VA Customer Experience (CX)
Veterans Experience Office (VEO)

September 2021

By deeply understanding our Veterans, VEO designs with and for our community to enable VA to deliver exceptional products and services.
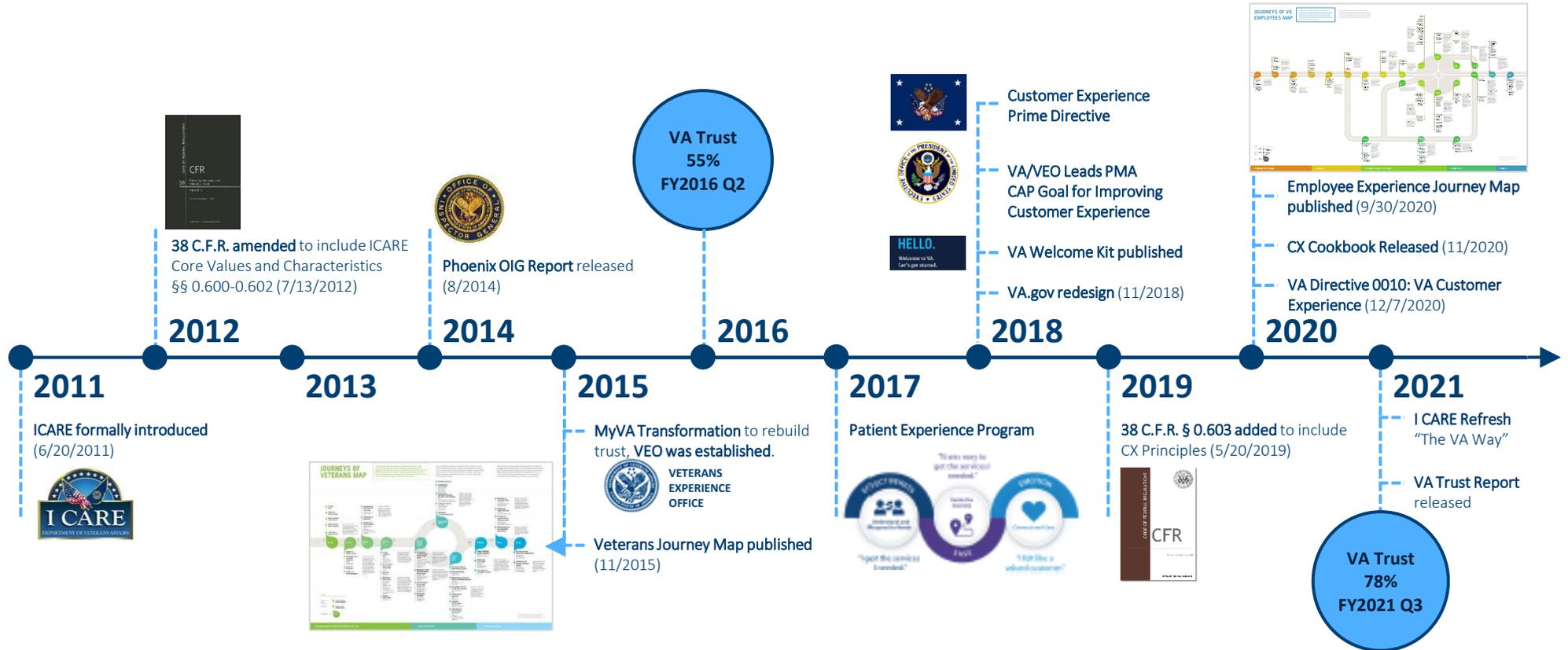
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA's Customer Experience Journey Line

Through transformational leadership and dedicated employees, VA committed itself to core values, characteristics and principles that define the organization and how it serves Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors

2011
ICARE formally introduced (6/20/2011)

2012
38 C.F.R. amended to include ICARE Core Values and Characteristics §§ 0.600-0.602 (7/13/2012)

2013

2014
Phoenix OIG Report released (8/2014)

2015
MyVA Transformation to rebuild trust, VEO was established.
VETERANS EXPERIENCE OFFICE
Veterans Journey Map published (11/2015)

2016
VA Trust 55% FY2016 Q2

2017
Patient Experience Program

2018
Customer Experience Prime Directive
VA/VEO Leads PMA CAP Goal for Improving Customer Experience
VA Welcome Kit published
VA.gov redesign (11/2018)

2019
38 C.F.R. § 0.603 added to include CX Principles (5/20/2019)

2020
Employee Experience Journey Map published (9/30/2020)
CX Cookbook Released (11/2020)
VA Directive 0010: VA Customer Experience (12/7/2020)

