

VA



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

JAMES J. PETERS

STUDENT VETERANS COALITION

Developed in partnership with the VA Healthcare System

VetEd NYC:

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR VETERANS
TRANSITIONING TO COLLEGE**



Transitioning from Military to Civilian and Academic Life

This guide serves as your key to unlocking the numerous opportunities and support systems available to aid you in this significant journey.

Within the New York City metropolitan area (NYC), you'll find a wealth of resources tailored specifically to Veterans like you. From housing options and career guidance, to healthcare services, benefits assistance, and community networks, this guide provides quick access to the areas where you may need assistance.

Explore the Veteran-specific programs, organizations, and initiatives that exist to empower you. Let this guide be your trusted companion, providing you with essential information and connecting you to the resources and opportunities that will pave the way for your success.



HOUSING

Finding suitable housing is a crucial aspect of your transition from military to civilian life. The New York City area offers a variety of housing resources tailored to support Veterans like you.

It is important to know that landlords in NYC must recognize your BAH as a "lawful source of income." Discrimination against Veterans using BAH to afford rent is illegal.

Explore the following resources to assist you in securing housing as you embark on this new chapter. Here's where you can find affordable housing and rental properties:

- NYC Housing Connect: This valuable platform provides listings and lotteries for affordable rentals and homeownership opportunities.
- Apartments.com: Consider using this popular apartment search website, which provides comprehensive listings and search filters to simplify your apartment search process.





Here are helpful organizations that can assist if you are facing homelessness:

- **Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF)**: Through the following partner programs, SSVF works with veterans and their families to obtain VA and other public benefits, including housing assistance:
 - **HELP USA**
 - **Jericho Project**
 - **Services for the Underserved (SUS)**
 - **Volunteers of America**
- **HUD-VASH**: This collaborative program between HUD and VA combines HUD housing vouchers with VA supportive services to help Veterans who are homeless and their families find and sustain permanent housing.
- **Black Veterans for Social Justice**: This organization provides housing support, counseling, and employment services to Veterans.
- **Worldwide Veterans and Family Services**: This organization offers housing resources, financial assistance, and supportive services to Veterans and their families.
- **Tunnel to Towers - Homeless Veteran Program**: Their National Case Management Network works to determine immediate housing needs, find safe and dignified accommodations, and provide housing accommodations.

These resources are designed to assist you in navigating the housing market and finding housing options that align with your needs. Remember to explore additional local resources to enhance your housing search and support you during your transition.



CAREER & EMPLOYMENT

Securing meaningful employment is a pivotal aspect of your transition from Military to civilian life. The following resources are dedicated to assisting Veterans like yourself in navigating the job market and preparing for successful careers:

- **VetConnectPro**: Utilize this valuable tool hosted by the NYC Department of Veterans' Services to create a compelling resume and explore job opportunities. VetConnectPro offers a user-friendly platform that streamlines your job search.
- **FourBlock**: Their career readiness program is designed to equip Veterans with the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transition to professional careers. Benefit from comprehensive career development workshops, mentorship opportunities, and networking events to enhance your career readiness.
- **American Corporate Partners**: Through their mentoring program, you will gain access to a network of professional mentors who provide guidance and support as you prepare for and transition into the workforce. This program offers insights and connections to prepare you to navigate the job market with confidence.
- **Viscardi Center**: The center offers a range of employment services and programs tailored specifically to individuals with disabilities, including Veterans. Explore their resources, career counseling, and job placement assistance to help you find meaningful employment.
- **America Works**: Their comprehensive services include job placement, vocational training, and ongoing support to help you achieve your career goals.
- Contact your college or university career service office for help with your resume and job search!

These employment resources are designed to support you throughout your career. Take advantage of these programs, platforms, and organizations to enhance your job search, develop essential skills, and establish a strong foundation for a successful professional career.

