

MY RECOVERY PLAN

WEB PROGRAM

User Guide



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS MY RECOVERY PLAN?

The My Recovery Plan web program was developed to help Veterans in their recovery and in dealing with a mental health condition or situation. Recovery planning at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is based on the manual, [Action Planning for Prevention and Recovery](#), which was originally developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



With My Recovery Plan's interactive tools, Veterans can:

- Create action, crisis, and safety plans digitally from any device with internet access
- Be guided by instructions and examples while building their plans
- Update their plans easily at any time
- Print and email their plans for easy reference or to share with members of their care team and support system
- Find relaxation exercises under the **Tools** menu at any time

WHERE CAN I FIND IT?

My Recovery Plan is available on VA's [Veteran Training portal](#). The portal offers free online programs that teach Veterans skills they can use to enhance their lives. On the Veteran Training home page, choose **My Recovery Plan** from the main menu and then select **Start Here**. The website can also be accessed directly at www.VeteranTraining.va.gov/apps/Recovery.

For quick access, bookmark My Recovery Plan in your web browser or add a My Recovery Plan icon to your home screen ([see Appendix C – Creating a My Recovery Plan Shortcut](#)).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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OMHSP also wishes to acknowledge the following VA staff from the VA MidSouth Healthcare Network (VISN 9) for their contributions to the development of this program:

- John Perry, Certified Peer Specialist, Chattanooga VA Clinic
- Connie Gallon, Compensated Work Therapy Program Manager, Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
- Dr. Amy Owen, Psy.D., Clay Hunt Outreach Coordinator, Tennessee Valley Healthcare System
- VISN 9 Peer Specialists

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to help both Veterans and VA staff (Peer Specialists, Social Workers, Nurses, Whole Health Coaches/Specialists, Suicide Prevention Coordinators, and other Clinicians) understand how to use My Recovery Plan. It offers instructions for using the website's interactive tools and resources to facilitate the Veteran's recovery planning process.

ABOUT RECOVERY PLANNING

HOW RECOVERY PLANNING HELPS

When in the military, you followed regulations, policies, procedures, and tactics to complete the mission. Recovery planning is the same thing. Following plans ensures that your wishes, goals, dreams, and tasks are your focus and priority. It is not being selfish. **You must take care of yourself before you can take care of others.**

“Adjusting to civilian life after the Army was hard for me. The action plan gave me direction and a mission.”

My Recovery Plan is a powerful self-care tool. The plans you create can support recovery by giving you the control to:

- Recognize your triggers and warning signs
- Have a strategy for when things are breaking down
- Avoid impulsive or inappropriate actions and reactions
- Identify needed care and resources quickly if in a crisis

Additionally, sharing your recovery plans with your Primary and Mental Health Care Providers can help them develop an overall treatment plan that is tailored to you.

“I had been stuck in the same routine for years. Every month, I was broke by the 15th. I had a class on the action plan by a peer. I created my action plan and stuck to it. I have a better life now. It feels good to have money all the time.”

WORKING WITH A VA PEER SPECIALIST

My Recovery Plan is free and available online for anyone to use. However, it is primarily intended for Veterans who are doing recovery planning with a VA Peer Specialist or other Mental Health Clinician.

Peer Specialists are trained and certified to support Veterans' recovery by helping them with goal planning, providing supportive services related to their established treatment plan, and monitoring their progress. All VA Peer Specialists are Veterans who have successfully gone through the recovery process themselves. They offer valuable support by modeling effective coping techniques and self-help strategies based on their own recovery experience.

- If you don't have a Peer Specialist or Mental Health Clinician to work with and wish to find one, [contact your local VA facility](#).
- If you prefer to use My Recovery Plan on your own, please follow this guide carefully. We strongly suggest that you also review [the SAMHSA manual](#). It will provide you with important additional information as you develop your recovery plans.

“Action plans give me guidelines to go by when things are breaking down. They give me a reference to look at to refocus on my recovery.”

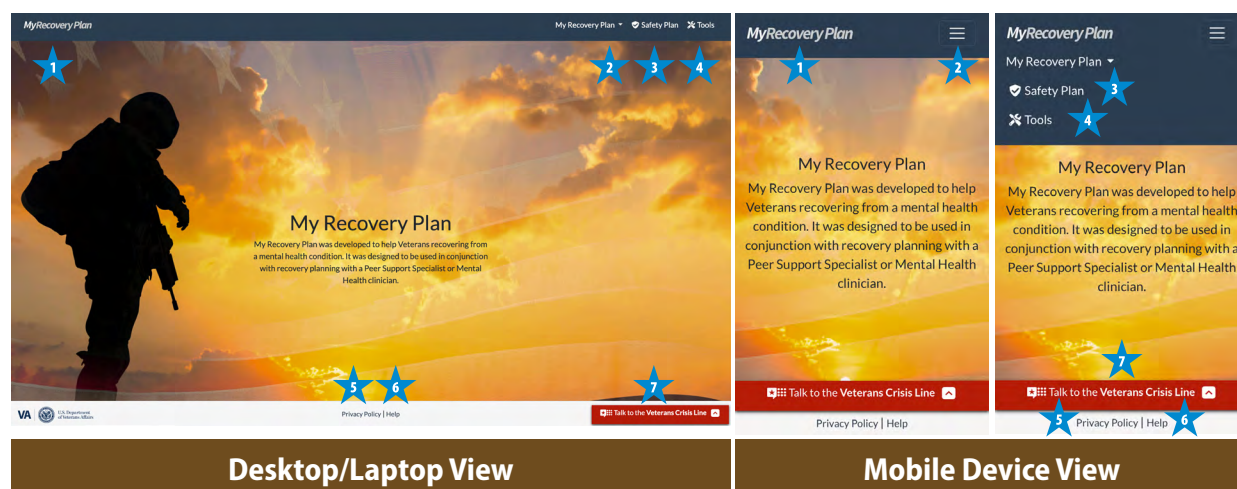
5 TO-DOS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you get started using My Recovery Plan, it's important to take a few minutes to become familiar with the website and how it works. Here are five to-dos before you begin.

