



ALASKA

VENDOR/PARTNER

GUIDEBOOK

SERVING AMERICA'S

VETERANS

[http:// www.visn20.med.va.gov/alaska](http://www.visn20.med.va.gov/alaska)
(Click on Partner Resources from left hand choices menu)

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Non-VA Purchased Care Program

What is the Non-VA Purchased Care Program?

- The Non-VA Purchased Care Program at the Alaska VA Healthcare System and Regional Office (AVAHSRO) is located in the Integrated Care Service.
- The Non-VA Purchased Care Program is designed to purchase health care for eligible veterans when VA or other Federal facilities are not feasibly available to furnish care.

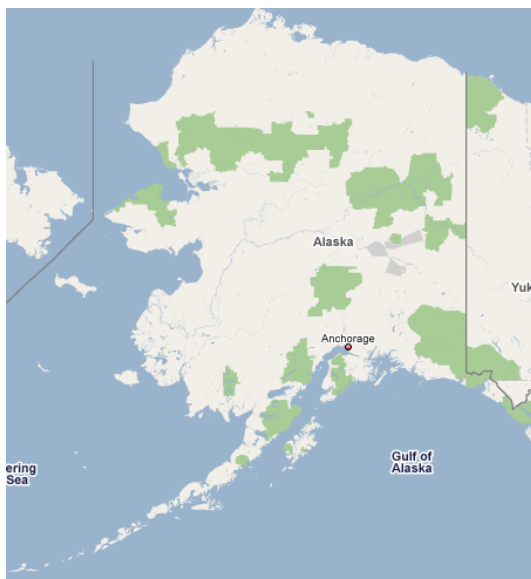
Am I eligible?

- All eligibility criteria must first be met before consideration can be made to purchase healthcare.

Veterans must use a local VA facility if they live within the following commuting areas:

- Anchorage VA Medical Center (Homer to Talkeetna to Glenallen)
- Matsu VA Medical Center (Matsu Valley)
- Kenai VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) or the
- Fairbanks VA CBOC (located on Ft. Wainwright in Bassett Army Community Hospital)
- Juneau and Homer have Newly Established Out-Reach Clinics

- Only those outside the areas listed above are authorized for the Alaska Non- VA Purchase Program.



Regional Care Management Teams

The Integrated Care Service (ICS) has a dedicated team of Registered Nurse (RN) Care Managers and specially trained Patient Services Assistants (PSA) for Alaska veterans. The goal of this team is to know the veterans, the healthcare providers, and services available in the area where the veteran resides. They determine who is entitled to what care and where the care will be provided. VA and Federal regulations guide these decisions.

The Fairbanks and Kenai VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) have a Care Management Team that provides limited authorizations for non-VA purchased care in their respective communities. However, the majority of outpatient authorizations will be processed by ICS in Anchorage.

ICS Regional Care Management Team (1-888-353-7574, extension 6904 or 907-257-6904):

- Anchorage Team – Anchorage, Mat-Su Borough, and Kenai Peninsula (Homer – Talkeetna - Glenallen) fax: 907-770-2077.
- Rural Team – all other areas of Alaska fax: 907-770-2075
- Toll Free Fax: 1-888-883-0574
- ICS Message Line: 1-888-353-7574, ext. 2041

Contact your Regional Care Management Team for:

- Preauthorization
- Eligibility & entitlement status
- Requests for inpatient/outpatient surgery
- Referrals for specialty care
- Requests for diagnostic testing
- Care management referrals
- Information on VA Health Care and support services
- Durable medical equipment, educational materials, and home health services
- Authorized periods of care for veterans who are chronically ill, if a care plan is submitted.

Referrals for individual medical/surgical treatments come mainly from you, the provider. Federal regulations require that care for veterans must be provided in a federal facility when it is available. Therefore, VA may request that medical/surgical treatment be done at the Joint Venture Hospital at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Bassett Army Community Hospital in Fairbanks, contractual facilities, or other facilities in the lower 48 states. The Regional Care Management Teams will work with you to make those instances go smoothly for the veteran and for you, the healthcare provider.

