



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Sonya L. Smith
DVS Secretary

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Contact: Ray Seva
Public Information Officer
ray.seva@state.nm.us
(505) 362-6089 *mobile phone*

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New Phone Number for the DVS Rural Veterans Transportation Program

SANTA FE--The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) has created a new phone number for making reservations with the Rural Veterans Transportation Program.

The program, launched in February, provides free round-trip rides for veterans living in the following nine counties--Cibola, Socorro, Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Quay, San Miguel, and Union—to the following VA medical facilities:

- Albuquerque Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center
- Amarillo (TX) Thomas E. Creek VA Medical Center
- Raton Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)
- Las Vegas (NM) CBOC
- Clovis CBOC
- Santa Fe Vet Center
- Albuquerque Vet Center

Veterans must make a reservation at least three days in advance of a medical appointment by calling the new DVS reservations phone number: (505) 429-5906 Monday through Friday from 9am-5pm.

Reservations can also be made for confirmed appointments with VA-approved medical providers—including for confirmed COVID-19 vaccine appointments. Neither the New Mexico Department of Health nor the New Mexico VA Health Care System are giving COVID-19 vaccines to anyone who is not pre-registered with a confirmed appointment.

Upon pickup at their home, veterans will be required to show proof of veteran status to the driver—who, per COVID-19 safety protocol, will be wearing a mask. Until further notice, veterans will also be required to wear a face mask for the duration of the trip.

“DVS really wants veterans in these nine counties to take advantage of this free transportation program,” said DVS Secretary Sonya L. Smith. “Please give us a call if you need a ride to your appointments. We don’t want veterans to neglect their health care. We will get you there, and bring you back safely. ”

The DVS Rural Veterans Transportation Program

The program is made possible through a grant awarded to DVS by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Highly Rural Transportation Grants Program. This grant is awarded to qualified organizations that can demonstrate the need and ability to provide transportation for veterans in “highly rural areas” who have trouble getting VA health care due to the lack of available transportation options.

VA defines a highly rural area as a county with less than seven people per square mile, and provided DVS with a list of qualifying counties in New Mexico. DVS will re-apply for the VA annual grant to expand the Rural Veterans Transportation Program beyond the current nine-county service area.

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