1. REVIEW THE PRIMARY NAVIGATION

The primary navigation offers access to all resources available in My Recovery Plan. **These menu options are available on all pages of the website.** Note that the website looks slightly different when you are using a laptop or desktop versus a smartphone or tablet. No matter what type of device you are using, these menu options are always available.

Note: Consider bookmarking the My Recovery Plan homepage in your web browser for quick access.



- ★ 1 Home Button** – Use the My Recovery Plan button on the top left-hand side of the page to return to the homepage.
- ★ 2 Menu** – Use the My Recovery Plan drop-down menu on the top right-hand side of the page to access each part of the Recovery Plan. If you are using a mobile device, tap the three parallel lines to reveal the My Recovery Plan drop-down menu.
- ★ 3 Safety Plan** – Select this tool if a licensed medical professional has asked you to create a Safety Plan.
- ★ 4 Tools** – Access the Tools page at any time with this button. My Recovery Plan tools include relaxation exercises, a notes feature, and a **delete all data** function.
- ★ 5 Privacy Policy** – Access VA's privacy policy.
- ★ 6 Help** – Find technical requirements and instructions for emailing and printing your plans.
- ★ 7 Crisis Line** – Select the red box in the bottom right-hand side of the page if you are in crisis. The box will open a window with information for contacting the Veterans Crisis Line.

2. WATCH THE GETTING STARTED VIDEO

Scroll downward on the [homepage](#) to reveal a short [welcome video](#). It offers a tour of My Recovery Plan's features. Click the play button to watch.



3. PREVIEW MY RECOVERY PLAN'S TOOLS

The My Recovery Plan website offers helpful tools you may wish to use – during the recovery planning process or at any time when you need them.

The Tools link is available at the top of every page throughout the website.

My Recovery Plan ▾ Safety Plan **Tools**

My Recovery Plan Tools include relaxation exercises and a notes feature.

Relaxation Exercises

If at any time you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or just need a break, these relaxation exercises can help.

Select each box to open instructions for each relaxation exercise.

Consider reviewing each one now to see which exercises you like best. You may wish to incorporate one or more of these exercises into your recovery plan. See [Appendix A](#) for links and descriptions of each exercise.



Notes Tool

Sometimes ideas come to mind when you are working on your recovery plan. The Notes tool lets you record them.

- ★ 1 Use the Notes field to type your ideas.
- ★ 2 Select the **Add+** button to add your note to your list.
- ★ 3 Select the **X** next to your note to delete it.
- ★ 4 Use the options to print or email your notes.

Notes
Write down what is on your mind and get it out of your head. Use this section to jot down quick notes of things that come to your mind that you don't want to forget. Enter a note in the field and select the Add Button to add it to your list.

This is my first note. ★ 3 X

★ 1 ★ 2 Add +

Notes are automatically saved to your browser's local storage.

Print Email ★ 4

4. READ THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS ON THE HELP PAGE

A link to the Help page is located at the bottom of every page of the My Recovery Plan website.

Note: Clicking **Help** opens a new page in your browser to display the Help information. To return to the main My Recovery Plan website, close the Help browser window or select your original browser window.

Privacy Policy | **Help**

The Help page offers quick tips and instructions that you can reference at any time while using the My Recovery Plan website. It includes:

- System requirements and settings
 - Review this information before you get started creating your plans to make sure your computer or device has the proper settings. Having the right settings can help avoid experiencing technical difficulties.
- A key that defines each of the website's icons and buttons
- Instructions for using the website's Print and Email buttons
- **Contact Us** option
 - Use this option if you cannot find the answer to your question in this user guide or on the Help page. The email address is not a VA help desk. It may take a couple of days to receive a reply.

Browser Settings

Having the proper browser settings is particularly important for My Recovery Plan to function properly. If you experience technical difficulties, try checking the following settings. The links below and on the website's [Help](#) page offer instructions for adjusting these settings.

