

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

St. Cloud VA UPDATE February 17, 2023



A monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve them. Send news items and comments to St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Public Affairs Officer, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303, or via email to barry.venable@va.gov



Construction continues on Max J. Beilke VA Clinic in Alexandria

The Max J. Beilke VA Clinic served 3,015 Veterans in Central Minnesota and conducted 14,359 clinical encounters last year.

The VA Clinic, currently located at 515 22nd Avenue East in Alexandria, is planned to move to a new location at 410 30th Avenue East as soon as construction activities are complete, most likely in May 2023.

Originally forecasted to be ready for service in the summer of 2022, construction material delays and challenges with acquiring equipment and furniture has pushed the opening back on the calendar.

- VA has a final inspection planned the week of 20-24 February 2023. Afterwards, we'll have the ability to better forecast an opening date.
- Following inspection, any "punch list" items needed for correction will be identified for the contractor to complete prior to VA accepting the project.
- After acceptance, VA has requirements to finish outfitting the clinic space with supplies, furniture, and equipment.
- The intent is to complete the move so Veteran care continues uninterrupted.

The current forecast is to open the new clinic sometime in or near May of 2023.

The new, leased location is an existing building that has been completely renovated. The new location increases the operating size of the clinic from 9,915 square feet to 15,061 square feet.

Clinic service offerings include:

- Primary Care
- Annual Wellness Exams
- Chronic Disease Management
- Routine Health Screenings
- Mental Health Services
- Specialty Care Referrals
- Medication Management
- Telemedicine
- Clinical Pharmacy Services
- Tele-audiology
- Tele-retinal
- Social Work Services
- Lab Services (draws)
- Home-Based Care
- Home Telehealth
- Primary Care Physical Therapy

The new clinic provides additional space for existing services and expanded parking (70 total spaces).

The clinic includes space and staffing to house an additional PACT teamlet intended to fill temporary gaps at VA Clinic locations as required.

The clinic also includes additional space for audiology services. Initially, audiology services will continue to be provided via tele audiology. The additional space allows for the addition of equipment and staffing to offer expanded tele audiology services and in-person technician appointments.

The lease contractor is Command and Control Construction LLC, of Hawley, Minnesota.

Public Law No: 111-163 (S.1963 - Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010) designates the VA outpatient clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota as the "Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic" in honor of Beilke's service. Beilke, an Alexandria native and retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant, was the last American combat soldier to leave Saigon on March 29, 1973 and died in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.



Presidents Day is Monday February 20, 2023

We hope you have a wonderful holiday! As a reminder, the health care system will be closed Monday, February 20, 2023. This includes the St. Cloud VA Medical Center and all three VA Clinic sites in Brainerd, Alexandria and Montevideo.

The Urgent Care Clinic hours at the medical center are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Urgent Care clinic is open everyday including all Federal holidays.

Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for free emergency health care



Under a new policy authorized [under section 201 of the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment \(COMPACT\) Act of 2020](#) and effective January 17, 2023, Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care – including transportation costs – and receive inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days, including social work.

This could increase access to acute suicide care to an additional 9 million unenrolled Veterans and reduce the number of Veteran suicides by offering immediate care when they are most vulnerable.

COMPACT-eligible individuals, regardless of VA enrollment status, are:

- Those who were discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months of active service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces, including reserve service members, who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

Emergencies are never planned, so Veterans and family members should know where to go before help is needed. Find the nearest community emergency room, urgent care facility or pharmacy by visiting https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=emergency_care

How should the emergency care get reported to VA?

Veterans seeking care at community facilities should inform the emergency care provider to report the emergency treatment to the VA Centralized Emergency Care Reporting Center as soon as possible after treatment starts by using the VA Emergency Care Reporting portal or calling the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline.

VA Emergency Care Reporting portal:

<https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov>

VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline:

844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842)

Veterans, or someone acting on their behalf, can also report the emergency treatment to VA. VA should only be notified once, and ideally that notification is from the community

emergency facility where treatment is being conducted. If a Veteran has an urgent or emergent need to coordinate care or transfer to a VA medical center (VAMC), contact the nearest VAMC immediately.

Notifying VA of an emergency event allows covered Veterans to have their emergency treatment authorized by VA. Failure to report emergency care to VA within 72 hours of the start of the emergency treatment may impact your eligibility for VA to cover the cost of treatment. However, even if the notification to VA did not occur timely, the emergency treatment may still be eligible for VA reimbursement.

What should a Veteran do if they are billed for emergency suicide-related care?

VA has developed an expedited review process specific to emergency suicide care to eliminate any additional stress during Veterans' time of need. If a Veteran receives a bill for emergency suicide care related care at a VA medical facility, they should contact their local VA patient advocate and ask for a clinical review with an appropriate provider. Veterans can also contact the number on their bill to initiate this process. Veterans can use the VA Facility Locator to find their closest VA medical facility.

