# Secure Messaging User Guide

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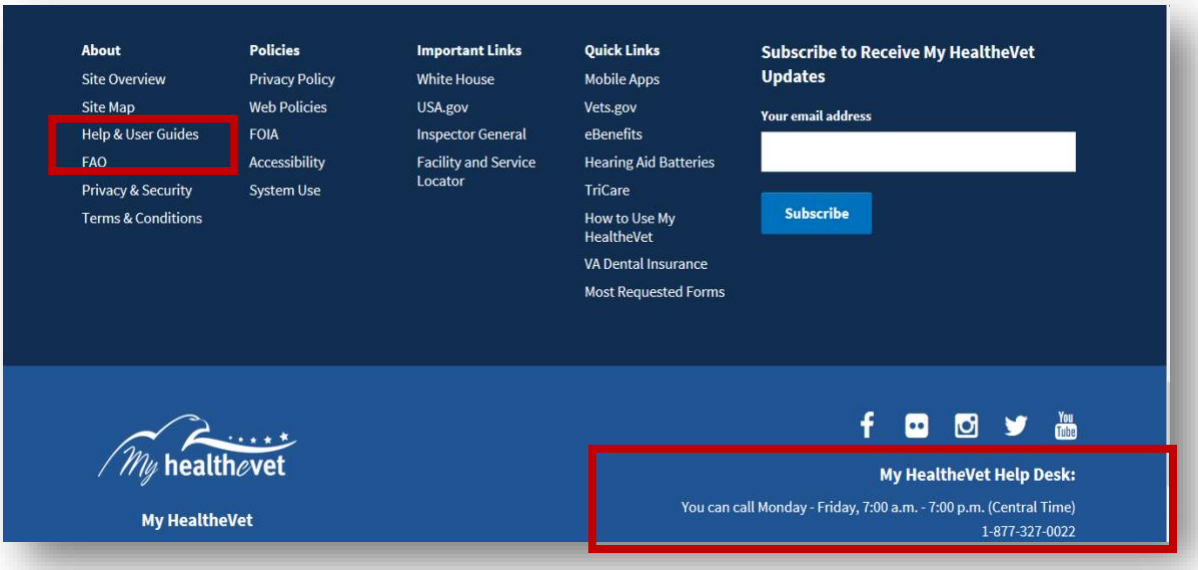
## Where to Find Help

### 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.

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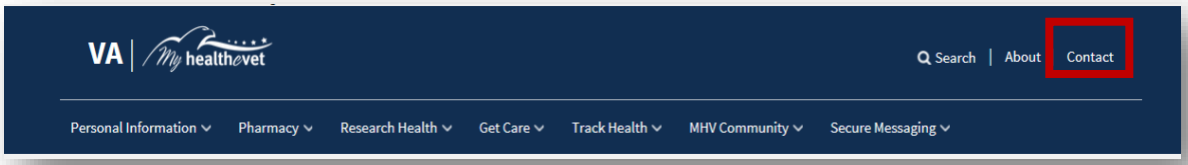
3. Select **Contact** to send a message to the My HealtheVet Help Desk or contact them a (877) 327-0022 (TTY dial 711).

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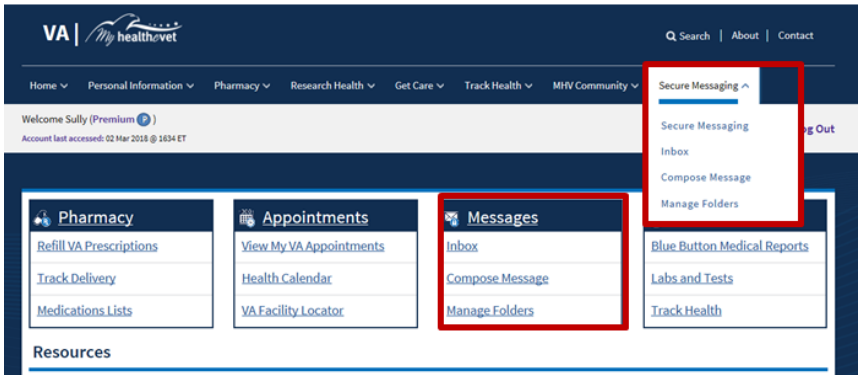
# Secure Messaging Quick Start Guide

## Review/Reply to a Message

**Step 1** – Login to your My HealtheVet Premium account. Login

**Step 2** – Go into your Secure Messaging folder from a link on the home page.




**Step 3** – To open a message in your **Inbox**, select the name under the **From** column. The message displays on the **View Message** page.