- [Enable JavaScript](#)
- [Enable Cookies](#)
- [Turn off Pop-up Blocker](#)

5. UNDERSTAND YOUR STORAGE AND PRIVACY OPTIONS

The My Recovery Plan website uses a secure storage method called **local storage** to retain and retrieve the information you've typed into your plans.

Important notes about local storage:

- Your work is **stored in the web browser**, not in a folder on your computer or mobile device.
 - **Do not clear the web browser's cache.** If you or someone else clears the cache, all work on your plans will be lost.
 - Use the **Email** and/or **Print** functions to permanently store your plans. You should take one or more of these actions each time you finish a session working on your plans, as well as when you complete them.
 - Plans that are emailed cannot be edited. If you have more work to do on your plans, do not clear your web browser's cache. If this happens, however, at least you have a copy and can retype the information.
- Local storage means your plans are **stored locally on your device** and nowhere else. Be sure to start your plans on a computer or mobile device that you can access regularly.
 - If you visit the My Recovery Plan website on a different device, your plans will not be there.
 - If you work on your plans with a Peer Specialist or someone else, be sure to use your own computer or mobile device. You could also print a blank plan, work with pen and paper, and type the information on your device later.

Congratulations, you have completed the Daily Plan.

Now decide how you would like to keep all of your information so you can access it when you need it. You can choose one method or all of them, it's up to you. For an explanation of each method, visit the [Help Page](#).

 Print

 Email

- The information you enter is **stored securely in your browser**. Only you have access to it.
- This may not be true, however, if you are using a public or work computer. If this cannot be avoided, there are options for further securing the information in your plans:
 - Create your recovery plans in one work session; print and/or email your plans to yourself; and then delete the browser's cookies. (Visit the My Recovery Plan [Help page](#) for instructions.) **Please note:** Taking these actions will mean your recovery plans are no longer available for editing online.

Read the Department of Veterans Affairs [Privacy Policy](#) by selecting the link at the bottom of the My Recovery Plan website.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Help](#)

BUILDING YOUR PLANS

The [My Recovery Plan](#) website has interactive tools to create an **Action Plan**, a **Crisis Plan** and a **Safety Plan**.

- **Action** and **Crisis** plans are part of the recovery planning process and can be done with the assistance of a certified VA Peer Specialist.
 - The **Action Plan** supports wellness and recovery by helping you set specific, action-oriented things you can do daily to remain healthy and stable. It also helps you identify the triggers that may produce uncomfortable symptoms, as well as come up with actions you can take to reduce those symptoms when you are triggered.
 - The **Crisis Plan** is for others who support you. If you are in crisis, they can use this plan that you create with them to help you when you cannot take care of things for yourself. It supports your recovery by letting others know what to do and what to avoid doing. The plan also informs them when to give control back to you.
- The **Safety Plan** is separate from the action and crisis recovery plans. It is a prioritized written list of coping strategies and sources of support that you can use before or during a crisis. Safety plans are usually requested by a licensed medical professional and should be created while under that professional's care and guidance.

The My Recovery Plan website provides step-by-step instructions while you are developing your plans. This **Building Your Plans** section of the user guide offers additional technical guidance.

CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan has four **categories**:

1. **Daily Plan**
2. **Triggers**
3. **Early Warning Signs**
4. **When Things Are Breaking Down**

Each Action Plan category has **subcategories**. You create your plan by adding information to each subcategory.

1. Daily Plan

- a. Feeling Well
- b. Dreams and Goals
- c. Daily List
- d. Reminder List

2. Triggers

- a. Identifying Triggers
- b. Triggers Action Plan

3. Early Warning Signs

- a. Identifying Early Warning Signs
- b. Dealing with Early Warning Signs

4. When Things Are Breaking Down

- a. Signs That Things Are Breaking Down
- b. Reduce Your Symptoms When Things Are Breaking Down

Begin the Action Plan

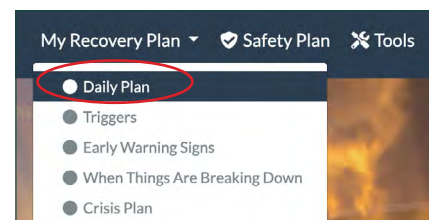
If you are just getting started with My Recovery Plan, it is recommended that you begin with the Daily Plan. You can launch the Daily Plan in one of two ways:

Let's begin with The Daily Plan, which is a step-by-step plan of things you can do to take care of yourself and stay healthy.

Select the Create Daily Plan Button to get started.

Start Daily Plan ▶

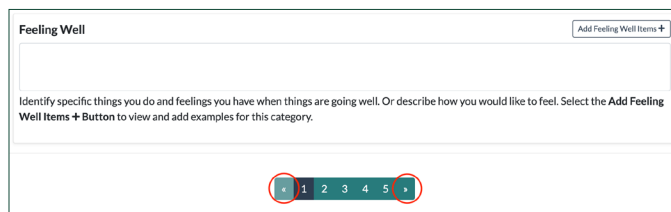
Select the **Start Daily Plan** button on the home page.



Select **Daily Plan** from the My Recovery Plan drop-down menu at the top of the page.

