662.3018	315 Bellaris St.	Garner	27529
Wake	919.212.8387	3000 Falstaff Road	Raleigh	27610
Warren	252.257.3385	109 S. Main Street	Warrenton	27589
Washington	252.799.9764	PO Box 1007	Plymouth	27962
Watauga	828.265.8065	331 Queen Street	Boone	28607
Wayne	919.731.1490	P.O. Box 227	Goldsboro	27533
Wilkes	336.651.7327	110 North Street	Wilkesboro	28697
Wilson	252.237.2422	2421B Airport Blvd NW	Wilson	27896
Yadkin	336.679.8209	PO Box 336	Yadkinville	27055
Yancey	828.682.1514	110 Town Square Drive- Room 12	Burnsville	28714

SECTION 3: GETTING STARTED

This section includes resources that can help you get back on your feet. Remember to check the phone book for local, county, and state agencies that know what services are available in the area to assist you. Some organizations may have waiting lists, require an interview, or have specific rules about whom they serve. It is best if you **start asking about services and requirements now**, so that you will be prepared when you are released. You may even ask if your name can be put on a waiting list when you get closer to your release date.

TOLL- FREE NUMBERS Crisis and other toll-free numbers are often listed in the front cover or first few pages of the phone book. You may also want to check under "Social Services" in the blue or yellow pages for hotlines and local numbers.

- US Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers: 877.222.8387
- VA Benefits: 800.827.1000
- Education Benefits: 888.442.4551
- CHAMPVA: 800.733.8387
- Persian Gulf War Helpline: 800.749.8387
- National Coalition for Homeless Veterans www.nchv.org 800.838.4357
- National Homeless Veterans Call Center 877.424.3838
- Veterans Crisis Line 800.273.8255 (TALK)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration Treatment Referral Helpline 800.662.4357 (HELP) <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- NC 4 VETS (NC Division of Veterans Affairs Resource Line 844.624.8387 (NC4.VETS)
- Health Benefits: 800.222.8387
- Debt Management: 800.827.0648
- Health Eligibility Center: 800.929.8387
- National AIDS Hotline: 800.822.7422

WHERE TO START Check the local phone book yellow pages under "Homeless" or "Social Service Organizations" for a list of many local organizations that offer different services, which may include clothing, public transportation tokens, emergency shelter, and more. You may need to contact several agencies to find all the services you need. Services provided by *government* agencies are listed in the blue pages found near the front of the phone book. Check with your local Public Assistance Office to find out what programs are available and what their guidelines are. We have included some guidance below, but your local organizations are your best resources. **Remember, it never hurts to ask!**

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 and referrals for medical and mental health care, long-term transitional residential assistance, case management and employment assistance with linkage to permanent housing. The coordinator for

the homeless program at each medical center is a valuable resource for information and referrals to housing programs. Resources vary from location to location. Make sure you contact the homeless coordinator at the VA medical center where you receive care if you need housing assistance.

This section includes ways to locate emergency shelter, transitional 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 should ask about applying as soon as possible. If you are released and find yourself homeless, emergency assistance is available by calling 1.877.4AID.VET (1.877.424.3838) or at <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/NationalCenter.asp>.

NCDPS County Resource Guide The N.C. Department of Public Safety County Resource Guide was developed by the NCDPS Office of Research and Planning/Office of Transition Services to provide a searchable database of community resources in each of North Carolina's 100 counties. The database contains contact information for many core local, state, and federal agencies, as well as various faith-based and community-based service organizations that provide assistance to released offenders and/or offenders under correctional supervision to support a successful transition into their community. You may want to ask your case manager about a county specific guide.

Ineligible for Veteran's benefits? Free or low-cost healthcare may be available.

Department of Social Services can tell you where to find healthcare facilities for the homeless. Check the phone book blue pages under local, city, or county government for the local number.

National Healthcare for the Homeless Council has a list of healthcare providers working with homeless people across the nation. For a list of providers, go to www.nhchc.org

Free clinics are run by many local organizations and communities. Look in the phone book blue pages under Public Health to contact the local government office for clinics in your area. You may also contact the NC Association of Free Clinics at www.ncfreeclinics.org or at PO Box 25893 Winston-Salem, NC 27114.

