



# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **VA announces broad suicide prevention partnership and safe firearm storage partnership**

**WASHINGTON** — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has recently formalized two partnerships aimed at [preventing Veteran suicide](#).

Effective January, the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention \(AFSP\)](#) began collaborating with VA to advance and improve the quality of life for Veterans to prevent suicides. Through this partnership, VA and AFSP have been exchanging research on suicide and prevention efforts. AFSP has also begun sharing VA suicide-prevention messaging.

Effective last November, the [National Shooting Sports Foundation \(NSSF\)](#) began working with VA to develop a program that will empower communities to engage in safe firearm-storage practices. The program will include information to help communities create coalitions around promoting and sustaining firearm safety with an emphasis on service members, Veterans and their families.

“We want all Americans to know that suicide is preventable.” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “By working with local organizations and community partners, we’re confident that we can make a meaningful difference to reduce suicide among Veterans.”

These innovative partnerships highlight the shared mission between the VA, nonprofit organizations and local communities to end suicide among those who have served or are currently serving.

Research shows there is no single cause for suicide: It is the outcome of multiple contributing factors and events. However, environmental factors, such as access to lethal means, increase the risk for suicide. Firearms are one of the most deadly and common methods for suicide among Americans — particularly for service members and Veterans.

Veterans in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 800-273-8255 and press 1, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat), or text to 838255.

Reporters covering Veteran mental health issues can visit [ReportingOnSuicide.org](https://ReportingOnSuicide.org) for important guidance on how to communicate about suicide.

See [here](#) for Secretary Wilkie's recent opinion editorial outlining VA's progress on preventing Veteran suicide.

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