**Step 4** – Reply to a message 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 moves to your **Sent** folder.

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## Compose a New Message

**Step 1** – Log in to your My HealtheVet Premium account. Login

**Step 2** – Create a new message by selecting the **Compose Message** button from the Dashboard or **Compose a Message** from your **Inbox**.

**Step 3** – Select the Health Care Team or VA staff you wish to contact by selecting the drop-down arrow for **To.** Only your participating VA Health Care Team and other VA staff will appear in the list.

**Step 4** – Select the Subject of your message by selecting the drop-down arrow for **Subject**:

**Step 5** – Type your message.

**Step 6** – 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).

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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:

- Login to My HealtheVet
- Select the **PERSONAL INFORMATION** tab
- Select the **My Profile** sub-tab
- Under **What is Your Relationship to VA**, if you use the VA Health Care System, make sure you select the **VA Patient** checkbox
    - If **VA Patient** is not checked and you use the VA Health Care System, select this box
- Select the **Save** button at the bottom of the screen

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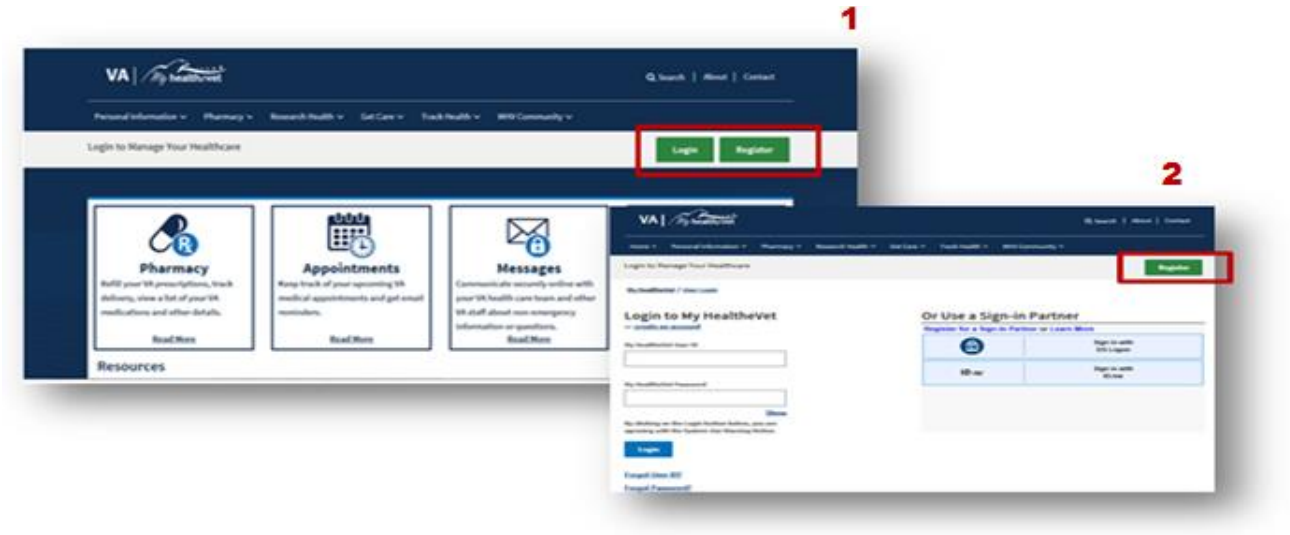
# Getting Started with Secure Messaging

## Step 1 – Log in to Secure Messaging

1) Log in to your My HealtheVet Premium account by selecting the **Login** button on the 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 complete the registration form. 2) Enter your My HealtheVet User ID and Password on the Login page. Or, log in using a Sign-in Partner.

