



MEETING MINUTES
MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019 - 6:00 P.M.
125 EAST AVENUE, ROOM 218
NORWALK, CT 06851

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: the meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jeff DeWitt at 6:15 p.m.

2. PUBLIC FORUM:

a. Juliet Taylor, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 13 Chaplain, State Officer of the Day and Women's Advocate attended and addressed the Committee. She is an inspirational leader on veteran care especially as it relates to female veteran homelessness. We appreciate her presence and sharing her very personal story. If anyone would like to touch base with her, she can be reached at juliet.publichealth@gmail.com.

b. Repeat visitor from last month was Rick McFarland, Regional Director, Guardian Angels Medical Service Dogs. Would like to raise awareness of the organization. In his 3rd year raising funds. Would like to see a dog matched to a veteran in need in the Norwalk area. His cell phone is 203-803-0798 if anyone would like to speak to him about his program.

3. ROLL CALL:

a. Present (5): Jeff DeWitt, Chair; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Larry Cafero, Legal Services Chair; Bryan Rooney, Military Outreach and Deputy Chair; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large.

b. Absent or excused (7): Deanna D'Amore, Medical and Health Services Chair; Bob King, Labor and Business Relations Chair; Kras Carlucci, Housing Services Chair (*permanently withdrew from active participation*); Dan Caporale, Veteran At-large; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Don Overton, Veteran At-large; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff

4. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:

a. By-Laws approval has been tabled until January 2020 at Mayor Rilling's request. His goal is allowing the Committee to mature before pursuing formal and legal standing as a Commission in the City of Norwalk.

b. A directory / registration of Norwalk businesses offering military discounts to veterans and Active / Guard / Reserve is ready to go. Bryan Rooney has agreed to formulate a plan to roll out



the publicity of the tool so best to maximize publicity initially. Bob King in the business chair is also critical to the success and publicity of the list.

c. The Committee has yet to have a representative of the Norwalk Housing Authority attend a meeting. The Chairman feels this position would be better suited being an advisory-only position to the committee rather than a full-fledged member. For the purposes of recording and documenting what programs the city does offer, the following is a condensed version of a conversation between Kras Carlucci and Jeff DeWitt:

-- Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA) has 21 [VASH Vouchers](#) for homeless veterans. The veteran must be referred directly through the VA in New Haven. The total number being utilized as of May 13, 2019 are 15, making 6 available. Once vouchers are utilized there is not much turnaround.

-- NHA does not provide substance abuse or any other kind of counseling to veterans or any other resident group.

-- Regarding employment, if a VASH veteran is seeking employment they can sign up for the NHA Family Self Sufficiency Program and staff there will work with the individual to help them find employment once they are ready. The Family Self Sufficiency Program is only for NHA residents which would include VASH.

--- There is a need to identify other resources in the community that address employment seeking needs, specifically for veterans with unique skill sets.

-- Homes for Hope in Westport does not work directly with the Norwalk Housing Authority.

-- Currently, all HUD housing waitlists are closed and NHA is not accepting any applications for housing. Lists for all bedroom sizes were closed on May 1, 2019 because the wait time is over two years. The Section 8 waitlist has been closed since 2012 and there is no forecast for opening it any time in the near future as there is approximately 800 names on that list. There is no veteran preference on any of these lists, something the MVLC Chairman would like to see changed in the future.

-- Still have a need to create a document with specific contact information and resources available to military and veterans who reside in Norwalk should their living situation change dramatically and they need emergency assistance.

5. READING OF THE MINUTES:

a. Reading of the minutes of the previous month's minutes was not brought up on the floor this month.

6. REPORTS:

a. Brian Rooney – Military Outreach: (REPEAT) Project Evergreen’s “GreenCare and SnowCare for Troops” (<https://goo.gl/gK4RdY>) is a program for military rank E-6 and below to register when deploying to have some basic needs taken care of in their absence. Program volunteers take care of lawn, landscape, and snow removal services at their cost. Publicity will be needed to establish a database of volunteers in Norwalk and education of the active, Guard, and Reserve population in Norwalk. Bryan developed a trifold style brochure about the committee to publicize the committee’s efforts, goals, and services. The brochures can then be put around town, National Guard armories, handed out at events such as 5Ks, Memorial Day parade, etc.

b. Bob King – Business & Labor: needs support for his program at St. John’s Cemetery on 5/18, starting at 9:00 with setup, 9:30 refreshments, 10:00 flag placing.