WELL-BEING: MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Your health and well-being are of utmost importance during your transition from military to civilian life. The following resources are dedicated to providing comprehensive medical, dental, and mental health support for Veterans like yourself:

- **James J. Peters Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center**: Located in Bronx, NY, this medical center serves Veterans in the surrounding NYC metropolitan area. It offers primary care and specialty health services. Contact (718) 584-9000 ext. 5353 to determine your eligibility for services and to access the care you need.
- **Vet Centers**: Vet Centers are located throughout the surrounding communities and provide free mental health assistance in a non-medical setting. Call (718) 367-3500 to reach the Bronx Vet Center, and (914) 682-6250 for the Westchester Vet Center.
- **Steven A. Cohen Military Family Center**: This center offers free, compassionate care for Veterans and military families who are dealing with the long-term effects of military service and other life stresses. They provide support for relationship difficulties, school problems, unemployment, relocation issues, and more. To schedule an appointment, please call (855) 698-4677 or email militaryfamilyclinic@nyulangone.org.
- **Veterans Crisis Line**: Available 24/7, the Veterans Crisis Line offers free and confidential support. Simply dial 988 and press 1 to connect with trained professionals who can assist you during times of crisis.
- **Union Community Health Center**: This health center provides both medical and dental services, ensuring comprehensive care for Veterans. For more information and appointments, call (718) 220-2020.
- **BronxCare Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Health Center**: Specifically tailored to meet the healthcare needs of Veterans, this clinic offers a range of medical and dental services. Contact (718) 503-7715 to register and set up an appointment.
- **NY Presbyterian Military Family Wellness Center**: This center specializes in providing care and support for military families and Veterans. Call (212) 821-0783 to make an appointment.

Whether you require primary care, specialized treatments, mental health support, or dental services, these organizations are here to help you maintain your well-being throughout your transition and beyond.

EDUCATION

As a Veteran transitioning to civilian life, accessing education and training opportunities can open doors to new career paths. The following resources highlight various VA education benefits available to assist you:

- **Post 9/11 GI Bill® (Ch. 33)**: This program helps eligible Veterans cover the costs of college, graduate school, and training programs. The VA's website will provide you with detailed information on how to file for eligibility and make the most of this valuable educational support.
- **Veteran Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31)**: This program aims to assist Veterans with service-connected disabilities in exploring employment options and addressing their education or training needs. This resource will guide you through the application process and provide you with valuable information about the program.
- **Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance (DEA - Chapter 35)**: Provides educational assistance to eligible dependents and survivors of Veterans, helping them pursue their educational and vocational goals.
- **Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 30)**: This is an additional program that provides educational benefits to eligible military service members and Veterans, helping them cover the costs of education and training programs.
- **Yellow Ribbon Program**: Veterans who qualify for the Post 9/11 GI Bill® at the 100% benefit level may also be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program. This program provides additional financial support for schools with tuition and fees that exceed the coverage offered by the Post 9/11 GI Bill®.





- **Edith Nourse Rogers Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) Scholarship**: This scholarship offers additional benefits to eligible Veterans utilizing the Post-9/11 GI Bill or dependents using the Fry Scholarship. It provides up to 9 months (or \$30,000) of training benefits specifically tailored for high-demand fields.
- **Veterans Tuition Awards**: VTA are grants available to eligible Veterans pursuing full- or part-time studies in approved undergraduate or graduate degree programs or vocational training programs within New York State.
- The **Recruitment Incentive and Retention Program (RIRP)** is a New York State program designed to recruit and retain members for the State Military Forces (Army and Air National Guard, and Naval Militia). This competitive program will pay the cost of tuition up to SUNY tuition rates per semester.
- **ArmyIgniteED** is the virtual gateway for all eligible Active Duty, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers to request Tuition Assistance (TA).
- The **Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606) (MGIB-SR)** provides educational assistance in the form of monthly payments to qualified Service Members enrolled in VA-approved education and training.

These VA education benefits are designed to assist you in achieving your education and career goals. Whether you're pursuing a degree, vocational training, or other educational opportunities, these programs can provide crucial financial support and resources. Take advantage of these resources and explore additional VA programs that may be available to further support your educational journey.



The following colleges and universities are members of the James J. Peters Student Veterans Coalition and proudly work to support Veterans in their transition to academic life.

SCHOOL	DESCRIPTION
<u>CUNY, Bronx Community College</u>	The Office of Veteran and Military Resources (VMR) provides services for Veterans, current service members, and their dependents who are enrolled at Bronx Community College. From the college application all the way to graduation, we introduce student-Veterans to the resources they need to be successful. We also help them integrate with the rest of the student and civilian population.
<u>CUNY, Hostos Community College</u>	The Hostos Office of Veterans Affairs (HOVA) is proud to serve our Veteran, Military and dependent population. HOVA strives to provide each Veteran with personalized support that will assist them in their transition from the military into academia. HOVA provides a diverse array of services and resources to address the barriers and obstacles that can hinder the Veteran's academic progress. The key mission of HOVA is to assist each Veteran to achieve their academic goals by providing them with a strong support system and centralized Vet-friendly services.
<u>CUNY, LaGuardia Community College</u>	Veterans Services is privileged to welcome Veterans, Reservists, Military personnel and their families to our College community. We value your service and are here to help ease your transition from the Military to college life. Our team understands the unique challenges you face as a student Veteran, and we arm you with the support and resources needed to meet your personal and academic goals.



CUNY, Lehman College

The Office of Veterans and Military Affairs is committed to supporting the VA student's community in pursuit of their higher learning degree for their professional development by identifying, addressing, and advocating for their evolving needs. We do this by exceptional programming and mentorship. The office is a resource center for topics related to your VA benefits as well as your academic affairs. We support Service members, Veterans and dependents in applying for and managing your VA Education Benefits.

Fordham University

Our main goal is to ease the military transition to civilian life, into higher education, and finally to professional career. The Military-to-civilian transition is too great a task for a single DoD transition program, and with support services siloed, there is no coordinated effort to support Military-connected students as they navigate from service to the classroom to career. Therefore, institutions of Higher Learning (Fordham University) must employ a coordinated, whole-of-community approach to tailor services to the unique needs of Military-connected students at every phase in the Military-to-civilian transition.

Manhattan University

Commitments to academic excellence and career preparation, intentional advising and unwavering support, and community formation and individual well-being form the heart of Manhattan College's Veterans Success Programs.

<u>Monroe University</u>	
<u>University of Mount Saint Vincent</u>	<p>Our Military and Veterans Services honors, supports, and empowers Military-affiliated students, Veterans, and their families on their educational journey. Recognizing the unique experiences and sacrifices of those who have served our country, we offer holistic advising services, coupled with an engaged community that ensures you have all the tools and resources necessary for academic, professional, and personal success.</p>



DISABILITY

If you're a Veteran facing disability challenges, numerous resources are available to provide assistance and support. The following organizations and programs are dedicated to helping Veterans apply for and access disability benefits and services:

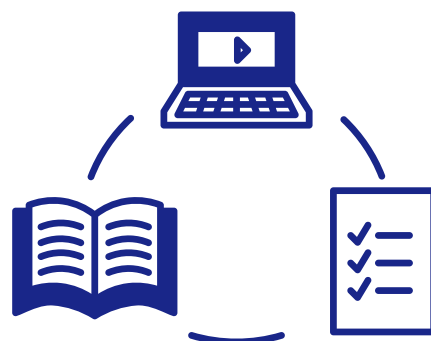
- **New York State Department of Veterans' Services**: This department offers support in filing a claim for disability compensation. Book an appointment by calling (888) 838-7697 or [click here](#). They can guide you through the process and ensure you receive the benefits you're entitled to.
- **DAV (Disabled American Veterans)**: DAV provides a range of services and support for disabled Veterans. They assist with benefits claims, transportation to medical appointments, employment resources, and more.
- **VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars)**: VFW offers a variety of programs and services for Veterans, including assistance with disability claims and access to resources tailored to disabled Veterans.
- **American Legion**: The American Legion offers support and guidance in filing for disability benefits, connecting with VA healthcare, and accessing other resources.
- **Veteran Benefits Administration**: The VBA is responsible for administering disability compensation programs. They provide comprehensive information and resources related to disability benefits.