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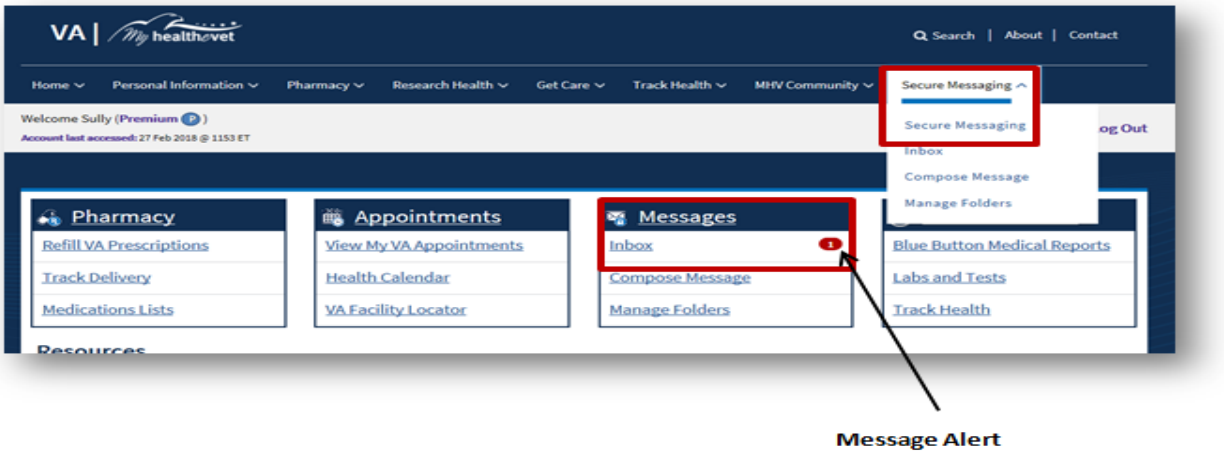
## Step 2 – Access Secure Messaging

After logging in, there are three ways you can access Secure Messaging:

1) Select **Messages** or the **Inbox** link on the dashboard
2) Or, 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.

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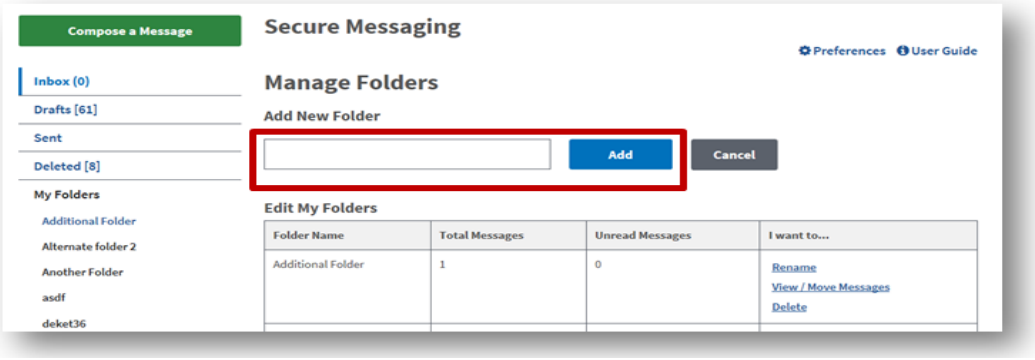
## Step 3 - Navigating Secure Messaging

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

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

2. 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.

3. Create your own folders: Under **Manage Folders**, enter a name for your folder and select the **Add** button.



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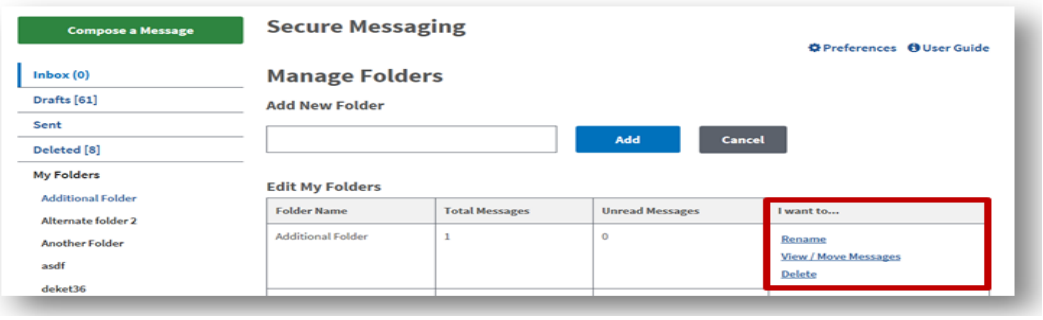
Later, if you want to make changes to a folder you have created (for example rename the folder), select the desired link under the **I want to...** column and then make the desired changes.

