CALVET

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

COVID-19
Veterans Resource Guide
2020

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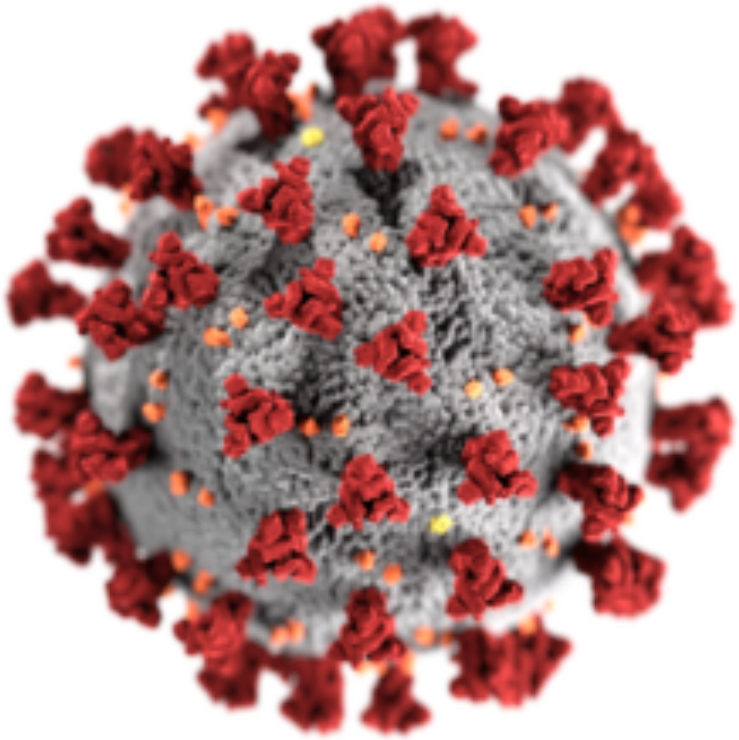
COVID-19 in California

- COVID-19, which is caused by the coronavirus, is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways
- A shelter-in-place directive was issued March 19th in response to slowing down the virus
- Californians can go out for essential errands or to do critical jobs, but are otherwise advised to stay away from others
- Visit https://covid19.ca.gov/ for continual updates and useful information



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Stay-at-Home Order

Do:

✓Stay home

✓Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer

✓Cover your cough or sneeze

✓Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Don't:

✓Shake hands

✓Touch your face

✓Go to the doctor if you aren't sick

✓Stockpile masks or gloves

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What’s Open During the Stay-at-Home order?

Essential services such as:

- Gas stations, pharmacies, and banks
- Grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants
- Laundromats/laundry services
- Essential state and local government functions

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Nutritional Resources

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CalFresh

- Formerly known as Food Stamps
- Helps to improve the health and well-being of qualified households and individuals by providing them a means to meet their nutritional needs
- Apply for CalFresh online or dial **916-654-1896**
- Get your questions answered through the CalFresh Benefits Helpline at **1-877-847-3663**

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Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Federal food stamp program
- Provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families
- For more information, call **1-877-847-FOOD** (**1-877-847-3663**) or apply online

SM SNAP

Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program

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Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

- Created to meet the needs of the hungry and homeless throughout the US
- Allocates federal funds for the provision of food and shelter, as well as services that provide financial assistance
- United Way serves as the fiscal agent

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Food Banks

- A location where donated food and other products are solicited and warehoused
- Food is distributed to a variety of individuals and community agencies which serve people in need
- To locate a nearby food bank, go to www.cafoodbanks.org or call **1-866-321-4435**

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Healthcare

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VA Healthcare

- USDVA is still accepting applications for health care during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Estimated time for approval is approximately 7-10 days business days
- Apply online or by telephone at **1-877-222-8387**

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My HealtheVet

- To mitigate community spread visit www.myhealth.va.gov
- Access or manage: Appointments, Prescriptions, Health Records, or Messages to or from your Doctor
- Contact My HealtheVet by phone at

1-877-327-0022

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Veterans Crisis Line

- A free, confidential resource that connects veterans with caring, qualified responders
- Available 24/7 to anyone, even if you're not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care
- If you are in crisis and need to speak with a crisis responder, please call **1-800-273-8255 and Press 1** or **text 838255**
- Also offers online chat to provide another way for Veterans to connect with confidential, round-the-clock support

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

www.veteranscrisisline.net

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VA Facilities Directory

- A storehouse of facility and key staff information within 1,934 VA facilities
- Categorizes information for browsing by state, administration, and address
- Locate VA Medical Centers or Clinics in your local area at www.va.gov

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Other Websites and Phone Numbers

- Check out publichealth.va.gov for the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus information

- The VA's **Inquiry Routing & Information System** (IRIS) webpage is a one-stop location that routs you to information on many of the different programs offered through the VA

- **1-844-MyVA311 (1-844-698-2311)** is a national toll-free number which assists Veterans in getting their questions answered more efficiently

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More Websites and Phone Numbers

