

From: Suffolk County Council VFW CMDR, Dave Rogers

To: Long Island Veterans

Subject: Resources for Long Island Veterans During the CoVID 19 Crisis

Comrades here is a list of resources and assistance I can provide during this time to our Comrades on Long Island. Some pertain to Suffolk County, others to Nassau, and some even in NYC, while some assist in Nassau and Suffolk, others will help anywhere in NYC and the Island. If I get more information, I will pass it on. If you know of anything that I should add please let me know. The reason I am sharing from all areas, is because many of the organizations I work with help people across the island.

For Suffolk County I also have a couple of phone numbers to peer to peer counselors and social workers that I can give out to people who need it, I am not posting it because they asked that I only give to those in the area that need it. So contact me if you know any veterans that need assistance.

For this information and help people can follow our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/sccvfw>

### **TESTING for CoVID 19**

Drive Through Testing: If you think you may have the CoVID 19 call your doctor first for advice on if you should be tested, if you need to be tested call: **1-888-364-3065**

### **Suffolk County Testing at Stony Brook University**

### **Nassau County at Jones Beach**

Right now they are only calling people who come up positive, and calling those negative as they have time, so if you get tested and don't get a call you can go to their website and look up your status: <https://www.bioreference.com>

(For other test sites you will have to contact them)

### **Northport VA:**

**KNOW A VETERAN THAT CAN USE SOME HELP?** Here are some Contact Numbers:

White House VA Hotline: **1-855-948-2311**

The Veterans Crisis Line **1-800-273-8255** Press **1**

Call ahead to the VA before heading there. Routine appointments are cancelled at this time, So, if it is not an emergency don't risk heading out. If you need an update or meds go through <https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home> or call the VA Hospital **631-261-4400**

Confidential Support at the Northport VA can be reach at **800-273-8255** or text **838255** 24 hours a day

**Suffolk County Veteran Services:**

All veteran services are working remotely. Contact the Veterans Service Agency at: **(631) 853-VETS** (our **Hauppauge Office**), or **(631) 852-1410** (our **Riverhead Office**), or via email at:

[servingheros@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:servingheros@suffolkcountyny.gov) or [veteransinfo@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:veteransinfo@suffolkcountyny.gov)

Leave a message or your information and someone will get back to you.

<https://suffolkcountyny.gov/veterans>

**Nassau County Veteran Services:**

Call the Main Phone Line: **516-572-6565**

As of right now they cannot offer much transportation, they are working on getting help for those that really need it, but it is on a case by case basis.

The Office is still processing claims, but is not at full staff, so they are spreading appointments out, and will see people as they can, make sure you call ahead.

The food bank is still open, call to check on your availability. They can still deliver food from the bank but have to call first.

Pick up for Food is at the office: Vet Mart requires you to bring a copy of your **DD214 or veteran ID to get food.**

2201 Hempstead Turnpike

Building "Q"

East Meadow, NY 11554

**Dwyer Peer to Peer (Suffolk County)**

New operating hours for the Peer Support Line:

o Monday to Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

o Saturday, 5-10 p.m.

o Sunday, 2-7 p.m.

The Peer Support Line can be accessed by calling **631-471-7242** ext. **1217**.

• Our online Peer Support Groups can be accessed through this link on our website:

<http://mhaw.org/programs/online-peer-support-groups>

Peer Support Groups are offered:

o Thursday, 7 -8:30 p.m.

o Saturday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

o Sunday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

**Vet2Vet (Nassau County)**

VHALI is working remotely, leave a message and they will get back to you.

**Veterans Health Alliance of Long Island**

**516-489-2322**

**Audrey Lewis**

Program Manager of Veterans Services, VHAI, PFC Dwyer Peer Support Project – Nassau /Vet2Vet

516-489-2322 ext. 1260 or email: [Alewis@mhanc.org](mailto:Alewis@mhanc.org)

Will hold Telehealth Meetings:

Monday 5:15 to 6:15

Wed 6:30 - 7:30

1800-216-0770 the guest code is 877966

**Women Veterans Support Group for Suffolk County**

Women Veterans Support Groups are meeting through Zoom, for more information email Sharran Chambers-Murphy @ [schambersmurphy@gmail.com](mailto:schambersmurphy@gmail.com) or call the Dwyer Program Main line 631-471-7242

**New York National Guard Family Programs Office**

Lisa Cooper Family Assistance Specialist. (631)962-1637 [lisa.cooper.ctr32@mail.mil](mailto:lisa.cooper.ctr32@mail.mil)

Family Programs Assists Service Member and Family Resource Centers (SMFRC) to serve the needs of Service Members, Veterans and their Families by providing Eight Essential Services. FAS' provide information on resources and benefits that are available within the military network and in your local community.

