

# My HealthVet Secure Messaging User Guide

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## Secure Messaging — Feature Overview

Secure Messaging is an easy to use online messaging system available through My HealtheVet. It is for users who have a My HealtheVet [Premium](#) account and who have registered as a **Veteran/VA Patient**. Secure Messaging is safe and secure, because the messages you send and receive are all kept within My HealtheVet.

Secure Messaging improves the connection between you and your VA health care team and other VA Staff. You can use it to ask about your VA appointments, medications, and your lab results or to have routine questions answered. Similar to email, Secure Messaging allows you to write a message, save drafts, review your sent messages and maintain a record of your conversations. Since the lines of communication are open, it helps make your VA appointments more productive because your VA health care team has more than just notes from your last appointment.

You can set your preferences to notify you through your personal email when a Secure Message is waiting in your My HealtheVet inbox. Use Secure Messaging to keep your VA health care team informed. Secure Messaging is there when you need it - just as it should be. Start using Secure Messaging today to discuss your health with your VA health care team.

### **Secure Messaging is not for emergency situations**

Secure Messaging should only be used for non-emergency and non-urgent matters

If you have already registered for a My HealtheVet account and need to check that you have registered as a **VA Patient**, you can do the following:

- Sign in to My HealtheVet
- Select the **PERSONAL INFORMATION** tab (Figure 1)
- Select the **My Profile** sub-tab (Figure 1)

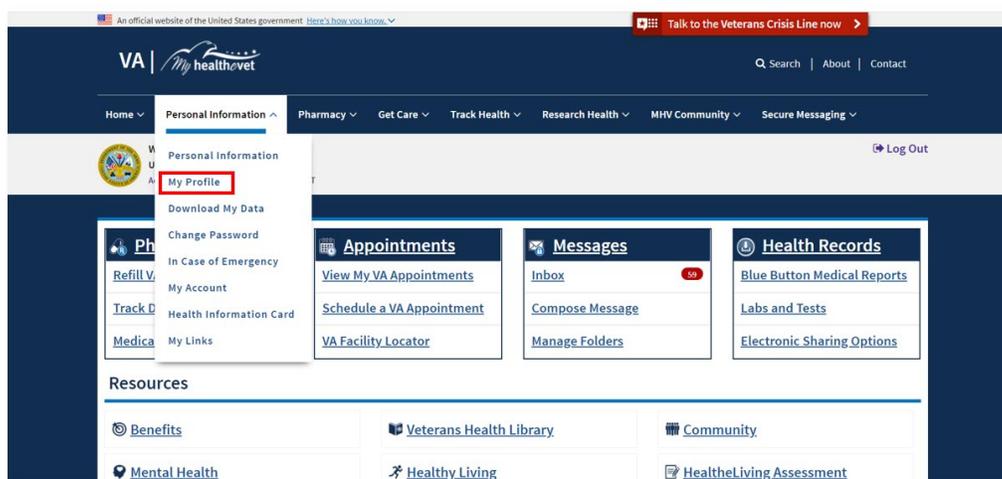
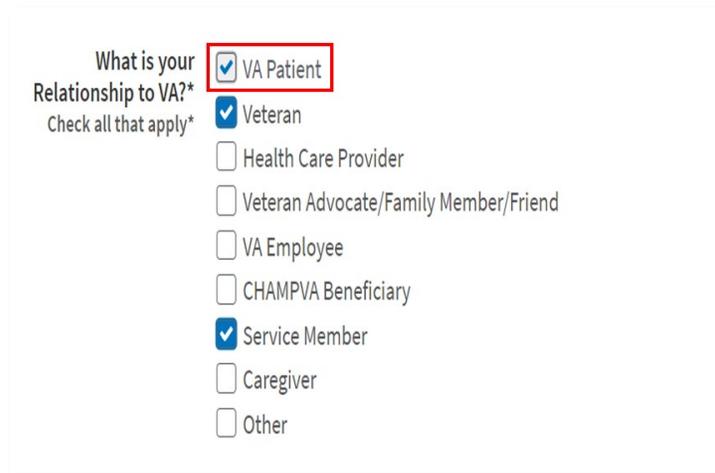


Figure 1: My Profile Link

- Under **What is Your Relationship to VA**, if you use the VA Health Care System, make sure you select the **VA Patient** checkbox (Figure 2)



What is your Relationship to VA?\*

Check all that apply\*

- VA Patient
- Veteran
- Health Care Provider
- Veteran Advocate/Family Member/Friend
- VA Employee
- CHAMPVA Beneficiary
- Service Member
- Caregiver
- Other

Figure 2: What is Your Relationship to VA?

- Select the **Save** button at the bottom of the screen (Figure 3)



Figure 3: Save/Cancel Buttons

## Getting Started with Secure Messaging

### Step 1 – Sign in to Secure Messaging

1) Sign in to your My HealtheVet [Premium](#) account by selecting the **Sign in** button on the upper right side of the screen. You must have already registered as a Premium user. If you do not have a My HealtheVet account, please register by selecting the **Register** button and completing the registration form (Figure 4). 2) Enter your My HealtheVet User ID and Password on the Login page. Or, log in using a Sign-in Partner.

