



**HEROES**  
WITH HEARING LOSS

## A Guide For Veterans With Hearing Loss

### Services And Resources Available To Veterans

Hearing loss and tinnitus are the top service-connected disabilities among veterans in the United States.<sup>1</sup> The unique challenges veterans face in addressing hearing-related issues necessitate specialized support and resources. This guide explores some services and resources available to assist veterans in managing and coping with hearing loss, along with steps to access these resources online.

### Understanding Veterans' Hearing Loss

The military environment is a hotbed of loud noises. Whether they've spent one year or an entire career in uniform, veterans are frequently exposed to

high-decibel noises. Whether it's acoustic trauma during combat or training exercises (particularly those involving gunfire), or long-term exposure from operating machinery or working on a flightline, veterans often incur hearing loss as a result of their time in service. Hearing loss can also be the result of a traumatic brain injury that injures the inner ear or affects the part of the brain that processes auditory information. Tinnitus, characterized by ringing or buzzing in the ears, is also a very common condition among service members – often related to the same kinds of noise from concussive blast exposure. Understanding the distinct nature of these issues within a military environment is crucial in tailoring support and assistance for veterans. Here are some valuable resources for veterans – and those who support and care for veterans – to help better understand, navigate and find treatment for hearing-related issues.

## Audiology Services For Veterans

### VA Audiology Clinics:

- The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) operates audiology clinics across the country, providing comprehensive hearing evaluations, hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive listening devices, (Personal Listening Devices (PLD) such as FM loops or personal amplifiers, alerting devices, television listening devices, etc.), tinnitus-masking solutions, and even captioned telephones.
- Veterans can locate VA audiology clinics near them by visiting the VA's official website at: [va.gov](http://va.gov), navigating to the "health care" section, and using the facility locator tool.
- In some cases, veterans who do not live near a VA facility may qualify for care outside the VA from a provider within the community care network. Check for eligibility by visiting the VA community care page ([va.gov/resources/eligibility-for-community-care-outside-va/](http://va.gov/resources/eligibility-for-community-care-outside-va/)).

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### Education And Rehabilitation Programs:

#### Veterans Affairs (VA)

- The VA offers rehabilitation programs focused on addressing hearing loss-related challenges. These programs encompass auditory training, communication strategies and speech-reading techniques. Veterans can find information about these programs and their availability at local VA medical centers through the VA's online resources at [va.gov/health-care](http://va.gov/health-care), or by contacting the nearest VA healthcare facility.

#### American Tinnitus Association (ATA)

- The ATA focuses on relief, prevention and finding cures for tinnitus. Since 1971, the 501(c)3 non-profit organization has been a global leader in the effort to find a cure for tinnitus. ATA brings together patients, researchers, healthcare professionals, industry partners and lawmakers to advance public understanding of tinnitus and fund vital tinnitus research. Find out more at [ata.org](http://ata.org).

#### Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA)

- Late-deafened adults are people who, after having acquired spoken language, have lost the ability to hear and/or understand speech with or without hearing aids. ALDA is a self-help group created to support adults who have lost their hearing. Find out more at [alda.org](http://alda.org).

#### Hearing Center of Excellence

- The Hearing Center of Excellence fosters and promotes the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, rehabilitation and research of hearing loss and auditory injury. It supports the development, exchange and adoption of best practices, measures of effectiveness and clinical care guidelines to reduce the prevalence and cost of hearing loss and tinnitus among veterans. Learn more at [Hearing.Health.mil](http://Hearing.Health.mil).



### Heroes With Hearing Loss®

- The mission of the Heroes With Hearing Loss program is to raise awareness and begin conversations about shared – as well as unique – hearing loss experiences among veterans, their family, friends, and professionals with whom they work. For veterans who struggle to hear over the phone, the program offers real-life solutions including Captioned Telephone, provided through program sponsor Hamilton® CapTel®. With Captioned Telephone, veterans with hearing loss can stay connected over the phone by listening while reading captions of what's said. Learn more at [HeroesWithHearingLoss.org](https://HeroesWithHearingLoss.org).

### Counseling Services:

- Mental health support is critical for veterans with hearing loss and associated conditions. The VA provides counseling services and support groups specifically addressing the psychological impact of hearing loss. Veterans can access information about counseling services on the VA's mental health webpage ([MentalHealth.Va.gov](https://MentalHealth.Va.gov)) or by contacting their local VA medical center.

- The confidential **Veterans Crisis Line** is available to all veterans, their families and friends in times of crisis. If you are a veteran, service member, or any person concerned about someone in crisis, you can connect with professional, caring VA responders over the phone/TTY: dial 988 then press 1, text: 838255, online chat: [VeteransCrisisLine.net/get-help-now/chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/get-help-now/chat).

### Non-profit Organizations:

Several non-profit organizations have programs dedicated to supporting veterans with hearing loss. Examples include:

#### Hearing Health Foundation (HHF)

- The HHF's mission is to promote hearing health as well as prevent and cure hearing loss and tinnitus. The HHF is the largest non-profit funder of hearing and balance research in the U.S. and is a leader in driving innovative treatments for people with hearing loss, tinnitus and other hearing challenges. Explore some first-person accounts from veterans who have faced challenges with tinnitus and hearing loss at [HearingHealthFoundation.org/veteran-stories](https://HearingHealthFoundation.org/veteran-stories).

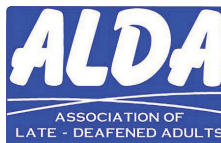
## Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Veterans Across America Virtual Chapter

- HLAA's veterans community mission is to provide education, be an advocate for veterans with hearing loss and provide a support system to help veterans return to and adjust to civilian life. Learn more at [HearingLoss.org/hearing-help/communities/veterans](https://HearingLoss.org/hearing-help/communities/veterans).

Hearing loss and tinnitus significantly impact the lives of millions of veterans. However, a range of specialized services and resources exist to address a veteran's unique needs. By leveraging VA audiology clinics, rehabilitation programs, counseling services and non-profit organizations, veterans can access comprehensive support to manage and cope with hearing-related challenges. Online platforms provided by the VA, non-profit organizations, community entities and social networks play a crucial role in ensuring easy access to these valuable resources tailored to support veterans in managing the challenges of hearing loss and tinnitus.



For more information about Captioned Telephone resources for veterans, visit [HeroesWithHearingLoss.org/resources](https://HeroesWithHearingLoss.org/resources)



<sup>1</sup> "VA Research on Hearing Loss," U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs. [research.va.gov/topics/hearing.cfm](https://research.va.gov/topics/hearing.cfm)

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