The following services are available at the VA/Joint Venture clinic in Anchorage. Some services may have limited availability:

Primary Care
Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs
Ambulatory surgery (limited)
Audiology and Speech Pathology
Care Management
Cardiology (limited)
Dental (Limited eligibility)
Social & Behavioral Services
Diabetic Education
Dermatology (limited)
Emergency Room Services (Joint Venture only)
Gastroenterology (limited)
Laboratory
Mental Health
Neurology (limited)
Ophthalmology (limited)
Orthopedics (limited)
Pharmacy
Physical Therapy
Podiatry
Prosthetics and Sensory Aids
Radiology
Women's Health Services
Urology
Vascular Services

Other services at the VA:

Back Care Classes
Dietician consults
Cholesterol and Hypertension
Classes
Lifestyle Changes – A Healthy
Heart
Hepatitis C Classes
Coumadin Clinic
Diabetic instructions
Patient Education Resource
Center (PERC)

**Services available at the
Fairbanks VA**

Primary Care
Audiology (Limited)
Care Management
Mental Health
Orthopedics (Limited)
Women's Hlth. Services (Limited)
Podiatry (Limited)

Authorization Helpful Hints

- **All** non-emergent care must be **preauthorized**. VA encourages vendors to submit routine requests and supporting documentation as early as possible in advance. See attached **Alaska VA Outpatient Authorization Request** form. This allows VA staff time to verify eligibility criteria and review of the request by the Medical Review Board (MRB).
- If an office visit is for an emergent or urgent situation, notify VA by utilizing the ER/Observation Alert Form in order for us to document the encounter within our system as possible ER/urgent care. If coded as emergent care, it will be reviewed as an emergency room visit.
- Veterans must be enrolled and eligible at the time of service. VA is mandated to utilize Federal facilities when available.
- VA will not usually pay for services unless they are authorized in advance.
- VA is never the secondary payer; VA does not co-pay for services.
- Please read the Authorization Document (VA Form 10-7079) carefully. VA will not be responsible for payment on any follow up appointments, diagnostic testing, or procedures that have not been pre-approved. The patient will be responsible for payment.
- All VA rules and regulations pertaining to veteran benefits, including healthcare, are established by Congress and administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. These rules are subject to change.

Unauthorized Medical Care

VA requires all medical care be pre-authorized unless it is urgent or emergent. Any treatment rendered without pre-authorization will be reviewed to determine if prior authorization could have been obtained. The criteria for payment of unauthorized medical care are very specific in federal law. Consideration for payment can only be made when **all** three of the following conditions apply:

- 1) Treatment was rendered for an adjudicated service-connected disability or a condition associated with and held to be aggravating a service-connected disability, or for any condition in the case of a veteran who is found to be in need of vocational rehabilitation and for whom an objective has been selected or who is pursuing a course of vocational rehabilitation;
- 2) Treatment was rendered as a medical emergency of such nature that delay would have been hazardous to life or health;
- 3) VA or other Federal facilities were not feasibly available.

See attached **VA Form 10-583**, Claim for Payment of Cost of Unauthorized Medical Services.

Alaska Medicaid

Veterans eligible for Medicaid have an "N" on their Medicaid card. "N" means the veteran is viewed as having limited resources and freedom of choice to utilize VA or Medicaid as desired. As of April 1, 2004, Alaska Medicaid no longer requires a VA denial letter for these veterans to use their Medicaid benefit. However, veterans coded "N2" will need a letter from VA, before Medicaid will pay. The Medicaid approved letter **must** be requested in advance of care rendered, in order for Medicaid to accept it. Please contact Integrated Care at 1-888-353-7574, extension 4743. We will send you the form that you may attach to any billing for reimbursement purposes through Medicaid.

Social & Behavioral Health Service Purchased (Fee) Care

The Alaska VA Social & Behavioral Health Service (S&BHS) has the overall responsibility for mental health care in the community for Veterans entitled to this benefit.