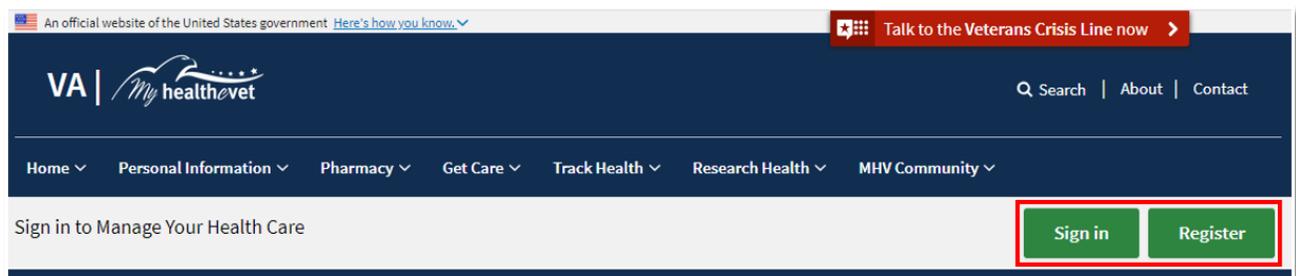


Figure 4: Sign-in/Register Buttons

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## Step 2 – Access Secure Messaging

After signing in, there are three ways you can access Secure Messaging (Figure 5):

- 1) Select **Messages** or the **Inbox** link on the dashboard, or
- 2) Select the **Secure Messaging** tab at the top

NOTE: You can also select the **Compose Message** and **Manage Folders** links to directly enter those folders.

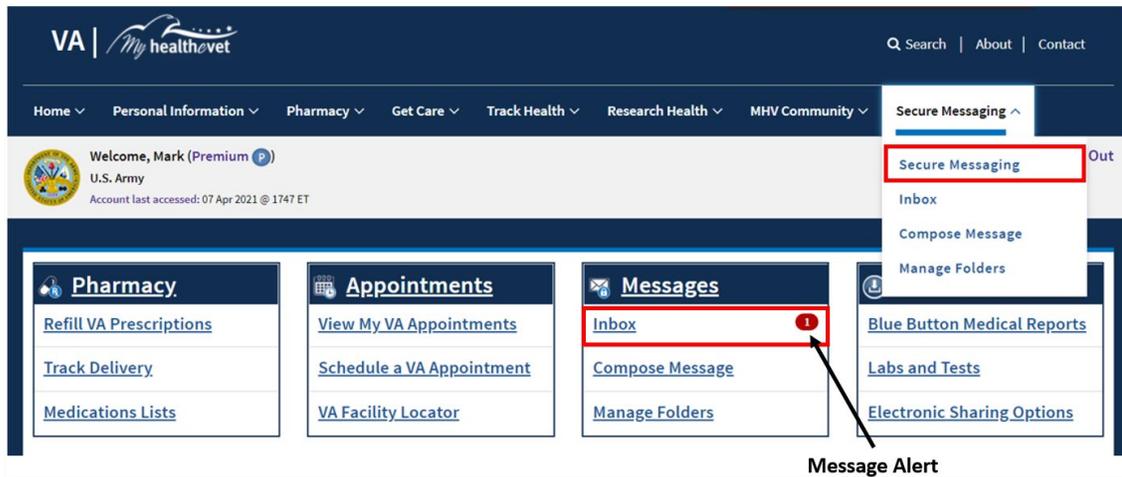


Figure 5: Inbox Link/Message alert

## Step 3 – Composing a Secure Message

Secure Messaging opens to your **Inbox**. From the **Inbox**, you can do several things:

1. Compose a new message:
  - a) You can create a new message by selecting the **Compose a Message** button on the left side of the screen (Figure 6).

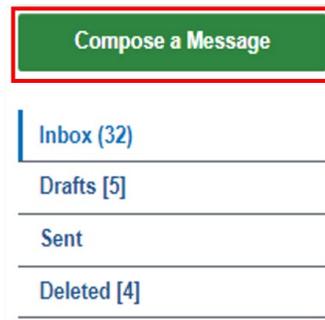


Figure 6: Compose a Message Button

b) Select the VA health care team and other VA staff you wish to contact by selecting the drop-down arrow for **To**. Your participating VA Health Care Team and other VA staff will appear in the list. You can edit the list of groups listed in the **To** dropdown by selecting the **Edit List** link next to the **Select a group to send the message...** dropdown arrow (Figure 7).