2021
I CARE Refresh "The VA Way"
VA Trust Report released
VA Trust 78% FY2021 Q3

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Experience Office

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VEO Vision & Mission

VISION

To leverage customer experience (CX) data, tools, technology, and engagement to enable the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to be the leading CX organization in government, so Service members, Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors choose VA.
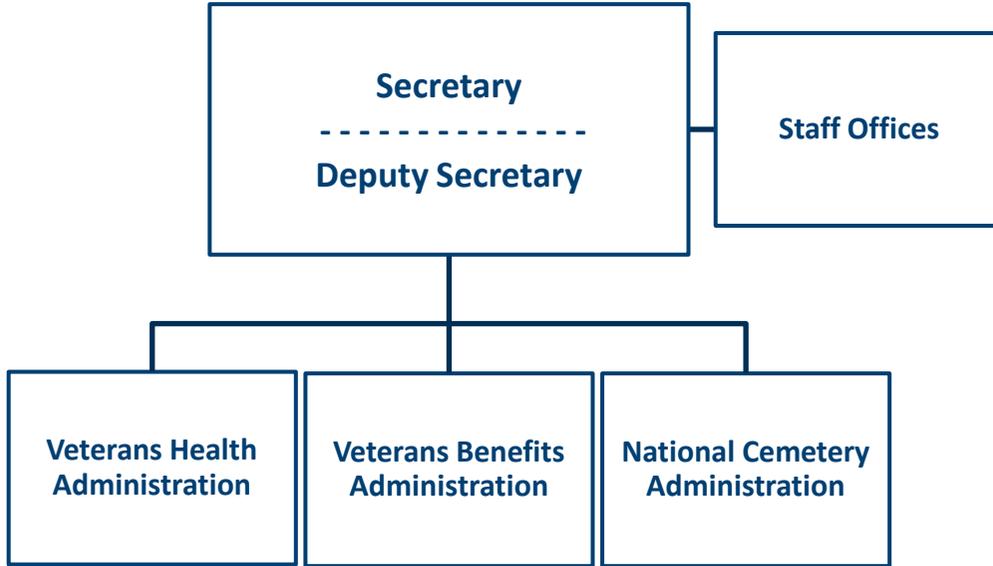
MISSION

VEO supports VA as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs' CX insight engine and a shared service to partner with, support and enable VA Administrations and Staff Offices to provide the highest quality CX in the delivery of care, benefits and memorial services to Service members, Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors.