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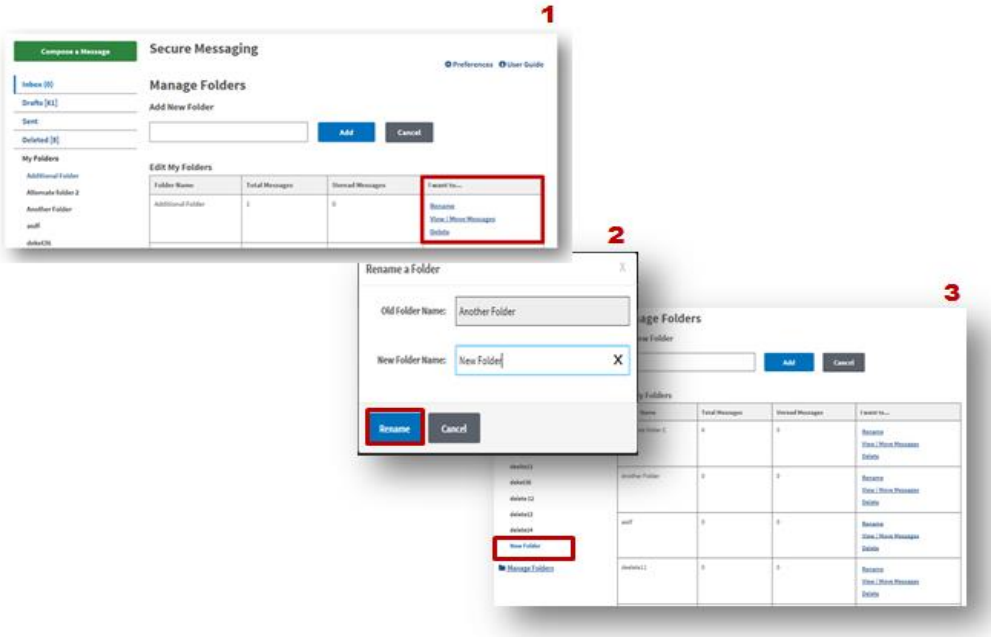
a. <u>Rename a Folder:</u> 1) Select the **Rename** link under the **I want to...** column. 2) In the **Rename a Folder** window, enter the new name of the folder. 3) Select the **Rename** button. The new name of the folder will display as a quick link.

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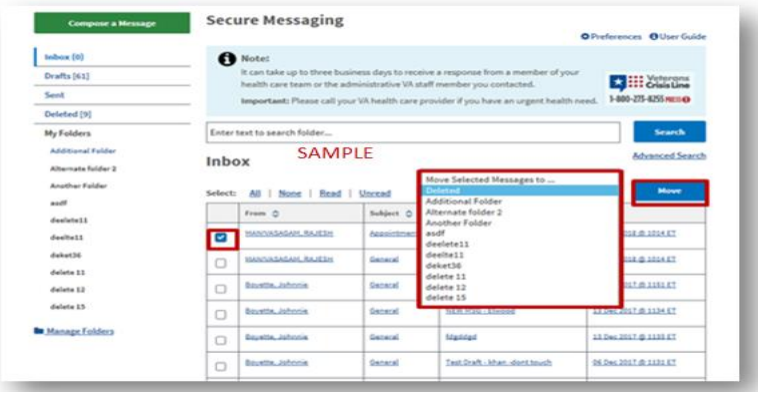
b. Move a Message: 1) Under **Manage Folders,** select the **View/Move Message** link. 2) Move the selected messages to a folder by selecting the drop-down arrow under **Move Selected Messages to...** 3) Select from the list where you want to move the message (Deleted or one of your other personal folders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




**Note**: Secure Messages stay in the Deleted folder for 12 months. After 12 months, they are maintained in the Secure Messaging database, but no longer visible in your account. To obtain copies of older messages, contact the Release of Information Office at your local VA health care facility. For the nearest facility location, use the VA Facility Locator.