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Legal Resource and Referrals     | 5) Crisis Intervention and Referral   |
| 2) Financial Resource and Referrals | 6) Community Information and Outreach |
| 3) TRICARE Resource and Referral    | 7) Exceptional Family Member Program  |
| 4) ID Cards and DEERS               | 8) Emergency Family Assistance Center |

**Vet Center**

Vet Center in Babylon and Nassau County are also working remotely during this time, the centers are staffed but you can't go there.

**Nassau County Vet Center** number is 516-348-0088

**Babylon Vet Center** number is 631-661-3930

**EOC of Suffolk County**

With all this going on, veterans will be worried about how they will pay their rent, might need a new job, on the edge of homelessness, need legal assistance... if you are dealing with any of this reach out to the EOC of Suffolk County 631-289-2601 or go to <https://eoc-suffolk.com>

**EOC of Nassau County**

Provides the same service as Suffolk County for more information call: (516) 292-9710

During these trying times, many Nassau County Residents have lost employment. The EOC of Nassau County, Inc. will be assisting by giving free assistance with Resume Creation or Interview Questions at these times. For more info <http://ow.ly/jMI550yUt4H> or [mbennett@eoc-nassau.org](mailto:mbennett@eoc-nassau.org)

### **UNITED WAY**

Dial **211** or call toll free **888-774-7633** call center operates 24hrs

## **Resources & Information**

### **211 Long Island**

[www.211longisland.org](http://www.211longisland.org)

Visit 211 Long Island for information, updates and important health information about the Coronavirus COVID-19. The 211 Long Island Call Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. To contact, dial 2-1-1, outside of Nassau and Suffolk Counties 1-888-774-7633.

### **State Health Department Website**

[NY.Gov/Coronavirus](http://NY.Gov/Coronavirus)

Provides Coronavirus Updates for New Yorkers and Guidance for Healthcare Providers

### **Center for Disease Control (CDC)**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

### **FamilyWize Prescriptions Savings**

[www.unitedwayli.org/familywize](http://www.unitedwayli.org/familywize)

Individuals should continue to adhere to their prescribed medications. When calling in to get a script filled or refilled, ask your pharmacy to apply the FamilyWize discount - simply provide them with the following information:

**BIN: 610194**

**Card ID: FW100**

**Group ID: FW100**

**PCN: FW**

FamilyWize does not require registration so there is no need to physically show a card. Note that CVS and Walgreens are providing [free delivery of prescription medications](#). Prefer to keep a FamilyWize Prescription Savings Card in you wallet? [Download your card here.](#)

## United Together: A Response Fund for COVID-19

United Way of Long Island has established [UNITED TOGETHER: A Response Fund For COVID-19](#) to help alleviate disruptions to family life. We are collaborating with the Long Island Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (LIVOAD) and our network of nonprofit organizations in the region to assist families and individuals as they deal with this health and economic crisis.

During the first 30 days of this economic downfall, support will be provided to those who are newly unemployed due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Beginning early April, the Fund will help eligible applicants meet their critical basic needs of food and household supplies via retail gift cards.

We will continue to monitor and evaluate nonprofit organizations' capacity to fulfill unmet needs. Grants will support agencies that have deep roots in the community and provide services to families, seniors, veterans and special populations.

# Applications Open Early April

## Personal Hygiene and Social Distancing Protocols

Please remember: Public health experts have been clear that the great majority of those who contract coronavirus will recover without difficulty, and that we can protect ourselves and our families by following common-sense public health guidelines.

- Maintain good hand hygiene by frequently and thoroughly washing with soap and water
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing. If tissues are unavailable, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve...NOT your hands
- Avoid shaking hands, hugging or greeting with a kiss
- Wipe surface areas often with disinfectant
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- If you, a family member or other member of your household gets sick – please see a doctor if symptoms are flu-like
- Be familiar with the attached [COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#) provided by the Center for Disease Control

## If you think you are symptomatic

DO NOT GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM. Call your healthcare provider, tell them about your condition, and await further instructions before going to a healthcare facility. This will allow for time for the appropriate precautions to be taken.

