



## Paralyzed Veterans of America

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[www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org)

Chartered by the Congress of the United States

November 2014

Dear Fellow Member,

We need to alert you of a new Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) initiative that concerns us. On November 5, 2014, the "Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA)," took effect. The law was passed in response to the number of veterans who were denied timely access to health care through the VA either due to unreasonable distance or wait times. If you've registered to receive care at the VA prior to August 1, 2014, you are eligible to exercise "choice" under the new law.

Paralyzed Veterans of America's legacy is built around making sure you receive timely access to quality health care at VA Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder (SCI/D) Centers and SCI/D Primary Care teams. We believe the only real choice for you is care delivered through the capable hands of SCI/D-trained experts at VA Hospitals. Should you choose to seek care outside of VA, please take a moment to carefully consider the following questions:

- *Does my treating physician understand Autonomic Dysreflexia (if applicable), what triggers it, and how to treat it?*
- *Does my treating physician understand the complex nature of my spinal cord condition and its residuals (bowel, bladder, spasticity, decubitus ulcers, neuropathic pain, respiratory weakness, chronic urinary tract infections)?*
- *Without access to my medical records, is my treating physician fully aware of my past hospitalizations, medications, potential drug interactions, and/or preexisting conditions (bacteria resistance, side effects, allergies)?*
- *Will my PVA service officer be authorized to advocate for me in the event of an adverse outcome, clinical appeal, or need to access my medical records?*
- *Does treatment by non-VA health care providers involve other VA benefits and ancillary health care matters, such as supporting a disability claim, ordering prosthetics, requiring housing/vehicle modifications?*

These questions are just a few that should not be an afterthought when deciding to seek care at a non-VA facility. Your search for a "quick fix" may have unintended consequences. While some care, such as dental and vision, will not warrant the same consideration as more serious SCI/D conditions, such as wound treatment, urinary tract infection, and respiratory concerns, we encourage you to direct your care to the most qualified providers available.

**Under the new law, eligible veterans may opt to receive non-VA care if one of two primary conditions is met:**

- 1) If a veteran lives more than 40 miles from any VA health care facility (either a major medical center or a community-based outpatient clinic), then he/she is eligible for "choice" care; or**
- 2) If a veteran is already enrolled in the VA health care system, has sought an appointment for care, and the veteran cannot be seen within 30 days of the desired date, he or she is also eligible for "choice."**

Note, there is no blanket authorization for veterans to receive care outside of the VA. *You must meet the aforementioned distance, or wait-time requirement!* In order to verify your eligibility for "choice," you must have enrolled in the VA health care system. The cards will be distributed in three phases:

**PHASE 1:** Beginning on November 5, 2014, VA will mail cards to all veterans who live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility.

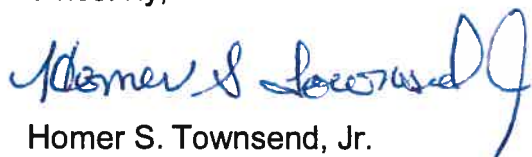
**PHASE 2:** By early December, VA will mail cards to all veterans who have sought care from the VA and have currently been waiting more than 30 days.

**PHASE 3:** Finally, by January 2015, VA will mail cards to all remaining enrolled veterans.

Simply receiving a "choice" card does not automatically make you eligible to seek care outside of the VA. If you experience any difficulty with your access to SCI/D care at the VA, or in reporting your concerns related to "choice" care, you should contact your local PVA National Service Office (see the attached contact list). You can also call the PVA Medical Services Helpline at (800) 232-1782 or the VA SCI/D System of Care Helpline at (206) 582-4624. If you experience problems with "choice" care, you can also e-mail the PVA National Office at ***ChoiceCare@pva.org*** to report those concerns.

Your feedback is welcomed and much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Homer S. Townsend, Jr.  
Executive Director



Al Kovach, Jr.  
National President

2 Attachments: *Sample Veterans Choice Card (Temporary Program)*  
*National Service Office Listing*

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**Veterans  
Choice Card  
Temporary Program**

**Name:** <Veteran First Name Veteran Last Name>

**Member ID:** <Veteran EDIPI>

**Date of Issuance:** <Date Card Generated>

Call 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx for information or to make an  
appointment

*This card does not provide pre-approval. Veterans may  
be liable for the cost of care that is not pre-approved.*

**Veterans Choice Program Information  
(for Veterans and Providers):**  
<http://www.va.gov/xxxxxxxxxx>

This card is for qualifying medical care outside the  
Department of Veterans Affairs. Please call 1-xxx-xxx-  
xxxx to ensure that treatment has been authorized.

Providers submit claims to:

XXXXXXXXXX

PO Box XXX

XXXXXX XX, XXXXX

**S A M P L E**

*(Note: National Service Office Locations is listed on reserve side of page).*

## NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICE LOCATIONS

**PVA Regional Office**  
Montgomery, AL  
Phone 334-213-3433  
Ext 34/35

**PVA Regional Office**  
North Little Rock, AR  
Phone 501-370-3757

**PVA Regional Office**  
Phoenix, AZ  
Phone 602-627-3311

**PVA SCI Center**  
Long Beach, CA  
Phone 562-826-8000  
Ext 3774

**PVA Regional Office**  
Los Angeles, CA  
Phone 310-235- 7796

**PVA Regional Office**  
Sacramento, CA  
Phone 916-364-6791

**PVA SCI Center**  
Palo Alto, CA  
Phone 650-493-5000  
Ext 65046

**PVA Regional Office**  
San Diego, CA  
Phone 619-400-5320

**PVA SCI Center**  
San Diego, CA  
Phone 858-552-7519

**PVA Regional Office**  
Denver, CO  
Phone 303-914-5590

**PVA Medical & Regional  
Office Center**  
Wilmington, DE  
Phone 302-993-7252

**Lake City, Florida**  
Phone 386-755-3016  
Ext 2236

**PVA SCI Center**  
Miami, FL  
Phone 305-575-7180

**PVA Health Care Center  
Office**  
Orlando, FL  
Phone 407-629-1599 Ext  
1125/1111

**PVA Regional Office**  
St. Petersburg, FL  
Phone 727-319-7470

**PVA SCI Center**  
Tampa, FL  
Phone 813-978-5841

**PVA SCI Center**  
Augusta, GA  
Phone 706-823-2219

**PVA Regional Office**  
Decatur, GA  
Phone 404-929-5333

**PVA Regional Office**  
Chicago, IL  
Phone 312-980-4278

**PVA SCI Center**  
Hines, IL  
Phone 708-202-5623

**PVA Regional Office**  
Indianapolis, IN  
Phone 317-916-3626

**PVA Regional Office**  
Des Moines, IA  
Phone 515-323-7544

**PVA Medical & Regional  
Office Center**  
Wichita, KS  
Phone 316-688-6810

**PVA Regional Office**  
Louisville, KY  
V 502-566-4430

**PVA Regional Office**  
New Orleans, LA  
Phone 504-619-4380

**PVA Medical & Regional  
Office Center**  
Augusta, ME  
207-621-7394

**PVA Regional Office**  
Baltimore, MD  
Phone 410-230-4470  
Ext 1020

**PVA Regional Office**  
Boston, MA  
Phone 617-303-1395

**PVA Medical Center Brockton**  
Phone 774-826-2219

**PVA Regional Office**  
Detroit, MI  
Phone 313-471-3996

**PVA Regional Office**  
St. Paul, MN  
Phone 612-970-5668

**PVA SCI Center**  
Minneapolis, MN  
612-629-7022

**PVA Regional Office**  
Jackson, MS  
Phone 601-364-7188

**PVA Medical Center**  
Kansas City, MO  
Phone 816-922-2882

**PVA Regional Office**  
St. Louis, MO  
Phone 314-552-9887

**PVA SCI Center**  
St. Louis, MO  
Phone 314-844-6467

**PVA Regional Office**  
Lincoln, NE  
Phone 402-420-4017

**PVA Benefits Office**  
Las Vegas, NV  
Phone 702-791-9000  
Ext 14458

**PVA Regional Office**  
Reno NV  
Phone 775-321-4789

**PVA Regional Office**  
Newark, NJ  
Phone 973-297-3228

**PVA Regional Office**  
Albuquerque, NM  
Phone 505 -346-4896

**PVA SCI Center**  
Bronx, NY  
Phone 718-584-9000  
Ext 6272

**PVA Regional Office**  
Buffalo, NY  
Phone 716-857-3353

**PVA Regional Office**  
New York, NY  
Phone 212-807-3114

**PVA Benefits Office**  
Syracuse, NY  
Phone 315-423-5013

**PVA SCI Center**  
Syracuse, NY  
315-425-4400  
Ext 53317

**PVA Regional Office**  
Winston-Salem, NC  
Phone 336-251-0836

**PVA Regional Office**  
Cleveland, OH  
216-522-3214

**PVA SCI Center**  
Cleveland, OH  
Phone 216-791-3800  
Ext 4159

**PVA Regional Office**  
Muskogee, OK  
Phone 918-781-7768

**PVA Medical Center**  
Oklahoma, OK  
Phone 405-456-5483

**PVA Regional Office**  
Portland, OR  
Phone 503-412-4762

**PVA Regional Office**  
Philadelphia, PA  
Phone 215-381-3057

**PVA Regional Office**  
Pittsburgh, PA  
Phone  
412-395-6255

**PVA SCI Center**  
San Juan, PR  
Phone 787-641-7582  
Ext 11564

**PVA Regional Office**  
San Juan, PR  
Phone 787-772-7384

**PVA Regional Office**  
Columbia, SC  
Phone 803-647-2432

**PVA Medical & Regional  
Center Office**  
Sioux Falls, SD  
Phone 605-333-6801

**PVA SCI Center**  
Memphis, TN  
Phone 901-523-8990  
Ext 7795

**PVA Regional Office**  
Nashville, TN  
Phone 615-695-6383

**PVA SCI Center**  
Dallas, TX  
Phone 214-857-0105

**PVA SCI Center**  
Houston, TX  
Phone 713-794-7993

**PVA El Paso Office**  
Phone 915-564-6183

**PVA Regional Office**  
Houston, TX  
Phone 713-383-2727

**PVA SCI Center**  
San Antonio, TX  
Phone 210-617-5300  
Ext 6819

**PVA Regional Office**  
Waco, TX  
Phone 254-299-9944

**PVA SCI Center**  
Hampton, VA  
Phone 757-722-9961  
Ext 2943  
Phone 804-675-5316

**PVA SCI Center**  
**Richmond VA**  
Phone 804-675-5316

**PVA Regional Office**  
Roanoke, VA  
Phone 540-597-1707

**PVA Regional Office**  
Seattle, WA  
206-220-6149

**PVA SCI Center**  
Seattle, WA  
Phone 206-768-5415

**PVA Regional Office  
Huntington, WV**  
VA Regional Office  
Phone 304-399-9393

**PVA Regional Office**  
Milwaukee WI  
Phone 414-902-5655