

#BeThere



The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative (CFOI) is to engage, educate and inform faith-based, community, and non-profit organizations about the VA tools and resources that will equip them to better serve the Veterans, their families, survivors, caregivers, and other beneficiaries within their organizations.

To learn more about what VA programs are available and how they may help, please visit the following websites:

#### VA website

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

#### VA Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative (CFOI)

[www.va.gov/cfbpartnerships/](http://www.va.gov/cfbpartnerships/)

#### Suicide Prevention

[www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/)

#### Mission Act

[www.missionact.va.gov/](http://www.missionact.va.gov/)

#### Veteran Welcome Kit

[www.va.gov/welcome-kit/](http://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/)



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**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# How to Start a Veterans Ministry



A quick start guide brought to you by  
VA's Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative (CFOI)

• Educate • Engage • Inform

**The VA Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative (CFOI) can help your faith-based, nonprofit, or community/neighborhood organization by:**

- Collaborative brainstorming and coordination of training sessions for clergy, congregations, and community groups/members. Examples include:
  - Recognizing and addressing the spiritual and emotional needs of returning Veterans.
  - Assisting families after the transition from active-duty Servicemember to Veterans status.
  - How to reach Veterans in specific demographics or with special needs.

**Your faith-based, nonprofit, or community/neighborhood organization can help Veterans in the following ways:**

- Provide Veterans with transportation to medical appointments.
- Help recently housed Veterans obtain furniture and housing supplies.
- Educate yourself, Veterans, and others about VA benefits and services and how a Veteran can apply for them.
- Learn the signs of a Veteran or a Veteran's family member in distress.
- Encourage Veterans to use the VA services she or he has earned.
- Volunteer with the VA Voluntary Service.
- Visit a hospitalized Veteran.
- Provide drop-off child care services for a Veteran family with young children.
- Establish a Veterans/Military Ministry.

## 7 STEPS TO A VETERAN MINISTRY

### **Step 1: Identify number of Veterans in your organization**

- Set-up recruiting tables before and after service/event (awareness and sign-up)
- Create a tracking system to identify veteran population within organization

### **Step 2: Create faith-based Veteran group mission/ vision statement**

- Aligned to organization

### **Step 3: Elect faith-based Veteran group leadership council officers (President Vice President, Secretary, etc.)**

### **Step 4: Hold monthly meetings with officers (faith-based Veteran group leadership counsel) and members**

### **Step 5: Develop a strategic plan for the upcoming year**

- Weekly/monthly prayer groups, activities, trips, seminars, etc.
- Connect with local VA Medical Center (VAMC)

## Goals:

### **Step 6: Recognize Veterans in your organization:**

- Recognize Veterans during primary service/event during month of November
- Host formal banquet during the month of November in honor of your Veterans

### **Step 7: Partner with the VA Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative (CFOI)**

- Host an annual collaborative outreach event
- Request current VA resources and information