Proceed Through the Action Plan

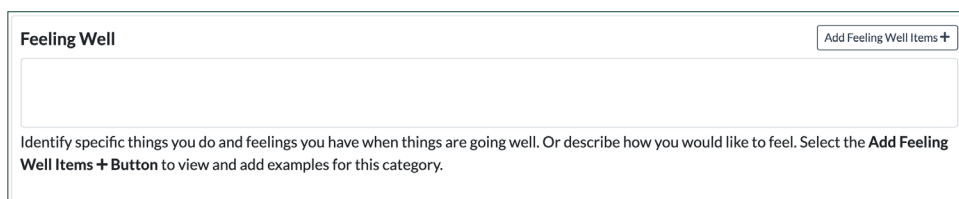
Use the double arrows to navigate backward and forward.



The screenshot shows a 'Feeling Well' section with a text input area and an 'Add Feeling Well Items +' button. Below the input area, there is a horizontal list of five items, each with a double arrow at its end, indicating navigation. The items are numbered 1 through 5. The first item is highlighted with a red circle, and the fifth item is also highlighted with a red circle.

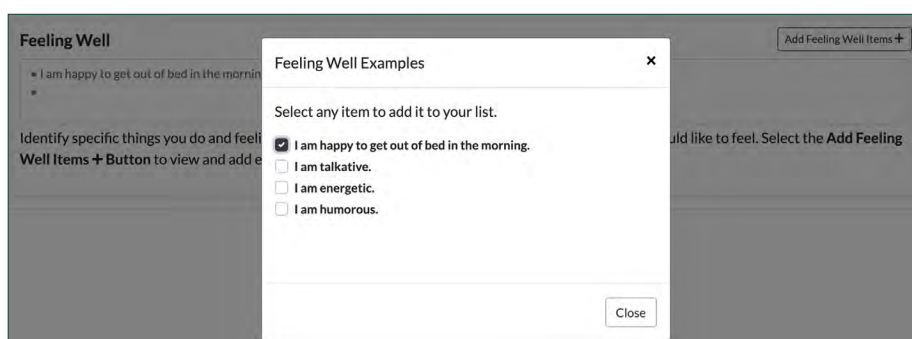
How to Enter Information

For each subcategory, read the instructions under the content box and type your response into the content box.



The screenshot shows the 'Feeling Well' section with a text input area and an 'Add Feeling Well Items +' button. Below the input area, there is a line of text: 'Identify specific things you do and feelings you have when things are going well. Or describe how you would like to feel. Select the Add Feeling Well Items + Button to view and add examples for this category.'

If you need ideas or examples, tap the **Add Items+** button, located in the top right-hand corner above every content box. This will open a popup box with suggestions you can add. Be creative and try not to limit yourself to the suggestions provided. Tap the **Close** button or the **X** to close the popup box. See [Appendix B](#) for a listing of all **Add Items+** examples that are available in My Recovery Plan.



The screenshot shows a 'Feeling Well Examples' popup box. It has a title bar with a close button (X). The main content area says 'Select any item to add it to your list.' and lists four items with checkboxes: 'I am happy to get out of bed in the morning.' (checked), 'I am talkative.', 'I am energetic.', and 'I am humorous.'. There is a 'Close' button at the bottom right.

Print and Email – Actions to Take After Completing Each Plan

When you complete a section of My Recovery Plan, you will be prompted to take action before moving to the next category.

Daily Plan

The Daily Plan is a step-by-step plan to support wellness and recovery. The structure helps you organize your thoughts to develop an action-oriented plan with specific things you can do to remain healthy.

Congratulations, you have completed the Daily Plan.

Now decide how you would like to keep all of your information so you can access it when you need it. You can choose one method or all of them, it's up to you. For an explanation of each method, visit the [Help Page](#).

Print

Email

1

Select the Next Button to advance to the next section, Triggers.

Next

2

1. Decide how you want to keep the information you just entered into your plan. The options are Print and/or Email. Find detailed instructions for each of these options on [the website's Help Page](#).
2. Select the **Next->** button to proceed to the next category of the Action Plan.

Note: When you've reached the final Action Plan category (When Things Are Breaking Down), the **Next->** button takes you to the Crisis Plan.

CREATING A CRISIS PLAN

A Crisis Plan focuses on how other people can support you during a crisis. It helps you maintain responsibility for your own care by informing others what to do for you. Because this plan is used by others, be sure to make it clear and easy to understand. It is recommended that you create the crisis plan with your supporters to ensure they understand your needs.

The Crisis Plan has three **categories**:

3. My Info

4. Help From Others

5. My Treatments

Each Crisis Plan category has **sub-categories**. You create your Crisis Plan by adding information to each sub-category. Note: Some sub-categories will be prepopulated with the information that you provided in your action plans.