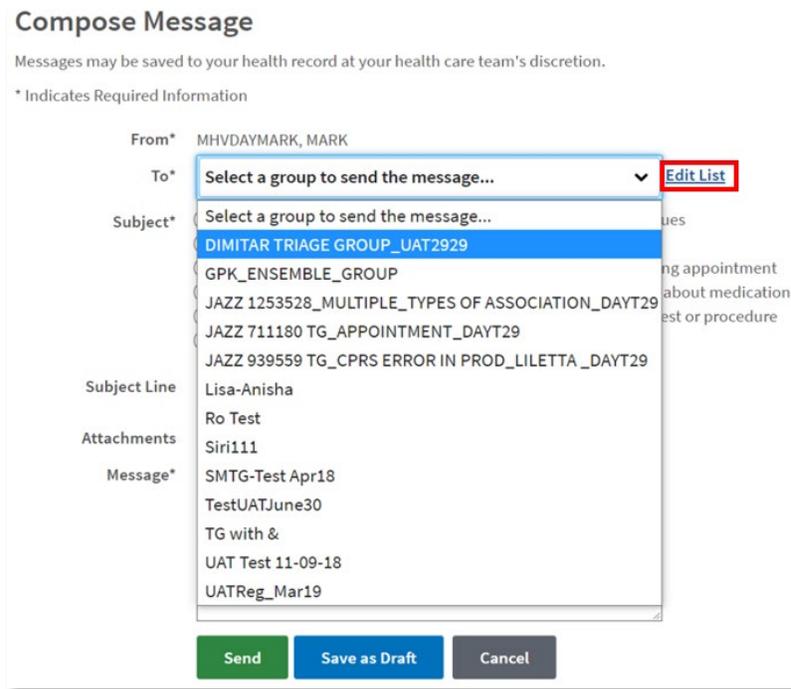


Figure 7: Selecting a Group

**Note:** Check your preferences if the VA health care team you are expecting to see is not listed.

c) Select radio button associated with the related subject title for **Subject** (Figure 8):

**Note:** If the General subject title is selected you are required to add a Subject Line.

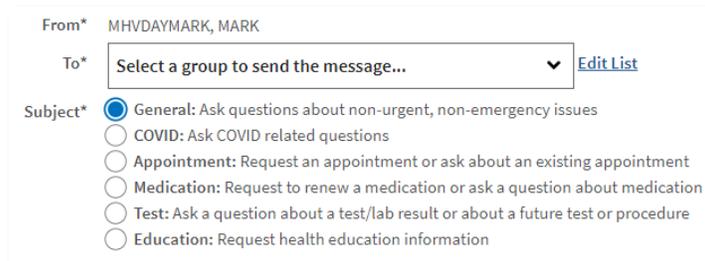


Figure 8: Select a Subject Category

- d) Add Subject Line (Figure 9).
- e) Add any attachments (Figure 9).
- f) Type your message (Figure 9).
- g) When you have completed the message, select the **Send** button. You also have the option to save the message as a draft (select the **Save as Draft** button) or cancel the message (select the **Cancel** button) (Figure 9).

The screenshot shows a web form for sending a secure message. At the top, the 'From' field is populated with 'MHVDAYMARK, MARK'. The 'To' field is a dropdown menu with the text 'Select a group to send the message...' and an 'Edit List' link. The 'Subject' field has a radio button selected for 'General: Ask questions about non-urgent, non-emergency issues', with other options for COVID, Appointment, Medication, Test, and Education. Below this is a 'Subject Line' text input field. The 'Attachments' section includes a paperclip icon, an 'Add Attachment' link, and a link to 'Instructions to attach a file'. The 'Message' field is a large text area containing the text 'Name' and 'Title'. At the bottom of the form are three buttons: 'Send' (green), 'Save as Draft' (blue), and 'Cancel' (grey).

Figure 9: Send/Save as Draft/Cancel buttons

## Step 3 (a) - Include an Attachment with Your Message

A Secure Messaging Attachment is a file that you can include on a Secure Message to your VA health care team. Your attachment should relate to your message.

This feature allows you to share the results of tests, procedures, or health care summaries that you may have obtained from your non-VA providers with your VA health care team. It should not be used to send non-health related information. To include an attachment with your message:



2. Select the **Add Attachment** link (Figure 10) on a new **Secure Message** or on a **Secure Message** that you are replying to. The **File Attachment** folder opens (Figure 11).

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**Compose Message**  
Messages may be saved to your health record at your health care team's discretion.  
\* Indicates Required Information

From\*

To\*  [Edit List](#)

Subject\*  General: Ask questions about non-urgent, non-emergency issues  
 COVID: Ask COVID related questions  
 Appointment: Request an appointment or ask about an existing appointment  
 Medication: Request to renew a medication or ask a question about medication  
 Test: Ask a question about a test/lab result or about a future test or procedure  
 Education: Request health education information

Subject Line

Attachments **Add Attachment** [Instructions to attach a file](#)

Message\*

Figure 10: Add an Attachment

**File Attachment** ✕

You may attach up to 4 files which must be in one of the following formats:  
doc, docx, gif, jpg, pdf, png, rtf, txt, xls, xlsx.

The file size for a single attachment cannot exceed 3 MB and the total size of the attachments cannot exceed 6 MB.

Figure 11: File Attachment

Use the **Browse** button to select the file on your computer that you would like to attach.

3. Then select the **Attach** button (Figure 11).

To provide you with outstanding health care services, your VA health care team may decide to save some of your **Secure Messaging Attachments** in your VA medical record. Doing this allows them the ability to refer to the information later.

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## Step 4 - Open Messages from the Inbox

To open a message in your **Inbox**, select the name under the **From** column. The message displays on the **View Message** page (Figure 12).

