

What We Do

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to all veterans who served in any combat zone. Counseling is available for veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma or harassment. Additionally, bereavement counseling is available for family members who have lost a loved one on active duty. Services are also available for their family members for military related issues. Veterans have earned these benefits through their service and all are provided at no cost to the veteran or family.

What services are offered?

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Couples/Marital Counseling
- Family Counseling
- Sexual Trauma Counseling
- Bereavement Counseling
- Employment Counseling
- Substance Abuse
- Medical Referrals
- VA Benefits Information
- Discharge Upgrade Information
- Networking and Referrals
- Community Education
- Crisis Intervention
- Consultation to Professionals
- Referrals to other VA services and Community Services

**Services are FREE
to all eligible Veterans
and their families.**

Directions

From 495 North

Take 495 South to Exit 38 – Route 38
Turn Right onto Main St/Rt. 38
Follow for 1.7 miles.
Turn Left onto MA-110/Andover Street
Proceed down hill and cross river
Turn right into GATEWAY CENTER
Park in front of Vet Center

From 495 South

Take 495 North to Exit 35 A-B-C
(Burlington/Lowell Connector)
Take Lowell Connector/US-3 Exit on
Left. Take Lowell Connector Exit 35C
Follow Lowell Connector to the end.
Take Left onto Gorham Street
At Second Light Take right onto Church
Street.
Take Next Left onto George Street
Go Through the Light and turn right into
Parking Lot. Vet Center is at the end.

From 128/Bedford:

Take U.S. 3/Middlesex Turnpike North
Lowell Connector Via Exit 30A-B
Follow Lowell Connector to the end.
Take Left onto Gorham Street
At Second Light Take right onto Church
Street.
Take Next Left onto George Street
Go Through the Light and turn right into
Parking Lot. Vet Center is at the end.



(978) 453-1151
(800) 905-4675

www.vetcenter.va.gov

Vet Center

**FREE & Confidential
COUNSELING services**

For veterans AND their families

Lowell Vet Center

10 George Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 453-1151 phone
(978) 441-1271 fax



**Vet Centers
1-877-WAR-VETS**
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Readjustment Counseling Service
www.vetcenter.va.gov

Vet Center Program

The Vet Center Program was established by Congress in 1979 out of the recognition that a significant number of Vietnam-Era veterans were still experiencing lingering readjustment problems associated with their military service. The program continued to expand to the present distribution of 300 Vet Centers throughout the United States including Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

The goal of the Vet Center program is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life. We understand, and most of all, we care.

What is Military Sexual Trauma Counseling?

Military sexual trauma counseling may include individual or group counseling, marital and family counseling, referral for benefits assistance, liaison with community agencies or substance abuse information and referral to help you deal with the emotions of military sexual trauma and regain confidence in your everyday life.

What is Bereavement Counseling?

Bereavement counseling is assistance and support to people with emotional and psychological stress after the death of a loved one. Bereavement counseling includes a broad range of transition services, including outreach, counseling, and referral services to family members.



ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Legislation established eligibility for Vet Center services (Public Law 104-262). Services are available based on war zone eligibility, military sexual trauma, and/or bereavement needs.

War Zone Eligibility, specifically:



World War II - 12/7/41 to 12/31/46
U.S. Merchant Marine - 12/7/41 to 8/15/45
Korean War- 6/27/50 to 1/31/55
Vietnam War- 2/28/61 to 5/7/75
Lebanon- 8/25/82 to 2/26/84
Grenada- 10/23/83 to 11/21/83
Panama- 12/20/89 to 1/31/90
Gulf War- 8/2/90 to open
Somalia- 9/17/92 - open
Bosnia/Kosovo- Operations Joint Guard, Joint Forge & Joint Endeavor only.
Global War on Terrorism - GWOT Expeditionary Medal recipients after Sept. 11, 2001
OEF - Afghanistan Campaign
OIF/OND - Iraq Campaign
Combat Action Ribbon recipients

Sexual Trauma/Harassment –

Veterans of both sexes and all eras are eligible.

Bereavement Counseling –

Available for immediate family members who have lost a loved one on active duty.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

The Vet Center Staff protects the privacy of all clients. All information disclosed in counseling sessions is held in strictest confidence. No information will be communicated to any person or agency without written consent (except to avert a potentially life-threatening crisis - Privacy Act 1975). All records related to treatment are strictly confidential.



Readjustment Issues & PTSD

Adjustment to civilian, peacetime life after serving in the military during periods of conflict has long been recognized as a process that all former warriors must confront.

After a trauma or life threatening event it is common to have upsetting memories of what happened, to have trouble sleeping, to feel jumpy, or to lose interest in things you used to enjoy. For some people these reactions do not go away on their own, or may even get worse over time. These people may have **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**.

Readjustment can be mild and brief or severe and longer in duration. We now know that anyone exposed to traumatic events such as war or sexual trauma, can have difficulties adapting to those experiences. Some symptoms include:

- Anger, Irritability, Rage
- Anxiety or Stress Reactions (nervous, tense, "short fuse")
- Depression
- Difficulty Trusting Others
- Emotional Numbing – "shutting down"
- Hyper-alertness and Startle Reactions (jumpy or alert)
- Impacted Grief (unable to feel loss)
- Intrusive Memories and Thoughts
- Isolation and Alienation from Others
- Loss of Interest in Activities
- Problems with Authority
- Self-Esteem Problems
- Sleep problems and nightmares (insomnia, constant awakening)
- Survivor Guilt
- Substance Abuse (drinking to fall asleep, etc.), and
- Employment Issues.

We understand, and most of all, we care and we can help.