



# Help Starts Here.

Washington State Employee Assistance Program

Many veterans and their family members, and others with connections to Afghanistan, are feeling deeply impacted by the events of recent weeks and the growing humanitarian crisis in that region. Director of the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs Alfie Alvarado-Ramos states, *“The news that continues to unfold is causing strong emotional reactions that range from anger, confusion, betrayal, regret, sadness, shock, loss, to resignation and acceptance. Their family members may also be frustrated and angry wondering about the many sacrifices they made in support of their loved ones. ...Those who served in Afghanistan did their mission with honor, valor, and distinction. Our veterans have our gratitude and need to know that they are not alone.”*

The Director shares that it is natural to experience strong emotions related to current events in Afghanistan. It’s even more important that those emotions are channeled in ways that are healthy. The veteran community is full of individuals who have been down similar paths. Vietnam veterans faced incredible emotional challenges after leaving Vietnam. They served during a time when the public could not separate the warrior from the administration’s policies, which caused a lifetime of emotional pain for many. In their journey to resiliency, they vowed that what happened to them would not happen to others. They, and many other veterans, have your backs and are willing to listen.

## Support is Available

Your Washington Department of Veterans Affairs can be a gateway and resource to supportive programs such as the War Trauma Counseling Program, Veterans Peer Corps, Vet Corps, and other resources. They can also facilitate a connection to other programs and organizations. DVA wants you to know: *“We just need to hear from you so that we can be there for you.”*

- [Counseling and Wellness | WA Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Find your nearest Vet Center](#) for War Veterans Counseling
- Read the [VAn tage Point](#) blog with an Afghanistan Series including articles on:
  - [How Veterans can reconcile service](#)
  - [Afghanistan: How Veterans can learn from Vietnam Veterans](#)
  - [How spouses, caregivers can support Veterans with PTSD](#)

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs also provides [valuable resources](#) for a range of topics, including the crisis in Afghanistan.

## Some Suggestions for the Days Ahead

The below suggestions may help, if you experience difficult emotions in the coming days.

Washington State EAP is accessible, free, and confidential.  
Contact us today at **877.313.4455** or [eap.wa.gov](http://eap.wa.gov)



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- Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings, and talk with your friends and families about what you are experiencing.
- Reach out to battle buddies or connect with a peer-to-peer network.
- Sign up for mental health services, or even if you don't feel you need this now, call one of the services above to find out the process for signing up should you change your mind.
- Identify what is and not in your scope of influence, and focus on the things in your control.
- Set boundaries around social media and news consumption—you don't have control over what is happening in the world, but you do have control over setting down your phone and instead participating in an activity that supports your mental and physical health.
- Even when you don't feel like it, prioritize eating healthy foods, getting physical activity, and [good sleep hygiene](#).

## Washington State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Resources

For state employees and employees at our contracted public employers, the EAP provides assessment, short-term counseling and referral services and numerous [resources](#) to promote you and your adult household members' well-being. Visit [our web site](#) to learn more about accessing these services.

For supervisors, managers, executive leadership and human resources personnel seeking assistance in supporting others, contact us at (877) 313 – 4455 to request a management consult.

These on-demand webinars hosted on YouTube might provide support during this time:

- [Self-Care with the Washington State EAP](#)
- [How to Build Resilience When Your Job Involves Helping Others in Crisis](#)

Additionally, [you can sign up for the one-hour "Be in Solidarity with Afghan Community" gathering](#) on Friday, August 27 at 11am. This event is hosted by the Washington Immigrant Network (WIN) Business Resource Group and facilitated by a veteran and EAP counselor. It is a time for anyone concerned about Afghanistan to share stories and hold space for each other.

## Other Support Resources

- [Military & Veterans Crisis Line](#): 1.800.273.8255, Press 1, or text 838555, 24/7
- [Vets 4 Warriors](#): 1.855.838.8255
- [InTransition](#) helps service members find mental health services: 1.800.424.7877
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) – call 1.800.273.8255
- [Crisis Text Line](#) – to Connect with a Crisis Counselor, text "HOME" to 741741

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- [Washington Recovery Helpline](#) (for mental health, substance use or gambling challenges)
- [County Crisis Lines](#) (available for all Washingtonians, regardless of income or insurance)

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