Mental Health Services, Substance Use Disorder Treatment, Support Groups

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill lists community mental health service providers at www.nami.org or call 800.950.6264.

Mental Health America offers support groups, rehabilitation, socialization, and housing services through 340 community organizations located across the country. Call 800.969.6642 or find a local office online at www.nmha.org.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration operates a national treatment referral helpline at 800.662.4357 (HELP) or online at <http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

Alcoholics Anonymous Check the phonebook for a local number or visit <http://www.aa.org>

Narcotics Anonymous 855.227.6262 or visit <http://www.na.org>.

Employment is one of the biggest barriers between you and successful re-entry. Finding a job may be hard and can seem overwhelming, but it is possible and very important! When released you may find that you are completely starting over. Don't wait until you get out to start thinking about employment. **Start planning now!** Ask for job counseling and training while incarcerated

so you are prepared to work when released. Obtain and keep copies of any education, training, or trade certifications you may have from your work or training while you are incarcerated. These could make a difference in getting hired. You also may be able to obtain references relevant to your employment.

NC Department of Commerce provides three major services: employment service, unemployment insurance, and labor market information. Services are provided through a variety of access points including local and branch offices, call centers, internet, and the central office. NC Department of Commerce is recognized as a public service agency staffed with professionals who can provide selection and referral services for employers and assist applicants in applying for jobs in the local area or across the state. **Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)** and **Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists** are able to help Veterans find and keep jobs. LVERs are located with the local offices. **NC Commerce Reentry Initiative** provides resources and assistance to job seekers with criminal records to help them overcome the barriers toward employment created by a criminal record.

The State of North Carolina has a **Vocational Rehabilitation** program that helps people with disabilities find and keep jobs. Apply for these services immediately after your release. Look in the phone book blue pages under "Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)," then "Vocational Rehabilitation," or search the internet for "Vocational Rehabilitation" in your state.

Veterans Industries and Compensated Work Therapy Programs The VA offers structured work opportunities and supervised therapeutic housing for at-risk and homeless veterans with physical, mental health, and addiction problems. The VA contracts with private industry and 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. You will need to get a referral from your primary care provider at your local VA medical center after your release.

Financial Help If you are unemployed with little or no income, you may be able to get **food stamps**. A person may normally qualify for \$85 to \$100 worth of food stamps per month. You should contact your local Department of Social Services office to ask for an application. For more information look online at www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/foodstamp/index.htm

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits can be applied for before your release, even though you won't receive the benefits until after you are released. Food Stamps can be applied for together with SSI. Normally, it takes about three months to review an application, so apply well before your release date. It is best to get help filling out the application. For detailed information or assistance, call 1.800.772.1213, call or your local social security administration office listed in the phone book blue pages, or go to: <http://www.ssa.gov/>

Other programs may be available in your area. Check the community services section of your phonebook. Look for listings such as the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities or Catholic Social Services, the Salvation Army, United Way, 2-1-1, and other non-profit

providers. 2-1-1 provides free and confidential information and referral. Call 2-1-1 for help with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling and more. <http://www.211.org/>

Women Veterans Most VA **Medical Centers** and readjustment offices have a designated Women Veterans Coordinator to assist women veterans in accessing VA benefit programs and healthcare services. Most VA Medical Centers have a Women's Health Clinic to help meet the needs of female Veterans. Look online at www.womenshealth.va.gov/ for more information.

SECTION 4: RESOURCES

Emergency Assistance If you are in a medical crisis, call 911 for immediate medical and mental health assistance.

If you have thoughts of harming yourself, call the **Veterans Crisis Hotline** at **1.800.273.8255**.
Press 1 to be connected to the Veterans Crisis Line

To find homeless Veteran service providers in your area, call the **National Call Center for Homeless Veterans** hotline at 1.877.424.3838.