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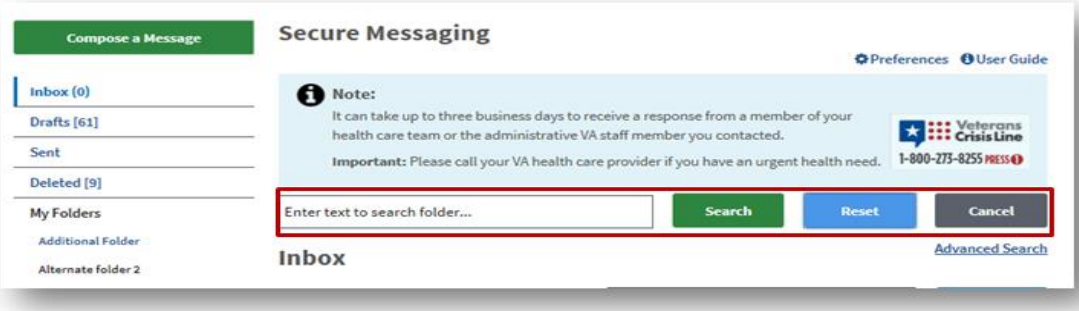
4. Search for messages: You can search for a particular message. 1) Enter text in the search box. 2) Click on the **Search** button. The **Reset** button clears the text in the search box. The **Cancel** button, cancels the search.

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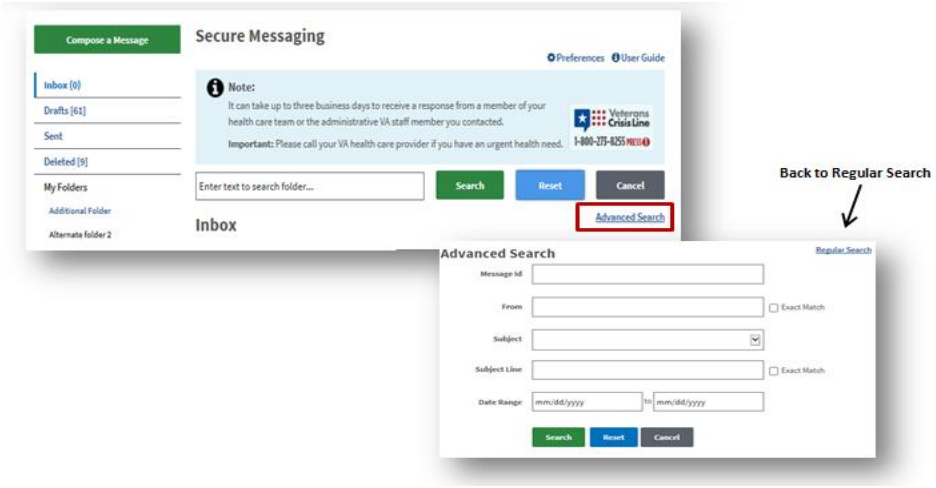
An advanced search is available. Select the **Advanced Search** link and enter the criteria on the next page.

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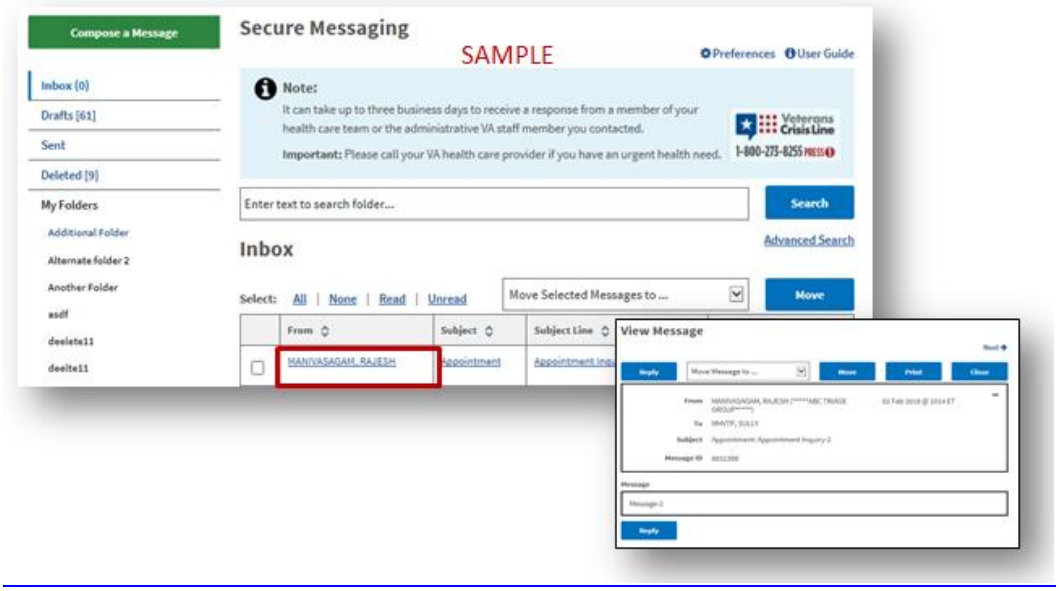
## Step 4 - Open Messages from the Inbox