## To Help Families in Need:

Give to United Way of Long Island's **UNITED TOGETHER: A Response Fund For COVID-19.**

### **Services for the Underserved (S:US)**

Is working remotely to get assistance or more information contact Tiffany Kehoe at **631-227-0777** or email [TKehoe@sus.org](mailto:TKehoe@sus.org)

### **Island Harvest (Serves Nassau and Suffolk County)**

If you know of a veteran in need of food call John at island Harvest. **516-967-3414.**  
If you are able to pick up for that veteran, you can call John to arrange a pick-up at their location  
40 Marcus Blvd, Hauppauge, NY 11788  
(They will put the food in the trunk or back seat for you, no need for contact)

### **Long island Cares (Serves Nassau and Suffolk County)**

Long Island Cares and their satellite locations are still open, please call the main number for assistance with food and they will get it out to you or let you know where and when you can pick it up, with the high demand they also are working by set times for pick up. Call **631-582-3663**

### **Project SafetyNet**

Project Safety Net's top priority is the health of our clients, staff and colleagues. Following Governor Cuomo's current guidance on social distancing, our testing services, group meetings and in-person gatherings are postponed until further notice. Care Coordination services will be provided remotely. Office hours will shift to accommodate the reduced staff presence. We expect this situation to evolve daily and we will make on-going adjustments to balance our mission and the critical services we provide to the community. Please see the links on our [Covid-19 reference](#) page for resources to help you stay healthy and well during this challenging period. Long Island will get through this crisis if we unite, stay informed and act with purpose!

**Long Island Center for Recovery:** for veterans suffering with addiction  
[aleonardo@longislandcenterrecovery.com](mailto:aleonardo@longislandcenterrecovery.com) [www.longislandcenterrecovery.com](http://www.longislandcenterrecovery.com) **631-728-3100**

### **SAGEVets FOR LGBTQ Veterans:**

Emergency hotline for Elder LGBTQ veterans **(908) 977-6869** or **(201) 256-1357.**

**NYC Veterans Alliance: Though this is from NYC some of the information and numbers can help all our veterans.**

## Resources for Veterans & Families During COVID-19 Emergency



Do you need immediate help? Please fill out our form:



You've asked us questions--and we want to help with answers. Please see below for the best information we've compiled to date, and please come back for updates. (Updates as of 3/25/20) Here's what we know right now:

### **1) Anticipate this lasting until May or longer.**

On March 24, [Governor Cuomo stated the COVID-19 pandemic will reach its peak within 2-3 weeks in New York](#). It is unclear how much longer the spread of the virus will last beyond that. So let's buckle in and prepare to make it through however long this lasts.

### **2) [Social distancing](#) and [washing your hands thoroughly \(20 seconds\) with soap](#) are important protective measures for you and others.**

Whether you're old or young, healthy or sick, and regardless of whether you ever have symptoms--we all have a part to play in stopping the spread of this dangerous virus wherever we can.

Keep at least 6 feet apart from others if you go outside--but otherwise please stay home no matter who you are to reduce spreading the virus.

Get comprehensive facts, statistics, and tips on the COVID-19 illness and pandemic from the [Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center](#).

### **3) Misinformation is all over the place.**

That email or social media post from your buddy saying that if you hold your breath and don't cough then you're okay? [That was a fake.](#) (So was the "[dolphins swimming in a Venetian canal](#)" post.)

Be wary of information without verifiable sources--and be ESPECIALLY suspicious of anyone trying to charge you money for information, testing, or anything else related to COVID-19. Bad actors will be out there trying to exploit this situation--let's be vigilant.

If you think you're being scammed or overcharged, call 311 (in NYC) or make a complaint to the [New York State Attorney General](#) at 1-800-771-7755.

#### **4) Know what to do if you or someone in your household has symptoms.**

COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, and range from mild to potentially fatal. This can be a scary illness, which is why we all need to do all we can to halt its spread.

See [symptom guidelines from the U.S. Center for Disease Control](#) and/or call the New York State Department of Health's COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-364-3065 to talk with a healthcare professional about any symptoms you are experiencing and to learn whether you should be tested or seek emergency care.

If you need COVID-19 information and assistance in New Jersey, go [covid19.nj.gov](#)

If you are enrolled in VA Healthcare, see the [VA's guidance on COVID-19](#) , call your [nearest VA facility](#), log in to [HealtheVet](#), or use [VA telehealth](#) to consult with a VA provider about your symptoms before you plan to visit a VA facility in person.