Driving the Delivery of VA Services from the Veteran's Perspective

VA from a VA Perspective

Secretary
- - - - - - - - - - - - -
Deputy Secretary

Staff Offices

Veterans Health Administration

Veterans Benefits Administration

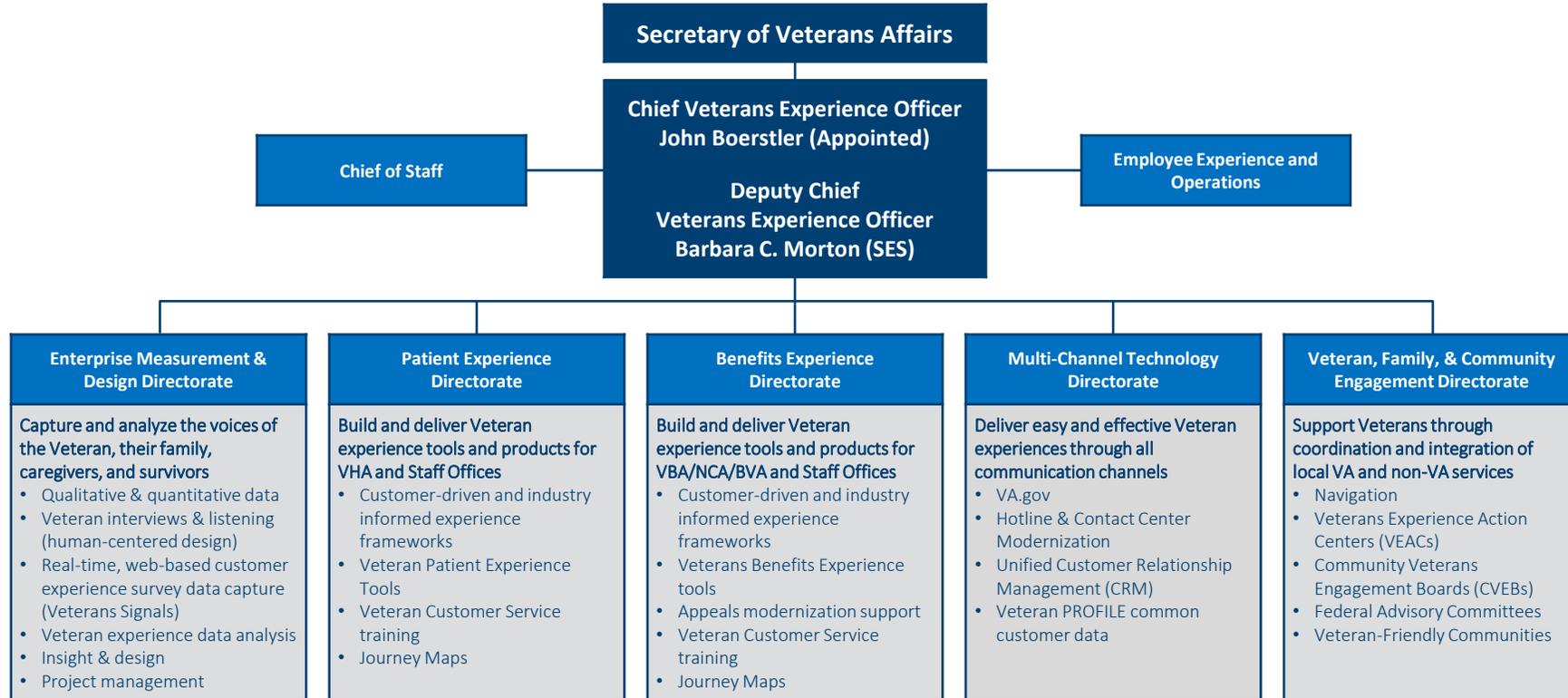**National Cemetery Administration**

VA from a Veterans Perspective

This Veterans Journey Map* identifies key moments that matter to Veterans and aligns VA care, benefits and memorial services available according to the Veteran's life journey.
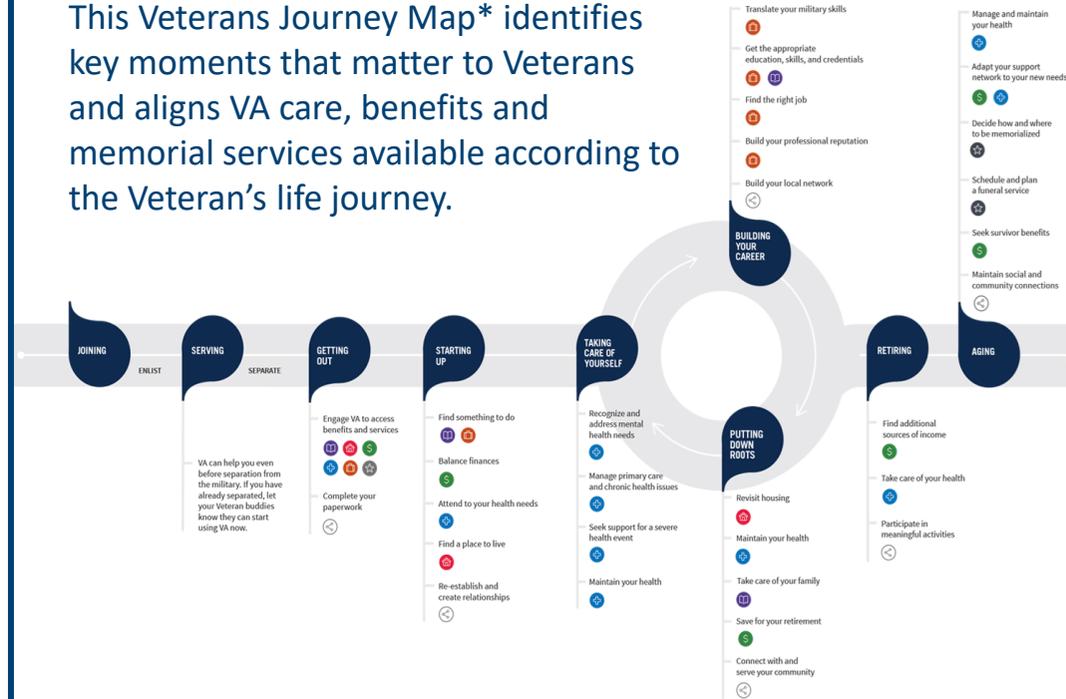
*The Veteran Journey Map is foundational to VA's Strategic Plan, available at: www.va.gov/oei/docs/VA2018-2024strategicPlan.pdf.

VEO Structure

VEO was established in 2015 with VA's Chief Veterans Experience Officer reporting directly to the Secretary and is structured around its four core capabilities of DATA, TOOLS, TECHNOLOGY and ENGAGEMENT.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Chief Veterans Experience Officer
John Boerstler (Appointed)

Deputy Chief
Veterans Experience Officer
Barbara C. Morton (SES)

Chief of Staff

Employee Experience and Operations

Enterprise Measurement & Design Directorate	Patient Experience Directorate	Benefits Experience Directorate	Multi-Channel Technology Directorate	Veteran, Family, & Community Engagement Directorate
Capture and analyze the voices of the Veteran, their family, caregivers, and survivors	Build and deliver Veteran experience tools and products for VHA and Staff Offices	Build and deliver Veteran experience tools and products for VBA/NCA/BVA and Staff Offices	Deliver easy and effective Veteran experiences through all communication channels	Support Veterans through coordination and integration of local VA and non-VA services
• Qualitative & quantitative data • Veteran interviews & listening (human-centered design) • Real-time, web-based customer experience survey data capture (Veterans Signals) • Veteran experience data analysis • Insight & design • Project management	• Customer-driven and industry informed experience frameworks • Veteran Patient Experience Tools • Veteran Customer Service training • Journey Maps	• Customer-driven and industry informed experience frameworks • Veterans Benefits Experience tools • Appeals modernization support • Veteran Customer Service training • Journey Maps	• VA.gov • Hotline & Contact Center Modernization • Unified Customer Relationship Management (CRM) • Veteran PROFILE common customer data	• Navigation • Veterans Experience Action Centers (VEACs) • Community Veterans Engagement Boards (CVEBs) • Federal Advisory Committees • Veteran-Friendly Communities