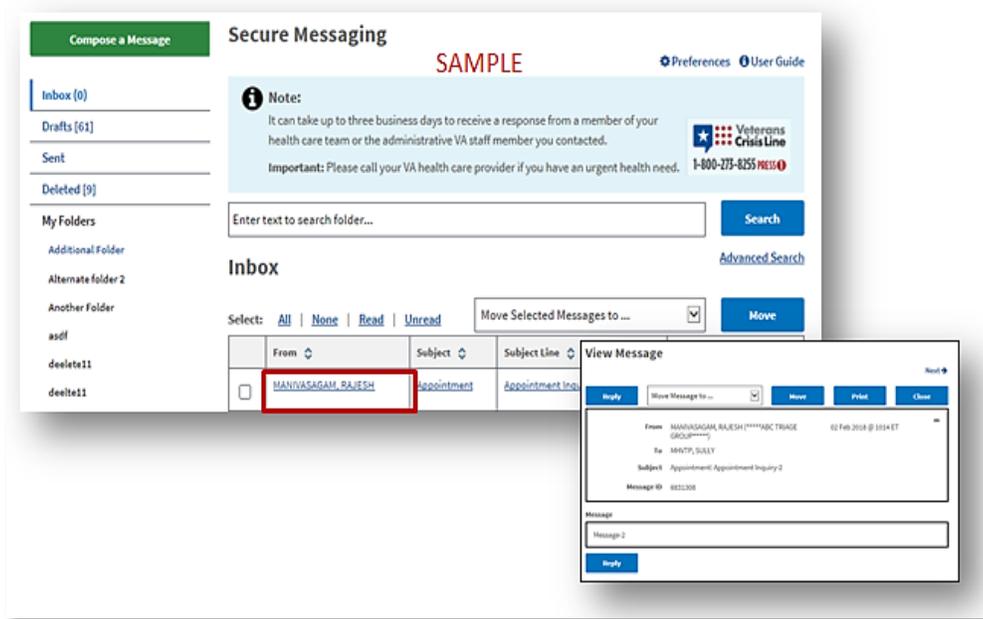


Figure 12: View Message

## Step 5 - Print a Message

You can print messages. 1) Select the name under the **From** column of the message you want to open. 2) On the **View Message** page, select the **Print** button. 3) Select the **Print** button on the **Print Message** page. 4) Select the **Print** button on the **Print Message** page. The print window opens in your browser. 4) Select the **Print** button (Figure 13).

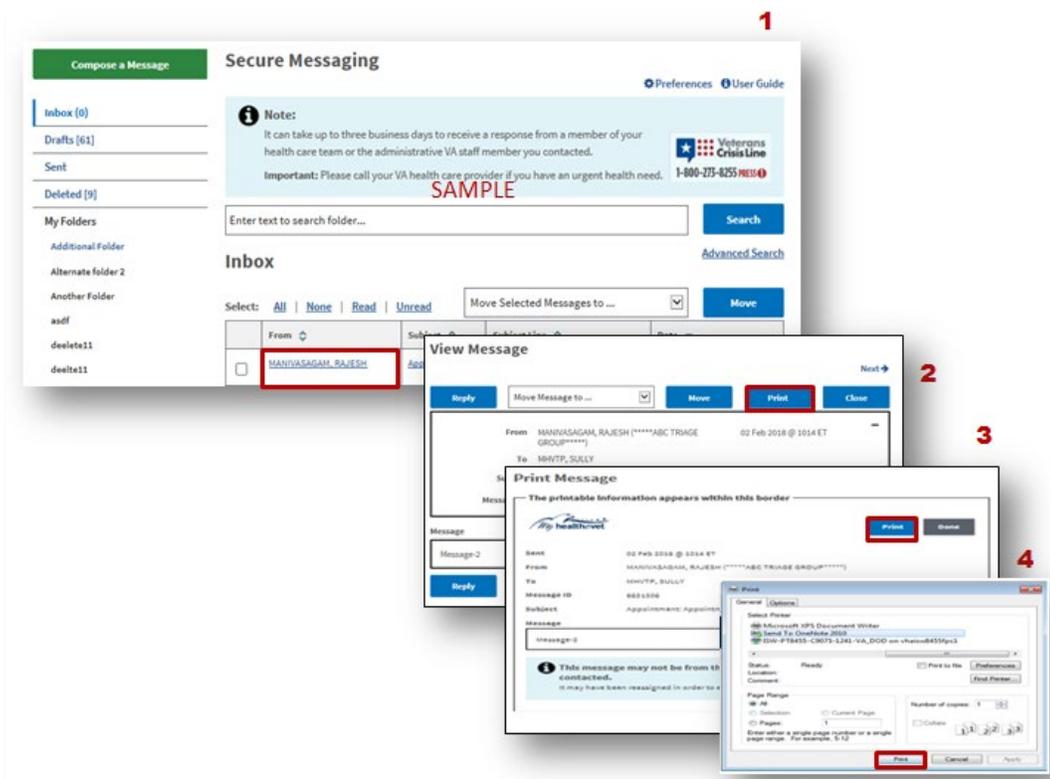


Figure 13: Print a Message

## Step 6 - Reply to Messages

After reading a message in your **Inbox**, you can reply by selecting the **Reply** button. On the **Reply to Message** page, type your message in the **Message** box. Select the **Reply** button. Your reply message move to you **Sent** folder (Figure 14).