- For Benefits Questions, such as GI Bill, Claim Status or Disability Benefits, contact the **VA Benefits Hotline** at **1-800-827-1000** (Monday - Friday, 8AM - 9PM ET)

- Call **1-877-222-VETS (1-877-222-8387)** if If you have a problem with your care provider, VA medical facility, or any other aspect of your care

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Community Services and Resources

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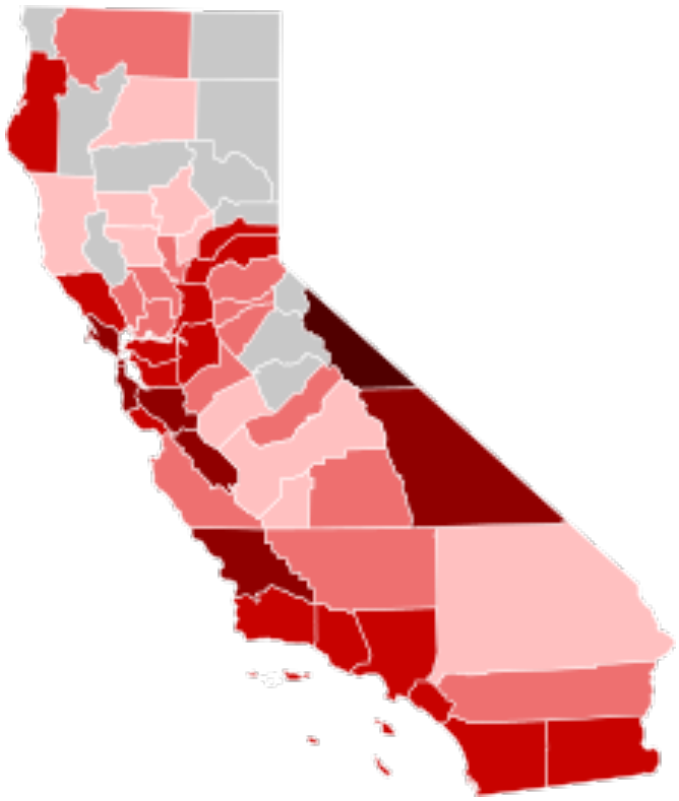
County Services and Resources

- Each city, county, and local government in California is uniquely working to mitigating the spread of COVID-19

- Find out how your county is responding by getting local information at www.covid19.ca.gov



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Education Services and Resources

- Check your local school district for more information on how and where to receive services
- Childcare for essential workers may be available in your area
- Contact your city, county, or local government as **available services can vary**

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Renters and Homeowners Protection

- The California Governor authorized local governments and banks to halt evictions for renters and homeowners, slow foreclosures, and protect against utility shutoffs for Californians affected by COVID-19

- The order does not relieve a tenant from the obligation to pay rent or restrict the landlord's ability to recover rent that is due

- The protections are in effect through May 31, 2020, unless extended

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90-Day Mortgage Payment Relief

- If you are struggling with the COVID-19 crisis contact your financial institution to see if you are eligible to participate in the 90-Day Grace Period for Mortgage Payments program

- This relief package offers mortgage payment forbearances of up to 90 days to borrowers economically impacted by COVID-19

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In Addition…

Those institutions will:

- Provide borrowers a streamlined process to request a forbearance for COVID-19-related reasons
- Confirm approval of and terms of forbearance program
- Provide borrowers the opportunity to request additional relief, as practicable, upon continued showing of hardship due to COVID-19

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Included with the Package

- Late or missed payments will not be shared with credit reporting agencies
- Moratorium on initiating foreclosure sales or evictions for 60 days
- Financial institutions will waive or refund mortgage-related late fees and other fees for 90 days

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Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs)

- A low-interest federal disaster loan that is offered through the U.S. Department of Small Business Administration
- Provides up to $2 million in assistance and can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue
- Can be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact
- Businesses can apply here online

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COVID-19 Emergency Financial Relief Program

- Prioritizes and provides financial assistance to individuals who are experiencing financial stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Available to all all Veterans, Active Duty, Reserves and National Guard
- Supports 1 month of payment (up to $1500) in areas such as rent, mortgage, auto loan/lease, or utilities (electric, water, heat)
- One emergency financial request per household

PENFED Foundation

Apply Online Today

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Important Dates and Deadlines

- State and federal tax deadlines have been extended to July 15, 2020
- The deadline for compliance with REAL ID requirements has been delayed until October 1, 2021

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VA Education Benefits

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Senate Bill 3503

- Emergency Act to Preserve GI Bill Payments Becomes Law: Effective 3/1/2020 - 12/21/2020

- VA education payments for classes that are "converted to distance learning by reason of an emergency or health-related situation" will continue to be paid as if they were conducted in the classroom

- Affects all VA education payments

www.Military.com

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GIBill.va.gov

- Check the Announcements section for up-to-date information on COVID-19 and any changes that are made in regards to education benefits in general

- Follow USDVA on **Facebook** @gibilleducation to participate in open discussions related to your GI Bill benefits at this time

- If you have questions about your specific circumstance, please contact the Education Call Center @ **1-888-442-4551**