Barbara Martin, LCSW, is the primary point of contact for reviewing treatment plans, presenting them to the Mental Health Review Board as indicated, and approving authorizations for Non-VA purchased care. S&BHS works closely with ICS to expedite mental health care in the community. As with all care purchased in the community, **all visits MUST be pre-authorized.** Treatment must be designed, at a minimum, to reduce or control the veteran's psychiatric symptoms so as to prevent relapse or hospitalization, and to improve or maintain the veteran's level of functioning.

We follow the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines for payment however, we do not reimburse at their rate. See the Alaska Fee Schedule link: www.visn20.med.va.gov/alaska.

How it works:

1. Veterans will be authorized an initial evaluation only with a request for a treatment plan.
2. Submit treatment plan to Barbara Martin by fax at 907-770-2075.
3. Upon review and approval of the treatment plan, S&BHS will authorize a specified period of care authorization with specific CPT codes and a specific number of visits. If additional visits are required within the period of care authorized, an updated plan for review and approval is required.
4. At least **two weeks prior to the expiration of the period of care**, vendors must submit progress notes and an updated treatment plan if additional care is required.

Providers of Non-VA purchased mental health services must be licensed in the state of Alaska and qualified to perform specific mental health services provided. We cover the services of physicians, clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and physician assistants in the diagnosis and treatment of mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders. We cover other licensed providers (i.e. licensed marriage & family counselors, licensed counselors, etc.) when they meet the "incident to" criteria and are billed as such for counseling only.

Requests, progress notes, and treatment plans may be mailed or securely faxed:

AK VA Healthcare System and Regional Office (AVAHSRO)
Attn: S&BHS (Barbara Martin, LCSW)
1201 North Muldoon Road
Anchorage, AK 99508
Barbara: 907-257-4854 or 1-888-353-7574 ext. 4854
Fax: 907-770-2075



Pharmacy Services

The VA pharmacy provides needed medications accurately, safely, and in a timely manner. They monitor therapeutic outcomes of prescribed medications to minimize potentially negative effects. The Pharmacy is authorized to fill only those prescriptions written by a VA provider or an approved fee-basis provider. Prescriptions may be brought in person to the VA Pharmacy window, Suite 1100, or mailed to the VA Pharmacy at the following address:

AK VA Healthcare System and Regional Office
Attn: 119 (Pharmacy)
1201 North Muldoon Road
Anchorage, AK 99508
PH: 907-257-4805 or 1-888-353-7574, Extension 4805
FAX: 907-257-6755

VA is restricted to a formulary system of stocked drugs. If a physician prescribes medication that is not on the VA formulary, the pharmacy will contact the prescribing physician and recommend an alternative medication that is in the VA formulary. Special requests for non-formulary medication must be processed through the VA pharmacy and meet all necessary criteria. To obtain a copy of the VA formulary list of medications, please call: 907-257-4820 or 1-888-353-7574, ext. 4820. It is also available at <http://vha20web3/csp/user/webrx/index.csp>.

When prescriptions are written and the patient does not have access to the VA Pharmacy, only medications required for authorized conditions will be approved. Two prescriptions should be written in these instances. The first prescription may be filled at your local pharmacy upon approval from the VA Pharmacy for no more than a ten (10) day supply. The second prescription should be for a thirty-day (30) supply with no more than five refills. This prescription should be mailed to the VA Pharmacy Service at the above address. Hometown pharmacy approval for emergent medications can be obtained by having your pharmacy contact the VA Pharmacy. The VA Pharmacy staff is available Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. Hometown pharmacy approval can be obtained during weekends and holidays from the Medical Administrative Assistants (MAA) @ 907-580-6420.

In **Fairbanks** two prescriptions should be written for new medications. The VA has an agreement in place with Bassett Army Community Hospital. The first prescription should be written for a (10) day supply to be filled at Bassett Army Community Hospital Pharmacy. The veteran should mail the second script to the Anchorage VA Pharmacy at the address indicated above. The veteran will receive subsequent supplies by mail from the VA Pharmacy. Dual eligible veterans may receive all medications @ BACH. Tri-care and non VA will be charged for medications and services.

