

## 1. Narrative

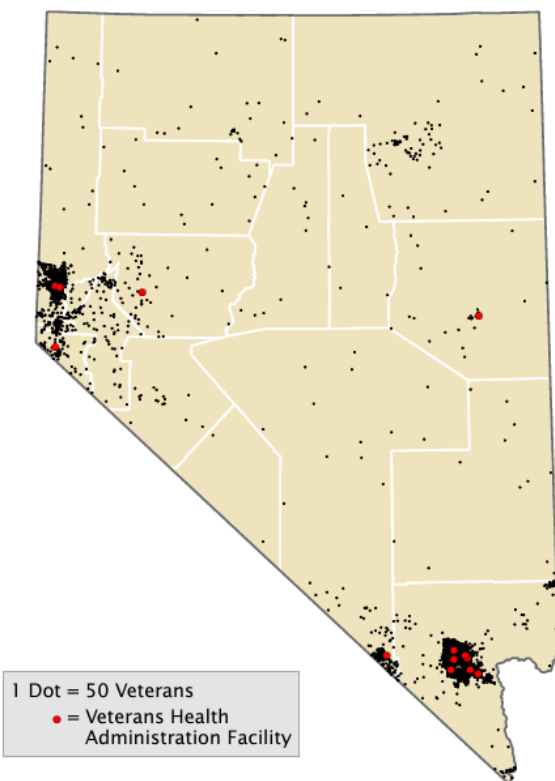
### **PTSD Statistics in the United States**

In 2020, the National Center for PTSD reported that about 13 million Americans—roughly the population of the entire state of Pennsylvania<sup>1</sup>—suffer from PTSD, correlating to approximately 5 out of every 100 adults<sup>2</sup>. Veteran populations experience even higher rates of PTSD; specifically, 13 of every 100 female veterans and 6 of every 100 male veterans. Research indicates that PTSD is 3 times more common in veterans who have deployed and varies by service era. For example, 29% veterans of the Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF) era experience PTSD, compared to 10% of veterans from the Vietnam War era<sup>3</sup>. Events most often associated with PTSD include sexual assault, combat exposure, childhood neglect, and childhood physical abuse.

Persons with PTSD experience three main categories of symptoms: re-experiencing, avoidance or numbing, and hyperarousal.<sup>4</sup> Re-experiencing symptoms include frequent upsetting thoughts or memories of the traumatic event, recurrent nightmares, flashbacks, strong feelings of distress when reminded of the event, and physical responsiveness such as increased heart rate or sweating when reminded of the event. Avoidance and numbing symptoms involve avoidance of triggers associated with the traumatic event, and suppression of general responsiveness. These can include avoiding activities or places that remind a person of the traumatic event, an inability to remember important aspects of the event, and feelings of detachment from other people. Finally, those with PTSD may experience persistent, heightened arousal known as hyperarousal. This manifests as difficulty falling or staying asleep, irritability, hypervigilance, and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms are often experienced in reaction to specific triggers related to the traumatic event.

## Veteran Population in the Las Vegas Region

The Las Vegas area is home to one of the largest veteran populations in the state of Nevada (**Fig.1**). The US Census Bureau also reports that the unemployment rate for veterans in Nevada is notably higher (7.1%) compared to the overall veteran population of the United States (5.3%). Of the 1,356 VA facilities in the US, which would suggest an average of 27 facilities per state, only 14 are in Nevada. Fewer Nevadan veterans have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, and more Nevadan veterans are uninsured than the average veteran in the US.<sup>9</sup> Our program would offer free care to veterans who may not be able to afford more traditional methods; further, rates of unemployment are strongly correlated with rates of mental illness, including PTSD. Amelioration of the mental health burden on the veteran population could reasonably improve the unemployment rate as more veterans achieve a higher quality of life through our program.



**Fig. 1. Veteran Population in Nevada<sup>9</sup>**  
Source: [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) (2022)



**Fig. 2. Location of Las Vegas in Nevada**  
Source: [maps-of-the-USA.com](https://maps-of-the-USA.com)

## **Safety Measures**

All appropriate safety measures related to [REDACTED] will be enacted, to include establishment of trust and understanding of [REDACTED] before participants interact directly with [REDACTED]. Specifically, the following policies will be enforced.

### Emergency Action Plan

All exits, evacuation routes, fire extinguishers and alarms, assembly points, and available emergency equipment (including but not limited to automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) or first aid kits) will be clearly marked and identified to staff and participants. Phone numbers for the local fire department, emergency medical services, and program managers will be displayed and available to staff and participants. All utility company emergency contacts will be documented and available to staff, to include electric and water companies. All site staff are required to report any medical, fire, weather, power, or spill-related emergencies. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (see personnel) are professional firefighters with emergency medical services training; they will provide care when necessary and appropriate, and will request additional services accordingly. This applies to fire, medical, chemical spill, and other emergencies within the scope of their training.

### Incident Weather Plan

Outdoor activities will be postponed in the event of severe weather. If thunder or lightning are heard or seen during outdoor activities, participants and staff will seek shelter or return to Fire and Ice facilities if it is safe to do so. In the event of a tornado, staff will lead participants to seek appropriate shelter and instruct them on proper head and neck protection. In the event of an earthquake, staff will lead participants to seek appropriate shelter or evacuate when needed. This will include staying away from overhead fixtures, windows, filing cabinets, and sources of electrical power. In the event of a flood, staff will instruct and lead participants to evacuate indoor facilities if necessary, or to seek higher ground during outdoor activities.

### First Aid and CPR Requirements

Pursuant to OSHA recommendations, there will always be at least one staff member present who is trained and certified in first aid, including CPR.