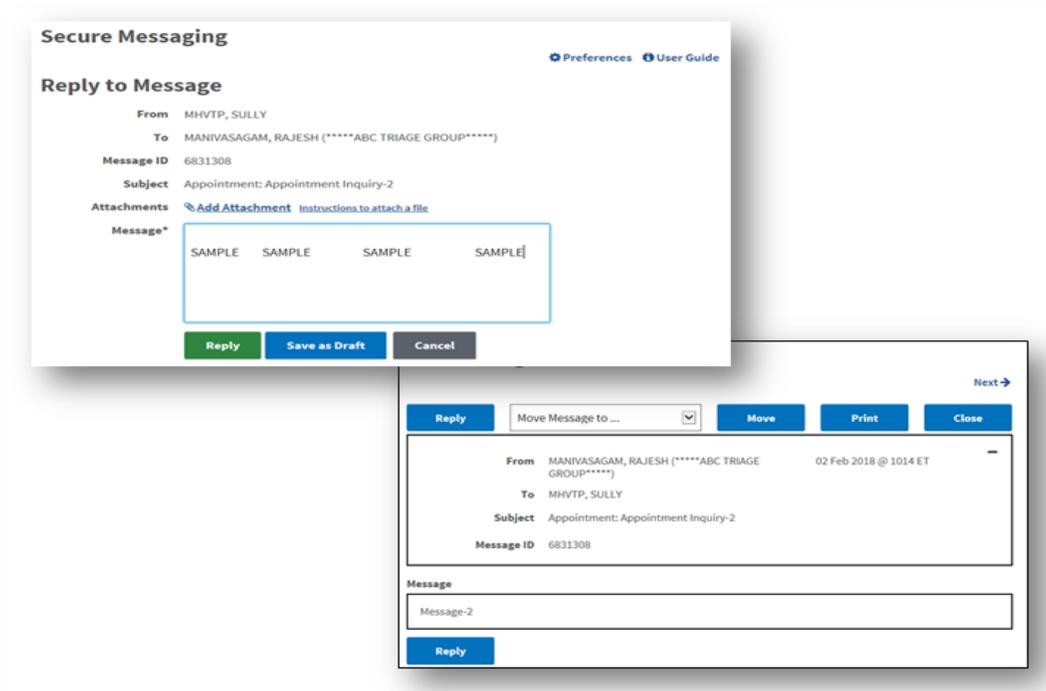


Figure 14: Reply to Message

## Message Management

Secure Messaging allows you to communicate with your participating VA Health Care Team and other VA staff in a secure environment within the My HealtheVet portal. You can send and receive messages from your VA Health Care Team, as well as manage and maintain your messages within your Secure Messaging account.

**Open your Inbox, Drafts, Sent, and Deleted folders for your Secure Messaging account:** Under the **Compose a Message** button, select the quick link for the desired folder. Secure Messaging will open the folder you selected. **\* Notice** the number in parenthesis ( ) next to the links illustrated above; this number tells you how many messages are currently in this folder (Figure 15).

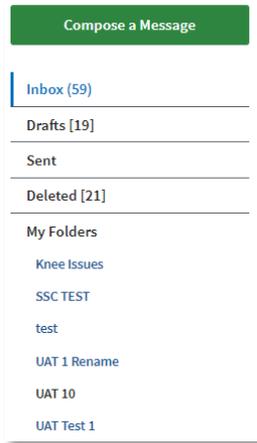


Figure 15: My Folder Links

**Create your own folders:** Under **Manage Folders** (Figure 16), enter a name for your folder and select the **Add** button (Figure 17).

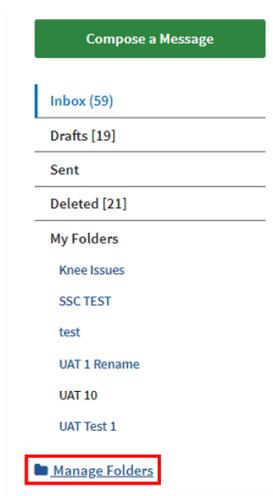


Figure 16: Manage Folders

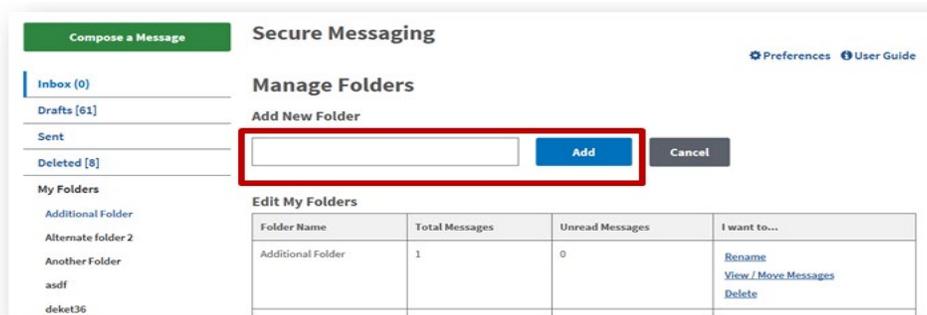


Figure 17: Adding a New Folder

Later, if you want to make changes to a folder you have created (for example rename the folder), select the desired link under the **I want to...** column and then make the desired changes (Figure 18).