All non-emergent medication requests should be sent to the VA Pharmacy. The VA pharmacy will mail the first month's supply to the veteran along with instructions on how to obtain refills.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical services are not pre-authorized. However, medical services that are necessary on a prompt or emergent basis should be reported within 72 hours in order to be reviewed under Alaska's expanded authority. Please submit notification of emergent medical care by letter, phone call, or facsimile. See "VA ER/OBSERVATION ALERT" form.

The Emergency Room of choice in the Anchorage bowl is located at Elmendorf AFB as it is a federal facility. Only if the veteran's condition is such that getting to Elmendorf would be hazardous to life or limb, will other Anchorage ER visits be approved.

Telephone notifications:

**Medical Administrative Assistants are available 24 hours a day
@ 1-907-580-6420 or Toll Free: 877-817-3885**

**ICS (Mon – Fri, 08:00AM - 4:30PM)
@ 1-888-353-7574, ext 6904 or
907- 257-6904**

24 hour FAX: 1-907-770-2077/2075

Claims for emergency services are reviewed and verified by the VA prior to payment by our medical review board. The claims and the **emergency room report** should contain sufficient information to enable the review board to:

- ❖ Properly identify the veteran;
- ❖ Determine the condition treated and amount of treatment already furnished;
- ❖ Confirm the need for the prompt or emergency treatment;
- ❖ Determine what further treatment, if any, is required.

Claims with ER notes can be mailed to:

**AK VA Healthcare System
Attn: Fiscal
1201 North Muldoon Road
Anchorage, AK 99508**

If it is determined that the veteran is eligible for prompt or emergent treatment, an authorization will be completed and forwarded to our Fiscal Service for payment. If it is determined that the emergency room visit did not meet the criteria for emergent medical services, an explanation of benefit letter will be sent to both the vendor and the veteran stating the reason for denial.

Hospitalizations

When veterans are emergently admitted to a non-VA hospital, the law requires VA be notified within **72 hours** from the time of admission. This allows us the opportunity to verify eligibility or assist you in obtaining the necessary documents.

To be eligible for VA coverage for inpatient care, veterans must be enrolled in the AVAHSRO at time of admission. *If enrollment has lapsed or if the veteran has never applied for healthcare benefits, the admission will not be covered by the VA.*

The veteran may apply for enrollment at the time of admission, but it will go into effect after discharge. We request admission notifications be done via fax at 1-907-257-6920.

(See “**VA INPATIENT ALERT**” form and **VA Form 10-10EZ.**)

By accepting VA coverage, the veteran is subject to transfer to a Federal facility or contractual facility if medically appropriate.

Considerations for each transfer:

- The patient’s clinical stability
- Requests for surgical/invasive procedures
- Medical services needed
- Availability of such services at a Federal facility

Every effort will be made to respond to requests for authorization of medical services in an expeditious manner. VA will not transfer any patient who is assessed by the physician and documented as clinically unstable for transfer.

Please see “**Transferring VA patients to another facility**”
on the next page for specific assistance with transfers.

Observation Services

Observation services are outpatient services furnished by a hospital on the hospital’s premises that usually do not exceed 23 hours. These are not pre-authorized and are reviewed by the Nurse Care Managers upon receipt of the bill. Billing must indicate hours of observation and medical documentation must accompany the billing. Hours in excess of 23 hours must be medically justified and will be considered for rare and exceptional cases.

Transferring VA patients to another facility

If you have a VA eligible patient that needs to be transferred to another facility (and the patient wishes to use his VA benefit), please call the VA MAA (see Telephone notifications on page 10 of this document). The MAA will verify the patient's eligibility for VA health care benefits and will facilitate transfer to the needed facility if eligible.

The VA is required by law to utilize federal facilities first, and then contract services. We may purchase from other sources only if federal or contract services are not available. Alaska VA has contracted with an air ambulance service to provide medivac services to veteran patients. The MAA is the designated contact to arrange for transport. Medivac arrangements made outside MAA channels may result in the VA not authorizing payment for the medivac.

