



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 30, 2011

## **VA Extends Post-Incarceration Health Care *Measure Would Help Reduce Repeat Offenses***

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will extend health care to eligible Veterans in halfway houses and other temporary, post-incarceration housing under a new program aimed at cutting back on repeat offenses.

“There’s hard evidence that lack of access to health care, including mental health care, for newly released inmates is a factor in people becoming homeless or returning to prison and jail,” said Jim McGuire, director of VA’s Veterans Justice Outreach Programs. “These are Veterans who otherwise qualify for VA health care.”

A long-standing rule has barred VA from providing health care to Veterans for whom another federal, state or local government has an obligation to provide health care. Frequently, that means inmates of prisons and jails.

Under the changed rule, that prohibition would be amended and VA would be allowed to provide health care to Veterans in halfway houses and other temporary, post-incarceration housing.

An Urban Institute study in 2008 found that good health care in the first months of community reentry played a key role in easing readjustment and reducing recidivism.

About 29,000-56,000 Veterans are released annually from state and federal prisons, and at least 90,000 Veterans are released each year from city and county jails, according to Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Statistics.

# # #