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# Military Personnel and Veteran's Mental Health Resource Guide

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# Patient Rights and Responsibilities

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An integral part of effective health care involves cooperation from both the patient and the health care team. Therefore, patients must know their rights and their responsibilities. It is part of SHAC's mission to help our students become better health care consumers. We encourage you to review our [Patient Rights and Responsibilities](#).

As part of the patient rights, we affirm that patients have a right to dignity and respect, regardless of age, disability, national origin, race, color, marital status, veteran status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, or any other basis.

## ***Privacy and Confidentiality***

SHAC staff is committed to protecting your medical, mental health, and personal information. Information regarding ways we protect your information can be found at:

- [Confidentiality Policy](#)
- [Releases of Information](#)

For some patients concerns may arise regarding parent access to health care information. For example, patients may be concerned that parents have access to their health information via their current insurance, student billing, and/or through the patient portal. If this is a concern, please notify your provider at SHAC so we can discuss ways we can protect your information, while also working towards meeting your health care needs.

If you would like to provide information to others in your life, you can complete a [release of information form](#). We also encourage you to discuss potential privacy concerns with your provider.

## ***Addressing Student Concerns/Complaints***

You are encouraged to talk with your provider about any concerns you have with your working relationship, particularly if your needs are not being met. If you are dissatisfied with your provider you have the right to request a different one. You are encouraged to discuss this first with your current SHAC provider.

That being said, if you feel your rights have not been respected, or wish to file a complaint, compliment, or suggestion, you can:

- [Complete our anonymous online feedback form](#)
- Contact SHAC Director of Administrative Services, Heather Goah at 503-725-2552 or hsh@pdx.edu

## ***Reporting an Incident of Bias***

Portland State University is committed to addressing bias incidents on campus and in our community and will provide individuals with resources and support when someone experiences a traumatizing event. Bias is harmful to individuals and the community.

The [Bias Review Team \(BRT\)](#), which includes key campus-wide stakeholders, communicates and meets regularly to respond to a reported bias incident, and to support students, employees and community members who experience or witness an act of bias. The BRT comprehensively, collaboratively, and

consistently works to address bias incidents that affect Portland State University (PSU) students, faculty, staff, and community members.

To report an incident, please complete and submit the [Bias Incident Report Form](#). We also encourage you to review the [Portland State University Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Policy \(PDF\)](#), which addresses the definition of discrimination and harassment and provides appropriate contacts for reporting cases.

## SHAC Mental Health Resources

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Military personnel and veterans may have life experiences and mental health difficulties. Our staff work to support military personnel through a variety of methods. Our services are confidential and covered by student health fees.

That being said, we continually try to evaluate and improve our services, and therefore the information is subject to change. In this event, we will make every effort to update this information accordingly.

Additionally, services may be impacted by staff availability, insurance requirements, individual needs, and other factors. Our staff will do our best to work with you to support your individual health care needs.

Our current mental health services include:

- Consultation
  - We recommend scheduling a brief consultation appointment to access the services below. Call our front desk to schedule at 503-725-2800.
  - You may request a therapist (e.g., provider who is a woman/man, queer therapist, clinician of color, or other identity) when scheduling, though scheduling options may be more limited and all options may not be available.
- Short-term Individual Therapy
  - Concerns that students may raise in short-term counseling, may include, but are not limited to:
    - Balancing academic, family, and military activities
    - Navigating academics and transitioning to civilian life
    - Finding community and belonging
    - Feeling misunderstood or out of place
    - Navigating changes upon returning from deployment
    - Anxiety around being redeployed
    - Experiences related trauma (e.g., witnessing acts of violence, experiences of sexual assault)
    - Navigating relationships
  - Please note that due to high utilization of our services, accessing our short-term counseling services may take time.
- Referrals for Specialty Services/Long-term/Community services
  - In some cases, we may refer out to specialty services, long-term therapists, and community services that may better be able to meet your individual needs.

- Please let us know if you would like to connect with someone with veterans experience in the community, and we will do our best to match you to services that may best fit your needs.
- Case Management
  - Counselors provide case management support to students in establishing mental health care in the community.
- Group therapy
  - We offer various identity based groups, study skills groups, mindfulness groups as well as groups focused on reducing stress, anxiety, and managing intense emotions.
- ADHD/Learning Disability (LD) Assessments
  - Contact our front desk staff at 503-725-2800 to be connected with the Counseling Services Assessment Coordinator to learn more about options for ADHD/LD assessments
- Medication management in conjunction with short-term counseling
- Outreach
  - We can help coordinate outreach programming and support for military personnel and veteran's based on various topics of interest. Feel free to reach out to our Outreach Coordinator at [aer9@pdx.edu](mailto:aer9@pdx.edu) for more information.

You may also be interested in [our health promotion services](#). We encourage you to review our website for additional information regarding their services.

## Portland State University Resources

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Portland State has a variety of services and programs to meet the needs of queer and trans students. These services can enhance student well-being and success.

- [Veteran's Resource Center](#)
- [The Learning Center: Tutoring, Academic Coaching](#)
- [Queer Resource Center](#)
- [Student Legal Services](#)
- [Women's Resource Center](#)
- [Disability Resource Center](#)
- [PSU Community Counseling Clinic](#)
- [Global Diversity and Inclusion Bias Review Team](#)

### **Community Providers and Resources\***

Below you will find information about some of our local community providers and resources that may be of interest to you as you navigate services in the Portland area. If it doesn't feel that your provider is a fit for you, don't be afraid to tell them. They may be able to adapt to your needs or be able to suggest someone else that would personally fit you better. For assistance connecting to providers, we welcome you reaching out to our Counseling Services staff for support.

- [Portland Veterans Center](#)
- [OHSU Veteran's Hospital](#)
- [Returning Veterans Project: Free, Confidential Services](#)
  - [Information on who qualifies for RVP Services](#)
- [Give an Hour](#)
- [Portland Therapy Center: Therapists who specialize in working with Veterans](#)
- [Cedar Hills Hospital: Military Program](#)
- [VA Mental Health Resources](#)

\*This list is compiled as a service to Portland State University students and is not an endorsement of any individuals or organizations. Individual inquiry should be made regarding fees, services, compatibility with your insurance carrier and credentials.

### **Crisis Resources**

If you are in crisis and need urgent support, you can come to SHAC Counseling Services during any of our open hours (M-H 9am-5pm, F 9:30am-5pm). If you need in-person evaluation after hours, Unity Center for Behavioral Health (1225 NE 2nd Ave) has a mental health emergency room.

#### **[Military Veteran Crisis Line](#)**

Text: 838255

Call: 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

[Online Chat](#)

TTY Service: 1-800-799-4889

#### **[Active Duty and Reserve Crisis Line](#)**

Text: 838255

Call: 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

[Online Chat](#)

TTY Service: 1-800-799-4889

**[Military Helpline](#)**

Call : (888) 457-4838 (24/7/365)

Text: MIL1 to 839863 between 8am-11pm PST daily by texting

**Crisis Text Line: 741741**

**Multnomah County Crisis Line: 503-988-4888**

Students can also access [state-specific mental health crisis resources](#).

# Helpful Resources for Veterans

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## **Local Resources**

- [Multnomah County Veterans' Services](#), Comprehensive VA benefits counseling, Assistance with VA health care enrollment, Claims preparation and submission, Claims follow-up to ensure final decisions, Initiate and develop appeals on unfavorable VA decisions when appropriate to include representation at VA Hearings, Networking and advocacy with federal, state and local agencies, Justice involved outreach
- [Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Oregon Military Support Network Resource Guide](#)
- [Vetwork PDX](#)

## **National Resources**

- [A Home For Every Veteran](#)
- [Computer and Electronic Accommodations Program](#) (CAP) for Wounded Veterans
- [Half of Us](#) - students who served in the Iraq War and who speak out about the emotional challenges of adjusting to life back at home and the importance of finding support.
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America](#) (IAVA) Veterans-only online network.
- [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#)
- [Military OneSource](#) - Help with education, relocation, parenting, stress provided by the Department of Defense for active-duty, Guard, and Reserve service members and their families.
- [Operation Healthy Reunions](#) - Mental Health America distributes educational materials on such topics as reuniting with your spouse and children, adjusting after war, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- [Resilience in a Time of War](#) - Article from the APA concerning returning military and their families
- [Restore Warriors](#) - Goal: Help wounded service members and their families who are struggling with the impact of combat stress in their daily lives.
- [Returning Veterans Project](#)
- [Seamless Transition](#) - VA's Seamless Transition Office
- [Student Veterans of America](#) - A coalition of student veterans groups from college campuses across the United States
- [Suicide Prevention Resources through the VA](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Information by Military Branch](#)
- [Surviving Deployment](#)
- [Transitions Project: Veteran Services](#) Support for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or in imminent danger of homelessness
- [Traumatic Brain Injury: The Journey Home](#) - provides an informative and sensitive exploration of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), including information for patients, family members, and caregivers.
- [US Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Wounded Warrior Project](#)



## Frequently Asked Questions

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### ***How do I know when to seek mental health support?***

We recommend seeking counseling services if you are noticing:

- Persistent low mood
- Oscillating between highs and lows
- Worsening symptoms (e.g., increased heart rate, problems getting out of bed, difficulty concentrating)
- Mental concerns that start interfering with things you once enjoyed
- Feelings of isolation and need to talk to someone
- You experience a crisis
- You start to notice suicidal thinking

To schedule an appointment, call our front desk at 503-725-2800. If you are in crisis and need urgent support, you can call SHAC Counseling Services during any of our open hours (M-H 9am-5pm, F 9:30am-5pm). If you need in-person evaluation after hours, Unity Center for Behavioral Health (1225 NE 2nd Ave) has a mental health emergency room.

### ***Am I allowed to access SHAC if I have the VA insurance?***

You are always welcome to take advantage of our consultation services. We can help you navigate various treatment options (whether at the VA, SHAC, or in the community) that may best fit your needs. We will take your insurance into account, although this will not prevent you from accessing our services.

### ***Will you report my information to my commanding officer if I use your services?***

No, Counseling Services is a confidential resource on campus. We will not share information with your commanding officer unless you give us permission to do so by completing a release of information.

There are times when medical, mental health, and dental providers may be required to break confidentiality and release certain information. Possible situations when this might happen include, (1) if you indicate an intent to harm yourself or others; (2) if you reveal abuse or neglect of a child, or of an elderly or disabled adult; (3) if a court of law orders disclosure of information about your treatment; (4) if you initiate legal proceedings regarding your mental health treatment, or use mental illness as a defense in a criminal or civil action; (5) if you are diagnosed with a reportable disease as required by the State Health Department; or (6) if you are at risk of operating a motor vehicle. Confidentiality in these cases will be limited to the extent the law allows. We encourage you to review our [Confidentiality Policy](#) for additional information.

### ***Will my professors, peers, or family find out about me accessing services?***

Counseling Services is a confidential resource on campus. We will not share your information with professors, peers, or family unless you give us permission to do so by completing a release of information. Additionally, some students may choose to tell their professors, peers, or family about their work with their therapists. However, that decision would ultimately be up to you.

It is important for you to know that medical, mental health, and dental providers may be required to release certain information in any of the following situations: (1) if you indicate an intent to harm yourself or others; (2) if you reveal abuse or neglect of a child, or of an elderly or disabled adult; (3) if a court of law orders disclosure of information about your treatment; (4) if you initiate legal proceedings regarding your mental health treatment, or use mental illness as a defense in a criminal or civil action; (5) if you are diagnosed with a reportable disease as required by the State Health Department; or (6) if you are at risk of operating a motor vehicle. Confidentiality in these cases will be limited to the extent the law allows. We encourage you to review our [Confidentiality Policy](#) for additional information.

***What do I do if I feel a friend of mine is in need of mental health support? What do I do if I see my fellow veteran struggling?***

- Talk to them about your concerns.
  - Share your observations. Try to be non-judgmental, compassionate, and empathic.
  - Don't try to diagnose.
  - Keep questions open-ended
  - Listen without interrupting.
  - Validate their feelings.
  - Some examples of what to say may include:
    - I am here if you need me.
    - I've noticed that you haven't been acting like yourself lately. Is something going on?
    - It makes me afraid to hear you talking like this. Let's talk to someone about it.
- Offer support.
  - You may ask:
    - Is there anything I can do to support you now?
    - Can I help you find mental health services and supports? Can I help you make an appointment?
  - Offer to support them in accessing the care they need.
  - Check-in on them regularly.
- Reach out to someone you trust.
  - You can't do it alone. Oftentimes people need support from multiple people in their lives.
  - Reach out to others for support. Trusted people can provide you support and may be able to also provide your friend support. For example:
    - Some from a resource center (e.g., Veteran's Resource Center, Cultural Resource Centers)
    - A trusted friend or family member
    - Coaches
    - Professors
    - Request a consultation with a SHAC counselor for support.
- Always remember that you are not solely responsible for another person's mental health. You are not responsible to be available 24/7.
  - There are other people that are trained to provide support.
  - Recommend they review the mental health resources provided in this guide.
  - Encourage them to call a crisis line when they need crisis support.
- If they are a Portland State University student,
  - Refer them to Student Health and Counseling Services for a consultation appointment to learn more about services that may be able to support them.
  - Refer them to the [CARE team](#) for support.
  - If your friend is in danger, please call 503-725-5911 (Campus Public Safety Office) or 911. When you call you can let them know that your friend is a veteran struggling with mental health

concerns and they may be able to send someone appropriately trained to provide immediate support.

***When I am feeling overwhelmed or stressed out, what can I do?***

- **Paced breathing:** take a full, deep breath in; aim to breathe from the belly/diaphragm rather than the chest. Hold your breath for 4 – 7 seconds, depending on what feels comfortable, and exhale slowly and fully. Work to make the exhale longer than the inhale; sometimes it helps to put your teeth or lips together to produce a sound while you breathe out to extend the exhalation.
- **Exercise:** Try running or jumping in place for a few minutes, taking a brisk walk outside (again, be mindful of maintaining appropriate physical distance between yourself and others), or doing another exercise activity that will help to disperse overwhelming energy that can sometimes accompany panic attacks.
- **Five Senses:** Look around the space you're in for five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can touch, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste. You can name these things aloud or do this mentally; it will help you to focus on your environmental cues rather than the panicked thoughts.
- **Talk to A Friend:** Talking to someone you trust can provide validation and support around your concerns. Isolation can make our experience worse and make it difficult to move forward.
- **Seek Out Additional Support:** Contact Student Health and Counseling Services for a consultation appointment to learn more about options that may be able to support you. We offer short-term therapy, help navigating community referrals, as well as managing stress workshops, mindfulness workshops, focused study groups, and more.