Folder Name	Total Messages	Unread Messages	I want to...
Cloud testing	15	5	<a href="#">Rename</a> <a href="#">View / Move Messages</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>

Figure 18: Editing Folders

**Rename a Folder:** 1) Select the **Rename** link under the **I want to...** column.

2) In the **Rename a Folder** window, enter the new name of the folder. 3) Select the **Rename** button. The new name of the folder will display as a quick link (Figure 19).

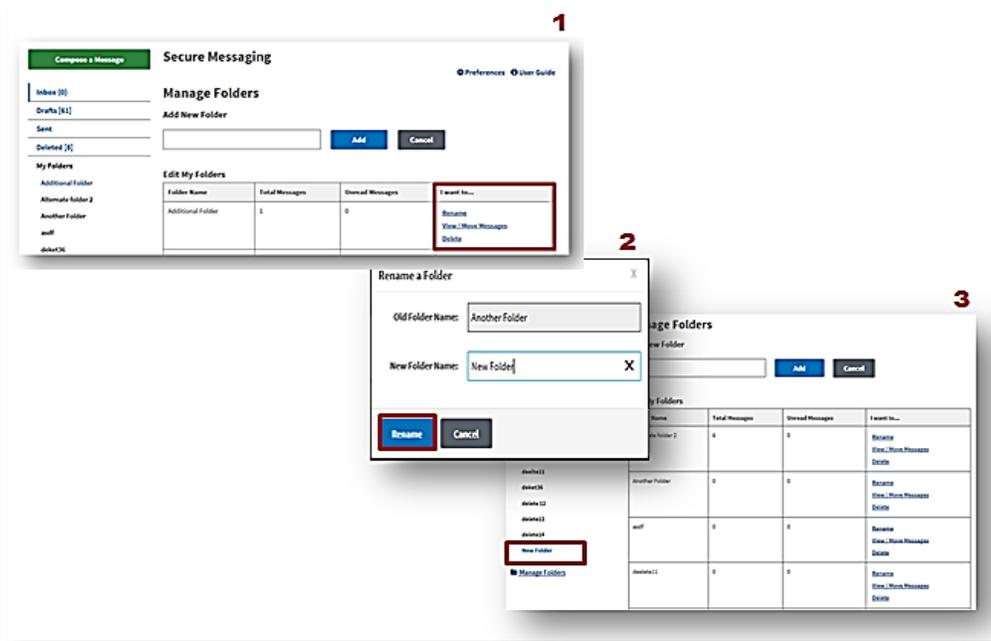


Figure 19: Renaming a Folder

**Move a Message:** 1) Under **Manage Folders**, select the **View/Move Message** link (Figure 20). 2) Select the check box for all messages you desire to move. 3) Move the selected messages to a folder by selecting the drop-down arrow under **Move Selected Messages to...** 4) Select from the list where you want to move the message (Deleted or one of your other personal folders under My Folders) and then select the **Move** button (Figure 21).

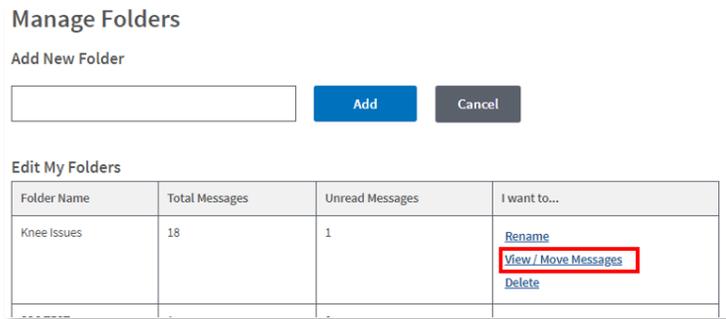


Figure 20: View/Move Messages

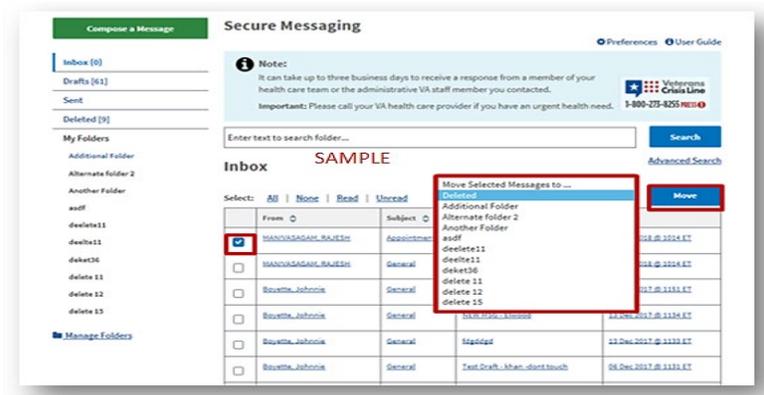


Figure 21: Move Selected Messages to...