Many patients can be transferred to the Elmendorf Air Force Base (EAFB) medical facility in Anchorage. In this case, the MAA will alert the on-call internist who will then speak with the referring provider. Upon acceptance by the EAFB internist, the MAA will initiate medivac transportation of the patient from your facility to EAFB or another appropriate federal facility as needed. This is the preferred method of patient referral, as federal law requires veterans to be cared for at federal facilities when possible.

There may be instances where the patient requires health care services that EAFB cannot provide (i.e. interventional cardiology, neurosurgery), and the patient is **unstable**, transfer to Providence Alaska Medical Center (Anchorage) will be requested. If the patient is **stable**, transfer to Seattle VA will be requested.

Most Southeast Alaska patients will be transferred to Seattle VA, not Anchorage VA. Medivac distances are similar and the range of services available at Seattle VA is much greater than Anchorage VA. In both of the above cases, the VA MAA can assist you in facilitating the transfer.

In all cases an accepting physician and a bed for the patient need to be acquired before medivac transportation can be arranged.

Utilization Management

Our Utilization Management (UM) team consists of Utilization Review (UR) registered nurses, UR administrative staff that process admissions, and work with the Medical Administrative Assistant (MAA) who verifies eligibility and facilitates transfers during hours the VA Clinic is closed. VA requires all admissions be reviewed. The admitting facility should provide initial clinical update within 24 hours of admission and regular updates every 48-72 hours. These updates are included in the decision process for potential transfers. These updates may be called in 1-888-353-7574, extension 6904 or **preferably**, faxed in to 1-907-257-6920.

Submitting Bills to VA for Non-VA Purchased Care

The bill paying process for all of Alaska is located under Fiscal Service in Anchorage. In order to process an invoice in a timely manner, the VA is requesting that each invoice (preferably a UB-04 or CMS 1500) being submitted for payment has the following information:

- **Name, Address, and SSN of the Veteran**
- **Name, Address, and Tax ID of the Vendor**
- **Name, Address or facility where services were rendered**
- **Date of Service**
- **Detailed itemization, appropriate CPT and/or HCPC codes for each service provided, and ICD-9-CM (diagnosis) code.**
- **Complete documentation (progress notes, lab test results, radiology reports, history & physical, discharge summary, etc.) for services provided to support claim.**
- **Attached authorization for services rendered if available.**

Any of these items missing could result in the delay of processing your claims. We process all claims off invoices, not statements.

All invoices and medical records are to be sent to:

**Department of Veterans Affairs
Alaska VA Healthcare System
ATTN: Fiscal (04)
1201 North Muldoon Road
Anchorage, AK 99508**

Any questions or concerns regarding payment or coding issues may be directed to one of the following:

Fiscal Main number/Billing Inquiries or Status	907-770-2000
Fiscal Fax number	907-770-2033
Rhonda Munnlyn, Supervisory Fee Program Analyst	907-770-2006
Jon Janssen, Lead Accounting Technician	907-770-2017
Woody Duncan, Medical Bill Analyst/Auditor	907-770-2004

Here is some helpful information and items to be concerned with when submitting an invoice for payment.

- When processing invoices for payment, remember that if VA preauthorized the care, then VA payment is considered payment in full for that service. We do not pay balance after Medicare and/or secondary insurance.
- Outpatient and inpatient charges are subject to VA's Fee Schedule for payment with the exception of contractual agreements.
- The **Fee Schedule** can be located @ www.visn20.med.va.gov/alaska (Go to Left Hand Menu and Click on Partner Resources, 2010 Alaska Fee Schedule.)
- All submitted charges must have accompanying documentation.
- The Alaska VA Healthcare System follows guidelines similar to Medicare for billing and coding.
- Inactive codes cannot be processed for payment. Please reference the current AMA CPT or HCPCS publications.
- If you are billing for both TC (technical component) and PC (professional component), please bill the global CPT code with no modifier and the total charge on one line item.
- If you are billing for just the TC, please bill with the appropriate modifier.
- Late charges should be billed separately from the original invoice and contain only charges that were not previously submitted.
- Each month, letters are generated explaining any suspended payments, reduced charges and/or services included in the primary service code.
- Please be aware that processing invoices for payment comes first. Frequent vendor inquiries for payment status back up our payment process.



