

FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc.

Veterans Program Guide

Structured residential recovery and housing support for eligible veterans

Program Purpose

The Veterans Program provides structured residential recovery and housing support for eligible U.S. veterans through VA-supported referral pathways. The program helps veterans build stability, participate in recovery-focused activities, and work toward long-term independence in a supportive environment.

Program at a Glance

Program Focus	Residential recovery and housing support for eligible veterans
Referral Pathway	Mostly referral-based through VA-supported coordination
Length of Support	Veterans may receive support for up to two years under the VA per diem structure
Program Participation	Recovery meetings, classes, program expectations, and accountability
Support Services	Case management, meals, transportation support, resource coordination, and day-to-day structure
Veteran Housing	After approximately 90 days, veterans may be eligible to move into designated veteran housing as rooms are available

Overview

Vets FIRST is a specialized program for veterans who are working to overcome substance use challenges and rebuild stability. The program is supported through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and is designed to provide a structured residential recovery environment with practical day-to-day support.

The program is mostly referral-based and may include veterans with qualifying discharge status who are connected through VA-supported pathways. Eligibility and placement are coordinated through the appropriate referral and interview process, including involvement with FIRST staff and VA partners as applicable.

While in the program, veterans are expected to participate in required meetings, classes, and program activities. They also receive case management, meals, transportation support, resource coordination, and the structure needed to focus on recovery and long-term stability.

Who the Program Is Designed For

The Veterans Program is intended for eligible U.S. veterans who need a structured recovery-focused living environment and support while working toward stability, recovery, and independence.

- Veterans referred through VA-supported pathways or other appropriate referral sources
- Veterans seeking a structured residential setting that supports recovery and accountability
- Veterans who can participate in required meetings, classes, and program expectations
- Veterans who may benefit from case management, meals, transportation support, and connection to resources
- Veterans who are working toward stable housing, recovery, and long-term independence

How the Veterans Program Works

1. Referral, Eligibility, and Intake

The Veterans Program is primarily referral-based and operates in coordination with VA-supported pathways. Veterans may be screened through an interview or eligibility process before placement. The goal of intake is to determine whether the program is a good fit and whether the veteran can participate in the structure and expectations of the program.

The program has historically served veterans with qualifying discharge status and involvement with the Asheville VA system. Because eligibility and referral processes may vary, veterans and referral partners should confirm current requirements directly with FIRST or the appropriate VA contact.

2. Structured Residential Recovery Support

Veterans live in a structured residential environment and participate in recovery-focused programming. Program expectations include meetings, classes, daily responsibilities, and accountability. The structure is designed to support sobriety, stability, personal responsibility, and connection to a recovery community.

3. Case Management and Practical Support

Veterans receive case management and help connecting with appropriate resources. Support may include assistance with appointments, coordination with service providers, benefits or resource navigation, recovery planning, and practical steps that support stability.

The program also provides meals, transportation support, and day-to-day structure so veterans can focus on recovery and stability while working toward long-term goals.

4. Meetings, Classes, and Program Expectations

Participation is an important part of the program. Veterans are expected to attend required recovery meetings, classes, and program activities. These expectations help reinforce accountability, recovery habits, peer support, and the daily structure needed for long-term stability.

5. Veteran Housing Options

After approximately 90 days, veterans may be eligible to move into one of FIRST at Blue Ridge's designated veteran houses as rooms are available. This step allows veterans to remain connected to support while continuing to build stability in a more independent housing setting.

Veterans may remain under the VA per diem structure for up to two years when appropriate. After one year, veterans may graduate in a manner similar to Long Term Program participants while continuing to receive housing support for an additional period as allowed by the program structure.

What the Program Provides

- Structured residential recovery and housing support
- Recovery meetings, classes, and required program participation
- Case management and resource coordination
- Meals and transportation support
- Peer support and accountability
- Connection to VA-supported referral and support pathways
- Potential access to designated veteran housing after approximately 90 days, as rooms are available

Important Program Notes

Not a Standalone Job-Placement Program

The Veterans Program is a structured residential recovery and housing-support program. Its core supports include recovery meetings, classes, case management, meals, transportation, residential structure, peer support, and stability planning. It should not be understood as a standalone job-placement or vocational training program.

Housing Availability

Veteran housing options may be available after approximately 90 days, but placement depends on room availability and program appropriateness. Availability, eligibility, and timing should be confirmed through FIRST staff.

Program Expectations

The Veterans Program works best for participants who are willing to accept structure, follow program expectations, attend required activities, and actively participate in recovery and stabilization efforts. The program provides support, but participants are expected to take an active role in their recovery and progress.

- Attend required recovery meetings, classes, and program activities
- Follow residential rules, schedules, and program expectations
- Participate in case management and planning
- Work toward stability, accountability, recovery, and long-term housing goals
- Maintain respectful participation in the residential community

Referral and Next Steps

The Veterans Program is mostly referral-based and is connected to VA-supported pathways. Veterans, family members, service providers, or referral partners who want to learn more should contact FIRST at Blue Ridge or coordinate with the appropriate VA contact to determine current eligibility and referral steps.

Because program availability, referral requirements, and housing placement may change, all interested parties should confirm current details directly with FIRST staff before making plans for admission or placement.

Taking the FIRST Step

The Veterans Program exists to help eligible veterans build stability through recovery support, residential structure, case management, meals, transportation, and long-term housing support. The goal is to provide a supportive environment where veterans can focus on recovery, accountability, and a stronger path forward.