



SERVING VETERANS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

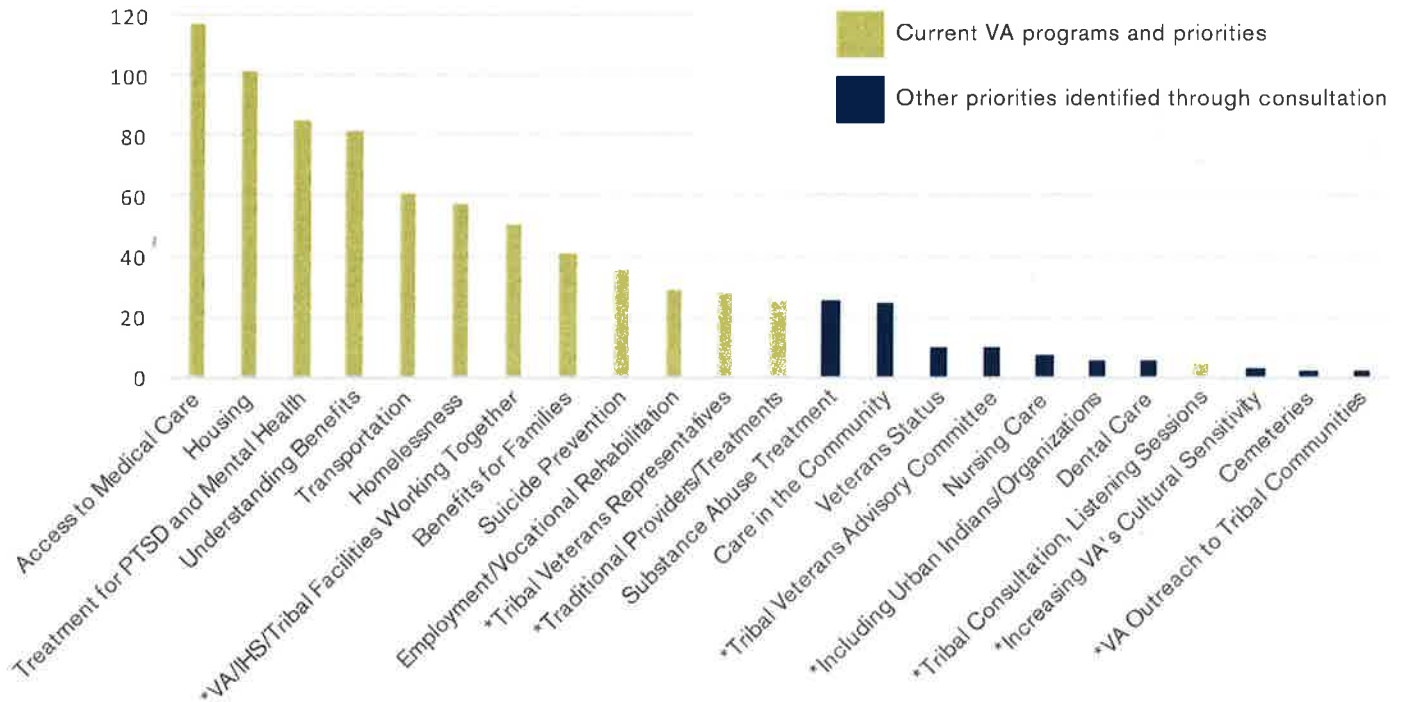
Priorities from 2016 Tribal Consultation

In 2016, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) conducted tribal consultation with all 567 federally recognized tribes. VA asked tribes to identify their top 3 to 5 priorities for serving Veterans in Indian Country. Tribal leaders, national and regional tribal organizations, Veterans, and other designated representatives offered their input. This fact sheet describes the responses received.

Tribes' Top Priorities for Serving Veterans in Indian Country

1. Access to medical care
2. Addressing housing and homelessness
3. Treatment for PTSD and mental health
4. Understanding benefits, including benefits for families
5. Transportation

Tribes' Priorities for Serving Veterans



Respondents ranked their priorities from 1 through 5. The graph shows which priorities received the highest ranks compared to other priorities. To determine the top five priorities, some similar items were combined, such as housing and homelessness.