VEO Capabilities

VA CX Principles

CX Principles are codified in 38 C.F.R. § 0.603 as part of VA's Core Values & Characteristics

EASE

TRUST

EMOTION

EFFECTIVE

VA measures CX along the core principles of CX:

- *Ease.* *VA will make access to VA care, benefits, and memorial services smooth and easy.*
- *Effectiveness.* *VA will deliver care, benefits, and memorial services to the customer's satisfaction.*
- *Emotion.* *VA will deliver care, benefits, and memorial services in a manner that makes customers feel honored and valued in their interactions with VA.*

The combination of these factors impact the **overall trust** the customer has in VA.

Drivers of CX at VA

VA through VEO is hardwiring CX as a core capability to provide the best experiences in delivery of care, benefits and memorial services to Veterans, Service members, their families, caregivers and survivors

Veterans, Families, Caregivers & Survivors — Needs and experience of Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors to **drive VA strategy and decision making**.

38 C.F.R § 0.603 — **Adds CX Principles to VA's Core Values and Characteristics**. Codifying these principles and measuring CX through Ease, Effectiveness and Emotion, will ensure that Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors receive the proper emphasis at all levels within VA and become an enduring part of the VA culture (May 20, 2019).

VA Directive 0010 — **Establishes policy, requirements and accountability for VA CX** in accordance with 38 C.F.R. §§ 0.600-0.603 to ensure all Veterans, Service members, their families, caregivers and survivors receive consistent world-class experiences across VA (December 7, 2020).

White House Initiatives — Initiatives such as those listed below play a key role in scaling and sustaining CX across government.
- **Executive Order 13985:** Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (January 20, 2021).
- **President's Management Agenda (PMA) Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goals**

VA CX APG — VA Agency Priority Goal (APG) **requires reporting on Veteran experience** (trust, ease, effectiveness and emotion) with customer satisfaction through VA.gov.

VA Strategic Plan — **Designed around the Veteran experience and Veterans Journey Map** to drive VA-wide strategic focus on CX.

VEO CX Framework — **Defines Core CX capabilities** as data, tools, technology and engagement.

Additional driver in the pipeline:
- **Trust in Public Service (TIPS) Act**, if passed, would require Federal agencies to collect CX data and use it for service recovery and performance improvement.

VA Governance — **Hardwires CX data into VA strategy and decision-making**, to include for the Navigator Initiative.

VA CX Strategy

Pursuant to VA Directive 0010: VA Customer Experience (December 7, 2020) VA is strategically institutionalizing CX goals in policy and operational decision-making to deliver exceptional customer experiences along 3 key pillars:

1) **Pillar I: CX Core Capabilities & Framework**
   Drives improvements to individual service recovery and systems performance improvement using industry best practices and CX insights (i.e., human-centered design (HCD), CX data)

2) **Pillar II: CX Governance**
   Hardwires CX data and insights into VA strategy, decision-making and management

3) **Pillar III: CX Accountability**
   Infuses CX into performance metrics, budget strategy, policy and operations
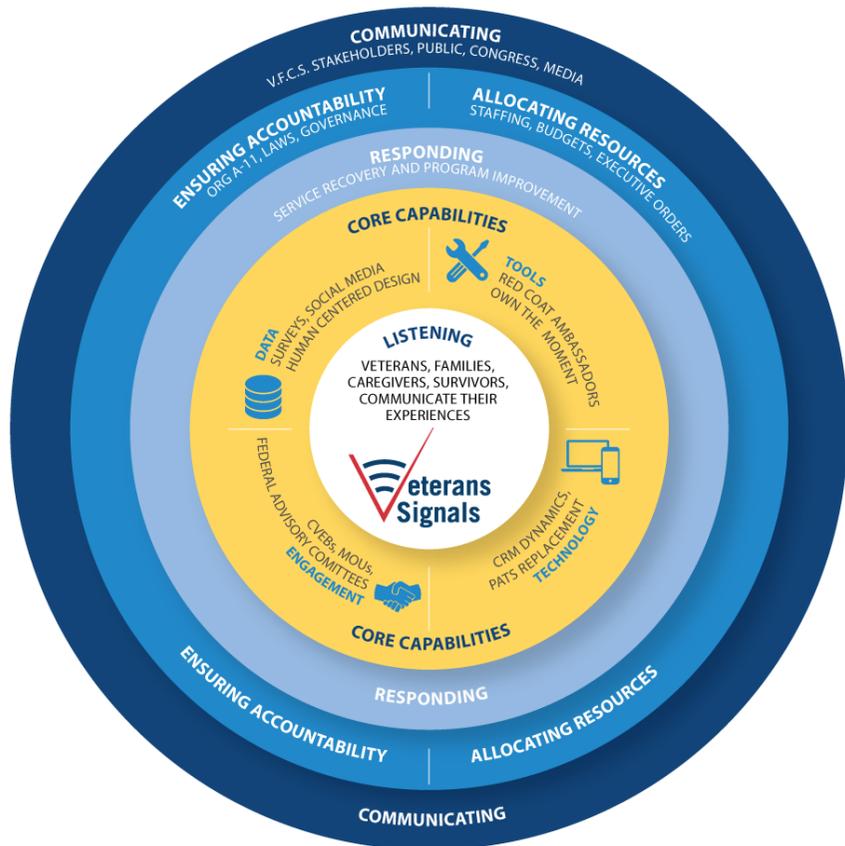
Pillar I: CX Core Capabilities & Framework