NCServes is a coordinated network of services, resources, and care (public, private and non-profit organizations) serving Veterans, service members and their families. **Coastal** 844.435.1838 **Central** 866.249.6656 **Metrolina** 855.425.8838 **Western** 855.962.8387

Healthcare VA Medical Centers and VA Community Based Outreach Clinics in NC
Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's) are designed to provide access to healthcare and routine care in areas distant from the medical center. Certain areas of the state may be geographically closer to VAs in different states (Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina). A list of VA facilities is available in the last section of the Federal Benefits for Veterans book and can be accessed online.

Charles George VA Medical Center

1100 Tunnel Road Asheville, NC 28805 800.932.6408
CBOCs in Franklin, Rutherfordton, and Hickory

Durham VA Medical Center

508 Fulton St Durham, NC 27705 888.878.6890
CBOCs in Durham, Raleigh, Greenville, and Morehead City.

Fayetteville VA Medical Center

2300 Ramsey Street Fayetteville, NC 28301 800.771.6106
CBOCs in Supply, Hamlet, Jacksonville, Pembroke, Wilmington and Goldsboro.

W.G. Bill Hefner VA Medical Center

1601 Brenner Ave Salisbury, NC 28144 800.469.8262
CBOCs in Charlotte, Hickory and Winston-Salem.

Vet Centers

If you have served in any combat zone, or experienced military sexual trauma, Vet Centers are in your community to help you and your family with readjustment counseling and outreach services. The Vet Centers in North Carolina are listed below:

Charlotte Vet Center

223 S. Brevard Street Suite 103
Charlotte, NC 28202
704.333.6107

Fayetteville Vet Center

4140 Ramsey Street Suite 110
Fayetteville, NC 28311
910.488.6252

Raleigh Vet Center

8851 Ellstree Lane, Suite 122
Raleigh, NC 27617
919.361.6419

Greensboro Vet Center

3515 W Market St., Suite 120
Greensboro, NC 27406
336.333.5366 Or 877.927.8387

Greenville Vet Center

150 Arlington Blvd
Greenville, NC 27856
252.355.7920

Jacksonville Vet Center

110A Branchwood Dr
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910.577.1100

Housing

It is important to know that you have a place to go when released. The first step in returning to the community is finding a place to stay. A stable housing plan should provide the best available support and opportunity to make a successful reentry. This section includes ways to locate emergency shelters, transitional 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 should ask about applying as soon as possible. If you are released and find yourself homeless, emergency assistance is available. Some options may serve as a stepping stone until additional options become available.

Salvation Army - provides services, including shelter and transitional housing, for homeless individuals and families. For available local services and information, check the phone book for the local office of the Salvation Army or contact the organization online at www.salvationarmyusa.org

United Way - provides a variety of services through local organizations. Check the phone book for a local post or locate local organizations online at www.unitedway.org

Local churches and faith-based organizations, such as Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, and Volunteers of America, may have a variety of programs to assist you. Find these organizations by calling your county or city Department of Social Services. Check the blue pages of the phone book for the number.

EMERGENCY HOUSING

To find out if there are homeless Veteran service providers in your area, contact the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Team at your local medical center. Look in the phone book **yellow pages** under "Social Service Organizations" for local shelters or organizations that may be able to help.

Look in the phone book **blue pages** under local, city, or county government Department of Social Services or "Human Services" or call the County Commissioner's Office for information about local low-income housing coalitions or homeless advocacy groups.

To find a list of emergency shelters for men, women and families in every state, check with programs staff or unit manager. There are several web sites that list emergency homeless shelters across the country. www.hud.gov/homeless/hmlsagen.cfm
<http://www.shelterlistings.org> <http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org>

The local Health Care for Homeless Veterans program will know about resources in your area.

Transitional Housing

Oxford House is a self-run, self-supported recovery house program for individuals recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction. Oxford Houses assure an alcohol and drug-free living environment. There are 150 houses in North Carolina, with locations in 28 cities. Individuals living in a house are expected to participate in a recovery program in the community during their residence. For more information view www.oxfordhouse.nc.org or contact the Oxford House Criminal Justice Outreach at 919.247.7831 or 919.395.8192

There are other transitional housing options run by community and faith based agencies.