-- Still a need to identify veteran owned businesses in Norwalk. A potential starting point that has worked in other cities is a Veteran Chamber of Commerce that would become a subgroup of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce. The feeling is that there is no better resource than people that have the same experiences – veterans helping veterans. The goal is to make the list public so residents know where they can support veteran owned businesses and to provide assistance the business owners, as needed.

-- Still have a need to gather contact information related to employment for veterans. The results can be posted on the MVLC web page for veterans who are out of work or who are looking to change careers. A good starting point is the CT Dep't of Labor:

<https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/veterans/>

-- Need to also explore federal retraining funds under the [Workforce Investment Act Title 1](#) program may be available for apprenticeship training, on-the-job training, and special job training programs funded by the government. Don Overton might be a good resource on this also.

-- Created for HR professionals, this new education program from the SHRM Foundation will focus on best practices to attract, hire, and retain veterans. Participants will earn a Certificate after completing a multi-faceted program:

<https://www.shrm.org/foundation/ourwork/initiatives/engaging-and-integrating-military-veterans/pages/veteransatworkcertificateprogram.aspx> Again, through the Chamber of Commerce and through print and digital media.

c. Fred Wilms – Financial Services: created a one-pager related to funds that may be available for business startups or expansions. See Addendum 1 for more information.

d. Deanna D’Amore – Health Chair: spoke about upcoming positions opening on the City of Norwalk staff for Human Services and Social Services. When those positions get filled, an invitation to an MVLC meeting will be sent so they can understand what the MVLC needs are

and what we can offer. Survey being conducted by Data Haven. A question being asked is whether the respondents are veterans or not. The survey results would help the city understand services need. The results will be broken out by type of city (median income, etc.). Spoke about a directory of phone numbers we can link on our web page from Southwestern Mental Health Board. In addition:

- The committee chair met the Suicide Prevention Coordinator for the Connecticut VA Healthcare System. Her name is Christina Allen. She is completely dedicated to the mission and offered to help in any way she can. Her number is 203-932-5711 x2550, cell is 203-506-4081, and e-mail is christina.allen2@va.gov.

- A great deliverable to the city is to roll out some prevention education through print and digital media and any other channels. See Addendum 2 for reports that can support the program.

- Good information here:

- https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/data.asp

- https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Office-of-Mental-Health-and-Suicide-Prevention-National-Strategy-for-Preventing-Veterans-Suicide.pdf

- <https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/61VAR0618%20White%20Paper%20on%20Veteran%20Suicide.pdf>

- Connecticut is well below the national average for veteran suicides. Good news, but one death by suicide is one too many.

- Another deliverable that should be easy to roll out is to contact the medical community and educate them on the process for doctors to begin to accept Tricare as a form of insurance.

- Good information here: <https://www.humanamilitary.com/provider/resources/become-a-tricare-provider>. Phone number is 800-444-5445. With that information, create a method of contact with the medical community to educate them.

- e. Larry Cafero – Legal Chair: Sent a Freedom of Information Act request to Connecticut VA to identify the Norwalk residents in their system. This is an effort to begin to identify who we are serving. Results due any day. Continue on the solid path you're on pursuing the state and VA to release lists of military and veterans that live in Norwalk.

- Received a list of veterans who are certified veteran attorneys. There is one attorney on the list – City of Norwalk Corporation Counsel Christie Jean.

- Larry will begin to gather names of attorneys in town who would be willing to help military and veterans with simple legal assistance such as creating an LLC, contracts for business, and anything else that would fall under acceptable legal advice at a discounted rate.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Survey: (repeat; still tabled until the next meeting). Direction seems to be towards keeping it very simple and use follow on surveys. Larry Cafero recommends disclaimers regarding “list will not be sold, etc.”

Recommendations:

- Don't include month in the birth day field.
- Do you avail yourself of VA healthcare Y/N.
- Primary care doctor in Norwalk Y/N.
- Include Tricare For Life to list of insurance providers
- How is the information going to be used?
- Where are veterans utilizing services?
- Add Optional comment section for each category.
- “This survey seeks to identify the military and veteran population in Norwalk”
- Distribution method: if web based, anyone can fill out the information and we only need to capture Norwalk-based military and veterans
 - No local census capability available.
 - Using a mailing service would be costly but it will capture the largest audience, to include those that don't use a computer.
 - Can a survey be included in the tax bill, or some other mass mailing already in place by the city?