**Note:** Secure Messages stay in all your folders (including the Deleted folder) until they are permanently deleted by you. The most recent Secure Messages displays at the top of the Inbox. You may choose to move older messages to Personal folders. You can also change the default date range of Secure Messages to display via the **Message Display Setting** on your [Preference](#) page.

VA Patients cannot reply to messages older than 120 days.

**Search for messages:** You can search for a particular message. 1) Enter text in the search box. 2) Click on the **Search** button. The **Reset** button clears the text in the search box. The **Cancel** button cancels the search (Figure 22).

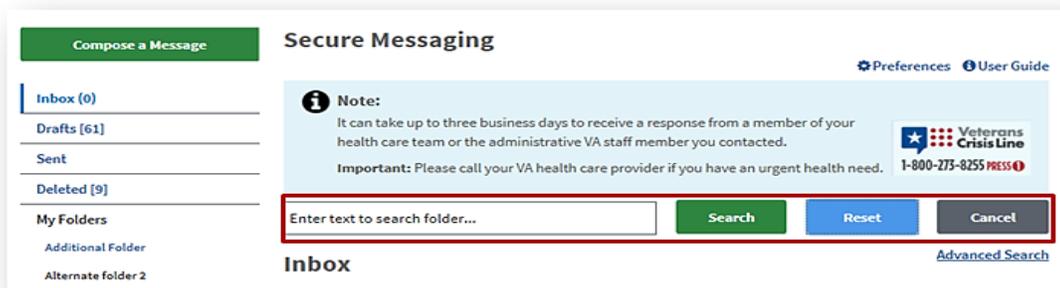


Figure 22: Search for Messages

An advanced search is available. Select the **Advanced Search** link and enter the criteria on the next page Figure 23().

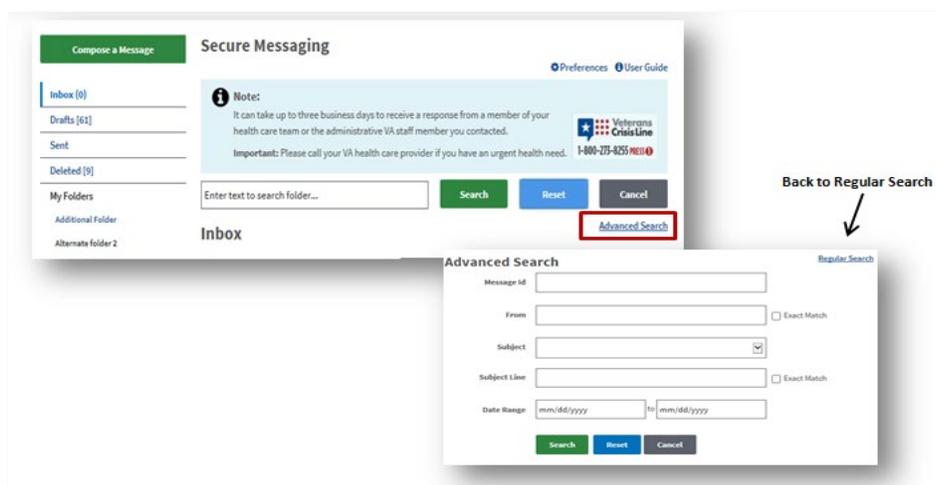


Figure 23: Advanced Search

## User Preferences

My HealtheVet Secure Messaging allows you to set various preferences within your account. To access the Preferences section, select the **Preferences** link. On the **Preferences** page, select your preferences for **1) New Secure Message Notifications** sent to your personal email, **2) Signature Settings** for a signature block, **3) Message Display Settings** to set a time period of messages to display in the inbox, and **4) My Secure Messaging Contact List** to select which Triage Groups display on your Compose Message To dropdown list. When you are finished selecting your preferences, select the **Save** button (Figure 24).

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The screenshot shows the 'Preferences' window for Secure Messaging. It is titled 'Secure Messaging Settings' and includes a note: '\* Indicates Required Information'. The settings are organized into several sections:

- New Secure Message Notifications:** Radio buttons for 'On' and 'Off' (selected). Below are text boxes for 'Email Address' and a dropdown for 'Frequency'.
- Signature Settings:** Text boxes for 'Signature Name' and 'Signature Title'. A checked checkbox labeled 'Include Outgoing Signature' is present.
- Message Display Settings:** A dropdown menu set to 'Display Messages from past 12 months'.
- My Secure Messaging Contact List:** A table with two columns: 'Triage Group Name' and 'Display on "To" List of Contacts'. The table contains six rows, each with a 'Yes' or 'No' radio button.

At the bottom of the window are 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons.

Figure 24: Preferences

## Additional Information on Secure Messaging

**\*\*\* Remember:** Secure Messaging should be only used for **non-urgent, non-critical** communication.

If you need help while using Secure Messaging, select the [User Guide](#) (Secure Messaging>Compose a Message>User Guide) link located at the top left of the screen to review this guide (Figure 25).

