

Ways You Can Help

- Clinicians, including those who treat patients in correctional facilities, should routinely inquire about Veteran status, history of justice-system involvement, and suicide risk factors (including mental health and substance use disorders, traumatic brain injury, homelessness, perceived lack of social support, hopelessness, and a history of trauma).^{8,9}
- Connect Veterans who have been involved in the justice system with resources intended to help them in their transition out of incarceration, such as programs that provide employment and housing assistance. Also, when Veterans who have a mental health or substance use diagnosis leave correctional facilities, ensure that they have a plan for continued treatment.
- Consider cognitive behavioral therapy for justice-system involved Veterans who have a history of trauma or who perceive that they lack social support.⁹
- Visit www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp#contacts for information about the Health Care for Re-entry Veterans program and www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp for information about the Veterans Justice Outreach program. Contact the Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist at your local VA medical center to assist in outreach to justice-system involved Veterans.

There is no single cause of suicide. It is often the result of a complex interaction of risk and protective factors at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels. To prevent Veteran suicide, we must maximize protective factors and minimize risk factors at all of these levels.

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