

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Workforce Management & Consulting



**MAKE IT YOUR MISSION**  
*to Heal and Care for Veterans*

## **Total Reward\$ of a VA Career Registered Nurses (RN), Nurse Practitioners (NP), and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA)**

No matter where or how you serve as a RN, NP, or CRNA in VA, you will contribute to the greatest mission in federal service - the mission to heal and care for Veterans so they can thrive in life after military service.

# MAKE IT YOUR MISSION CHOOSE VA



## MISSION

As a VA employee, you have more than a job, you have a mission to serve Veterans who have borne the battle with honor.



## TOTAL REWARD\$

As a VA employee, you serve with dedicated professionals and are rewarded with a strong support system, superior work-life balance, and countless career growth and assignment options.



## COMPENSATION

As a VA employee, you will earn competitive compensation as you pursue excellence in health care for Veterans.



## COVERAGE

Rest easy knowing that VA has you and your family's insurance needs covered. Insurance coverage may follow you into retirement after 5 years of vested service and maintaining FEHB in the 5 years leading up to retirement (conditions apply).



## RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Earn an amazing retirement package including a traditional (defined benefit) federal pension, a 401(k) Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with employer matched contributions, and Social Security.



## CAREER AND GROWTH

Start your career at VA and benefit from opportunities to build your skills and professional growth by leveraging VA professional development programs to fit your specific long-term career goals.

# THE MISSION

RNs, NPs, CRNAs

VA's variety of occupation, education, and leadership support gives you limitless room to grow and excel in your career. Take a look at all VA can offer you, and pursue a RN, NP, or CRNA opportunity that will push your talent to exciting new heights.



Each year, VA serves over 9 million Veterans in 1,293 sites of care across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. VA is the largest employer of nursing personnel, with more than 100,000 nursing professionals and projections for continued growth as we continue to fulfill the vision of advancing nursing and transforming health care. Nurses make up 30% of the total VHA workforce and serve as the foundation for providing outstanding care and contributing to positive outcomes for Veterans and their families every day.

As a VA nurse, you are an invaluable member of inter-professional health care teams. VA nurses contribute their knowledge and expertise to optimize patient-driven care and advance VA goals for improving access. They also provide safe, effective, high-quality care as part of a dynamic team helping our hospitals outperform the private sector.

VA nurses receive unparalleled opportunities to continuously develop as professionals and positively impact health care. They are empowered through shared decision-making, implementation of evidence-based practice, simulation and training/scholarship programs.

VA nursing practice provides Veteran health care across a continuum of services for acute and chronic conditions in hospital, ambulatory and skilled nursing settings. To improve Veteran access to care, nurses help create new models of care, introduce new nursing roles and advance existing ones.

VA nurses share lessons learned, tools and evidence-based practices across the system. Nurses can advance their education, mentor and be mentored, become a principal investigator and move into executive roles. Nurses engage in emergency management and disaster preparedness both in VA and beyond.

## Take a closer look...

From your start as a nurse at VA through retirement, you receive competitive pay and generous benefits that add to the satisfaction of a career based on giving back to those who have given so much to the nation. At VA you will enjoy these perks **#WorkatVA**

- 1 active and unrestricted license allows you to practice at any VA nationwide site of care
- 11 federal holidays
- No employment contracts, restrictive covenants, or non-compete clauses





**Competitive Salaries.** Earn a competitive total reward\$ package as you pursue excellence in healthcare for Veterans. At VA, you receive compensation based on your locality, tenure, education, training, licensure, certification and experience.

## VA pays numerous benefits on your behalf

- Social Security paid by VA = 6.2% of taxable wages on behalf of the employee. If an individual has taxable wages over the taxable maximum of \$160,200, VA will contribute \$9,932.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) = free legal and mental health services.
- Medicare paid by VA = 1.45% on behalf of the employee.
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA) = you may contribute up to \$3,050 a year to your health care FSA with a \$610 max carry over and save up to 30% on dependent care expenses.
- Life Insurance = VA pays 1/3 of insurance cost for basic life insurance.
- Thrift Savings Plan Federal 401(k) = VA provides up to 5% employer contributions (1% automatic contribution and up to 4% employer matching contributions).
- Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) = VA contributes 16.6% annually to FERS-FRAE (Further Revised Annuity Employee) Employing Agency Contribution basic/defined benefit traditional pension.