VA CX Core Capabilities

Modeling after the private sector, VA is implementing CX with four core capabilities: data, tools, technology and engagement.

DATA	Capture and analyze the voices of Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors
	HCD Research	Veterans Signals (VSignals) Surveys	VA Trust Score	CX Data Analytics
TOOLS	Build and deliver tangible CX tools and products across VA
	VA Welcome Kit	Quick Start Guides	Own the Moment Training	WECARE Rounding	VA Customer Experience Institute (VACXi) – HCD Training and PX University	Red Coat Ambassador Program	Inpatient Solutions	ICARE Refresh	CX Consultations	EX Solutions	Letters Rewrite
TECHNOLOGY	Deliver easy and effective Veteran experiences through all communication channels
	White House/VA Hotline	VA Profile	Unified Customer Relationship Management	Patient Advocate Tracking System-Replacement (PATS-R)	Contact Center Modernization	Digital Modernization (VA.gov)
ENGAGEMENT	Connect VA and local public / private services in a coordinated support network for Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors
	Veterans Experience Action Centers (VEACs)	Community Veteran Engagement Boards (CVEBs)	Strategic Partnerships	#VetResources Newsletter	Choose Home Initiative	Federal Advisory Committees – Greater Los Angeles and Veterans' Family, Caregiver, and Survivor

VA CX Framework

Discover

- Qualitative interviews
- Synthesis
- Identify moments that matter, pain points, bright spots

Design & Implement

- Rapid prototyping, testing, and product refinement
- Design and implement CX surveys, tangible tools, modern technology, targeted engagement

Respond & Improve

- Making it right for individuals through service recovery
- Monitoring system-wide performance and instituting performance improvements globally

Benchmark and borrow from industry best practices

INDUSTRY AND OTHER BEST PRACTICES

ENGAGEMENT

HARDWIRE CX DATA INTO BUSINESS PROCESSES
▶ Real-time surveys
▶ Data analytics

Perform individual service recovery

DATA

DISCOVER

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT

TOOLS

TECH

SERVICE RECOVERY

Deliver CX tools to employees

HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN (HCD)
▶ Map the Veteran's Journey
▶ Capture moments that matter
▶ Identify pain points
▶ Document bright spots

USE INSIGHTS FROM VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES, CAREGIVERS, AND SURVIVORS

Deploy modern, integrated technology for Veterans and employees

ENGAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Drive system-wide performance improvements

VEO Application of CX Core Capabilities

CX Data: Human-Centered Design (HCD)

HCD enables VEO to gather key insights directly from Veterans, Service members, their families, caregivers and survivors to identify the moments that matter most, pain points and bright spots

- Journey maps **uncover moments that matter most** to Veterans that might not naturally appear on traditional operational dashboard

- VEO has **created 45 unique journey maps and accompanying insight reports** that are used to prototype and ultimately deploy tangible CX tools and products

CX Data: Digital Listening

The Veterans Signals (VSignals) Platform collects and analyzes CX data and insights in real-time to inform service recovery and performance improvement efforts across VHA, VBA, NCA and the Board

94 UNIQUE SURVEYS

43.0 MILLION SURVEYS SENT

7.3 MILLION RESPONSES / **17.2%** RESPONSE RATE

2.5 MILLION FREE-TEXT COMMENTS

Administration and Program Priorities
Monitor Veteran insights identified as priorities of Administrations and program offices with immediate access to descriptive, predictive and prescriptive analytics

Trust Scores
Measure CX metrics—Ease, Effectiveness, Emotion and Trust—at the service level and compare across business lines

Live Feed
Review Veteran insights within seconds of a survey or any digital insight submission

Intelligent Search
Search intelligently through insights data to monitor priorities, compliments, concerns, and recommendations; data cuts by location, age, gender, time frame, predictive analytics to identify emerging topics

Social Media Scraping
See what conversations are taking place in social media on VA digital accounts like VA Facebook and Twitter accounts

Emerging Topics
Monitor conversations to detect or predict what is emerging, especially before topics Veterans discuss intensify

CX Tools

VEO has developed and deployed dozens of tangible CX tools across VA to empower employees to deliver excellent experiences and allow Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors better access and navigate benefits and services

Training

Own the Moment CX Training sets CX behavioral standards for employees
- **115,000+ employees trained**
- Is **the core of VA's Annual ICARE Training refresh** for all VA employees

WECARE Leadership Rounding trains leaders in industry best practice of regular rounding