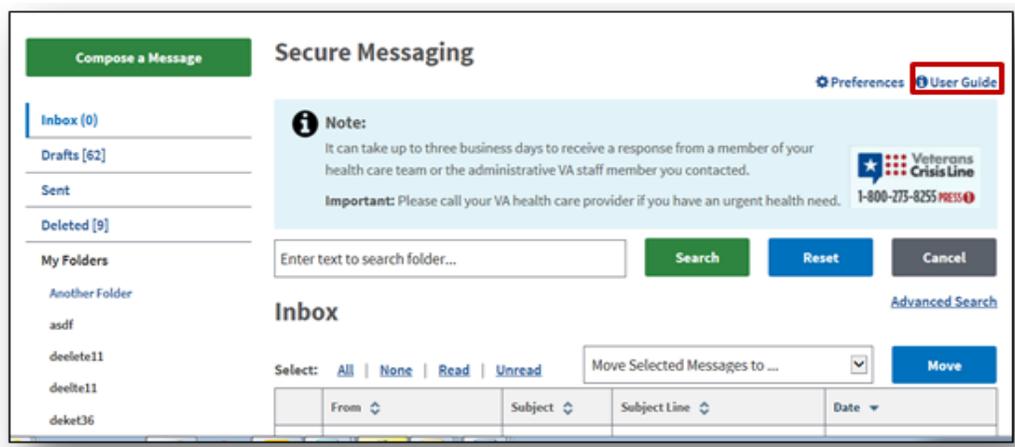


Figure 25: User Guide Link

## **Protecting Your Personal Information**

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The Department of Veterans Affairs takes safeguarding and protecting your information very seriously. You should, too. You control access to your personal information. It is your responsibility to keep your information private and protected. To help protect your privacy, My HealthVet provides some important points to remember. Visit [Protecting Your Personal Information](#) to learn more.

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## Where to Find Help

### Frequently Asked Questions, Help and Contact MHV

1. Select **FAQ** to go to **Frequently Asked Questions** and get commonly asked questions and answers about Secure Messaging.
2. Select **Help & User Guides** for general guidance on using My HealtheVet and User Guides for My HealtheVet features (Figure 26).

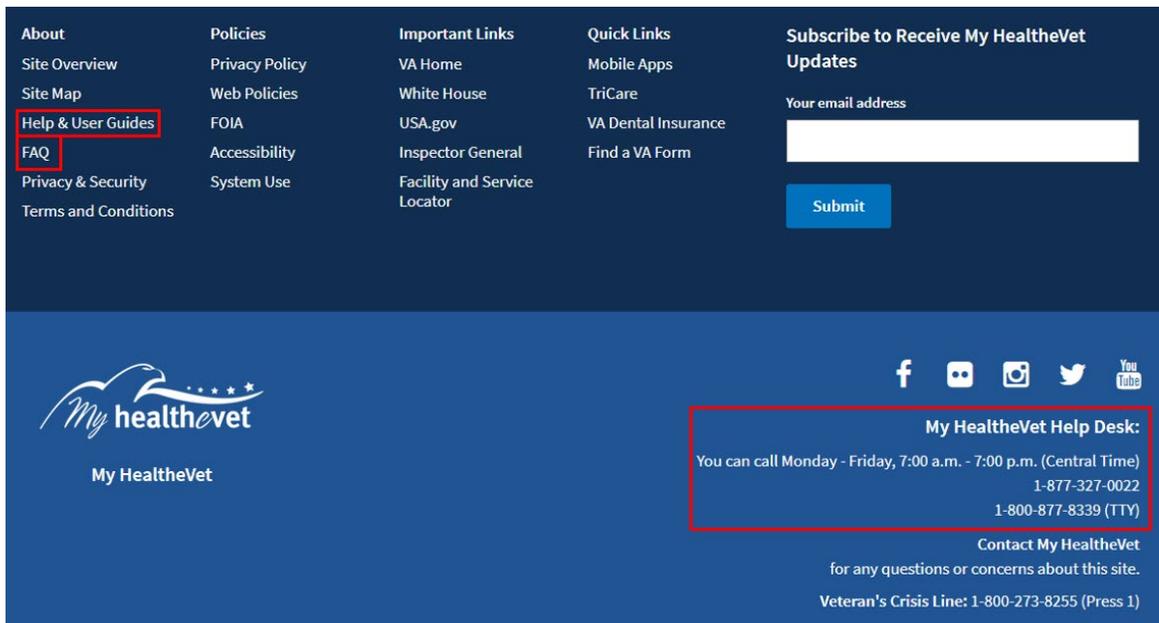


Figure 26: FAQ, Help and Contact information

3. Select **Contact** (Figure 27) to send a message to the My HealtheVet Help Desk or contact them at (877) 327-0022 or for TTY dial 711.

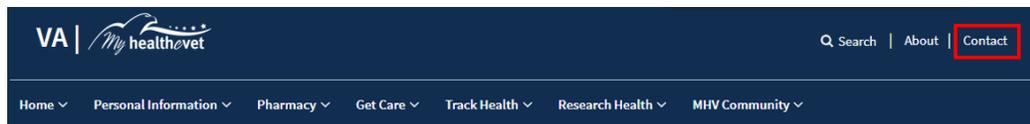


Figure 27: Contact Button