**Regular Increases.** Receive annual pay increases, when signed into federal law (as of 2023, the 5-year average increase was 2.26%), within-grade or “step” increases and when appropriate, grade increases.

**Incentive Awards.** Including Superior Performance Awards, Special Contribution Awards, Quality Step Increases, VA Honor Awards, non-monetary Recognition.

**Employment without strings.** Whether you are full or part time, your employment at VA is without employment contracts, noncompete clauses, restrictive covenants or other significant restrictions on outside work.

**Liability Protection.** VA healthcare providers are covered under federal tort laws and may be defended by the United States against allegations of malpractice or negligence (38 USC 7316).

**VHA National Child Care Program.** This program assists VA employees in balancing work and family responsibilities. After 60 days of employment, full time employees with a total family income below \$149,000 may be eligible for childcare subsidy program (conditions apply).

**Transit Benefit Program.** You may qualify for transit subsidy monthly benefits of a max of \$300/month; check with your local VA Medical Center (conditions apply).



# SAMPLE TOTAL REWARD\$



## Let's do the math!

### Find Your Total Reward\$ of a VA Career as a NP, RN, or CRNA

This Total Reward\$ sample is a generalized report reflecting the potential monetized value of a full VA compensation package for a full-time employee\*

## Sample Annual Total Reward\$ Worksheet

**Compensation + Benefits = *Your Total Reward\$\****

Direct Compensation	RN	NP	CRNA
Salary Examples	\$105,000	\$143,000	\$205,000
<b>Total Rewards of Benefits Provided by VA</b>			
Health Insurance Premium Subsidy	\$15,896	\$15,896	\$15,896
Social Security	\$6,510	\$8,866	\$9,932
Medicare	\$1,523	\$2,074	\$2,973
Basic Life Insurance	\$277	\$378	\$541
Thrift Savings Plan Federal 401(k) <small>(Employer Contributions)</small>	\$5,250	\$7,150	\$10,250
Federal Employee Retirement System <small>(FERS)</small>	\$17,430	\$23,738	\$34,030
Education Debt Reduction Program <small>(conditions apply, \$40k max/yr.)</small>	\$_____	\$_____	\$_____
Child Care Program <small>(maximum benefit/conditions apply)</small>	\$5,000	\$5,000	N/A
<b>Annual Total Reward\$</b>	<b>\$156,886</b>	<b>\$206,101</b>	<b>\$278,622</b>

\*This calculation is a sample only and does not constitute a contract of employment or a guarantee of benefits or future employment. Certain elements vary and are based on specific circumstances. If your service includes part-time calculations, your total reward\$ and benefits will be proportionally prorated. For more information, please see [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov).

# VALUE OF TIME OFF

RNs, NPs, CRNAs

## Spend time with family and friends with paid leave.

Take time off. At VA, you start your career with 50 days of paid time off each year. Paid vacation, unlimited accumulated paid sick leave and 11 paid federal holidays accrue right away.



Leave Category	Full Time	Part Time
Federal Holidays	11 days	11 days*
Annual Leave (0-3 years of service)	26 days	1 hour for every 10 hours worked
Annual Leave Max Carryover	86 days	240 hours
Sick Leave	13 days	1 hour for every 20 hours worked
Sick Leave Max Carryover	Unlimited	Unlimited
Military Leave	15 days	Prorated
Military Leave Maximum Balance	30 days	Prorated
Paid Parental Leave**	12 weeks	Prorated (must work at least 1,250 per year)

\*Part-time employees are entitled to federal holidays that fall on days employees would otherwise be required to work or take leave. This does not include overtime work.

\*\*The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) provides up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child for employees covered by Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions applicable to federal civilian employees.



### Combined Leave

Estimated total annual combined value of paid holidays, sick leave and annual leave (50 days):

Avg. Salary	Est. Total annual combined value (50 days)
\$105,000	\$20,125
\$143,000	\$27,408
\$205,000	\$39,291



### Paid Parental Leave

Estimated total paid parental leave (12 weeks, if taken conditions apply):

Avg. Salary	Est. Total paid parental leave (12 weeks, if taken)
\$105,000	\$24,149
\$143,000	\$32,889
\$205,000	\$47,149

This value estimate does not represent additional compensation, but rather the value of paid time off based on a \$105,000, \$143,000 and \$205,000 annual salary and 50 paid eight-hour days of leave and holidays.

