

# Working with Veteran Service Officers (VSOs)

## A VSO CAN HELP VETERANS UNDERSTAND AND APPLY FOR VA BENEFITS

### How does a VSO help a Veteran?

If you need help filing a claim or appeal, you may want to work with a Veterans Service Officer (VSO). These professionals are trained and certified in the VA claims and appeals processes. VSOs work on behalf of Veterans and service members—as well as their dependents and survivors, **at no cost**.

### VSOs can help you understand and apply for VA benefits, like these:

- Financial support (monthly payments)
- Education
- Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E)
- Home loans
- Life insurance
- Pension
- Health care
- Burial benefits

### These trained professionals can also help in these ways:

- Help you gather supporting documents (like a doctor's report or medical test results)
- File a claim or appeal on your behalf
- Provide added support, like helping with transportation to medical appointments or emergency funds
- Note: If your claim has a clear factual or legal error, your VSO can request a faster Higher-Level Review decision through a new pilot program called Claim Accuracy Request (CAR).

### Connect to a Veteran Service Officer

[Find a local VSO](#) on the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) website [michigan.gov/mvaa](https://michigan.gov/mvaa)

Check out this 15 minute video: [15 Things Veteran Service Officers Want You To Know](#).

### As of March 5, 2024, Most Veterans are Eligible for VA Health Care\*

### Apply for VA health care by calling the Health Eligibility Center (HEC) (877) 222-8387

Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 8:00pm Eastern Time.

If more than a week passes after applying, with no response, call again.

**Less than 50% of Veterans are connected** to all their earned military benefits\*. Connection to benefits saves lives and improves quality of life; we need help connecting those who have served.

\*The PACT Act is a new law, and the most significant expansion and extension of Veteran benefits, eligibility, and care in 30+ years. **Those previously denied for benefits should reapply.** Contact your County VA Office and Veteran Service Officers. Or dial 1-800-MICH-VET

[mcrh.msu.edu/programs/Veterans-Care](https://mcrh.msu.edu/programs/Veterans-Care)