Toolkits

Red Coat Ambassadors Program outfits volunteers across VA health care facilities with red coats to greet and assist Veterans with wayfinding services, and information about services and programs
- Deployed at 147 VHA sites
- Ease of navigation **increased 4%** between FY2018 and FY2019

Standard Phone Greeting sets consistent phone experience with a simple, 4-part greeting that ensures that Veterans know where they have called and understand how the employee can assist

Green Gloves Initiative helps employees and Veterans feel more comfortable at VA facilities by encouraging a clean and safe environment; as a result, the SHEP cleanliness score **increased 3%** between FY2018 and FY2020

VA Welcome Kit & Quick Start Guides

The VA Welcome Kit gives customers clear and accurate guided journeys to navigate VA's comprehensive offerings
- **1.3M+ downloads**
- **260,000 printed and distributed** across VA and to non-VA stakeholders, including Veterans Service Organizations, Congress and others

Quick Start Guides describe in simple steps and plain language how to access specific VA benefits and services; **currently 14 guides are available** on VA.gov such as:
- Applying for a Disability Rating, Education Benefits, Survivor Benefits and VA Health Care
- Getting Started with Health Services for Women Veterans, Caregiver Benefits, and Mental Health Services

CX Technology

Enterprise Data Management

Building a Veteran-centric information infrastructure, VEO's Enterprise Data Management enables VA to deliver seamless contact center and digital experiences for Veterans and their supporters
- Business owner for VA Profile, the authoritative source for **14.5M+ Veterans' customer data profiles**, which automatically updates across VA systems

Contact Center Modernization

Enhancing personalized customer experiences
- Provides common Customer Relationship Management software platform across VA contact centers to provide a single view of the Veteran
- For the first time, Veterans can now update an address by phone and online, and updates will be captured across VHA and VBA systems – **650,000+ Veteran updates to their contact information**

Digital Modernization

Making it easier for Veterans to access and navigate VA services online
- Relaunch of VA.gov as redesigned based on Veteran feedback and preferences providing a single digital front-door to access all VA services
- As a result, average monthly **total users increased by 221%** and **user satisfaction increased by 25%**

Enterprise Data Management

Contact Center Modernization

Digital Modernization
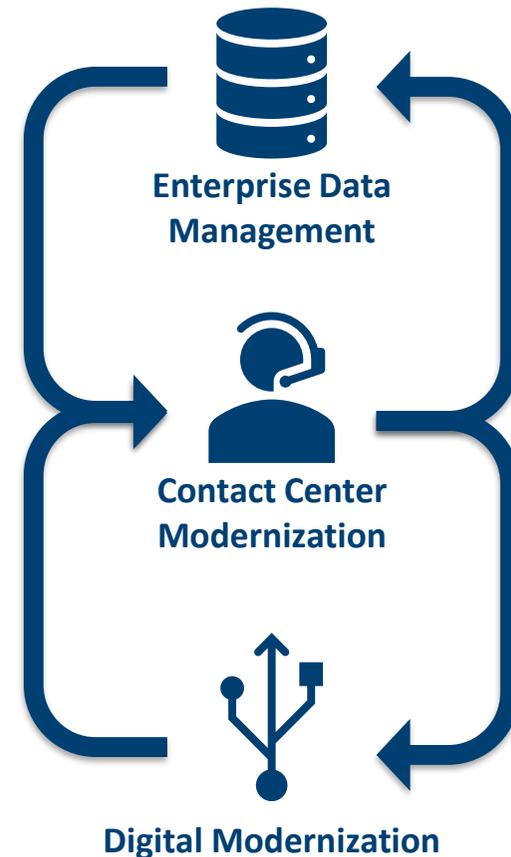
CX Engagement

Veterans' Families, Caregivers and Survivors Federal Advisory Committee (FAC)

- First FAC of its kind to establish listening channel for Veteran families, caregivers and survivors
- Chaired by Senator Elizabeth Dole is comprised of Veteran representatives and national leaders

Community Veteran Engagement Boards (CVEBs)

- Local community listening and information distribution channels
- CVEBs are nation-wide (map)
- Catchment area of **12.5M Veterans** and **50M Veteran family members, caregivers and survivors**

#VetResources Newsletter

- VEO's weekly newsletter sent to **11.6M subscribers** highlighting VA and non-VA resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors
- Sent more than **1 billion emails**, resulting in **290M opens**, **55M clicks to resources** and **150,000 clicks to the Veterans Crisis Line** since 2019

Veterans Experience Action Centers (VEACs)

- Events that allow Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors to directly engage with VA to resolve questions and gain assistance with VA benefits and services
- VEACs are collaborative events, both in-person and virtual, between community partners and VA which contributed to over 1,600 claims filed (resulting in more than $3,000,000 in retroactive grants received) and 300 new enrollments in VA health care
- **94% satisfaction rate** from Veterans and their supporters during inaugural Virtual VEAC

VA-Wide Trust Survey Results Since FY 2016 Q2

Since the inception of the VA-Wide Trust Survey, Veteran Trust, Ease, Effectiveness and Emotion have all risen.