# COVERAGE

RNs, NPs, CRNAs

**Health Insurance.** With Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB), choose from a variety of self or family health maintenance organizations or fee-for-service health plans that all cover pre-existing conditions. Your spouse and children under age 26 are eligible, as are children—regardless of age—who are unable to support themselves.

VA pays up to 75% of health premiums, and your portion of the premium is taken on a pretax basis unless you opt out. This benefit may continue into retirement provided you maintain FEHB coverage during your 5 years of vested service prior to retirement (conditions apply).

Plans can be adjusted during annual open season from November – December. You can also contribute to flexible, tax-free spending accounts up to \$3,050 for individuals in medical expenses and up to \$5,000 in dependent care expenses.

**Long-term disability coverage.** Become eligible for disability retirement benefits after 18 months of vested service.

**Life insurance.** Plan for what's next with Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), which is group term life insurance covering you and eligible family members. Receive this benefit with no physical exam if you elect to enroll within 60 days of being hired and get coverage that applies from your start date and continues into retirement.

**Dental and vision insurance.** Under the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), supplemental dental and/or vision benefits are available to you and your family including children up to age 22. FEDVIP coverage may continue into retirement for employees.

**Long-term care.** Under the Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program, you can access long-term care coverage for home care, adult day care and facility care. You may be eligible to apply for long-term care insurance even if you're not enrolled in the FEHB Program.

**Parental Leave.** The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) provides up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child for employees covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions applicable to federal civilian employees.

**Rest easy knowing that VA has you and your family's needs covered.**



# CAREER & GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Start your career at VA and benefit from opportunities to build your skills throughout your tenure to meet your career aspirations.



**Education Debt Reduction Program (EDRP).** As a RN, NP, or CRNA, you may be eligible for VA's Education Debt Reduction Program (EDRP). If approved, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for your student loan payments up to \$40,000 a year for up to 5 years.

**Continuing Education, in-person and virtual training.** VA is the nation's leading provider of continuing nursing education credits and hours. VA leads in clinical simulation training, with dedicated experts and state-of-the-art resources to support the learning needs of VA staff across over 170 VA medical centers and more than 1,255 sites of care.

**Leadership skills development.** VA provides a competitive, 3-tiered continuum of leadership development at the local, network, and national levels for employees with the potential and desire to serve in leadership positions.

## VHA Education & Scholarship Programs

**Employee Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP).** The National Nursing Education Initiative (NNEI) and National Education for Employees Program (VANEPP) are initiatives under EISP. NNEI focuses on RNs pursuing associate, baccalaureate, and other advanced degrees. VANEPP provides scholarships to allow participants to accelerate their degree completion by attending school full time.

**Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP).** HPSP graduates serve as a future talent pool to fill health care staffing needs at a VAMC after graduation and licensure or certification.

**VA Learning Opportunities Residency (VALOR).** The VALOR program provides opportunities for you to develop competencies in clinical areas. Opportunities for learning include didactic or classroom experiences, competency-based clinical practice with a qualified preceptor.

**Post-Baccalaureate Registered Nurse Residency (PB-RNR).** VA's PB-RNR purpose is to help you become a confident and practice-ready RN equipped with the knowledge and skills to address the specific needs of our Nation's Veterans.

**Nurse Practitioner Residency (NPR).** VA's NPR purpose is to help you to become a confident and practice-ready NP equipped with the knowledge and skills to address the specific needs of our Nation's Veterans.

**RN Transition to Practice Program (RNTTP).** The RNTTP residency program is a comprehensive 12-month program designed to assist new RNs in the transition from academic to practice setting.



# RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Get ready for retirement with 3-pronged support consisting of a Federal pension, the employer-matched Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) 401(k), and Social Security.



**Federal Employees Retirement System.\*** Earn a generous FERS pension after 5 years of vested service to VA through the basic/defined benefit retirement plan.

