



Dispatch FROM THE Front Lines

The Department of Defense's inTransition Program

*Available to ALL of America's Veterans,
Regardless of Discharge Status*

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Vulnerable Veteran Populations in the Veterans Treatment Courts

Justice-involved veterans can have a significantly harder time finding and obtaining available resources compared to their non-justice-involved veteran counterparts. Almost all service members who are incarcerated while serving are subsequently discharged with other-than-honorable (OTH), bad conduct, or dishonorable discharges, and because of this are often ineligible for the same resources that an honorably discharged member may receive. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that there are currently over 500,000 veterans with an OTH status in the United States.¹ Veterans with an OTH discharge status have significantly higher rates of mental health symptoms, report more substance use, and have lower incomes when compared to veterans with honorable discharges.² Furthermore, it has been found that roughly half of veterans in jail or prison were at some point diagnosed with a mental health disorder.³ These higher rates of behavioral health concerns, combined with a lack of available resources and supports, can cause serious difficulties for an already overwhelmed justice-involved veteran. inTransition is a government program that is available to help these veterans.

The inTransition program can be incredibly valuable for justice-involved veterans, given the lack of available resources for veterans with less than an honorable discharge.

inTransition Program Overview

inTransition was created in 2010 to help connect service members and veterans to behavioral healthcare and ensure that any service member or veteran who wants a provider for behavioral health services can be connected. The program has significantly evolved over the years. It now helps to connect any service member or veteran from any branch of service, including the seven collective reserve components of the Armed Forces—the Army National Guard of the United States, the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard of the United States, the Air Force Reserve, and the Coast Guard Reserve—with a behavioral health provider, regardless of time served, time since separation, or discharge status. With minimal barriers to care, inTransition aims to help any veteran seeking behavioral health services. Housed under the Department of Defense's Defense Health Agency, inTransition is available 24/7 anywhere in the United States and abroad. It is completely free of charge, confidential, and voluntary.

Any veteran looking for a behavioral health provider can contact inTransition and be assigned a coach who will help them through this process. inTransition coaches are masters-level, licensed clinicians and will work one-on-one with the veteran to first assess eligible benefits and then connect them with a provider in their area. The assigned coach will arrange for weekly or biweekly phone calls with the veteran until they have attended an appointment with a behavioral health provider of their choice and are happy with this new provider. Not only can the inTransition coaches connect veterans with behavioral health providers, but the coaches can also connect them to a variety of other resources, such as:

- Financial assistance • Employment resources
- Housing programs • Disability claims
- GI Bill navigation • and more

inTransition is available 24/7 anywhere in the U.S. at 1-800-424-7877. It is a free, confidential, and voluntary program.

The inTransition coach will not stop working with the veteran until they are connected to care. This help can be especially important for justice-involved veterans, who often do not qualify for, but can benefit from, extra support services. inTransition will keep working with the veteran to help them obtain a behavioral health provider who meets their needs and with whom they are comfortable. If you are helping a justice-involved veteran get connected to care, or if you are a veteran yourself looking for a behavioral health provider, inTransition is standing by to help.

To be connected with an inTransition coach or to make a referral, you can contact 1-800-424-7877 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

inTransition, Veterans Treatment Courts, and State, Local, and Military Correctional Facilities

Although inTransition has been around for over a decade, it became increasingly apparent that many justice-involved veterans, and those that help them, were unaware of this service; because of this, inTransition began specific outreach coordination with military brigades and correctional facilities across the United States and abroad, to spread awareness

of the program and to better support service members as they transition out of these facilities. As a result, there are now designated inTransition points of contact (POCs) at 11 major military brigades and correctional facilities worldwide. All these POCs are educated on the benefits of the inTransition program and are equipped to determine how best to utilize and socialize it within their facilities to ensure systemwide awareness.

Now that inTransition has a presence in military brigades and correctional facilities, the program has changed focus to spread awareness throughout civilian state and local correctional facilities, along with veterans treatment courts across the country. Numerous presentations have been given to employees within these systems to familiarize them with the services provided by inTransition, but more can and must be done to spread the word that inTransition can greatly assist those working in corrections and veterans treatment courts with the challenges they face in helping veterans. inTransition should be familiar to all in these spaces.

To learn more about inTransition, request a presentation, or order free materials, please visit <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/vpj1112.pdf>.

inTransition coaches can also connect veterans to other resources, including housing, financial assistance, employment, disability claims, and other resources to fit their specific needs.

¹U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2017, March 8). *VA secretary announces intention to expand mental health care to former service members with other-than-honorable discharges and in crisis* [Press Release]. <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/includes/viewPDF.cfm?id=2867>

²Brooks Holliday, S., & Pedersen, E. R. (2017). The association between discharge status, mental health, and substance misuse among young adult veterans. *Psychiatry Research*, 256, 428–434. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.07.011>

³Bronson, J., Carson, A., Noonan, M., & Berzofsky, M. (2015). *Veterans in prison and jail, 2011–12*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://www.neh.gov/sites/default/files/inline-files/vpj1112.pdf>



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