	FY16 Q2	FY16 Q3	FY16 Q4	FY17 Q1	FY17 Q2	FY17 Q3	FY17 Q4	FY18 Q1	FY18 Q2	FY18 Q3	FY18 Q4	FY19 Q1	FY19 Q2	FY19 Q3	FY19 Q4	FY20 Q1	FY20 Q2	FY20 Q3	FY20 Q4	FY21 Q1	FY21 Q2	FY21 Q3
Trust	55%	59%	60%	61%	65%	66%	69%	69%	70%	69%	70%	73%	72%	72%	72%	74%	80%	77%	79%	79%	79%	78%
Ease	61%	65%	66%	66%	64%	65%	67%	68%	69%	68%	69%	70%	70%	70%	71%	72%	75%	70%	76%	76%	74%	72%
Effectiveness	72%	74%	75%	75%	74%	75%	76%	77%	78%	77%	77%	79%	78%	78%	76%	76%	78%	74%	71%	71%	79%	77%
Emotion	63%	67%	68%	68%	68%	68%	70%	71%	72%	71%	71%	73%	73%	73%	73%	74%	77%	73%	75%	74%	77%	75%

Trust	Ease	Effectiveness	Emotion
23% ↑	11% ↑	5% ↑	12% ↑
"I trust VA to fulfill our country's commitment to Veterans."	"It was easy to get the care or service I needed."	"I got the care or service I needed."	"I felt like a valued customer."

VA Flagship Mobile App: Built for You

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Experience Office

VA Flagship Mobile App

A native mobile app to help Veterans quickly and easily manage their VA services across health and benefits

Veterans frequently access VA digital services from their mobile devices. To better accommodate their needs, VA launched flagship mobile app that leverages native features like biometrics, push notifications, location and calendar integrations to allow Veterans to quickly and easily check the status of their services and complete simple transactions.
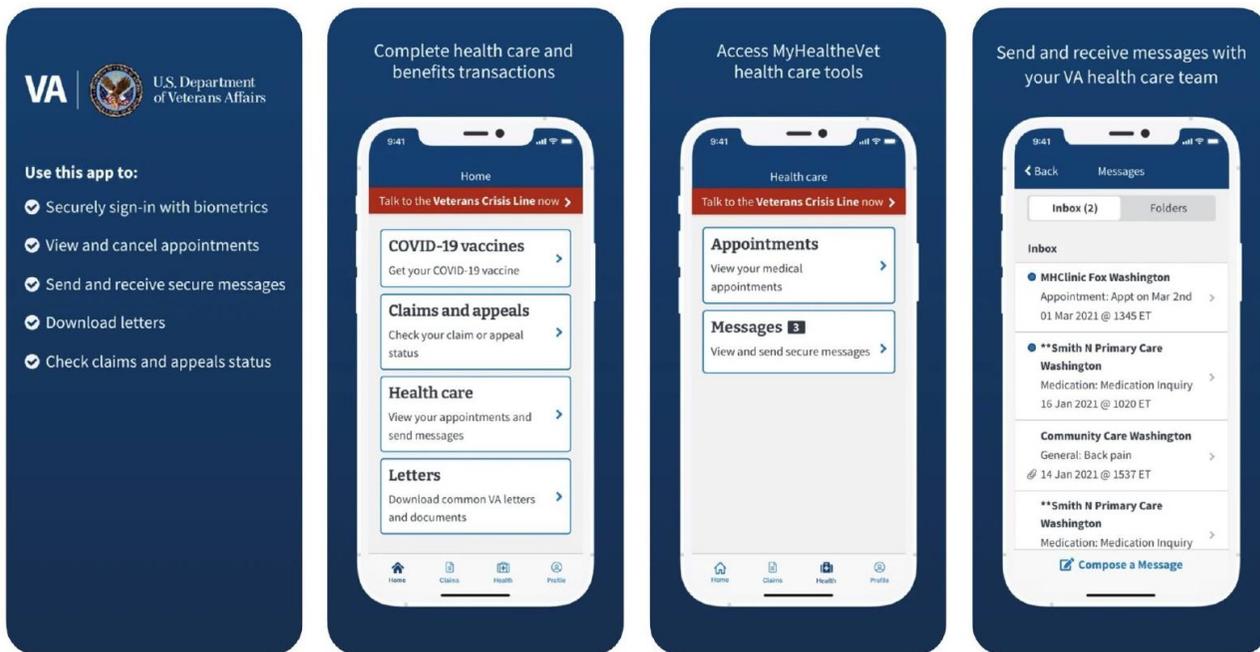
VEO Application of CX Capabilities to the Employee Experience (EX)

Improving the Employee Experience (EX)

- **Goal**: To provide easy, effective and emotionally resonant experiences for employees across their workforce life-cycle as members of the VA team by leveraging proven CX data, tools, technology and engagement capabilities to maximize recruitment and retention.

