

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Connected Care  
Health Outreach, Public Awareness, Content Management, and Training  
Veteran Service Organization Talking Points  
January 17, 2023**

## ATLAS Overview

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' ATLAS (Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations) pilot program is extending the reach of VA health care. This will especially benefit Veterans who face long travel times to VA facilities or have limited internet access at home.
- Through strategic partnerships, ATLAS provides Veterans with access to VA telehealth services through private appointment spaces with broadband internet. It provides an opportunity for Veterans, especially those in rural areas, to receive VA clinical services in their home communities.
- ATLAS has teamed up with **The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and Walmart.**
- These organizations offer Veterans convenient locations known as ATLAS sites. ATLAS sites have private appointment spaces in which Veterans can connect with their VA providers through VA Video Connect, VA's secure videoconferencing app.
- Once Veterans arrive at an ATLAS site, an on-site attendant will help them check in to their video telehealth visit and troubleshoot basic technical issues.
- Video visits do not replace or take away Veterans' in-person care options. The choice of where and when to receive VA care is up to the Veteran.

## Possible Veteran Questions

- *What will happen during an ATLAS appointment?* When Veterans arrive at an ATLAS site, an on-site attendant will show them to the private appointment room. The attendant will assist the Veteran with the provided technology for the appointment. Then the Veteran will securely meet with their VA provider through VA Video Connect. The attendant will not be in the room during the visit or have access to any medical information.
- *What clinical services can Veterans receive?* The local VA facility determines which clinical services to offer at an ATLAS site. ATLAS sites offer health care services that do not require hands-on exams. These services may include primary care, mental health, and specialty services.
- *Can a Veteran attend an ATLAS visit at an American Legion or VFW post if they are not a member of that post?* Whether a Veteran can use the space is at the discretion of the local Veterans service organization (VSO). In general, both nonmembers and members, including those



from other posts, can attend ATLAS visits as long as the post is associated with the VA Medical Center in which the Veteran is enrolled.

- *Is there a copay?* No. There are no copays associated with video visits, whether they occur in the home or at an ATLAS site.
- *Can Veterans be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred with an ATLAS appointment?* Veterans and caregivers who already qualify for travel reimbursement for visits at VA facilities can also request travel reimbursement for ATLAS visits. For more information, visit [va.gov/health-care/get-reimbursed-for-travel-pays](https://va.gov/health-care/get-reimbursed-for-travel-pays).
- *How do Veterans schedule an ATLAS appointment?* Veterans can visit the ATLAS webpage to find an ATLAS site's scheduling information and hours of operation. Each site determines its hours based on the local VA's normal clinic hours of operation. For more information, visit the ATLAS webpage at [connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas](https://connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas).

## Possible VSO Representative Questions

- *Can Veterans' caregivers and family members have appointments at ATLAS sites?* Beneficiaries, such as spouses who receive services from the Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA (CHAMPVA), and those who receive care through VA can visit ATLAS sites for select VA visits.
- *How can I promote ATLAS to Veterans?* Some promotional materials are available to download on the ATLAS webpage at [connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas](https://connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas). VSOs should ask their VA point of contact for customizable promotional materials such as flyers, brochures, and social media content. A communications plan that offers tailored outreach strategies is also available for each ATLAS site.