



# Guidebook for Transgender Military Veterans

## Introduction

Welcome to the Guidebook for Transgender Military Veterans. This resource is designed to provide comprehensive information, guidance, and support for transgender individuals who have served in the military. Whether you are navigating healthcare systems, seeking legal resources, or building community connections, this guide aims to empower you with the tools and knowledge you need.

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# Chapter 1: Understanding Your Rights

## 1.1 Veterans' Rights and Protections

- **Non-Discrimination Protections:** Federal laws prohibit discrimination based on gender identity within VA healthcare and other veteran services.
- **Military Service Records:** You have the right to update your name and gender marker on military discharge documents (DD214).

## 1.2 Legal Resources

- Contact organizations like Lambda Legal or the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) for assistance.
  - Familiarize yourself with the Equality Act and its implications for LGBTQ+ veterans.
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# Chapter 2: Accessing Healthcare

## 2.1 VA Healthcare Services

- **Gender-Affirming Care:** VA facilities provide hormone replacement therapy (HRT), mental health counseling, and some surgical procedures.
- **Enrollment:** Ensure you are enrolled in the VA healthcare system to access these services. Visit [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) for enrollment instructions.

## 2.2 Non-VA Healthcare Options

- Explore private insurance plans or community health clinics that specialize in transgender healthcare.
  - Research LGBTQ+ friendly providers in your area using directories like the Healthcare Equality Index.
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## Chapter 3: Updating Documentation

### 3.1 Military Records

- **Correcting Your DD214:** Submit DD Form 149 to the Board for Correction of Military Records.
- **Name and Gender Marker Updates:** Include a court order and/or medical certification as required.

### 3.2 Civilian Documents

- Update your name and gender on state IDs, driver's licenses, and passports to match your gender identity. Check your state's requirements.
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# Chapter 4: Building Community

## 4.1 LGBTQ+ and Veteran Organizations

- **American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER):** Offers support and advocacy for LGBTQ+ veterans.
- **Transgender American Veterans Association (TAVA):** Provides resources and community for transgender veterans.

## 4.2 Online Communities

- Join forums and social media groups to connect with other transgender veterans for advice and camaraderie.

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# Chapter 5: Employment and Education

## 5.1 Employment Resources

- Utilize VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) services for career counseling and job placement.
- Seek LGBTQ+-inclusive employers through platforms like Out & Equal.

## 5.2 Education Benefits

- Apply for the GI Bill to fund higher education or vocational training.
- Research schools with LGBTQ+ student support centers.

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# Chapter 6: Mental Health and Well-Being

## 6.1 Counseling and Support

- Access VA mental health services specializing in LGBTQ+ issues.
- Find therapists trained in gender-affirming care through the Psychology Today directory.

## 6.2 Self-Care Strategies

- Practice mindfulness, meditation, or yoga.
  - Build a support system of friends, family, and fellow veterans.
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# Chapter 7: Advocating for Change

## 7.1 Get Involved

- Volunteer with LGBTQ+ advocacy groups to support other transgender veterans.
- Share your story to raise awareness and promote inclusivity in the military and beyond.

## 7.2 Staying Informed

- Keep up-to-date with policies affecting transgender veterans by following trusted organizations and news sources.
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## Conclusion

Navigating life as a transgender military veteran can present unique challenges, but you are not alone. With the right resources, a supportive community, and the knowledge of your rights, you can thrive in all aspects of life. This guide is a starting point, and we encourage you to reach out, ask questions, and connect with others on similar journeys.

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## Resources

- [VA LGBTQ+ Veteran Care](#)
- [AGLA](#)
- [The DC Center](#)
- [Transgender American Veterans Association](#)
- [Lambda Legal](#)
- [National Center for Transgender Equality](#)