Long-term or Permanent Housing

Public housing waiting lists can be long, but the length of time can vary from place to place. Even if you are not sure where you want to live yet, apply to get on the waiting list so that you have as many options as possible. To learn how to apply, contact the local housing authority listed in the phone book blue pages under "Local Government, Public Housing Authority."

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Through the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program, VA aims to improve very low-income Veteran families' housing stability by providing supportive services in, or transitioning to, permanent housing. VA funds community-based organizations to provide eligible Veteran families with outreach, case management and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits. 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 Veterans' families stay in or acquire permanent housing on a sustainable basis. Although some of the SSVF providers accept self-referrals, generally they would like for a Veteran to start with the VA. While the current federal definition of homelessness does not recognize periods of incarceration as homelessness, without a stable home plan you may be eligible for services due to being at risk for homelessness.

VA Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD) has the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination. Most GPD programs charge 30% of your income. While it is a good idea to connect with your local VA Health Care for Homeless Veterans program, a stamp is a small investment in your future.

Name & Location of GPD Program	Phone Number	Comments
ABCCM Restoration Quarters 1329 Tunnel Rd Asheville, NC 28805	828.299.8701	Men. www.abccm.org/ministries/veterans
Steadfast House (ABCCM) 30 Cumberland Ave Asheville, NC 28801	828.259.5365	Women's Program. Women with young children welcome. http://www.abccm.org/ministries/women
First at Blue Ridge (Vets First) PO Box 40 Ridgecrest, NC 28770	828.669.0011	For those in recovery from substance use disorders. Co-ed. www.firstinc.org
Family Forum (Independence Place) 3501 E Independence Blvd Charlotte, NC 28805	(704) 817-8049	Men. http://familyforumforhomelessvets.org/
Maple Court (Volunteers of America) 207 Commons Blvd Durham, NC 27704	919.477.0571	Independent apartments. Co-ed. http://www.voacarolinas.org/vol-maple-crt
TROSA 1820 James St Durham, NC 27707	919.419.1059	For those in recovery from substance use disorders. Work oriented therapeutic community. www.trosainc.org
Servant Center 1312 Lexington Ave Greensboro, NC 27403	336.275.8585	For those with disabilities and receiving or applying for benefits. Men. http://www.theservantcenter.org
Caring Services Vet Safety Net 102 Chestnut Drive High Point, NC 27262	336.886.5594	For those in recovery from substance use disorders. Men. www.caring-services.org
Arthur Cassell Transitional House 1022 True Lane High Point, NC 27260	336.885.2166	For those in recovery from substance use disorders and/or mental health disorders. Men. www.odm-hp.org/ch.htm
Veterans Helping Veterans Heal 3614 N Glenn Ave Winston-Salem, NC 27105	336.744.1313	For those in recovery from substance use disorders and/or mental health disorders. Men. www.vhvh.org
Sgt Eugene Ashely Center 2002 Colwell Ave Wilmington, NC 28403	910.362.0292 910.763.4424	For those in recovery from substance use disorders and/or mental health disorders. Men. http://www.ashleycenter.org/

Checklist

Using This Guide

- Ask about classes and resources to help you plan for your release.
- Make a list of your needs.
- Make a list of who may be able to help you.
- Write letters and/or contact organizations by phone or email.
- Write down the steps you take so that you do not repeat them.
- Know where to call toll-free for help.
- Contact organizations about what services they have to offer.
- Think about your housing needs and gather information about what is available locally.
- Learn about job resources and create a plan to find a job.
- Learn about health issues, and what services are available.
- Learn about the resources available for substance use and mental health treatment in your area.
- Learn about your options to get financial help.
- Begin to take care of other legal issues.
- Learn about homeless Veterans services.
- Learn about resources for Women Veterans.
- If you are not currently receiving benefits, find out if you can or should be.
- If you are receiving benefits, notify the VA when you go to prison to avoid an overpayment.
- Contact a Veteran Service Officer to represent you and help you file a claim.
- Apply for apportionment so that some of the money withheld may be given to eligible family members.

Thank you for your service to our country.