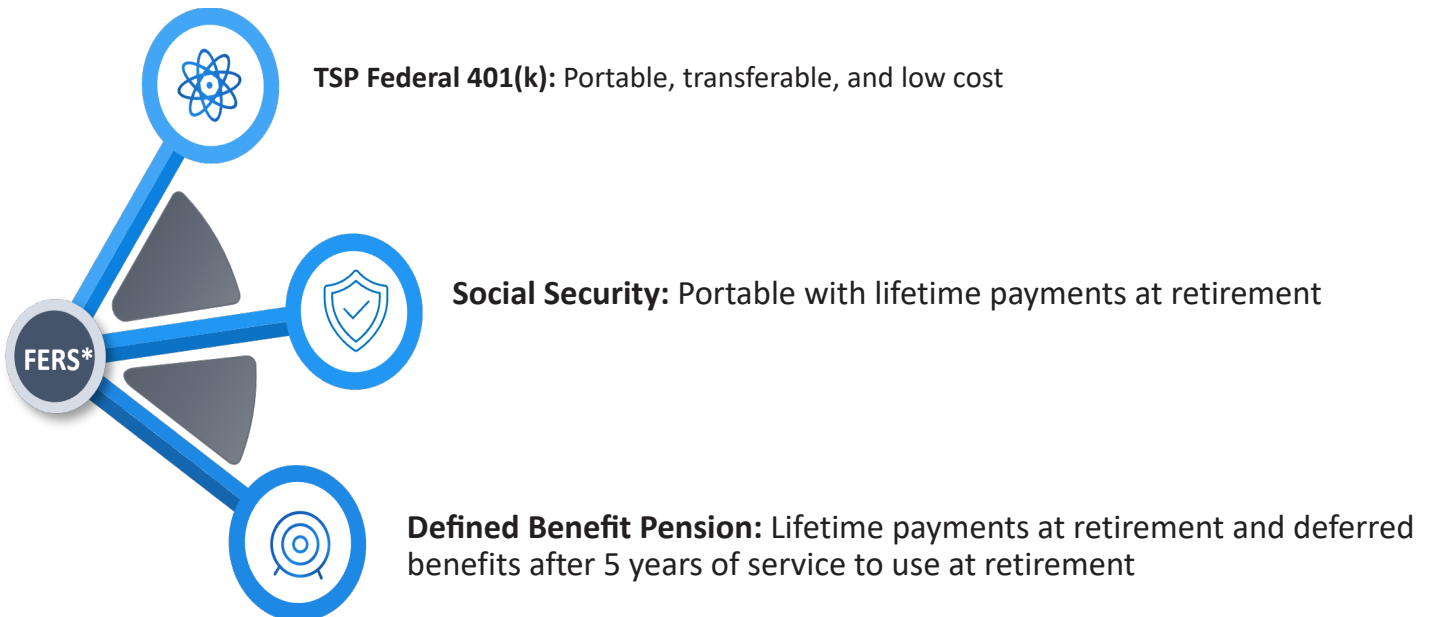
**Long-term disability and death benefits.** Become eligible for disability retirement benefits (similar to long-term disability insurance coverage) and employee death benefits after 18 months of vested service.

**Survivor benefits.** Become eligible for survivor benefits plan after 10 years of vested service.



## Earn credits from your time in military service

Don't worry – as a VA employee, you may carry over service time that is added to your total years of work for retirement purposes. This may increase your retirement pension payments (conditions apply).



# THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) Federal 401(k)

**Grow retirement funds by supplementing your pension, Social Security and other savings with TSP.**

**More savings.** TSP lets you contribute up to \$22,500\* a year to your account.

**Catch-up at mid-career.** If you're age 50 or older, grow TSP beyond the maximum with additional "catch up" contributions of up to \$7,500 per year\* for a total potential contribution of \$30,000. Catch-up ceilings are regularly increased so check the TSP website for the latest information.

**Employer matching.** Earn VA contributions right away. VA makes an automatic contribution of 1% of your salary into your TSP fund. VA also matches contributions dollar-for-dollar on the first 3% of your salary and 50 cents-on-the-dollar for the next 2% of your salary, for a total of up to 5% in employer contributions.

**Vesting.** When you're "vested," you have ownership of contributions—they are yours to take with you, into the next job or retirement. You are automatically vested in your own contributions and VA's matching contributions from day one of VA employment. Employees are vested in the 1% automatic contribution after 3 years of VA service.