1. My Info

- a. Feeling Well
- b. Symptoms/Issues
- c. Current Medications
- d. If Additional Medications Become Necessary
- e. Medications to Avoid

2. Help From Others

- a. Supporters
- b. What You Need From Supporters
- c. Special Help You May Need From Supporters

3. My Treatments

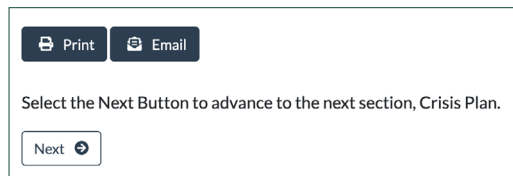
- a. Health Care Providers
- b. Preferred Treatment
- c. Treatments to Avoid
- d. Preferred Facilities/Providers
- e. Facilities/Providers to Avoid

Important Notes:

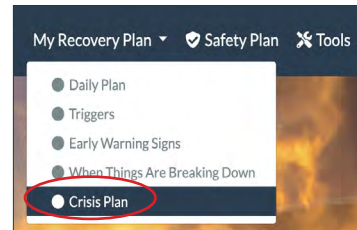
- For the **My Info** category of the Crisis Plan, you can visit My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov to obtain a copy of your current medications. If you are not a My HealtheVet Premium user, please contact your closest VA medical facility or visit [this My HealtheVet page](#) for options to create a Premium account.
- For the **My Treatments** category of the Crisis Plan, be sure to contact your VA Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) Social Worker for assistance with obtaining a VA medical power of attorney (POA) and living will (Advance Directive) to ensure your designated caregiver can contact VA health care providers on your behalf during a crisis. Non-VA POAs are not recognized by the VA healthcare system. [Contact your local VA facility](#) to request PACT Social Worker assistance.

Begin the Crisis Plan

You can launch the Crisis Plan in one of two ways:



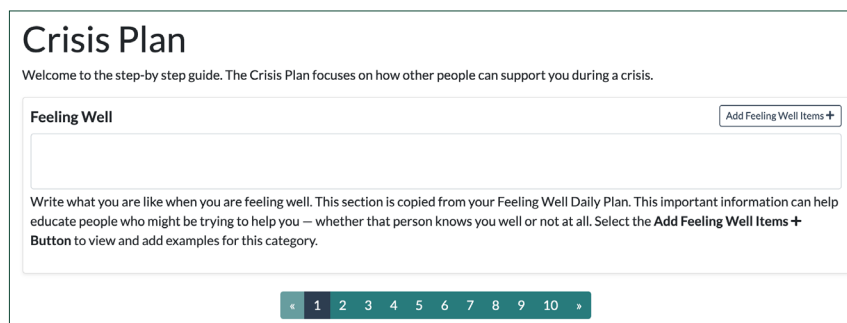
Select the **Next->** button at the bottom of the **When Things Are Breaking Down** page after you've saved your work.



Select **Crisis Plan** from the My Recovery Plan drop-down menu at the top of the page.

Proceed Through the Crisis Plan

Use the forward and back arrows to toggle through the Crisis Plan subcategories.



Entering Information and Sharing Your Crisis Plan

Like the Action Plan, use the content boxes to enter information into your Crisis Plan, and use the Print and/or Email buttons to keep and share your plan.

Facilities/Providers to Avoid

Add Facilities/Providers to Avoid +

Describe the treatment facilities you would like to avoid if family members and friends cannot provide you with care, or if your condition requires hospital care. Select the **Add Facilities/Providers to Avoid + Button** to view and add examples for this category.

If you need examples, tap the **Add +** button, located in the top right-hand corner above every content box. This will open a popup box with suggestions of what to add. Tap the **Close** button or the **X** to close the popup box. View all Crisis Plan category suggestions in [Appendix B](#).

Facilities/Providers to Avoid Examples

X

Select an example to add it to your list. You can edit it from there.

☐ VA Medical Facility (name and location)
☐ VA Clinic (name and location)
☐ Non-VA Hospital (name and location)
☐ Non-VA Clinic (name and location)
☐ Provider (location and number)

Close

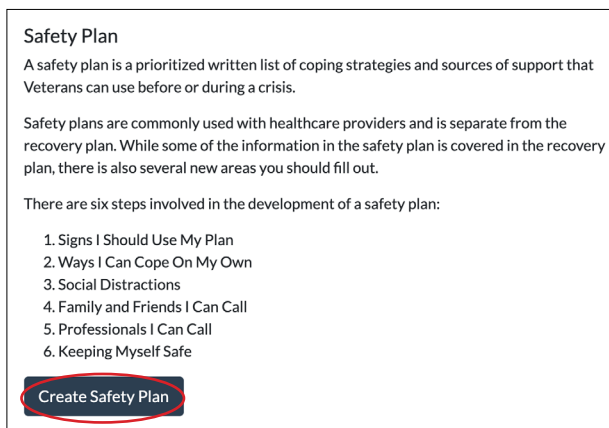
IF YOU NEED A SAFETY PLAN

A lot of what's in your Action and Crisis plans can be applied to a Safety Plan. It is VA policy that you work with a licensed clinical professional when building a Safety Plan. Let your provider know if you would like to use My Recovery Plan's interactive tool for creating a Safety Plan. You can also just use the tool, and then use the save, print, or email functions to share your Safety Plan with your provider.