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Maintain Academic Standards

- Remain aware of your Professors expectations as news regarding COVID-19 changes daily
- Continue to communicate any issues or concerns you may have during this unique time
- Apply for Tutorial Assistance if needed, and if you meet eligibility requirements

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CVSO Claims & Resources

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County Veterans Service Office

- Provide Veterans and dependents free benefit information and assistance for state and federal programs
- Representatives assist with processing intent to files, claims, and appeals
- Available by phone or through e-mail (certain locations may have video chat capabilities)
- Locate your local County Veterans Service Office online

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Assistance Offered Regarding…

- College Fee Waiver
- DMV Veteran Designation
- Records Request
- Legal Aid Resources
- Housing Resources
- PTSD & Mental Health Resources

Please note there maybe limitations to the programs

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Housing

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Suspension of Foreclosures

- The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) suspends all foreclosures for the next 60 days
- Applies to homeowners with FHA-insured Title II Single Family forward and Home Equity Conversion (reverse) mortgages
- Meant to address the impacts to the financial well-being of America's individuals, families, and businesses caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Includes short and long-term forbearance options, mortgage modifications, and other mortgage payment relief options available based on the borrower's individual circumstances

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Public and Indian Housing

- HUD developed an Information and Resource webpage that makes it easier for state and local health departments to collaborate with housing providers

- See FAQ regarding COVID-19 and Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs, and Native American programs

National Low Income Housing Coalition

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Homeless Service Providers

- People experiencing homelessness often have a higher risk for exposure to communicable diseases and have little access to health care systems and treatment in their communities
- Find information and resources for community partners at HUD Exchange
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) can fund for a range of eligible activities that prevent and respond to the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19
- See HUD's Quick Guide to review eligible activities to support infectious disease response

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Employment

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Search for Jobs

- Employee Development Department (EDD) provide priority services to all veterans, and their eligible spouse to find jobs and maximize employment and training opportunities
- Search for federal jobs at USAJobs.gov (Apply for Veterans Preference here)
- Search for California State jobs at CalCareers.ca.gov (Apply for Veterans Preference here)
- Get assistance with the job search process through Work for Warriors

Search for Essential positions

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Social Media

- Utilizing different Social Media Outlets can let you post and submit your resume and search for jobs
- LinkedIn can connect you to the world's professionals to become more productive and successful
- Check out CalVet's Facebook page for job postings specifically advertised to Veterans, and tips on securing a job

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Unemployment Benefits

- File a Claim online
- If the Veteran has been separated for more than 18 months, they must use the **REGULAR UI Application**
- If the Veteran has separated for less than 18 months, they must fill out the **SERVED IN THE MILITARY Application** (Can only be filed via phone or mailed faxed, and must include a copy of the veteran's DD-214)
- Contact your County Veteran Service Office (CVSO) for all questions and/or help

EDD Employment Development Department State of California

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New Mission: Self Care

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Adapt, Overcome, and Improvise

- As of now, life must adapt to a new way of living, which will incorporate a large amount of social distancing and self-isolation
- For many veterans, this can lead to a whole host of negative symptoms which could possibly affect your transition into civilian life
- It is important that you find ways to improve your mental health when sheltering in place

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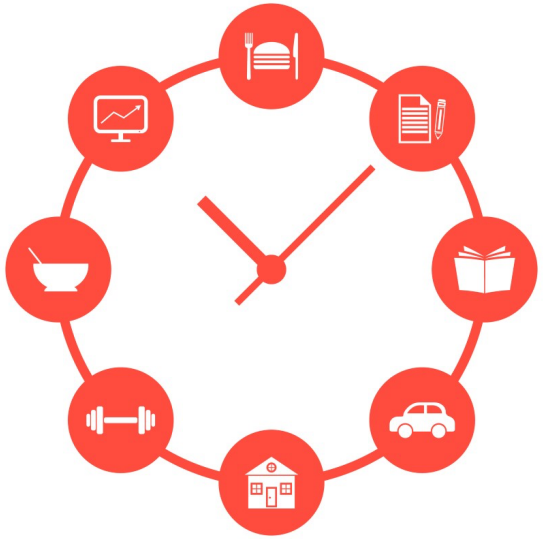
Create a Routine

- Perform the same morning rituals you did before
- Have meals at a consistent time throughout the day
- Try your best to get to bed at the same time each night
- Keep a rough schedule for things during the day; try to eat breakfast, read, or do chores and maybe after lunch, do an online activity or finish some work



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Continued Social Interactions

- Stay in touch with friends through texting, phone calls, and video chat
- Go for walks and use that time as an opportunity to get fresh air and a sense of human connection with those who may be doing the same
- Facebook groups are more relevant now, as people become more accustomed to, and more reliant on, online communities for an increasing range of their social needs
- Find virtual meeting spaces, ie: Streaming church services or music events

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Ask for Help

- You don’t have to be alone. If you or anyone you know needs help, contact the Veterans Crisis Line

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Contact Us

California Department of Veterans Affairs

1227 O Street, Sacramento CA 95814

1-800-952-5626

www.calvet.ca.gov