#### **5) Ask for help if you need it.**

Even if you feel alone, please know there are people working hard to help support you any way they can. Take a look at the resources below, and please don't hesitate to reach out to any agency or organization on this list.

If you need any kind of help (periodic check-ins, groceries, housing help, etc.) please fill out our Veterans Mutual Aid Request Form:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mutualaidvets>

The NYC Veterans Alliance team would also be glad to hear from you. Email [hello@nycveteransalliance.org](mailto:hello@nycveteransalliance.org) or call us at 929-265-4549.

Here are the resources and information we've compiled for you:

## COVID-19 RELIEF MEASURES

**GI Bill Continuity** - Congress passed legislation to make sure student veterans continue to receive educational benefits without interruption even if schools have moved to distance learning. Call the VA's GI Bill hotline at 1-888-442-4551 to resolve any issues or concerns you might have.

**Paid Sick Leave** - All employers are required by New York State to pay sick leave to employees affected by COVID-19 quarantine.

**Unemployment Relief** - New York State has waived the 7-day waiting period for anyone needing to file a claim for unemployment insurance as a result of COVID-19 closures and quarantines. As in, you can file as soon as you find yourself out of work.

**Mortgage Relief** - New York State has issued guidance to mortgage providers to provide relief to homeowners impacted by COVID-19.

**Eviction Relief** - As of March 20, Governor Cuomo has issued a moratorium on evictions for a period of 90 days.

**Utilities Relief** - Utility companies are suspending shutoff of utility services in both New York and New Jersey.

**Tax Filing Relief** - The new IRS deadline for filing taxes is July 15, 2020.

**Relief for NYC Small Businesses** - NYC is providing relief measures for qualifying small businesses in NYC.

## VETERANS CLAIMS AND BENEFITS

**Free Benefits Counseling** - New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs staff are working remotely, but you can still get help with filing a VA claim and free counseling from fellow veterans on VA and New York benefits and services for veterans. The intake phone center is currently down, but staff are ready to get in touch with you if you send an email to [contact@veterans.ny.gov](mailto:contact@veterans.ny.gov) or [inclusion@veterans.ny.gov](mailto:inclusion@veterans.ny.gov).

## FAMILIES WITH K-12 CHILDREN

**Grab & Go Meals** - In NYC, any K-12 students can pick up breakfast, lunch, and afterschool meals any NYC school facility.

**Free Spectrum WiFi** - Spectrum/Charter is offering 60 days of free WiFi for households with K-12 and college students who aren't current customers.

**Remote Learning Devices** - NYC Schools is lending digital learning devices to enable all K-12 students to learn at home.

#### FOOD/GROCERY ASSISTANCE

**FoodHelp.NYC** - Apply for food assistance benefits and [view a map of food pantries and community kitchens](#). Or call 866-888-8777 or 311 for information on locations and hours to get immediate help with food in NYC.

**Invisible Hands** - If you need grocery delivery--whether you can pay for it or not--you can place a request for delivery from an all-volunteer startup in NYC.

**God's Love We Deliver** - Apply for you or your loved one to receive meal delivery from a nonprofit serving individuals living with chronic illnesses or disabilities.

#### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**PenFed Foundation** - PenFed is providing emergency cash assistance to qualifying veterans and military members.

**VFW Unmet Needs Grants** - The VFW offers emergency cash assistance to qualifying veterans, military members, and families.

**NYC Cash Assistance** - NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) has a program to assist with immediate cash needs.

#### HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Housing is a top concern for all New Yorkers, and finding solutions for your specific situation can be very challenging, so we'll cut to the chase--there's no easy answers in NYC right now, and there are more than 600 veterans we know of who are currently homeless (the vast majority in shelters) and unable to find permanent housing. Evictions are suspended for 90 days (see above), but that may not end your worries.

See our [Affordable Apartment Primer](#) for a comprehensive listing of what we know about solutions for affordable housing.

If you have a tough-to-solve situation, reach out to us at [hello@nycveteransalliance.org](mailto:hello@nycveteransalliance.org) or 929-265-4549 and we'll do our best to help you find solutions.

## EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

**NYC Workforce1 Career Centers** - Offices are closed, but services are being offered remotely. If you need a job in NYC, [apply online](#).

**Our Suggestions:** If you've been laid off from a job in services that have been closed down--you may be able to find work with services that are now in high demand. Take a look at open positions at [FreshDirect](#), [ConEdision](#), [Amazon](#), [Whole Foods](#). These are ideas, not necessarily endorsements. Let us know if there are companies ready to hire quickly and we'll post the link.

## MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE

**Headstrong** - Headstrong is (virtually) open to treating current and new veteran clients during the COVID-19 emergency. Sign up [online](#) or contact Sam Dickinson, LCSW, Headstrong Counselor at [Szd2014@med.cornell.edu](mailto:Szd2014@med.cornell.edu)

**NY Presbyterian Military Family Wellness Center** - Anyone interested in our services can reach out directly to our intake specialist, Sara Such at [sara.such@nyspi.columbia.edu](mailto:sara.such@nyspi.columbia.edu) or Matt Ryba at 347-949-1193 or [matthew.ryba@nyspi.columbia.edu](mailto:matthew.ryba@nyspi.columbia.edu) to set up new services.

**Veterans Crisis Line** - Are you a veteran in crisis or concerned about one? Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves. 24/7/376 call, text, or chat support is available for all veterans, service members, reserve and National Guard members, and their loved ones. Call 1-800-273-8255, press 1 - or text 838255 to reach a caring professional.

**NYC Well** - NYC's connection to free, confidential mental health support. Speak to a counselor via phone, text, or chat and get access to mental health and substance use services, in more than 200 languages, 24/7/365. Provides peer support and short-term counseling via telephone, text and web; referrals and warm transfer to other services; follow-up to check that you have connected to care and it is working for you. Call 1-888-692-9355.

**Talkspace** - This is a paid service, but is a robust online platform that connects you to a therapist for as long as you choose. Currently offering 7-day free trial, and a discount for veterans. Therapists with a competency in serving military and veterans will indicate so in their profile.

**PTSD Coach** - PTSD Coach was designed for those who have, or may have, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This app provides you with education about PTSD, information about professional care, a self-assessment for PTSD, opportunities to find support, and tools that can help you manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD. PTSD Coach was created by VA's National Center for PTSD and DoD's National Center for Telehealth & Technology.

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

**Making a Household Plan** - Take the time to make a plan for your household to not only contend with the current situation, but for future potential escalation of circumstances. Make a plan for the possibility of you or your household members to seek emergency medical care. Make a plan for how your household, including your pets, will be managed if emergency medical care is needed. Check in with neighbors and make a list of your emergency contacts. Put all of your significant personal documents and records in one place in case they are needed in a hurry. Also see [Ready NY](#) for more helpful preparedness tips!

**Updating Your Will** - Regardless of your age or life expectancy, it's always good to have a plan to leave behind for your loved ones. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America has a unique partnership with FreeWill to provide you with a way to create or update your will, advance health care directives, and more at no cost to you.

**Planning Your Legacy** - All veterans are entitled to benefits at the end of their lives. We've gotten questions from family members of veterans who are near the end of their lives or recently passed who don't know what benefits are available to them, or what their veteran's wishes are/were. Whether you're young or old, please make sure you let your loved ones know this information. Learn more and get started [HERE](#).

## WAYS TO HELP OTHERS

**Donate Blood** - Blood reserves are critically low right now. If you can, consider donating now.

**Volunteer for the Medical Reserve Corps** - New Yorkers certified in healthcare are asked to volunteer their services if available.

**Team Rubicon** - Sign up to volunteer in your local community during COVID-19 with Team Rubicon USA.

**Invisible Hands** - Volunteer for a NYC startup that's coordinating home deliveries for New Yorkers in need.

**Help Main Street** - Purchase gift cards from your favorite local businesses to keep the cash flowing to them.

**Relief Funds for NYC Restaurant Workers** - Contribute to relief funds for local businesses that are shut down.

**Your NYC Council (or Local Elected) Office** - Contact your elected officials to ask if there are safe volunteer opportunities or ways to donate goods in your neighborhood.

## WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED

**OurVeterans.NYC** - We've pivoted from listing in-person events to listing as many digital events as possible that are relevant to the NYC Metro area veterans community. Please connect with the many veteran-serving and civic organizations who want to connect with you! Have an event? Send it to [OurVeterans@nycveteransalliance.org](mailto:OurVeterans@nycveteransalliance.org)

**Enjoy NYC's Culture Online** - NYC is amazing, and many of our cultural institutions are offering programming free online. Just a few to get you started: [92nd St Y](#), [New York Public Library](#), [Metropolitan Opera](#), [Broadway shows](#).

Have resources to add? Send them to [adrienne@nycveteransalliance.org](mailto:adrienne@nycveteransalliance.org) - we're in this together!