

New ID Cards for Vets Enrolled in VA Health Care

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VA is introducing a new, secure identification card called the Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC). VHIC replaces the Veteran Identification Card (VIC), which was introduced in 2004.

VA is committed to providing the high quality, safe and effective health care Veterans have earned and deserve, and part of this effort includes ensuring the personal security of Veterans.

As part of a phased rollout, on February 21, 2014, VA began issuing the newly designed, more secure VHIC to newly enrolled and other Veterans who were not issued a VIC. Starting in April VA will begin a replacement effort to automatically mail the more secure VHIC to Veterans who have the old VIC.

All Veterans who are enrolled and have the old card should have their new replacement card by July.

VA expects to complete mailings of the replacement VHICs by July. To ensure receipt of the new VHIC, enrolled Veterans should make sure that VA has their correct mailing address.

The new VHIC is distinguished by additional security features and will have a different look and feel. The Social Security number and date of birth were removed from the barcode and magnetic strip. Similar to a typical health insurance card, the VHIC displays the Veteran's Member ID and branch of service emblem, a new unique identifier, as well as a Plan ID which reflects the Veteran's enrollment in VA health care.

The VHIC is for use in VA medical facilities and does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA medical facilities.

Your Current Card is Good until You Receive Your New Card

Veterans can continue to use their current VIC card until their new VHIC is received as VA health care applications have been enhanced to read both the new VHIC as well as the old card. VA recommends Veterans safeguard their VIC as they would a credit card, and cut up or shred the card once it is replaced with the new VHIC.

If enrolled in VA health care, a Veteran who does not currently have a VIC can request a VHIC at their next VA health care appointment. In order to ensure your identity, you'll need to present an appropriate form of ID, such as your driver's license. And while you're there make sure that your record is updated with your current address. Your VHIC will be mailed to you, generally within 5-7 days.

If you are not enrolled with the VA and want to receive a VHIC, you will need to apply for enrollment. You can do that online (which is the fastest way to apply for enrollment) at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll. You can also apply by phone at 1-877-222-VETS (8387), by mail or in person at your local VA health care facility. Of course, you will need to go to your local VA to have your picture taken.

Veterans find it is convenient to bring in their identification documents and get their picture taken for their VHIC at their first scheduled appointment. Be sure to bring an appropriate form of ID such as your driver's license. Once your enrollment is confirmed, your new VHIC will be mailed to you, generally within 5-7 days.

For more information, you may contact us at 1-877-222-VETS (8387), you may visit your local VA medical facility Enrollment Coordinator or you may find more information online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic.

SOURCE: VA News Release

at <http://www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/2014/February/New-ID-Cards-for-Vets-Enrolled-in-VA-Health-Care.asp>