From previous meetings

An initial deliverable was to generate a survey to capture demographic and needs data for all military and veterans in Norwalk. Jeff DeWitt sent a draft version of the survey to the City of Norwalk legal team and asked for their input on the legality of a survey as it relates to Privacy Act, Freedom of Information Act, etc. Attorney Christie Jean responded with information related to applicable law, Connecticut Personal Data Act, Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.

Leon Breault, veteran At-large, spoke with someone at Norwalk Community College regarding the survey. It was recommended that the survey be less in depth. Category of discharge shouldn't include negative options.

Don Overton, recommends that we have a unique opportunity to get out ahead of the state to capture more useful data. Assessing veteran owned businesses is an option to include in the survey. The results of the survey could be used by the state to incentivize the opportunity for veterans to move to Connecticut and more specifically, Norwalk. Any positive data gleaned from the survey can be used in that regard. For every dollar saved in programs like property tax exemptions, two dollars goes back into the local economy through sales tax, etc. There are ways the survey can identify opportunities to present to the Common Council that will create opportunities in Norwalk for veterans. Avoid PII altogether but gather general trends.

Bryan Rooney discussed our need to decide what the purpose of the survey is. If it's simply statistical analysis, then we need the largest pool of questions possible. Maybe that method would be a good first-step. The next survey could then relate to veterans and military awareness of programs and benefits in Norwalk such as the City of Norwalk property tax exemption,

banking advantages, retail discounts, etc. Another option would be to survey veteran's awareness of services normally available on a military base. Even beyond statistics, the survey could help create a sense of community behind what the committee is chartered to do.

Mayor Rilling originally requested the survey to understand the veteran community. Awareness of services is important but demographic information is important too. Irene Dixon will get clarification from the mayor about his goals for the survey.

Fred Wilms recommended getting to voter registration data and cross reference names from survey from voter registration data.

Don Overton will reach out to Connecticut Veterans Affairs for data. In order to engage with external agencies such as Connecticut VA effectively, the committee needs legal standing. Jeff DeWitt will contact the Arts Commission for their lessons learned and any source documents that can be mirrored to expedite our efforts.

The Tax Collector's Office reports 1,437 households receiving some sort of veteran tax exemption. Well below the 3,000 estimate of military or veteran residents.

b. **(ON HOLD)** By Laws / Charter (repeat; tabled indefinitely):

(1) Deanna D'Amore asked that the language be changed for her position from "medical professional" to more align with her position as a health *administrator* for the city.

(2) Ensure the charter clearly states the purpose of the At-large veterans on the committee. The goal for them is to provide the focus area chairs first person testimonial of the experiences of being a veteran and/or serving in the military. Much more important is the kind of expertise Don Overton brings to meetings through his relationship with the legislative process and the Veterans Administration to educate us all on developments.

(3) Bryan Rooney will make the adjustments to the charter / by-laws and present it at the next meeting in March.

(4) The process after MVLC approves it, Brian Candela, attorney for the Ordinance Committee, will review it for their approval.

c. Priorities (repeat)

(1) Convert present charter into by-laws. When completed, present to Ordinance Committee for approval (meets every 3rd Tuesday), then Town Council approval (meets every 4th Wednesday). **(CLOSED UNTIL JANUARY 2020)**

(A) Irene Dixon learned about formalizing a committee legally. Three concerns: 1) Connecticut General Statute, Title 7 (Municipalities), [Chapter 99](#), Section 7-190 says there must be a "bare majority" by political party on every commission; right now we are 7 one major party, 3 unaffiliated, 2 other major party, 1 registered out of state, and 1 unknown; it's important to know the answer for our future; need the definition of what "bare majority" means; 2) can someone who is registered to vote out of state, serve on a municipal commission; and 3) can someone who resides outside of the municipality serve on the commission, specifically city employees who live elsewhere. Attorney Jean from the Counsel's office has been asked to look

into all three concerns. **(OPEN)** UPDATE: Attorney Jean has replied. Response will be shared at the May meeting.

(2) Future meetings should include defining direction such as event partnerships, schools and churches, and similar venues to advertise through them that the committee exists and invite people to committee meetings. **(OPEN)**

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. None

9. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. (repeat) Don Overton – the Connecticut Radio Information System, Inc. (CRIS) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) radio-reading service that has been serving people who are blind or print-challenged for nearly four decades. They operate with a small staff and a large number of dedicated volunteers who provide voice talent. CRIS Radio broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week featuring articles published in more than 70 newspapers and magazines, including award-winning children's magazines available online and on-demand. There is market to provide veteran specific programming in the future. Don will work this.

b. (repeat) Matt Seebeck: would like an introduction to the Housing Chair, Kras Carlucci. He has met two military/veterans who have housing issues. He would like to get educated on the processes in place in the city to help people. Introduction made via e-mail on 3/15/19.

c. (repeat) Irene Dixon – recommended utilizing the local government channel 79 on Optimum to get the word out. Larry Cafero recommended a still frame information screen related to the committee as needed.

d. (repeat) Howard Dixon – in the future, find what services the bases in the area can provide to retirees.

e. Don Overton spoke about the VA Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 and the effort by the VA to modernize and streamline the claims process to include the appeals process.

Military and veteran related events around Norwalk

MAY 2019

18: Armed Forces Day

18: King Industries flag placing event; St. John's Cemetery, 223 Richards Ave, 9:30 a.m., see addendum 1 to these minutes

19: Norwalk Veteran Memorial Committee Cemetery Visitation event, meet at City Hall at 10:00 a.m. for a short service, lower the flag to half-staff, playing of Taps; two 2 groups will depart on a schedule for a similar ceremony at cemeteries and other locations; see addendum 2 to these minutes for the schedule

- 19: Shea - Magrath Ceremony; Calf Pasture Beach, 12:00 p.m., guest speaker is State Senator Carlo Leone, USAF veteran
- 21: Membership meeting for American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12, 7:00, 60 County
- 23: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting (7:00)
- 27: Memorial Day; veterans who want or need a ride in cars, arrive at the American Legion, 60 County, by 8:00 a.m., depart at 8:30 a.m.

JUNE 2019

- 1: Weekend at American Legion Post 12 (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.); outdoor event, family friendly, open house, food trucks, and more
- 2: Veteran of the Month / Flag Raising Ceremony, 11:00 a.m.; Honoring Lt Frank C. Godfrey, namesake of American Legion Post 12
- 2: American Legion Post 12 Centennial Dinner; 6:00-7:00 cocktails, 7:00-9:00 dinner, guest speaker Frazier Brinley, Past National Historian for the American Legion; \$30 at the Post, \$32 through Eventbrite.com at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/american-legion-post-12-centennial-dinner-tickets-59291683020>
- 3: Bingo by the Auxiliary (doors at 5:00, games at 7:00)
- 4: Norwalk Veteran's Memorial Committee Meeting (7:00)
- 10: Bingo by the Auxiliary (doors at 5:00, games at 7:00)
- 10: Norwalk Military and Veterans Liaison Committee (NVMC) monthly meeting (6:00 p.m. @ City Hall)
- 13: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting (7:00)
- 17: Bingo by the Auxiliary (doors at 5:00, games at 7:00)
- 18: Membership meeting for American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12 (7:00)
- 20: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting (7:00)
- 24: Bingo by the Auxiliary (doors at 5:00, games at 7:00)

10. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned by Jeff DeWitt at 7:27 p.m.

11. Next meeting is Monday, June 10, 2019, 6:00 p.m., room 231.

Addendum 1

Start-up Resources for Veteran owned small businesses

Veteran small-business owners are an important part of the U.S. economy. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, veterans own 7.2% of the nation's 5.5 million businesses with employees. For veterans just starting out, below are specific resources:

Start-up financing options:

1. Your own savings.
2. Family & friends.
3. Home equity line of credit (if you own a house).
4. Credit cards.
5. Small Business Association (SBA) Veterans Advantage 7(a) and Patriot Express loans. Apply through your local bank.
6. Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. This SBA program supports a small business that loses a key employee called to active duty.
7. Street Shares Foundation. An online lender that can finance government contract invoices (most banks do not do this). Call 800-560-1435.
8. Hivers and Strivers Angel Fund. Invests up to \$1.0 million in military academy graduate business start-ups. Contact: www.hiversandstrivers.com.
9. VA Small Business Grants & Vocational Rehab Track. See VE Portal below.
10. Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Program. The Federal Government goal is to award at least 3% of all federal contracting dollars to these businesses. This program is offered through the SBA Office of Veterans Business Development. Contact: 202-205-6773.

Resources & Counseling options:

1. UCONN Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities. Contact: mzacchea@bsuiness.uconn.edu.
2. Boots to Business. Offered by the SBA as part of the DOD Transition Assistance Program. Contact: www.Boots-to-Business@sba.gov.
3. Institute for Veterans and Military Families. Located at Syracuse University, the Institute offers education and training. It also includes Veteran Women Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE) Contact: www.IVMFeducation@syr.edu
4. Patriot Boot Camp. This non-profit, located in Boulder, Colorado, sponsors a three-day boot camp. Contact: www.patriotbootcamp.org.
5. Vets First Verification Program. This VA program teaches vets how to compete for VA set-aside contracts. This portal connects vets to federal, state and local programs. Contact: See VE portal below.
6. Veteran Entrepreneur (VE) Portal. Offered through the VA Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization. The VE portal can be accessed by googling the name.
7. Warrior Rising. A non-profit founded in 2015 by veterans dedicated to helping veterans succeed in business. Contact www.warriorrising.org.

Addendum 2

Connecticut

Veteran Suicide Data Sheet, 2016



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is leading efforts to understand suicide risk factors, develop evidence-based prevention programs, and prevent Veteran suicide through a public health approach. As part of its work, VA analyzes data at the national and state levels to guide the design and execution of the most effective strategies to prevent Veteran suicide.

The 2016 state data sheets present the latest findings from VA's ongoing analysis of suicide rates and include the most up-to-date state-level suicide information for the United States.* This data sheet includes information about Connecticut Veteran suicides by age, sex, and suicide method and compares this with regional and national data.

Northeastern Region

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

After accounting for age differences,^b the Veteran suicide rate in Connecticut:

- Was significantly lower than the national Veteran suicide rate
- Was not significantly different from the national suicide rate

Connecticut Veteran Suicide Deaths, 2016^c

Sex	Veteran Suicides
Total	36
Male	30-40
Female	<10

To protect confidentiality, suicide death counts are presented in ranges when the number of deaths in any one category was lower than 10.

Connecticut, Northeastern Region, and National Veteran Suicide Deaths by Age Group, 2016^c

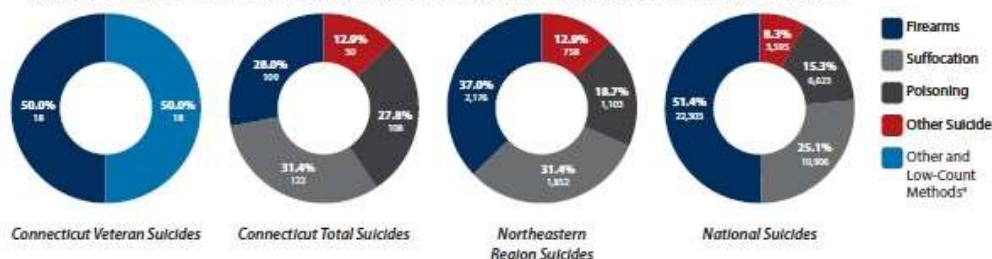
Age Group	Connecticut Veteran Suicides	Northeastern Region Veteran Suicides	National Veteran Suicides	Connecticut Veteran Suicide Rate	Northeastern Region Veteran Suicide Rate	National Veteran Suicide Rate
Total	36	690	6,079	18.8	23.9	30.1
18-34	<10	93	893	—	40.3	45.0
35-54	10	182	1,648	26.3*	30.1	33.1
55-74	16	260	2,259	19.8*	20.8	25.9
75+	<10	155	1,274	—	19.4	28.3

Connecticut Veteran and Total Connecticut, Northeastern Region, and National Suicide Deaths by Age Group, 2016^c

Age Group	Connecticut Veteran Suicides	Connecticut Total Suicides	Northeastern Region Total Suicides	National Total Suicides	Connecticut Veteran Suicide Rate	Connecticut Suicide Rate	Northeastern Region Suicide Rate	National Suicide Rate
Total	36	389	5,889	43,427	18.8	13.8	13.3	17.5
18-34	<10	83	1,466	11,997	—	10.6	11.3	16.1
35-54	10	136	2,157	15,467	26.3*	14.4	14.7	18.6
55-74	16	136	1,768	12,162	19.8*	16.4	13.8	17.3
75+	<10	34	498	3,801	—	13.4	12.7	18.5

* Rates calculated from suicide counts lower than 20 are considered unreliable.

Connecticut Veteran and Total Connecticut, Northeastern Region, and National Suicide Deaths by Method,⁴ 2016



These 2016 state data sheets are based on a collaborative effort among the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The statistics presented are derived from multiple data sources, including the VA Office of Enterprise Integration, the VA Serious Mental Illness Treatment Resource and Evaluation Center, VA Post-Deployment Health Services, the VA Center of Excellence for Suicide Prevention, and the DoD Defense Suicide Prevention Office. For additional information, please email VASPDataRequest@va.gov.

These sheets include information on the Veteran population and general U.S. population age 18 and older, with deaths reported in the contiguous United States, Alaska, and Hawaii. The total state, regional, and national counts and rates presented include both Veterans and non-Veterans.

Suicide deaths are identified based on the underlying cause of death indicated on the state death certificate. For Veteran decedents, this information comes from the NCHS National Death Index (NDI) and was obtained from the Joint VA/DoD Suicide Data Repository (SDR). Suicide death counts for the general U.S. population were obtained from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) WONDER (Wide-ranging ONline Data for Epidemiologic Research).¹ Underlying cause of death is defined as (a) the disease or injury that initiated the train of events leading directly to death, or (b) the circumstances of the accident or violence that produced the fatal injury.² The ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision) codes used to define suicide deaths are X60–X84 and Y87.0.

Suicide rates presented are unadjusted rates per 100,000, calculated as the number of suicide deaths in 2016 divided by the estimated population and multiplied by 100,000. Significance statements are based on the ratio of direct age-adjusted rates, using the 2000 standard U.S. population.³ The Veteran Population Projection Model 2016 (VetPop2016) was used in calculating rates to estimate the Veteran population for each state and age group.⁴ The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) one-year estimates were used to estimate the general U.S. population.⁵

Veteran age-specific counts may not sum to the total counts because there are a small number of deaths for which age information is unavailable. These deaths are included in overall counts and rates but are not distributed among age groups; therefore, they are not included in age-specific counts, age-specific rates, or age-adjusted rates. Rates are marked with an asterisk (*) when the rate is calculated from fewer than 20 deaths. Rates based on small numbers of deaths are considered statistically unreliable because a small change in the number of deaths might result in a large change in the rate. Because suicide rates based on fewer than 20 suicide deaths are considered statistically unreliable, any comparisons between age-adjusted rates and underlying age-specific rates based on fewer than 20 suicide deaths should be interpreted with caution.

To protect privacy and to prevent revealing information that may identify specific decedents, counts and rates are suppressed when based on 0–9 individuals. For suicide deaths by method, in cases where the number of deaths in any one of the categories was lower than 10, the categories with the smallest counts were combined until the minimum count of 10 was reached, to maintain confidentiality.

¹ The 2016 state data sheets contain suicide information for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

² Suicide rates presented in the tables are unadjusted for age. Age-adjusting suicide rates ensures that the differences in rates are not due to differences in the age distributions of the populations being compared. In some cases, the results of comparisons of age-adjusted rates differ from those of unadjusted rates. Comparison of rates is based on the ratio of age-adjusted rates; significance is determined based on a p-value <0.05.

³ Rates presented are unadjusted rates per 100,000. To protect privacy, and prevent revealing information that may identify specific individuals, counts and rates are suppressed when based on 0–9 people. Rates calculated with a numerator of less than 20 are considered statistically unreliable, as indicated by an asterisk (*).

⁴ Methods are based on ICD-10 codes X72 to X74 for firearms, X80 to X89 for poisoning (including intentional overdose), and X90 for suffocation (including strangulation). "Other Suicide" includes all other intentional self-harm including cutting/piercing, drowning, falling, fire/flame, other land transport, being struck by/against, and other specified or unspecified injury.

⁵ "Other Suicide" refers to all methods of suicide death apart from firearms, suffocation, and poisoning. "Low-Count Methods" refers to methods used in fewer than 10 deaths in a given state or territory. In states or territories with fewer than 10 firearm deaths, suffocation deaths, or poisoning deaths, these data are represented in the "Other and Low-Count Methods" category to protect the privacy of individual suicide decedents.

⁶ National, regional, and state general population suicide counts are obtained from the CDC WONDER online database. For more information on CDC WONDER, please refer to <http://wonder.cdc.gov/icd-10.html>.

⁷ World Health Organization, Manual of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries, and Causes of Death, based on the recommendations of the Ninth Revision Conference, 1975, Geneva, 1977.

⁸ Klein, R.L., and Schoenborn, C.A. Age adjustment using the 2000 projected U.S. population. Healthy People Statistical Notes, No. 30. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics, January 2001.

⁹ Veterans Population Model 2016 (VetPop2016). Predictive Analytics and Actuary, Office of Enterprise Integration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

¹⁰ U.S. general population estimates used for rate calculations are obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey one-year estimates.

Download the full set of 2016 state data sheets:

www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/suicide-prevention-data.asp