Common VA Departments and Extensions:

The 1-888 phone numbers below can also be reached by dialing
1-907-257-xxxx (xxxx = extension)

Normal VA Duty Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Contracting	1-888-353-7574, ext. 6945
Diabetes Coordinator	1-888-353-7574, ext. 6979
Dietitian	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4890
Inpatient Notification	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4976
Outpatient Authorizations for Purchased Care	1-888-353-7574, ext. 6904
Patient Education Resource Center	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4898
Pharmacy	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4805
Registration & Eligibility	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4947
Social & Behavioral Health Service	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4854
Telehealth	1-888-353-7574, Option #1
Veteran Travel	1-888-353-7574, ext. 4738
Veterans Benefits	1-800-827-1000
- (for non-healthcare benefits such as Disability and Pension)	

Other Alaska Veterans Healthcare Clinics/Offices:

Fairbanks VA Medical Clinic on Ft. Wainwright	1-907-361-6370 Ext #1
Fairbanks RN Care Manager	1-907-361-5878
Vanessa Griffin, Patient Services Assistant	1-907-361-5242
Fairbanks VA Toll-Free	1-888-353-5242
Fairbanks Fax	1-907-361-5260
Kenai VA Clinic	1-907-395-4100
Kenai VA Toll-Free	1-877-797-8924
Kenai Fax	1-907-283-4236
Juneau VA Representative	1-888-308-7890



Phone Numbers for Integrated Care Service

The 1-888 phone numbers below can also be reached by dialing
1-907-257-xxxx (xxxx = extension)

Normal VA Duty Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Authorizations/Outpatient Patient Services Asst. (PSA)	1-888-353-7574, ext 6904
Fax Anchorage Team authorization requests	1-907-770-2077
Fax Rural Team authorization requests	1-907-770-2075
Reconsiderations/Appeals PSA	1-888-353-7574, ext 6929
*DeLynn James, Chief, Integrated Care Service	1-888-353-7574, ext 6922
Ric Epperson, Supervisory Administrative Officer	1-888-353-7574, ext 4943
Judy Burgos-Farley, Nurse Manager (Care Management)	1-888-353-7574, ext 7451
**Integrated Care Service/Authorizations Message Line	1-888-353-7574, ext 2041
Inpatient/UR Program Support Asst.	1-907-257-4976
Utilization Management Fax	1-907-257-6920

* DeLynn James, Serving as UM Nurse Manager 1-888-353-7574, ext. 6922

**Messages left on the Message Line are checked daily and returned with 24 hours if required.

Other Important Numbers to keep handy

Telehealth (8:00 am–4:00 pm) veterans' health concerns 1-888-353-7574, ext 4710

Telehealth during non-duty hours

24 hr off-site nurses to answer veterans' questions 1-888-353-7574, option 1

MAAs – “24/7” for VA transfers, after hour questions	1-907-580-6420
Toll Free #	1-877-817-3885
MAA Pager	1-907-580-7243, ext 2091

REQUIRED VENDOR INFORMATION

For new vendors, or to make any address changes, please fill out the information below and return it to the AK VAHSRO.

Business name: _____

Tax ID: _____ **NPI #:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

Phone #: _____ **Fax #:** _____

Specialty/ Credentials: _____

NURSING HOMES NEED TO ALSO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Total Beds: _____ **Contract #:** _____

Effect. DT: _____ **End Date:** _____

Inspected/Accredited: (Inspected by VA) _____

Medicare/Medicaid Certified? # _____

(Circle if certified)

Last Assessment Date: _____

** PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND FAX IT <u>AND</u> YOUR W-9 TO:	
	** Or mail to:
Attn: Rhonda Munnlyn or Jon Janssen	Alaska VA Healthcare and Regional Office (AVAHSRO)
FAX: 1-907-770-2073/2033	1201 N Muldoon, ATTN: 04FEE
	Anchorage, AK 99504