

VHWC DISPATCH

July 2026

FOUNDATION

The VHWC brings together parties to build or expand pathways through which Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their care partners optimize health and wellness outcomes.

CONTACT US

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CORE TEAM UPDATE

July is a month that invites us to reflect on the ideals upon which our nation was founded and the individuals who have worked throughout history to preserve them. This year is especially significant as the United States commemorates its 250th anniversary, marking two and a half centuries of independence, resilience, and progress. As we celebrate this milestone, we recognize the generations of service members whose commitment, sacrifice, and dedication have helped safeguard the freedoms and opportunities we enjoy today.

The spirit of service extends far beyond military duty. Veterans continue to strengthen communities across Michigan through leadership, volunteerism, mentorship, public service, storytelling, and more. Their contributions enrich our neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and organizations long after their military service has ended.

As we continue advancing our 2026 priority areas of Housing Insecurity, Oral Health, Suicide Prevention, and Transition, we remain grateful for the organizations, partners, and individuals who support veterans every day. Through collaboration and shared commitment, we can continue building systems that promote health, wellness, and quality of life for veterans and their families across Michigan.

As always, we invite you to share updates, events, and opportunities with our network. Your engagement continues to strengthen support systems for veterans and their families across the state. To stay informed, join our [listserv](#). Contact us at ihp.vhwc@msu.edu if you have questions or suggestions for activities.

SPOTLIGHT:

Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors (MiOFO)

[Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors \(MiOFO\)](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was established in 2014 to help wounded veterans and individuals with health challenges reconnect with nature in meaningful and accessible ways. What began as a

**MILITARY
SERVICE?**

There may be benefits and resources available to help you through your current situation.

Call 1-800-MICH-VET or visit Michigan.gov/MVAA



mission to remove barriers has grown into a statewide network of support, opportunity, and hope for people across Michigan.

MiOFO believes that outdoor experiences should not be limited by injury, disability, or health challenges. Through a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, the organization helps participants experience the freedom, peace, confidence, connection, and renewed sense of independence that time outdoors can provide.

A cornerstone of MiOFO's work is its commitment to accessibility. Through its Adaptive Support Program, MiOFO offers all-terrain track chairs and accessible hunting blinds located [throughout Michigan](#), helping individuals with mobility challenges participate in outdoor activities that might otherwise be out of reach. These adaptive resources create opportunities for veterans and others with health challenges to enjoy hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor experiences in a safe and supportive environment.

MiOFO's efforts demonstrate how recreation, accessibility, and community connection can positively impact health and wellness. By removing barriers and creating inclusive outdoor opportunities, the organization empowers participants to reconnect with nature, build confidence, and strengthen their overall well-being.

To learn more about Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors and its Adaptive Support Program, visit miofo.org.

UPDATES: 2026 PRIORITY AREAS

Let our team know about upcoming events and we will share that information with our network. Organizations needing help for their event should also reach out so we can put those requests in front of others who may be in a position to help.

Housing Insecurity: We are working on a webinar encouraging landlords to rent to veterans. If you have content or speaker recommendations, please forward names and email addresses to ihp.vhwc@msu.edu.

Oral Health: We welcome ideas for partnering with current dental and hygiene training programs to help expand access to oral health services for veterans. If you have any contacts or suggestions, please send them our way.

Suicide Prevention: We are looking for opportunities to support suicide prevention trainings and educational offerings across Michigan. Let us know of programs, trainings, or webinars you come across.

Transition: We are seeking input on financial literacy offerings that strengthen housing stability, as well as screeners or tools that can better connect transitioning service members and veterans to resources. Please share programs, contacts, or tools that we should explore.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Webinars:

Webinars can be hosted by VHWC for statewide viewing. Email ihp.vhwc@msu.edu to introduce yourself, your idea(s), or make referrals to subject matter experts. Our staff is available to arrange for technical support and promotion through the VHWC network.

Events/Programs:

We are looking for those who have an interest in participating in creating podcasts for more informal and targeted discussions. We would record these for later listening. If you have an interest in hosting or participating with this, reach out to us. Also, let us know about your upcoming events for veterans! These are also listed on the [Resources and Events](#) tab of our website to boost engagement.

- Eaton County Salute to Veterans Dinner and Concert- 7/19/26, 5:00 PM at Northfork Estates, 9891 Northfork Way, Eaton Rapids, MI. Hosted by Eaton County Veteran Services, the evening will feature veteran resources and exhibits, a complimentary dinner, and a concert by Kevin Wolff. The event honors veterans and military families while connecting attendees with local programs and services.
- [Ingham County Fair Veteran Recognition Dinner and Concert](#)- 8/3/26 at the Ingham County Fairgrounds, 700 E. Ash Street, Mason, MI. Doors open at 4:00 PM, dinner at 5 PM. All Active Military, Veterans, National Guard, Reserved and their immediate families are invited to attend an evening of recognition and appreciation featuring veteran resource organizations, a complimentary dinner, and a concert held on the main fairgrounds. [Register here!](#)
- [Vet Fest 2026](#)- 8/8/2026, from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM at Lake Trust Stadium on the campus of Cleary University in Howell, MI. Hosted by [VETLIFE](#), this free event brings veterans and their immediate families together for live music, food, community resources, giveaways, and family-friendly activities. Attendees will have opportunities to connect with organizations offering support related to benefits, healthcare, employment, education, and more. Registration is required. Learn more and [register here!](#)
- Empowering Your Workforce: Strategic Veteran Recruitment Strategies Webinar- 8/11/26 at 11:00 AM. Hosted by the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), this webinar will provide employers with strategies and resources to recruit, hire, train, and retain veterans. Learn more and [register here](#).

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Subscribe at our website and share with your networks.
- Participate with Advisory Council or subcommittee activities.
- Volunteer your expertise: Whether you have ever served in the military, are a health care professional, community leader, or advocate, your input can make a difference.

"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave"

-Elmer Davis