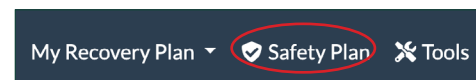
Note: My Recovery Plan's interactive tools for building a Safety Plan work the same way as the tools provided to build your Action and Crisis plans. Refer to [pages 12 – 19](#) of this guide for user instructions.

Begin the Safety Plan

You can launch the **Safety Plan** in one of two ways:

A screenshot of the 'Safety Plan' page. At the top, it says 'Safety Plan' followed by a definition: 'A safety plan is a prioritized written list of coping strategies and sources of support that Veterans can use before or during a crisis.' Below this, it states 'Safety plans are commonly used with healthcare providers and is separate from the recovery plan. While some of the information in the safety plan is covered in the recovery plan, there is also several new areas you should fill out.' Then, it lists 'There are six steps involved in the development of a safety plan:' followed by a numbered list: 1. Signs I Should Use My Plan, 2. Ways I Can Cope On My Own, 3. Social Distractions, 4. Family and Friends I Can Call, 5. Professionals I Can Call, 6. Keeping Myself Safe. At the bottom of this content area is a button labeled 'Create Safety Plan' which is circled in red.

Select the **Create Safety Plan** button near the bottom of the home page.

A screenshot of the top navigation bar. It contains three items: 'My Recovery Plan' with a dropdown arrow, 'Safety Plan' with a heart icon and circled in red, and 'Tools' with a wrench icon.

Select **Safety Plan** from the main menu at the top of the page.

NEXT STEPS

- You are encouraged to share your plans with your VA care team and other healthcare providers. If you are a My Health eVet Premium user, you can download your plans and send them to your VA providers via Secure Message as an attachment. My Health eVet is accessed at <https://www.myhealth.va.gov>. You should discuss your Action and Crisis plans with your providers and ensure that they are included in your treatment plans.
- It is important to read your Action and Crisis plans daily. If you start to have a bad day, review your Daily Plan to see if there is something that you missed and should add. Also, review the Feeling Well sections of your Action and Crisis plans.
- Use the relaxation exercises in Tools regularly to help you stop, slow-down, and think before you act.
- Update your plans as needed and share changes with your providers and supporters.
- VA Peer Specialists are Veterans ready to help you. Contact a Peer for assistance at your closest VA medical facility at <https://www.va.gov/directory>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to referencing the [SAMSHA Plan](#), here are more VA resources available to you.

- [Safety Plan Quick Guide](#)
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#)
- [Women Veterans Health Care](#)
- [Compensated Work Therapy \(CWT\) Program](#)
- [Homeless Program](#)
- [Caregiver Program](#)
- [Transition and Care Management](#)
- [Veteran Readiness and Employment Services \(VR&E\) Program](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Program](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [National Center for PTSD](#)
- [Polytrauma/TBI System of Care](#)
- [Patient Care Services – LGBT and Related Identities](#)
- [Directory of Veterans Service Organizations](#)
- [Veterans Benefits Administration](#)
- [National Cemetery Administration](#)

APPENDIX A

AT-A-GLANCE CHART: MY RECOVERY PLAN

RELAXATION EXERCISES

EXERCISE	FORMAT	DESCRIPTION
Awareness of the Senses	video	Eleven-minute mindfulness exercise to achieve relaxation through a heightened awareness of the senses
Coping Technique	text	Slow-down mindfulness exercise to get through tough or stressful situations
Count Slowly	text	Quick, simple coping technique that can be used anywhere, anytime to quiet anger or stress
Deep Breathing	video	One-minute tutorial that explains deep breathing to manage stress and insomnia
Meditation	text	Four-step meditation practice that focuses on breathing
Muscle Relaxation	video	Five-minute exercise to relax muscles and relieve tension
Praying	text	Tips for using prayer to relax if prayer is part of your faith or spiritual practice
Seated Practice	video	Three-minute seated exercise to achieve relaxation through a heightened awareness of your body
Visualize	video	Two-minute relaxation exercise using nature and the five senses
Yawning	video	One-minute tutorial that explains yawning as a quick meditation technique to relax and cool down the brain anywhere, anytime

APPENDIX B

MY RECOVERY PLAN 'ADD ITEMS +' EXAMPLES: ACTION PLANS, CRISIS PLAN, SAFETY PLAN

Action Plan – Daily Plan

SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Feeling Well	I am happy to get out of bed in the morning.
	I am talkative.
	I am energetic.
	I am humorous.
Dreams and Goals	I want to save money and take my family on a cruise.
	I want to spend more time with the kids.
Daily List	Eating three healthy meals a day.
	Drinking plenty of water.
	Getting to bed by 10:00 p.m. (or at a good regular time for you).
	Doing something you enjoy—like playing a musical instrument, watching a favorite TV show, knitting, or reading a good book.
	Exercising.
	Doing a relaxation exercise.
	Writing in your journal.
	Talking to a friend on the telephone.
	Taking medications.
	Taking vitamins and other food supplements.
Reminder List	Do some housework.
	Set up an appointment with one of my health care professionals.
	Spend time with a good friend or be in touch with my family.
	Do peer counseling.
	Buy groceries.
	Do the laundry.
	Have some personal time.
	Plan something fun for the evening or weekend.
	Write some letters.
	Go to support group.

