



Fully funded mental health care for veterans



The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) offers fully funded treatment of mental health conditions through Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) to all veterans who have completed one day of full time service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and some reservists. The mental health condition/s do not need to be related to ADF service, and a claim for compensation is not required. This treatment can be accessed for as long as it is needed, and at no cost to the veteran.

What conditions are covered?

DVA will cover the cost of treatment for eligible veterans for all mental health conditions, including, but not limited to:

- posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- depressive disorder
- anxiety disorder
- alcohol use disorder
- substance use disorder
- phobias
- adjustment disorders
- bipolar disorder

Who is eligible?

Current and former full-time members of the ADF can access fully funded mental health treatment through NLHC (mental health). This includes reservists who have at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS).

CFTS is defined as:

- full-time service in the permanent forces of the ADF
- a reservist who has been formally designated to be on full-time service by Defence
- a reservist who has been called out for full-time service by the Governor General under the Defence Act.

CFTS does not include training conducted as reserve service days.

Reservists without CFTS may still be eligible if they have either:

- Disaster Relief Service
- Border Protection Service
- involvement in a serious service-related training accident.

How is it accessed?

The Veteran White Card is used to pay for mental health treatment through NLHC (mental health). Many veterans have White Cards that already cover NLHC (mental health). To check if your White Card covers mental health treatment, or to apply for a White Card if you don't already have one, you can log into [MyService](#) or call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). Veteran Gold Card holders are already eligible for mental health treatment.

If you have concerns about your mental health, speak with your general practitioner (GP) in the first instance. Your GP may refer you to a mental health provider, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist. Before your appointment, check the healthcare provider will accept the White Card for payment.

What treatments are funded?

Treatment for mental health conditions funded under NLHC (mental health) may include:

- treatment from a mental health provider such as a GP, psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health social worker, or mental health occupational therapist;
- mental health admissions to a public or private hospital;
- mental health treatment delivered at a day procedure facility;
- prescribed medication for mental health conditions;
- relevant pathology and medical imaging services required to assess and diagnose mental health conditions;
- DVA recognised alcohol and drug treatment programs; and
- services provided by Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling.

If it is considered beneficial, your GP can refer you for extra services like exercise physiology, physiotherapy or nutrition advice alongside treatment from a mental health provider. These supports will generally provide short-term assistance, for example to help you develop a healthy eating plan or a self-directed exercise plan.

Where can I find more information?

To learn more about NLHC (mental health), visit www.dva.gov.au/nlhc-mental-health or call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

For immediate support, contact Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling for free and confidential counselling services available 24/7. Call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or visit www.openarms.gov.au.