JOURNEYS OF VA EMPLOYEES MAP

- **VEO in collaboration with HRA/OSP created VA's first-ever EX Journey Map**: For the first time ever, this journey map identifies the moments that matter to employees (i.e., applying, hiring, onboarding), bright spots and pain points encountered throughout an employee's journey with VA.
  - **11,000 data points captured** from employee interviews
  - **5 phases** in which an employees' goals and expectations are distinctly different:
    1. Considering & Getting in
    2. Starting Up
    3. Performing, Growing, and Adapting
    4. Changing Roles
    5. Moving On
  - Within the 5 phases, there are **23 employment stages** a VA employee may encounter
  - Within the 23 stages, **30 identifiable moments that matter** are highlighted

Employee Experience   **Customer Experience**
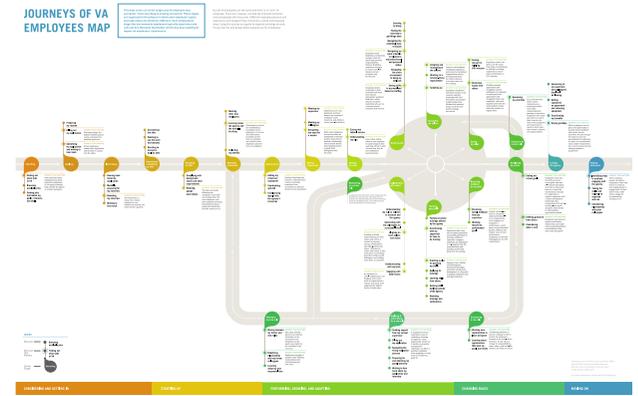
Pillar II: CX Governance & Pillar III: CX Accountability

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Pillar II: CX Governance and Pillar III: CX Accountability

Hardwires and institutionalizes customer experience data and insights into VA strategy and decision-making

VA CX Governance Model

Senior Leadership
VA senior leadership considers and ultimately approves recommendations

Matrixed Integrated Project Teams (IPTs)
Matrixed IPTs with subject-matter experts from across VA develop recommendations and strategies

Veteran Experience Data & Insights
Gather CX data & insights through qualitative interviews (HCD), real-time surveys and other feedback channels, and business challenges in need of resolution drive priorities

VA CX Accountability

Organizational

Individual

- President's Management Agenda (OMB A-11 Circular)
- VA Agency Priority Goal
- VA Directive 0010
- VA Trust score
- Amendment to 38 C.F.R. to include CX Principles

- SES performance plans
- Transactional surveys

Resources and References

REFERENCES

- **38 C.F.R. §§ 0.600-0.603, Core Values, Characteristics, and Customer Experience Principles of the Department:** *www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2019-title38-vol1/pdf/CFR-2019-title38-vol1-part0-subpartA.pdf*
- **Employee Experience Journey Map:** *https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/82394/va-creates-governments-first-ever-employee-experience-journeymap/*
- **OMB A-11 Circular Section 280 – Managing Customer Experience and Improving Service Delivery:** *https://www.performance.gov/cx/assets/files/a11-280.pdf*
- **SECVA CX Policy (August 22, 2018):** *vaww.Insider.VA.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Customer-Service-Policy-Statement-SECVA-Signed.pdf*
- **VA APG:** *https://trumpadministration.archives.performance.gov/veterans-affairs/*
- **VA Directive 0010: VA Customer Experience:** *https://vaww.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub_ID=1217&FType=2*
- **VA FY 2021 Budget Submission** *(VEO on p. 399)***:** *www.va.gov/budget/docs/summary/fy2021VAbudgetvolumeIIIbenefitsBurialProgramsAndDeptmentalAdministration.pdf*
- **VA Strategic Plan:** *www.VA.gov/OEI/docs/VA2018-2024strategicPlan.pdf*
- **VA Trust Report:** *www.va.gov/trust*
- **Veterans Journey Map:** *www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Veteran-Journey-Map.pdf*

RESOURCES

- **Community Resources, Information and Toolkits:** *www.VA.gov/VE/Engagement/Resources.asp*
- **Discover Virtual Events for Veterans, their Families, Caregivers and Survivors:** *www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/*
- **Sign up to Receive #VetResources Newsletter:** *www.va.gov/VetResources*
- **VA CX Accomplishments Report:** *www.va.gov/ve/docs/cx/customer-experience-accomplishments.pdf*
- **VA CX Cookbook:** *www.va.gov/ve/docs/cx/customer-experience-cookbook.pdf*
- **VA Welcome Kit and Quick Start Guides:** *www.va.gov/welcome-kit/*
- **VEO:** *www.VA.gov/VE/*
- **VEO Catalog of Services:** *https://www.va.gov/ve/docs/cx/customer-experience-capabilities.pdf*
- **VEO SharePoint Site:** *https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VACOVEO/*

Whether just getting out of the military or have been a civilian for many years, **DOWNLOAD THE VA WELCOME KIT,** at https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/, to help guide you to the benefits and services you have earned.

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE #VETRESOURCES for weekly information on resources for Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors at www.va.gov/VetResources.

DISCOVER VIRTUAL EVENTS for Veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors at https://www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/.