Action Plan – Triggers

SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Identifying Triggers	The anniversary dates of losses or trauma
	Frightening news events
	Too much to do, or feeling overwhelmed
	Family friction
	The end of a relationship
	Spending too much time alone
	Being judged, criticized, teased, or put down
	Financial problems: living paycheck to paycheck, not having enough money, getting a big or unexpected bill
	Physical illness
	Sexual harassment
	Being yelled at
	Aggressive-sounding noises or exposure to anything that makes you feel uncomfortable
	Being around someone who has treated you badly
	Certain smells, tastes, or noises
Triggers Action Plan	Make sure I do everything on my daily maintenance list.
	Call a support person and ask them to listen while I talk through the situation.
	Do a half-hour relaxation exercise.
	Write in my journal for at least half an hour.
	Ride my stationary bicycle for 45 minutes.
	Pray.
	Play the piano or work on a fun activity for 1 hour.
	Do relaxation and mindfulness activities.
	Seek financial assistance: contact my support system, seek VA peer support, attend a financial wellness workshop, attend a credit and debt workshop.

Action Plan – Early Warning Signs

SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Identify Early Warning Signs	Anxiety
	Nervousness
	Forgetfulness
	Inability to experience pleasure
	Lack of motivation
	Feeling slowed down or speeded up
	Being uncaring
	Avoiding others or isolating
	Being obsessed with something that doesn't really matter
	Thinking about irrational thought patterns
	Feeling unconnected to my body
	Increased irritability
	Increased negativity
	Not keeping appointments
	Changes in appetite
	Restlessness
	Thinking too much about things that I need or have to do
	Having racing thoughts about too many things
Dealing with Early Warning Signs	Do the things on my Daily Plan, whether I feel like it or not.
	Tell a supporter/counselor how I am feeling and ask for advice. Ask him or her to help me figure out how to take action.
	Peer counsel at least once each day.
	Do at least three, 10-minute relaxation exercises each day (simple exercises described in many self-help books that help you relax through deep breathing and focusing your attention on certain things).
	Write in my journal for at least 15 minutes each day.
	Spend at least 1 hour involved in an activity I enjoy each day.
	Ask others to take over my household responsibilities for the day.
	Check in with my physician or other health care professional.
	Read a good book.
	Dance, sing, listen to good music, play a musical instrument, exercise, go fishing, or fly a kite.

Action Plan – When Things Are Breaking Down

SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Signs That Things Are Breaking Down	Feeling very oversensitive and fragile
	Responding irrationally to events and the actions of others
	Feeling very needy
	Being unable to sleep
	Sleeping all the time
	Avoiding eating
	Wanting to be totally alone or isolating
	Substance abusing: drinking more than usual or too much, taking more than prescribed or not taking prescribed medication, using illegal drugs
	Taking out anger on others
	Chain smoking
	Eating too much
Reduce Your Symptoms When Things Are Breaking Down	Call my doctor or other health care professional, ask for and follow his or her instructions.
	Call and talk for as long as necessary to my supporters.
	Arrange for someone to stay with me around the clock until my symptoms subside.
	Make arrangements to get help right away if my symptoms worsen.
	Make sure I am doing everything on my daily check list.
	Arrange and take at least three days off from any responsibility.
	Have at least two peer counseling sessions.
	Do three deep-breathing relaxation exercises.
	Write in my journal for at least half an hour.
	Schedule a physical examination or doctor appointment or a consultation with another health care provider.
	Ask to have medications checked.

Crisis Plan

SECTION	SUB-SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
My Info	Feeling Well	I am happy to get out of bed in the morning.
		I am talkative.
		I am energetic.
		I am humorous.
	Symptoms/Issues	Being unable to recognize or correctly identify family members and friends
		Uncontrollable pacing, inability to stay still
		Neglecting personal hygiene (for how many days?)
		Not cooking or doing any housework (for how many days?)
		Not understanding what people are saying
		Thinking I am someone I am not
		Thinking I have the ability to do something I don't
		Displaying abusive, destructive, or violent behavior, toward self, others, or property
Help from Others	What You Need from Supporters	Abusing alcohol and/or drugs
		Not getting out of bed (for how long?)
		Refusing to eat or drink
		Listen to me without giving me advice, judging me, or criticizing me.
		Hold me (how? how firmly?).
		Let me pace.
		Encourage me to move, help me move.
		Lead me through a relaxation or stress reduction technique.
		Peer counsel with me.
		Provide me with materials so I can draw or paint.
		Give me the space to express my feelings.
		Don't talk to me (or do talk to me).
		Encourage me and reassure me.
		Feed me nutritious food.
		Make sure I take my vitamins and other medications.
	Special Help You May Need from Supporters	Play me comic videos.
		Play me good music (list the kind).
		Just let me rest.
		Buying groceries
		Watering the plants
		Feeding the pets
		Taking care of the children
		Paying the bills
		Taking out the garbage or trash
		Doing the laundry
		Cleaning the house
		Cooking meals
		Helping with my medications
		Doing yard work

