



MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS
(MDVA)

**COMMUNITY
PARTNER DIGITAL
COMMUNICATIONS
TOOLKIT**

SEPTEMBER | 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- MDVA Mission
- Toolkit Purpose
- Instructions
- Key Partners
- Veteran Population Data
- Communicating Who We Are
- Get Connected to MDVA
- Sample Letter/Email
- Downloadable Materials
- Maryland General Assembly/Legislative Process
- Requested Resources
- 2022 Military/Veteran Awareness Day and Months
- Contact Our Team





MDVA MISSION

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs was created by the State Legislature in 1999 as an executive agency with the mission of assisting veterans, active duty service members, their families and dependents, in securing benefits earned through military service. The Department's origin follows the history of the Maryland Veterans Commission back to 1924, when the Soldiers' Relief Fund Commission was formed to administer a State relief fund for disabled veterans of World War I.

PURPOSE

Thank you for helping communicate about the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs. Community partners who support and advocate for our programs as well as for VA benefits helps improve awareness of resources within our veteran and military connected community.

The purpose of this toolkit is to help you and your organization communicate to constituents the many resources, programs, and benefits available to veterans and their families

THANK
YOU





INSTRUCTIONS

Read

Read the toolkit contents

Copy

Copy slides, social media posts, and graphics to use at events, on social media and websites

Share

Share the talking points and MDVA 101 Video with constituents in your community

Consistency

Please refrain from editing toolkit content or posts

Ask

Contact MDVA if you have questions about the toolkit or how to share content



KEY PARTNERS

Federal, state and local governments

Veteran commissions, collaboratives, councils, and networks, as well as federal, state, and local government agencies

Private sector and nonprofits

Community based nonprofit and faith based organizations, private sector businesses and employers, employee veteran affinity groups

Federal, state, and local officials

Elected officials at the federal, state, and local level, especially the Maryland General Assembly



VETERAN POPULATION 2021

Jurisdiction	Total Population*	Female Population*	Homeless Population**
Anne Arundel County	49,761	8,465	18
Allegany County	4,881	353	3
Baltimore City	32,030	4,171	235
Baltimore County	45,825	5,445	27
Carroll County	10,270	953	6
Calvert County	7,970	1,008	Southern Maryland***
Caroline County	2,243	225	Mid Shore***
Cecil County	7,262	861	39
Charles County	15,922	3,130	Southern Maryland***
Dorchester County	2,355	257	Mid Shore***
Frederick County	17,117	2,148	6
Garrett County	2,051	133	2
Harford County	19,416	2,458	8
Howard County	18,562	2,770	6
Kent County	1,605	104	Mid Shore***
Montgomery County	42,974	7,220	14
Prince George's County	55,739	10,263	22
Queen Anne's County	3,694	332	Mid Shore***
Somerset County	1,613	120	Lower Shore***
St. Mary's County	11,960	1,910	Southern Maryland***
Talbot County	3,089	172	Mid Shore***
Washington County	9,679	1,027	28
Wicomico County	6,765	749	Lower Shore***
Worcester County	4,989	418	Lower Shore***
	T-377,772	T-54,693	T-462/415 sheltered

for more data on veterans in the United States
and in Maryland please see:

US Department of Veterans Affairs
National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics
www.va.gov/vetdata/

*VetPop, 9/30/21 projected population

**2021 HUD Point in Time Count

Southern Maryland
counted 17 homeless veterans, 14 sheltered
Lower Shore
counted 25 homeless veterans, 21 sheltered
Mid Shore
counted 6 homeless veterans, 3 sheltered

Since 2016 the homeless veteran count has
dropped from 520 to 462.

For more data visit the [2021 MDVA Annual Report](#)



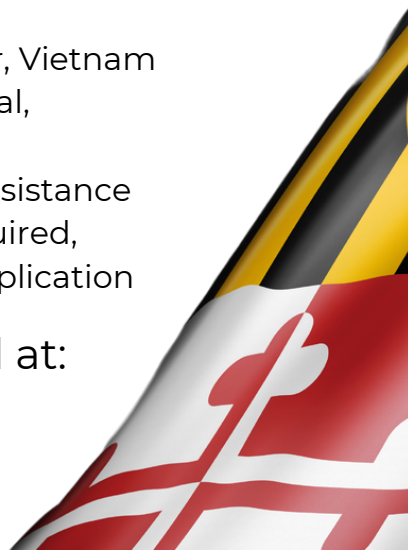
WHO IS THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (MDVA)

Communicating Who We Are To Your Community

Use these talking points to share information about our
Department with your community, stakeholders, and
constituents

- MDVA is a State Government Agency
- MDVA is responsible for five core programs: Service and Benefits, Cemeteries and Memorials, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, Outreach and Advocacy, and the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund
- MDVA partners with the US Department of Veterans Affairs but does not manage the VA Healthcare, Cemetery, or Benefits Administration
- MDVA distributes a lengthy bi-weekly electronic newsletter. All veterans, dependents, and interested community members are encouraged to sign up by visiting our website veterans.maryland.gov
- The Outreach and Advocacy Program also supervises the Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program, Veteran Services Specialist Program, and the Women Veterans/Inclusion Program
- The Service and Benefits Program also serves as a repository for DD214s for veterans discharged after October 15, 1979 and who returned to Maryland at the time of separation or retirement
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home is an assisted living and skilled nursing home for all veterans, male and female, and for eligible spouses
- Maryland is home to five state veteran cemeteries, Cheltenham, Crownsville, Eastern Shore, Garrison Forest, and Rocky Gap
- MDVA operates four veteran memorials, the WWII, Korean War, Vietnam Veterans, and Gold Star Families Monument. The fifth memorial, the War Memorial Building, is shared with Baltimore City
- The Maryland Veterans Trust Fund provides limited financial assistance to veterans. It is not an emergency fund, an application is required, and supporting documentation must be provided with the application

more information on MDVA can be found at:
veterans.maryland.gov



TELL YOUR COMMUNITY HOW TO CONNECT WITH MDVA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Join our newsletter distribution

Follow us on social media: like, share, comment, and retweet!

Tag us in your social media posts



Website

veterans.maryland.gov



Twitter

[@MdVeterans](https://twitter.com/MdVeterans)



Facebook

[@MDVeterans](https://www.facebook.com/MDVeterans)



Instagram

[@mdveteransinfo](https://www.instagram.com/mdveteransinfo)



YouTube

[@MDVeterans](https://www.youtube.com/@MDVeterans)

PLEASE SHARE:
"Visit the home page of
the MDVA website
to sign up for their
bi-weekly newsletter."

"The MDVA electronic newsletter is distributed bi-weekly on Friday.
Subscriber email addresses are not shared.

The newsletter contains MDVA news, federal and state partner news and community partner updates. The newsletter is an excellent way to stay informed on veteran related issues."

SAMPLE LETTER OR EMAIL TO YOUR NETWORK OR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

See below for a draft letter or email to partner organizations. The sample letter is available for downloading within the Dropbox downloadable materials folder. The link to Dropbox can be found on the toolkit web page. Feel free to modify only as needed to fit the tone of your organization.

Greetings (insert name or organization here),

I hope this email finds you well. We would like to inform you of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA). As a state government agency, MDVA has a service mission to assist veterans, active duty service members, their families and dependents, in securing benefits earned through military service.

MDVA manages five core programs: Service and Benefits, Cemeteries and Memorials, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, Outreach and Advocacy, and the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund. In addition the department has a dedicated women veterans/inclusion program manager and is represented on a number of statewide commissions, councils and workgroups.

The MDVA Service and Benefits Program represents veterans, dependents, and survivors throughout the VA benefits application process. Representation is offered at no cost and all benefits specialists are accredited by the VA.

Ways to help MDVA promote their programs:

Link to the MDVA website on your organization's website as a resource:
veterans.maryland.gov

Encourage veterans and family members to **sign up for the MDVA bi-weekly electronic newsletter**. Registration is available from the homepage of the MDVA website.

Follow MDVA on social media:

Facebook, @MDVeterans

Twitter, @MdVeterans

Instagram, @mdveteransinfo

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

(your name here)



DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS

A Dropbox link to materials is located on the community partner toolkit webpage. You do not need a Dropbox account to view, download, or print materials. With the exception of the sample letter and email, please keep the material elements intact. Partners are asked to request permission in advance of sharing the MDVA logo. Check back often for new downloadable materials. Contact Dana Burl, MDVA Outreach Program Director with questions, 410-260-3842 or dana.burl@maryland.gov

veterans.maryland.gov



**MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS**

Created by the State Legislature in 1999 as an executive agency with the mission of assisting veterans, active duty service members, their families and dependents, in securing benefits earned through military service.

 Service and Benefits Program Providing representation for veterans and dependents seeking USDVA benefits 800-446-4926, ext 6450	 Cemetery and Memorial Program Providing interment services for veterans and eligible dependents 410-923-6981, Cemeteries 410-354-3550, Memorials	 Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Providing skilled nursing & assisted living care to veterans and eligible spouses 301-884-8171, ext 5111
 410-260-3838  MDVeterans  @MdVeterans  @mdveteransinfo	 Maryland Veterans Trust Fund Assisting veterans who are experiencing temporary financial difficulties 800-446-4926, ext 6460	 Outreach and Advocacy Program Providing education to the community about veteran benefits and services 410-260-3842/3840

Have you or a member of your family served in the military?



**IF THE
ANSWER
IS YES...**

You may be eligible for benefits and opportunities to achieve financial stability, to improve well-being, or to acquire employment, education, or housing.

Dropbox folder contents:

- Social media graphics
- MDVA information postcards
- Memorial Day/Veterans Day posters
- Presentation slides
- Pocket cards
- Sample partner organization letter



MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY & THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

A growing number of community partner organizations have inquired about the Maryland legislative process. To learn more and to share information on the General Assembly see the resources below.

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

[Maryland Legislative Process](#)

In Maryland, citizens must approach their legislators to introduce a bill. If legislation is sponsored, the bill is drafted by the Department of Legislative Services, reviewed by the legislator, and prepared for introduction. (source: dls.maryland.gov)

[Find Your Representative](#)

Use this interactive map to find your legislative and/or congressional representatives

[Search Legislation](#)

[by session, number, sponsor, subject, and more](#)

During the annual Maryland legislative session, MDVA posts a weekly legislative update to its website. The update can be found from the home page, right column, 'News & Announcements'. In addition, the update is shared in the MDVA bi-weekly electronic newsletter.





REQUESTED RESOURCES

The following information and links are provided at the request of community partner organizations. Please link to these resources as needed on websites or social media.



Housing

Housing search, eviction prevention, homeless services, utility assistance

Employment

Resources for job seekers, veteran owned business owners, and employers

VA Benefits

MDVA Service and Benefits Program, Veterans Benefits Administration

Women Veterans

MDVA Women Veterans/Inclusion Program, VA Women's Health

Transitioning Service Members

VA Solid Start Program

Suicide Prevention

Veterans Crisis Line: 988, press 1

VA Mental Health Services

Maryland's Commitment to Veterans/

MD Department of Health



2022 SERVICE MEMBER, VETERAN AND FAMILIES AWARENESS DAYS AND MONTHS

March-

Women's History Month
March 3, Navy Reserve Birthday
March 5, Seabee Birthday
March 13, K9 Veterans Day
March 15, American Legion Birthday
March 21, Rosie the Riveter Day
March 25, Medal of Honor Day
March 30, Welcome Home Vietnam War Veterans Day (Maryland)

April-

Month of the Military Child
April 5, Gold Star Spouses Day
April 9, National Former POW Recognition Day
April 14, Air Force Reserve Birthday
April 23, Army Reserve Birthday
April 30, National Military Brats Day

May-

National Military Appreciation Month
Month of the Military Caregiver
May 6, Military Spouse Appreciation Day
May 8, Victory in Europe Day
May 12, Military Spouse Appreciation Day
May 14-19, Armed Forces Week
May 21, Armed Forces Day
May 30, Memorial Day

June-

PTSD Awareness Month
June 6, D Day
June 12, Women Veterans Day
June 14, Army Birthday
June 14, Flag Day
June 27, National PTSD Awareness Day

July-

July 4, Independence Day
July 27, National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
July 28, National Buffalo Soldiers Day

August-

August 1, Air Force Day
August 4, Coast Guard Day
August 7, Purple Heart Day
August 10, Agent Orange Awareness Day
August 29, Marine Corps Reserve Birthday

September-

National Suicide Prevention Month
National Service Dog Month
September 2, Victory over Japan Day
September 11, Patriot Day
September 16, POW/MIA Day
September 18, Air Force Birthday
September 18, Air National Guard Birthday
September 25, Gold Star Mother's Day
September 29, VFW Day

October-

Breast Cancer Awareness Month
October 13, US Navy Birthday

November-

National Veterans and Military Family Month
National Family Caregivers Month
November 10, Marine Corps Day/Birthday
November 11, Veterans Day

December-

December 7, Pearl Harbor Day
December 13, US National Guard Birthday
December 18, Wreaths Across America

*Source: militarybenefits.info/military.com

CONTACT THE MDVA OUTREACH PROGRAM

Outreach and Advocacy Program

Dana Burl

Director, 410-260-3842

dana.burl@maryland.gov

Denise Nooe

Deputy Director, 410-260-3840

denise.nooe@maryland.gov

MDVA Main Contacts

410-260-3838

mdveteransinfo@maryland.gov

