

Veteran Travel Transport to out-of-county VA Medical Appointments

Reviewed, approved for posting: 09 April 2026 ACVAC meeting

Bylaw Reference: (No present reference. Will add to subsequent Version 4.0 update).

Supporting Department of Veterans Affairs Directive: VHA DIRECTIVE 1601B.05 Beneficiary Travel Appendix A

Purpose: Establish shared travel transport policy and procedures as well as stated expectations and conditions of the veteran, Veteran Service Officer (VSO), and Transit Authority organizations. This procedure is not applicable for emergency or urgent care situations.

Primary Executer: VSO and Arenac County Public Transit Authority.

Veteran Benefit: Provide a transport option for veterans (and plus one) to out-of-county VA facility or VA approved Community Care appointment.

Procedure:

- Arenac County veterans request to use Arenac Public Transit Authority (APTA) for out-of-county medical transportation anywhere within the state of Michigan. Must have written approval from Arenac County's VSO, Ron Alley. Written approval shall be provided via email, for each requested transit.
- As proof of eligibility, the veteran shall provide a copy of their DD214, Michigan Driver's License with Veteran notation or VA medical card. If the veteran requires a family member or friend to accompany the appointment or procedure, that person needs to provide a copy of their driver's license or passport. Upon receipt, the Private Information of the veteran and plus one is maintained and secured by the VSO and Transit organization under VA and County Personally Identifiable Information (PII) standards.
- Transportation may be provided based on a determined of need and not for convenience's sake (e.g., too far, too cold, poor road conditions). Travel via the County Transit Authority is based on veteran's needs to include accompaniment requirements, and the exhaustion of family and friends to provide that transportation. Veteran needs are established in discussion between the requesting veteran and the VSO.
- Arenac Public Transit Authority requires seven-day advanced notice (via telecon and follow-up email) of veteran out-of-county medical appointments from Arenac County's VSO.
- If a requesting Arenac County veteran requires assistance to travel to a medical appointment in Ann Arbor (for example), they would first contact VSO, Ron Alley (989 846-9080, va@arenacountymi.gov). If Ron approves the trip, he will email APTA with the confirmation. APTA will then contact the veteran to finish coordinating appointment pick up and drop off times to and from the appointment.

- Departure pickup and return are typically from the veteran's home. Arenac Public Transit Authority driver will wait at the treatment facility for the veteran (and plus one) for return at conclusion of the appointment.
- If transport is provided by the Arenac County Public Transportation Authority, the **veteran shall not submit a separate electronic or paper VA travel reimbursement voucher** for said travel. The VSO communicates via printed copy or email, this stipulation to the veteran at the time of the county transit request.
- VSO will report monthly on veterans using this service and funds expended with respect to planned budget.

Veteran Use Threshold - There are budgetary cost considerations that must be considered for travel requests. These requests have an accumulative effect as the veteran may have recurring medical appointment and therefore travel cost that can be expended by the veteran's request for travel to medical appointments, short or long term. When calculated by the VSO using the Transit Authority invoiced cost, \$2,500.00 is established as the financial cumulative value that will trigger a notification from the VSO to the Chair of the ACVAC for action. Action can be as simple as understanding the veteran's continuing need for medical appointment travel to exploring additional options to meet the veteran's needs.

Identification of out-of-county of Department of Veterans Affairs facilities – *(The following list of VA facilities is provided for context only. It should not be read as VA medical facilities having in the past or routinely served the Arenac County Veteran population.)* Michigan Veteran Administration Medical Centers include Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Detroit, Iron Mountain, and Saginaw. VA Medical Clinics in Michigan include Alpena, Ann Arbor, Bad Axe, Benton Harbor, Cadillac, Clare, Detroit, Grayling, Indian River, Jackson, Monroe, Oscoda, Saginaw, and Traverse City. Medical professionals that are certified VA Community Care providers are too numerous to list here. The Arenac County Veterans Affairs transportation to Community Care providers will be adjudicated with VSO and Transit dispatch discussions on a case-by-case basis.

Use of VA and DAV Transportation Resources - Arenac Public Transit Authority driver may take the veteran to the Saginaw VA Medical Center for appointments beyond Saginaw, e.g., Ann Arbor, Detroit. Saginaw VA or Saginaw DAV resources can transport the veteran to their scheduled appointment beyond Saginaw. The VSO will provide the veteran with Saginaw VA Transportation Coordination contact information for the veteran to coordinate transportation needs beyond the Saginaw VA Medical Center.

Use of VA Lodging Accommodations – If the VA Medical Center scheduled appointment is too early in the morning or too late in the evening and is outside of Arenac Transit Authority time of operations, the veteran can request local overnight lodging. Lodging request will be made by the VA Clinic or Department providing veteran service. The VA Medical Center Lodging Department will notify veterans of accommodation. *Arenac County is under the minimum 61 mile distance for Saginaw VA Medical Center local lodging.*