- **NYC Office of Disability Services:** The NYC Office of Disability Services provides support and resources for disabled individuals, including Veterans. Explore their website to access information on disability rights, benefits, and services available in the NYC area.
- **Wounded Warrior Project:** WWP offers a wide range of programs and services to support Veterans with disabilities. They provide assistance with benefits claims, mental health support, physical rehabilitation, and more.
- **Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America:** IAVA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. They provide assistance with VA benefits claims, mental health resources, employment support, and advocacy.
- **Institute for Career Development:** ICD offers vocational training and job placement assistance for individuals with disabilities, including Veterans. They provide customized programs to help you develop new skills and achieve your career goals.

These resources are committed to supporting Veterans with disabilities, ensuring you have access to the benefits, services, and opportunities you deserve. Reach out to these organizations to explore the support they offer and find the resources that best suit your needs.



STAYING SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Transitioning from Military service to civilian life can be a challenging process, and maintaining social connections is crucial for a successful transition. Staying socially connected can provide a sense of belonging, support, and community, which are vital for overall well-being. Here are some reasons why staying socially connected is important:

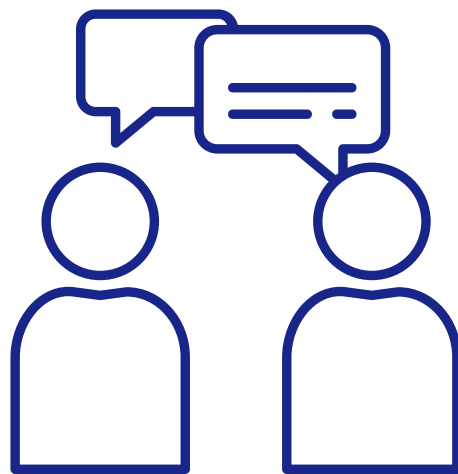
- **Sense of Belonging**: Building connections with fellow Veterans and community members can help create camaraderie. By engaging in social activities, you can find others who share similar experiences and understand the challenges you may face during the transition.
- **Emotional Support**: Social connections provide a valuable support system, allowing you to share your thoughts, concerns, and experiences with others who can provide empathy and guidance. Having a strong support network can help reduce feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression.
- **Networking Opportunities**: Building a diverse network of contacts can open doors to various opportunities, including employment prospects, educational resources, and mentorship programs. By staying socially connected, you can tap into the knowledge, skills, and experiences of others who may assist you in your post-Military endeavors.





To help you stay socially connected, here are some valuable resources and organizations:

- **Team RWB**: Team RWB offers a mobile app that connects Veterans with in-person and online health and wellness events. It provides a platform to engage in physical activities, connect with fellow Veterans, and build meaningful relationships.
- **OURVETERANS.NYC**: This platform serves as a public listing of events and information specifically intended for Veterans and their family members in the NYC Metro area. It offers a comprehensive directory of resources, support groups, and social events tailored to the needs of Veterans.
- **Student Veterans of America (SVA)**: Connect with your school's chapter of SVA, a national organization dedicated to supporting student Veterans during their transition to higher education. SVA provides community, resources, and advocacy for student Veterans across the country.
- **Local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)** and **American Legion**: Reach out to your local chapters of the VFW and the American Legion. These organizations offer social opportunities, community service projects, and advocacy for Veterans.





