

# Patient Check-in Modernization

## Veteran Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is deploying a modernized, convenient, and accessible patient check-in for appointments nationwide. The convenient option will enable patients to check in on the day of an appointment from their smartphone. Veterans will, of course, always have the option to check in with a staff member.

### 1. What do you need to use this convenient patient check-in option?

You'll need a smartphone connected to the cellular network provided by your carrier—or you must be connected to a Wi-Fi network, if one is available. You will also need to have your cell phone number on file with VA. If you want to check if VA has your current cell phone information, visit [www.va.gov/change-address/](https://www.va.gov/change-address/).

### 2. How does the new patient check-in application work?

VA will offer two new services for Veterans: pre-check-in and mobile check-in.

- Pre-check-in allows you to verify demographic information (e.g., contact, emergency contact, and next-of-kin) after confirming an appointment. To use pre-check-in, you cannot have opted out of text message (SMS) appointment reminders.
- Mobile check-in allows you to check in on the day of your appointment with a smartphone.

### 3. How to opt into text message (SMS) appointment reminders if I previously opted out?

You can restart text message appointment reminders at any time, by texting "START" to 53079 or by replying with "START" to any previous text message from VA.

### 4. How will I know if my facility uses pre-check-in?

If your facility offers pre-check-in for any of your clinics, you will receive a text message asking you to confirm your appointment. This text may be sent up to one week before your appointment. After confirming the appointment, you will receive another text message with a link to start the pre-check-in process.

### 5. How will I know if my facility is using mobile check-in?

If a facility offers mobile check-in, a poster with a QR code and instructions will be posted in the clinic check-in area.

### 6. Am I required to use mobile check-in if it is available?

No. You can check in for your appointments using the method that works best for you. You will always have the option to check in with a staff member.

### 7. Can I update my demographic information with the patient check-in application?

The patient check-in application does not allow you to update demographic and insurance information at this time. You will need to check in with a staff member to make any changes. Sign into VA.gov to update your contact information in your VA profile at <https://www.va.gov/change-address>.

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### 8. How soon before an appointment can I use mobile check-in?

Using your smartphone, you can check in up to 30 minutes before and 15 minutes after your appointment's scheduled start time. If you need to check in prior to or after that window, you will need to check in with a staff member.

### 9. Do I need a smartphone to use mobile check-in?

Mobile check-in requires the use of a smartphone. If mobile check-in is not available, or you do not have a smartphone, VA staff are honored to check you in for your appointment.

### 10. How will VA know it's me using the modernized patient check-in application?

VA will verify your identity in two ways: (1) VA will match your phone number with the one on file, and (2) VA will request your last name and last 4 digits of your social security number or your date of birth.

### 11. Can I check in once for multiple appointments?

No. If you are using mobile check-in, you will need to check in for individual appointments separately. Checking in for each appointment will alert staff of that particular clinic of your arrival.

### 12. What are the benefits of using the modernized patient check-in or pre-check-in options?

- Flexibility: You can use pre-check-in up to 7 days before an appointment.
- Convenience: You can easily verify current demographic information.
- Faster day-of check-in: You can avoid lines on the day of an appointment.
- Choice: Patient check-in using a smartphone is always optional, or Veterans have the option to check in with a staff member.
- Accessibility: Improved access for those who rely on assistive technologies to use their VA benefits online.

### 13. Can I use mobile check-in if I cannot connect to Wi-Fi?

If you cannot connect to a Wi-Fi network or a Wi-Fi network is not available, your smartphone may access mobile check-in via your cellular network carrier. Please note that data charges from your cellular network carrier may apply.

### 14. Can I use cellular data to complete mobile check-in if Wi-Fi is not working?

Yes. If you cannot connect to a Wi-Fi network, your smartphone should automatically connect to the cellular network provided by your carrier. You can then use the cellular network to complete mobile check-in. If your smartphone does not automatically connect to a cellular network, you may need to enable cellular data usage on your device. Please note that data charges from your cellular network carrier may apply.

### 15. How can I improve my smartphone signal strength?

Move towards a window or go outside of the clinic (e.g., hallway).