**Low-cost, choice-based investing.** TSP features matching funds, tax-treatment options (pretax traditional/after-tax Roth), investment choices and portability so you control how much you contribute and where to invest. TSP annual administration fees (total expense ratio) are roughly 10 times lower than industry averages at .055% for every \$1,000 invested versus the industry average of roughly .58% for every \$1,000 invested.\*\* That's more money in your pocket to use when you retire.

## Let's do the math! What will your investment look like with compounded interest?

**Keep more of your investment with low TSP investment fees!** Plan for a comfortable life after federal service with TSP and compound interest. At VA, TSP participants do have one big advantage over most 401(k) investors: lower fees. Invest \$22,500 annually toward retirement and see your savings stack up! Take a closer look at your investments.



**20 YEARS**

**\$930,826**

**VA TSP Fees**  
(fees paid by VA employees)

**\$512**

**Private Sector Fees**  
(for non-VA 401(k))

**\$5,399**



**30 YEARS**

**\$2,139,096**

**VA TSP Fees**  
(fees paid by VA employees)

**\$1,117**

**Private Sector Fees**  
(for non-VA 401(k))

**\$12,407**



**40 YEARS**

**\$4,511,790**

**VA TSP Fees**  
(fees paid by VA employees)

**\$2,481**

**Private Sector Fees**  
(for non-VA 401(k))

**\$26,168**

Compounded by 7% assumed annual rate of return

\*indicates the 2023 amount and may increase in future years

\*\* <https://www.investopedia.com/thrift-savings-plan-vs-401-k-5212330>

# FERS Basic/Defined Pension

**Become vested in FERS Basic/Defined Benefit pension after only 5 years of creditable civilian service.**

**Generous pension.** Under the federal retirement system, your future pension benefits are funded through an automatic 4.4% deduction from your salary and a 16.6% matching contribution from VA each pay period. After retirement, monthly pension annuity payments are distributed for life.



The examples below illustrate calculations for annual VA pension for full-time employees (not including 401k/TSP payments) using various retirement age and years of service combinations for average salaries of \$105,000, \$143,000, and \$205,000.



## Average Salary \$105,000

Example 1



- Under age 62
- 1% benefit
- 60 years old
- 30 years of VA service
- \$105,000 average high 3 salary



**\$31,500**

EXAMPLE

ANNUAL PENSION

Example 2



- Age 62 or older
- 1.1% benefit
- 63 years old
- 33 years of VA service
- \$110,000 average high 3 salary



**\$39,930**



## Average Salary \$143,000

Example 1



- Under age 62
- 1% benefit
- 60 years old
- 30 years of VA service
- \$143,000 average high 3 salary



**\$42,900**

EXAMPLE

ANNUAL PENSION

Example 2



- Age 62 or older
- 1.1% benefit
- 63 years old
- 33 years of VA service
- \$150,000 average high 3 salary



**\$54,450**



## Average Salary \$205,000

Example 1



- Under age 62
- 1% benefit
- 60 years old
- 30 years of VA service
- \$205,000 average high 3 salary



**\$61,500**

EXAMPLE

ANNUAL PENSION

Example 2



- Age 62 or older
- 1.1% benefit
- 63 years old
- 33 years of VA service
- \$215,000 average high 3 salary



**\$78,045**

### Age Defined

- Under age 62 the employee must have met their Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) between age 55-57 and they must have worked at least 10 years or greater under a retirement plan.

### Benefits Defined

- You may be eligible for a monetary FERS supplement if you are <62 years old and reached your MRA with 30 years of service or age 60 with at least 20 years.
- Under age 62 benefit is 1% of the highest 3 years of average salary for each year of service (conditions apply).
- Age 62 or older with 20+ years of service benefits is calculated at 1.1% of the highest 3 years average salary for each year of service.

Many different factors impact pension amounts; for instance, unused sick leave extends your creditable service time on a day-for-day basis. Review your specific situation with a VA nurse recruiter and follow the links in the resources section for more information.

# TOTAL REWARD\$

A VA Career offers you numerous benefits and rewards, take a closer look at your potential inventory of total reward\$. At VA you a balanced, flexible work environment focused on your unique needs.