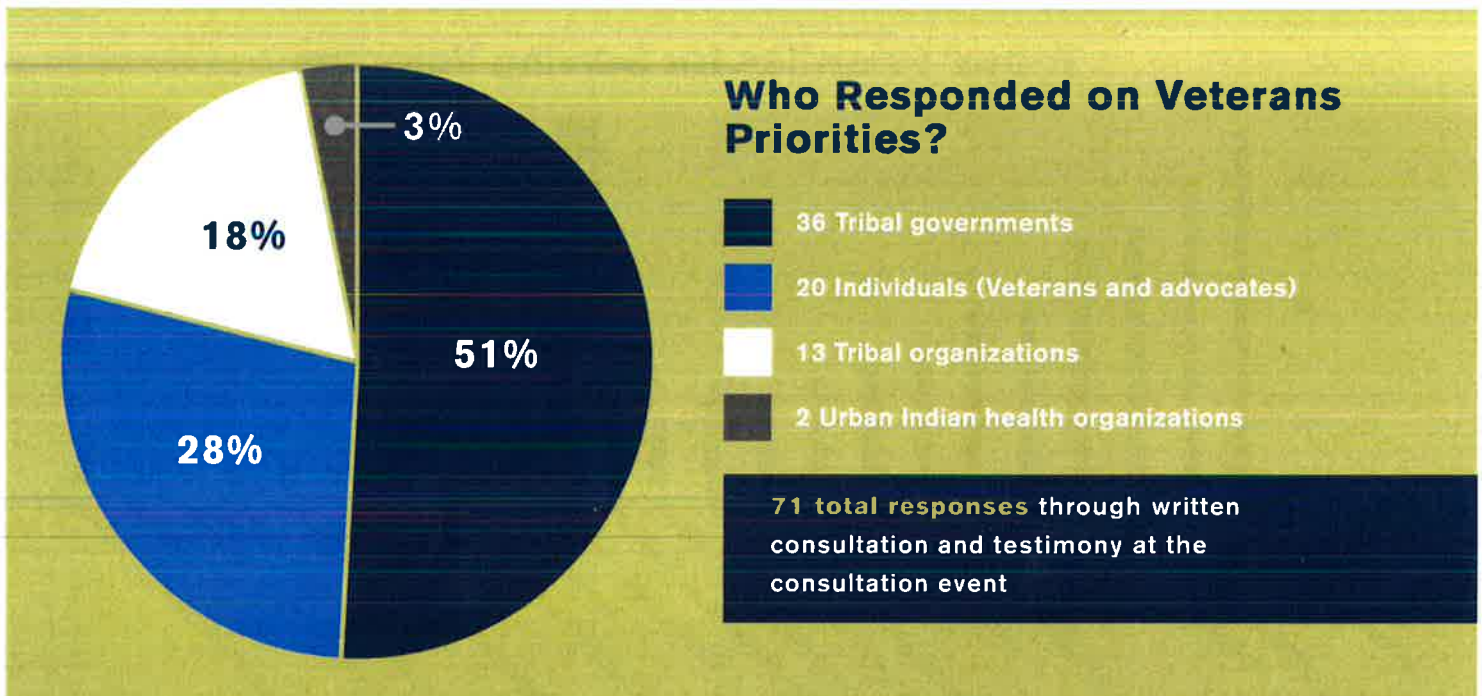
* Starred priorities are culturally specific items relevant to American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments and Veterans. VA recognizes the importance of culturally specific efforts in their relationships and work with tribal nations

Tribes' Other Priorities for Veterans

Most priorities identified in consultation fell within **13 current VA programs/priorities** for Veterans in Indian Country. Notably, consultation respondents identified **10 other priorities** for Veterans in addition to the more recent focus of VA efforts:

- **Substance abuse treatment** – Of all the other priorities, substance abuse treatment was mentioned most frequently. Some respondents named it as their highest priority.
- **Care in the Community** – VA's Consolidated Care Plan – Some representatives named continuing tribal reimbursement agreements with VA as their highest priority for serving Veterans.
- **Including Urban Indians and Urban Indian organizations** – Some respondents recommended that Urban Indian organizations be included more effectively in VA's efforts in Indian Country.
- **Veterans status** – Some respondents noted that determining Veteran status (benefit, disability, and discharge status), and changing it when necessary, is very difficult.
- **Tribal Veterans cemeteries** – Some tribes requested assistance in accessing VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program through the National Cemetery Administration.
- **A tribal Veterans advisory health care committee** – Some respondents recommended that VA have a tribal advisory committee as do other executive agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

A small number of respondents mentioned other priorities: nursing home care and benefits, dental care, increasing VA's cultural sensitivity, and ongoing VA outreach to tribal communities as priorities.



Contact Us

Phone: 202-461-7400 • Email: tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov

Find your regional tribal relations specialist:

<https://www.va.gov/TRIBALGOVERNMENT/contact.asp>