For more information, visit [Emergency Medical Care - Community Care \(va.gov\)](#)

[Fact Sheet for Veterans](#)

[Fact Sheet for Community Providers](#)

Yellow Pages

For fastest service, dial 320-252-1670, allow the greeting to begin, and enter the 4 digit extension for the location you are trying to reach.

Don't know the extension you want? The Yellow Pages are here to help!

You can find a copy of the Yellow Pages at many locations throughout the St. Cloud VA Health Care System (including the VA Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo), on our [St. Cloud VA website](#), or [download a copy here](#).

St. Cloud VA Health Care System (HCS)

Edition 2, September 2022



Yellow Pages

Call **911** or go to the closest community hospital with an emergency department if you believe you have a serious and possibly life-threatening issue or emergency mental health needs. The St. Cloud VA does not have an emergency department, acute medical care services, or after-hours outpatient services at any of our locations.

Published by the Patient Advocate Office, Veteran and Community Service Department, St. Cloud VA HCS. Direct inquiries, comments or adjustments to the Yellow Pages to 320-252-1670, ext. 6353.

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St. Cloud VA HCS

Edition 2, February 2023

Health care needs and services take many forms. Making sense of the type of care needed, and when and where to get needed care can be confusing.

Most care needs are grouped into three priority levels: routine, urgent or emergency needs.

Understanding the differences in these priority levels can help you get the right care in the right place and at the right time.



Going to a Community Pharmacy after a visit to a Community Urgent Care Center? Visit <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/program/VCC/Billing-Information-Card.pdf> to print or display this billing information for the community pharmacist.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
St. Cloud VA Health Care System

Published by the Patient Advocate Office, Veteran and Community Service Department, St. Cloud VA HCS. Direct inquiries, comments or adjustments to the CARE GUIDE to 320-252-1670, ext. 6353.

Care Guide

Health care needs and services take many forms. Making sense of the type of care needed, and when and where to get needed care can be confusing. Most care needs are grouped into three priority levels: routine, urgent or emergency needs. Understanding the differences in these priority levels can help you get the right care in the right place and at the right time. The Care Guide is designed to help you navigate those differences.

You can find a copy of the Care Guide at many locations throughout the St. Cloud VA Health Care System (including the VA Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo), on our [St. Cloud VA website](#), or [download a copy here](#).

Registration for Veterans Wheelchair Games Open

VA and Paralyzed Veterans of America will host the 42nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Portland, Oregon, July 4-9, 2023. Eligible Veterans interested in competing may submit applications at: www.wheelchairgames.org from February 1 until April 2, 2023.



The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is a sports and rehabilitation program for military Veterans who use wheelchairs for sports competition due to spinal cord injuries, amputations or other neurological conditions.

Each year, hundreds of Veterans train and travel from around the country to compete in the games, the world's largest annual multi-sport wheelchair competition for Veterans.

PACT Act Claims Clinic on March 15, 2023

The PACT Act Claims Clinic is scheduled for March 15, from 1 to 5 p.m. in Building 8 (Auditorium).

At the PACT Act Claims Clinic Veterans can learn more about:

- Definition of Toxic Exposure
- Health Care Eligibility Changes
- Toxic Exposure Screening and Education
- Toxic Exposure Research
- Presumption of Service Connection Changes

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) representatives will be on site to assist with disability compensation claims by walk-in or appointment. Appointments are available but limited. Veterans can call 320-255-6340 by March 10, to reserve a spot!



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- Appointments are available but limited. Please call 320-255-6340 by March 10 to reserve your spot!

March 15, 2023

1 to 5 p.m.

Open Forum/Q & A from 2 to 3 p.m.

St. Cloud VA Medical Center, Bldg. 8

Learn more about:

- Definition of Toxic Exposure
- Health Care Eligibility Changes
- Toxic Exposure Screening and Education
- Toxic Exposure Research
- Presumption of Service Connection Changes

What to bring?

- A copy of your DD-214 or other discharge papers.
- Any recent correspondence from VA you may have questions about, including Rating Decisions.



We have seen an increase in weapons/firearms brought into our facilities.

This is a preventable offense. When visiting VA, leave firearms at home.

Possession of firearms (and knives), carried either openly or concealed, whether loaded or unloaded are prohibited on VA properties (38CFR1.218 (b)(37)) and introduction or possession of explosive devices which fire a projectile, ammunition, or combustibles are also prohibited on VA properties (38CFR1.218 (b)(38)). These offenses carry penalties of \$500.00 and/or a term of imprisonment of not more than six months.

**On January 5, 2021,
Public Law 116-315
established Veterans
Affairs Life Insurance
(VALife) as a new life insurance program for Veterans.**



VALife offers guaranteed acceptance, whole life insurance coverage to more Veterans with service-connected disabilities than ever before.

VALife opened for enrollment on January 1, 2023.

Veterans age 80 and under with any level of service-connected disability rating (0-100%) from VA are eligible to apply, with no time limit.

There are no medical requirements for enrollment. Due to the absence of medical requirements, there is a two-year waiting period for full VALife coverage to take effect. This is a common practice with guaranteed acceptance whole life policies.

Veterans who are 81 or older may apply for VALife within two years of receiving notification of a new service-connected disability rating if they:

- Applied for VA disability compensation before age 81, and
- Received a new service-connected disability rating after turning 81.

Veterans can check eligibility and apply by VALife at <https://insurance.va.gov/VALIFE/>



New Copay Rates for 2023

Find your new copays for VA and VA-approved health care

Updated copay rates are available now. Learn what services don't require a copay and if you may be eligible to not pay copays.

[Learn more about new Copay Rates](#)



Intro to Whole Health course offerings near your home in March!

Intro to Whole Health is an educational class that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing life-enhancing strategies, self-healing and self-care. In March the course is available at the following dates times and locations:

Alexandria

Alexandria Library

720 Fillmore St.

Thursday, March 2,

- 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pre-registration is not required for the courses offered at public libraries. For more information call Whole Health at 320-252-1670, ext. 5401.



Brainerd

Brainerd Library

416 S. 5th St.

Thursday, March 9,

- 10 a.m. to noon

Pre-registration is not required for the courses offered at public libraries. For more information call Whole Health at 320-252-1670, ext. 5401.

Montevideo

Montevideo Library

224 1st St.

Thursday, March 16,

- 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pre-registration is not required for the courses offered at public libraries. For more information call Whole Health at 320-252-1670, ext. 5401.



Whole Health Empowerment Group

Join fellow Veterans in experiencing continued growth through Whole Health.

- Fourth Wednesday of each month
 - 1 to 2 p.m.
- Prerequisite: Intro to Whole Health Class
- Call the Whole Health team to schedule, 320-252-1670, ext. 5401

UPCOMING EVENTS

Quick Reference Phone List

Intro to Whole Health Class

An informative class that equips you to take charge of your health by emphasizing self-empowerment, self-healing, and self-care through better knowledge.

St. Cloud and Virtual classes occur on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday every month.

Course in Alexandria on Thursday, March 2, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Course in Brainerd on Thursday, March 9, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Course in Montevideo on Thursday March 16, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Call the Whole Health team to schedule: 320-252-1670, ext. 5401.

Whole Health Empowerment Group

Meets the 4th Wednesday of each month from 1-2 p.m.

Call the St. Cloud Whole Health Team to schedule: 320-252-1670, ext. 5401.

Taking Charge of My Life Program

A program helping Veterans learn more about how to improve their health and live consistently with what is most important to them. Occurs on Tuesdays in a series of 4 sessions. Call the St. Cloud Whole Health Team to schedule: (320) 252-1670 ext. 5401.

Veterans Affairs Radio Show

Monday, March 6, 8:10- 8:30 a.m.

KNSI AM 1450/ FM 103.3

Voices for Veterans Radio Show

Wednesday, March 15, 8:15-8:30 a.m.

WJON AM 1240 / FM95.3

For a complete Calendar of Events, go to

<https://www.va.gov/st-cloud-health-care/events/>

Main St. Cloud VA HCS Phone Number	320-252-1670 or 800-247-1739
TDD User	320-255-6450
Max J. Beilke VA Clinic, Alexandria	320-759-2640
Brainerd VA Clinic	218-855-1115
Montevideo VA Clinic	320-269-2222
Veterans Crisis Line	800-273-8255 Press 1
Homeless Veterans Hotline	877-424-3838
Billing	
VA Care	866-347-2352
Care in the Community (non-VA Care)	877-881-7618
Caregiver Support Team	ext. 7283
Chaplain Service	ext. 6386
Community Care Referrals	ext. 6401
Discrimination Complaints	ext. 6304
Eligibility	ext. 6226/6340
Nutrition Clinic	ext. 6376
Transition and Care Management Program	ext. 6453
Patient Advocate	ext. 6353
Pharmacy Refill Line	855-560-1724
Public Affairs Office	ext. 6353
Release of Information (Medical Records)	ext. 6336

Transportation	ext. 7622
TRICARE	844-866-9378
Voluntary Service	ext. 6365
VA Police	ext. 6355

Stay in Touch

Visit our Website: <https://www.va.gov/st-cloud-health-care/>

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS

Sign up for our automated email service. Visit the St. Cloud VA Website at: <https://www.va.gov/st-cloud-health-care/> and scroll down to the Get updates from VA St Cloud health care in the grey box. Click on the options you wish and enter your email address and you will be signed up to receive email updates from these four options.

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