Butler County Courthouse
428 6th St, PO Box 325
Allison IA 50602

319-346-6628
ebliss@butlercounty.iowa.gov

Butler County Veteran Affairs

Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-4:00 pm

New Director

VA Urgent Care

Did you know the VA offers urgent care benefits in the community?

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VA Care in Community
Are you better served in the community for your healthcare or specialty care needs?

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA): 515-252-4698 or 800-838-4692

Iowa City VA Medical Center: 319-338-0581 (Main) or 833-983-0492 (VA Health Connect)

VA Central Iowa Health Care System (Des Moines): 515-699-5588 or 800-488-8244

National VA Benefits Line: 800-827-1000

A Message from the Director

Hello, Butler County Veterans, Families, and Community Partners!

My name is Erica Bliss, and I am honored to introduce myself as the new Director of Butler County Veterans Affairs. For the past nine years, I have had the privilege of assisting veterans and their families as they navigate the VA system, access benefits, and connect with the resources they have earned through their service.

I am especially happy to be returning home to Iowa and look forward to serving the veterans and families of Butler County. My goal is to ensure our veterans know they have a local advocate they can turn to for assistance, information, and support.

I look forward to meeting you, hearing your stories, and becoming an active part of the veteran community here in Butler County.

Veterans Affairs can sometimes feel overwhelming—whether you are navigating VA benefits, filing a claim, seeking healthcare resources, looking for assistance with transportation or financial needs, or simply trying to figure out where to start. You do not have to navigate it alone. Our office is here to help you understand the benefits and resources available to you and to connect you with the appropriate services.

I also look forward to building strong relationships with our local veteran organizations, service organizations, community partners, and those who support Butler County's veteran population. By working together, we can make sure our veterans know what resources are available and that no veteran or family member falls through the cracks.

Each month, this newsletter will highlight important VA updates, local resources, upcoming events, veteran benefits, community programs, and information that may be helpful to you or someone you know.

I invite you to share this newsletter with fellow veterans, family members, caregivers, and community organizations. If there is a topic, resource, or question you would like to see featured in a future edition, please reach out to our office.

It is a privilege to serve Butler County, and I look forward to getting to know our veteran community and working alongside all of you.

Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and the many ways you continue to serve our community.

VA Community Urgent Care

Need Care Now? Know Your VA Urgent Care Benefit

Eligible Veterans enrolled in VA health care may be able to receive urgent care from a VA-approved in-network community urgent care provider without first obtaining a referral from their VA provider.

When Can I Use Urgent Care?

Urgent care is intended for non-life-threatening illnesses or injuries that need attention but are not serious enough for the emergency room.

Examples include:
Colds, flu, or respiratory infections
Minor cuts, burns, or injuries
Ear infections
Sore throats
Minor sprains or strains
Rashes or skin conditions
Other conditions requiring prompt–but not emergency–care

Before You Go

Make sure the urgent care location is part of the VA's authorized in-network community urgent care network.

You can use the VA's Urgent Care Locator or contact your VA health care team if you are unsure where to go. **https://www.va.gov/find-locations/**

Bring: Your VA health care identification card, A list of current medications, Your photo ID

What About the Cost?

Depending on your VA health care eligibility and priority group, you may have a copayment for urgent care services.

Your copayment can also depend on whether the visit is for a service covered by VA and how many urgent care visits you have already used during the applicable period.

Important: Do not assume that every urgent care clinic accepts VA benefits. Always verify that the provider is VA-authorized and in-network before receiving care whenever possible.

VA Care in the Community

Did you know? Veterans may be able to receive VA-authorized health care from community providers when certain criteria are met.

The **VA Community Care program** can help eligible Veterans receive care closer to home when VA health care is not available or when specific access, distance, or clinical requirements are met.

How It Works

- **VA determines eligibility** for Community Care.
- When approved, the VA issues an authorization for specific care.
- Veterans should **confirm that care is authorized before receiving services**, whenever possible.
- Community providers must have the appropriate VA authorization before providing covered services.
- A Community Care referral or authorization is not the same as simply choosing to see a non-VA provider.

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Emergency vs. Urgent Care

Emergency: A serious or life-threatening condition → Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. Report ER visit within 72 hours:
844-724-7842 or **vhaemergencynotification@va.gov**

Urgent Care: A non-life-threatening condition that needs prompt attention → Use a VA-approved urgent care provider.

Sept 7	Labor Day-County Offices Closed
Sept 11	Patriot Day
Sept 18	POW/MIA Recognition
	Air Force B-day
Sept 27	Gold Star Family

I hope you find the information in this newsletter beneficial. As I get situated in my new position and have the opportunity to meet more of you, I would also like to learn from you.

I am interested in hearing about the trends, challenges, and needs you see among veterans and their families in our community. Your insight is valuable in helping our office understand where the greatest needs are and how Butler County Veterans Affairs can most effectively provide assistance, resources and support.

Common Reasons Community Care May Be Used

Community Care may be available when:

- The VA cannot provide the needed service.
- A Veteran meets VA's access or drive-time standards.
- A specific service is not available through the VA.
- The Veteran meets other VA eligibility requirements.

Important Reminder

A referral does not always mean an authorization has been completed. Before scheduling or receiving community care, Veterans should verify that the service has been authorized and understand where the care is approved.

Need help? Butler County Veterans Affairs can help you understand your VA benefits and connect you with the appropriate VA resources.

Mason City
Main Phone: 641-494-5000
Mental Health: 515-699-5999

Waterloo
Main: 319-235-1230

Mental Health: 319-338-0581

CBOC