

## Quick Facts About VA's Health Care Services for Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) uses the term “military sexual trauma” (MST) to refer to experiences of **sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment** experienced while on federal active duty or active duty for training.
- The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has a range of **outpatient, inpatient, and residential services** available to assist Veterans in their recovery from MST. At many VHA facilities, Active Duty personnel can also receive these MST-related services.
- All treatment for conditions related to MST is provided to Veterans **free of charge**. This includes outpatient, inpatient, residential, and pharmaceutical treatment.
- To receive this free MST-related care, Veterans do not need to be service connected (that is, have a VA disability rating\*) – **eligibility for MST-related health care is independent of receipt of other VA benefits**. Veterans may be able to receive free MST-related care even if they are not eligible for other VA care. For example, there are no length of service or income requirements to receive MST-related care. Veterans do not need to have reported the incident(s) when they happened or have other documentation that they occurred.

### *Specific MST-Related Services Available Through the Veterans Health Administration*

- Every VA health care facility has a designated MST Coordinator who serves as a contact person for MST-related issues. This person can help Veterans find and access VA services and programs.
- Every VA medical center has providers knowledgeable about MST and provides MST-related mental health outpatient services. Services available include formal psychological assessment and evaluation; psychiatry; and individual and group psychotherapy. Specialty programs target problems such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance use disorders, depression, and homelessness. VHA's community-based Vet Centers have specially trained sexual trauma counselors.
- For Veterans who need more intensive treatment, many VHA facilities offer residential programming. A number of these residential programs focus specifically on MST or have specialized MST tracks.
- VHA also has inpatient programs available for acute care needs (e.g., psychiatric emergencies and stabilization, medication adjustment).

**For more information, please contact the MST Coordinator at your nearest VA Medical Center or visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp).**

**A list of VHA facilities can be found at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).**



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\*Note: the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) handles claims for compensation for injuries or disabilities that began or got worse during military service. More information about filing an MST-related disability claim is available at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/serviceconnected/MST.pdf>