Crisis Plan (continued)

SECTION	SUB-SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Help from Others	Health Care Providers	Peer Specialist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
		Psychologist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
		Psychiatrist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
		Primary Care Provider (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
		Social Worker (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
		Specialist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
My Treatments	Preferred Treatment	Tai Chi
		Yoga
		Chiropractic
		Acupuncture
		Peer Groups
		Mindfulness Groups
		Substance Abuse Groups
		Sleep Therapy
		Individual Therapy Sessions
	Treatments to Avoid	Prolonged Therapy
		Group Therapy Sessions
		Tai Chi
		Yoga
		Chiropractic
		Acupuncture
	Preferred Facilities/ Providers	VA Medical Facility (name and location)
		VA Clinic (name and location)
		Non-VA Hospital (name and location)
		Non-VA Clinic (name and location)
		Provider (location and number)
	Facilities/Providers to Avoid	VA Medical Facility (name and location)
		VA Clinic (name and location)
		Non-VA Hospital (name and location)
		Non-VA Clinic (name and location)
		Provider (location and number)

Safety Plan

SECTION	ADD ITEMS + EXAMPLES
Signs I Should Use My Plan	I am feeling hopeless. I am isolating myself from others. I am feeling sad or depressed most of the time. I am losing interest in things I used to care about. I am engaging in risky behaviors. I am drinking or using drugs more than usual.
Ways I Can Cope on My Own	Pray or engage in other spiritual activity Take a shower Slowly count to 100 Say something kind to myself Go for a walk outside Clean my refrigerator Focus on taking slow, deep breaths Play with a pet
Social Distractions	Name: John Doe / Cell:555-123-4567 / Home:555-555-5555 / email:jdoe@gmail.com Name: Jane Doe / Cell:555-555-5555 / Address: 123 Main St. Coffee shop Local park Library
Family and Friends I Can Call	Name: John Doe / Cell:555-123-4567 / Home:555-555-5555 / email:jdoe@gmail.com Name: Jane Doe / Cell:555-555-5555 / Address: 123 Main St.
Professionals I Can Call	Peer Specialist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email) Psychologist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email) Psychiatrist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email) Primary Care Provider (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email) Social Worker (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email) Specialist (Add Name/Phone/Address/Email)
Keeping Myself Safe – Store Guns Within Your Home	Use gun locks Use a gun safe Safe storage of ammunition Remove the firing pins from your guns, if possible Disassemble the gun completely, as if you were preparing to clean it
Keeping Myself Safe – Store Guns Outside Your Home	Have a buddy hold onto your guns Put in an appropriate storage facility that allows the storing of firearms Have local police hold onto your guns Safe disposal
Keeping Myself Safe – Safely Store Medication	Store medication in a lock box Ask a family member or friend to hold onto my medication Ask my doctor or pharmacist to only give me small amounts of medication at a time Ask my pharmacist for individual, daily dose packages or blister packages Ask my doctor or pharmacist for naloxone Safely dispose of medication I no longer need

APPENDIX C

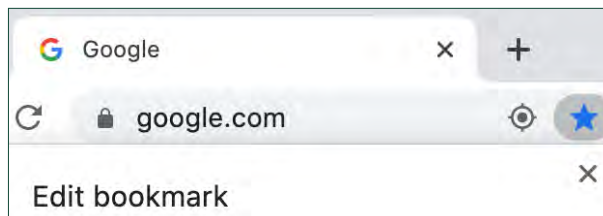
CREATING A MY RECOVERY PLAN SHORTCUT

You can access [My Recovery Plan](#) more quickly by creating a shortcut. You can do this by bookmarking the website or by creating an icon shortcut on your home screen.

BOOKMARKING/FAVORITES BAR

How to bookmark a website depends on which web browser you've chosen, as well as what type of device you are using.

The most common method for desktop and laptop computer browsers involves selecting a star in the web address field. This adds the website address to your list of favorites.



If you don't see a star in this field, try searching: how to bookmark a website with [browser name].

HOME SCREEN ICON

You can also create a shortcut to My Recovery Plan on your computer or mobile device. Doing so creates an icon on your desktop or home screen that you can tap to launch the My Recovery Plan website.

Desktop: Creating a shortcut icon on a desktop varies greatly, depending on browser type and operating system. [The instructions on this wikihow page](#) offer guidance for various scenarios.

Home Screen: Adding a My Recovery Plan icon on your smartphone or tablet home screen depends on device type: iOS or Android. [This My HealtheVet page](#) offers step-by-step instructions. For the first step in both sets of instructions, visit the My Recovery Plan website and then follow the remainder of the steps.

MY RECOVERY PLAN

WEB PROGRAM

www.VeteranTraining.va.gov/Recovery

September 2021

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention