

A Family Guide to Veteran-Directed Care

What the program is, how it works, and what it can look like for your household.



WHAT IS VETERAN-DIRECTED CARE?

Veteran-Directed Care (VDC) is a Department of Veterans Affairs program that gives Veterans a flexible budget for the services they need, along with the freedom to decide how that budget is used. Veterans can choose who they hire, set their own schedules, and determine the services and priorities that are most important to them.

VDC is available to Veterans of all ages who need help with daily activities and may otherwise be at risk of leaving their homes. By giving Veterans greater choice and control over their care, VDC helps them remain at home and live as independently, healthfully, and happily as possible.

HOW IT WORKS

- It starts at the VA. If you are interested in these services, talk to your doctor or social worker at your VA facility.
- Once you're approved for VDC you'll be given a monthly budget based on your assessed needs. You'll have a meeting with a caseworker at the agency that works with the VA to administer the program.
- You (or your Authorized Representative) become the employer of your own caregivers, also called Direct Care Workers.
- *Veterans Choose* is your Financial Management Service (FMS) - we handle payroll, tax withholding, and the paperwork behind the scenes, so you can focus on your care instead of the administration.
- You review and approve your workers' hours for each pay period and track your monthly budget as you go.

WHAT THIS CAN LOOK LIKE FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD

VDC puts you in the driver's seat when it comes to arranging your care. Depending on your needs and your approved plan, you may be able to:

- Choose who provides your care – You may be able to hire someone you already know and trust, including a friend, neighbor, or eligible family member. See our [Hiring Your Direct Care Workers Guide](#) for more information.
- Build care around your life – Work with your caregiver to create a schedule that fits your routines, priorities, and needs rather than working around an agency's schedule.

- Have more control over how your care is provided – You decide what matters most to you and direct your workers within the services and budget outlined in your approved plan.
- Keep care close to home – VDC can help you receive the support you need while remaining in your home and connected to the people and routines that are important to you.
- Spend less time managing the paperwork – As your Financial Management Service (FMS), Veterans Choose handles payroll, tax withholdings, and other administrative responsibilities behind the scenes, while you remain in control of your care.

GETTING STARTED

If VDC sounds like a good fit for your household, the next step is to talk with your VA doctor or social worker. Our Enrollment Checklist walks through exactly what to get ready.

This guide is one of several “Helpful Documents Before You Enroll.” Explore the others to see what enrolling, hiring, and what getting paid actually looks like.