## Your Total Reward\$ could potentially include:

- Competitive compensation and salaries
- Pay for time not worked
- Recruitment and retention bonuses\*
- Work-life balance
- Workplace flexibilities/alternative work arrangements\*
- Health and wellness programs
- No employment contracts, restrictive covenants, or non-compete clauses
- Insurance coverage (health care, life, etc.)
- Extensive retirement package
- Credit for Military Service\*
- Performance and recognition awards and programs
- Professional development opportunities
- Education Debt Reduction Program\*

\*Please note, certain elements vary and are based on specific facility circumstances, eligibility requirements, and availability and are not a guarantee of benefits.

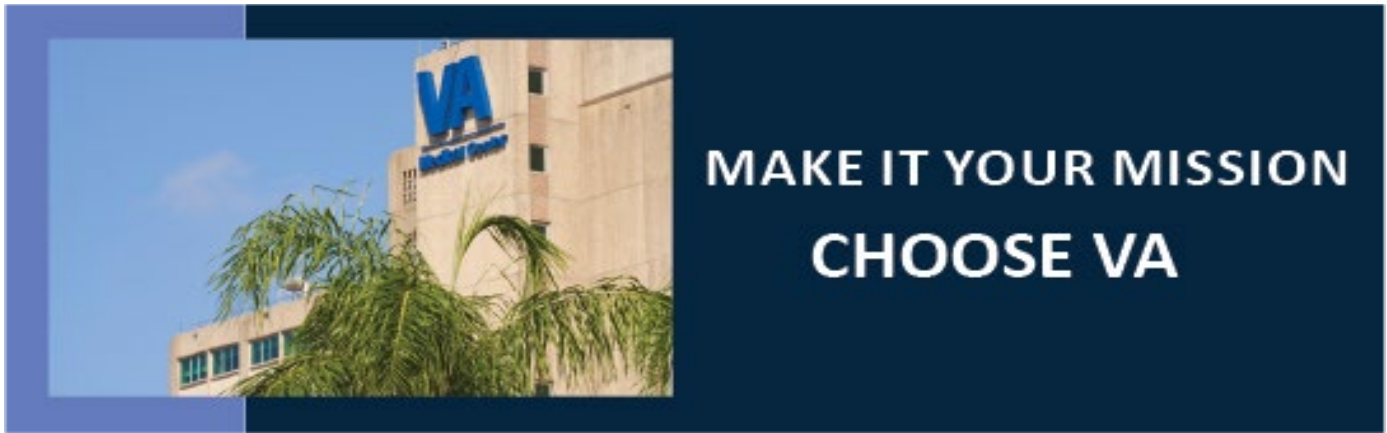
**Work anywhere.** With one full and unrestricted active U.S. license, you can work at any of the 1,293 VA sites of care or by the beach, in a city or in the countryside – and take your benefits with you. Apply for an open position at VA facilities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Philippines.

**Relocate with ease.** Applying for work at another VA? You won't typically lose accumulated paid leave, benefits, or pay by transferring from one VA position to another VA position.

**Receive assistance.** Under VA's Employment Assistance Program (EAP), get free, short-term counseling and other services to cope with the stresses of life and other issues. EAP includes:

- 24/7 access to and follow-up with professional counselors.
- Counseling on legal, financial, child and elder care, mental health, identity theft and wellness issues.
- Community resources and referrals.
- Internal and external tools on EAP services.





## RESOURCES

### Benefits, Education, and Employment Incentives

- Federal benefits: <https://www.opm.gov>
- Education support: <https://www.vacareers.va.gov/Benefits/EducationSupport>
- Employment benefits: <https://www.vacareers.va.gov/Benefits/EmploymentBenefits>
- Transit Benefit Program: <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/WMCPortal/SubPages/Pages/Transit.aspx>

### Coverage

- Liability protection explained: <https://www.vacareers.va.gov/Benefits/EmploymentBenefits/#insurance>

### Insurance

- Life insurance: <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance>
- Dental/vision: <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/dental-vision>
- Federal health benefits: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/index.asp>
- Federal health benefits comparison tools: <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance>
- Federal insurance frequently asked questions: <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/insurance-faqs>
- Flexible spending accounts primer: <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/flexible-spending-accounts>
- Long-term care: <http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/long-term-care>

### Retirement

- Estimate future pension benefits at OPM's Federal Ballpark Estimate: <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/calculators/federal-ball-park-estimator/>
- Thrift Savings Plan: <https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>
- Retirement benefits: <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information>
- Social Security Retirement Estimator: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/estimator.html>