- **Bronx Music Heritage Center**: Engage with the Bronx Music Heritage Center, which offers a range of music programs, performances, and cultural events.
- **Center for Traditional Music and Dance**: Explore the Center for Traditional Music and Dance, which celebrates and preserves traditional music, dance, and cultural heritage.
- **DE-CRUIT**: This organization utilizes theater and storytelling techniques to help Veterans navigate the transition process. Their programs focus on personal growth, self-expression, and building connections within the Veteran community.
- **Exit 12 Dance Company**: This contemporary dance group composed of Veterans and military family members uses dance as a tool for storytelling, healing, and creating connections within the community.
- **Poetic Theater**: Their Veteran Voices Workshop brings together artists, performers, and Veterans to explore and share experiences through poetry and theater providing a unique outlet for self-expression and connection.
- **Theater Development Fund**: The Theater Development Fund offers discounted tickets to Veterans groups.
- **VetTix**: Vet Tix offers access to sporting events, concerts, performing arts, educational and family activities with an online sign-up process, verification of service, and a small delivery fee.
- **Women Veterans Empowered and Thriving**: This organization offers mentorship programs, educational resources, and events designed to enhance the well-being and success of women Veterans.

OTHER RESOURCES

During your transition from Military service to civilian life, there are additional resources available to assist you in accessing benefits and addressing any concerns related to your Military service. Here are some frequent topics that can provide guidance and support:

Obtaining Military Service and Medical Records

It is essential to have a copy of your final Military service and medical records, as they are crucial for accessing benefits and services. A copy of your Military service records can be requested from the National Archives.

Filing for a Discharge Upgrade

If you believe that your discharge characterization from the Military does not accurately reflect your service or circumstances, you have the option to pursue a discharge upgrade. A discharge upgrade can impact your eligibility for certain benefits and opportunities. There are resources available to assist you through this process. Consider the following options:

- **Contact your local Veterans Service Organization (VSO):** VSOs have trained personnel who can guide you through the discharge upgrade process, provide support, and help gather necessary documentation.
- **Seek legal assistance:** Consider consulting with a lawyer who specializes in Military law or Veterans' issues. They can provide legal advice, review your case, and help you navigate the discharge upgrade process.

Please note that the discharge upgrade process may vary depending on your specific circumstances and the branch of the Military in which you served. It is recommended to consult with a knowledgeable professional or organization to ensure you have the most accurate information for your situation.





VetConnectNYC

The New York City Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) connects service members, Veterans, survivors, caregivers, and Military families to services at partner organizations, including Veteran service organizations, non-profit community organizations, and government agencies through the **VetConnectNYC** platform. Complete the form on their website and a DVS Care Coordinator will contact you in 3-5 business days.

Veteran Service Officer

VSOs are trained professionals who assist Veterans and their families in navigating the process of accessing and securing benefits and services provided by the VA. They play a crucial role in helping Veterans understand and apply for healthcare, disability compensation, education benefits, and other support programs. VSOs provide personalized guidance, advocacy, and support, ensuring that Veterans receive the benefits they deserve and easing the burden of navigating the VA system. VSOs are often affiliated with a government or private organization.

Look up your closest VSOs at any of the following: **New York State Department of Veterans' Services**, **American Legion**, **Veterans of Foreign Wars**, **AMVETS**, **Vietnam Veterans of America**, **Disabled American Veterans**, and **Paralyzed Veterans of America**.

Remember, these resources are meant to provide guidance and support during your transition, and they can help you navigate the complexities of assessing benefits and addressing discharge-related concerns. Utilize them as valuable tools to ensure you receive the support and recognition you deserve for your Military service.

James J. Peters VA Medical Center
130 W. Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468
(718) 584-9000 ext. 5353

To make an appointment at JJP VAMC



VA New York Regional Office
245 W. Houston Street, New York, NY 10014
(800) 827-1000

To learn more about applying for VA benefits



Bronx Vet Center
2471 Morris Avenue, Bronx NY 10468
(718) 367-3500

Westchester Vet Center
117 East Stevens Avenue 2nd Floor Valhalla, NY 10595
(914) 682-6250