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

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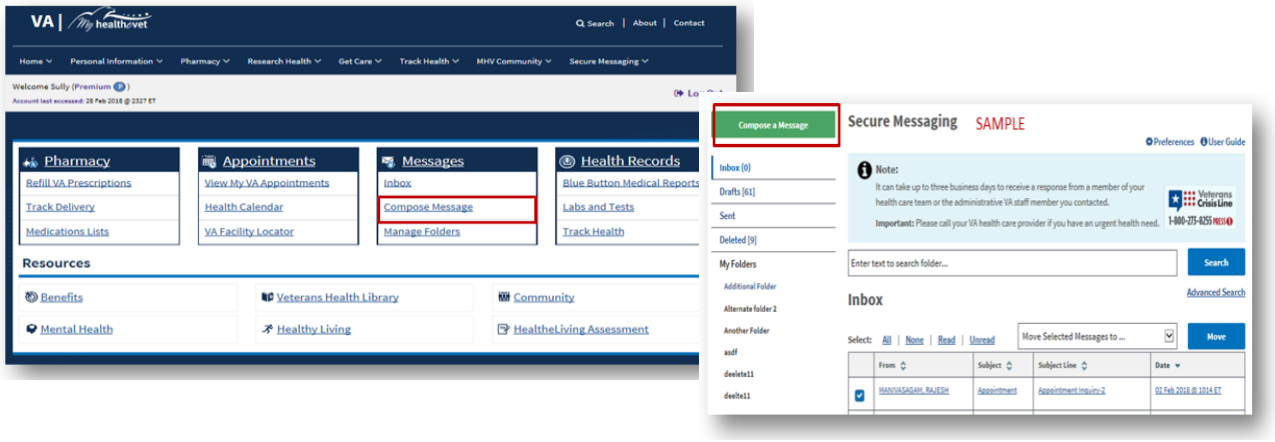
## Message Management

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.

## Step 1 - Compose and Send a New Message

Create a new message by selecting the **Compose Message** button from the Dashboard or **Compose a Message** form your **Inbox**.

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To create a new message, fill in the appropriate information:

1. Select the Health Care Team you wish to contact by selecting the drop-down arrow for **To.** Only your participating VA Health Care Team will appear in the list.

2. Select the Subject of your message by selecting the drop-down arrow for **Subject**:. You may choose from five options:

   - **General:** Choose this for all other non-urgent issues. **Note**: If you choose General, use the space next to the Subject field to type in additional information about your subject
   - **Appointment:** Choose this to ask about a future or existing appointment
   - **Medication**: Choose this to renew a medication or ask a question about medication
   - **Test:** Choose this to ask about a test result or about a future test or procedure
   - **Education:** Choose this when sending educational material

3. Type your message.

4. When you have completed the message, select the **Send** button. You have the option to save the message as a draft (select the **Save as Draft** button) or cancel the message (select **Cancel** button).

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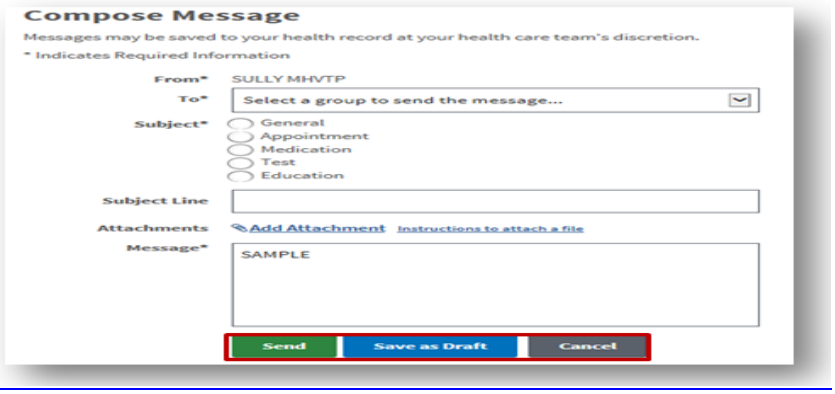


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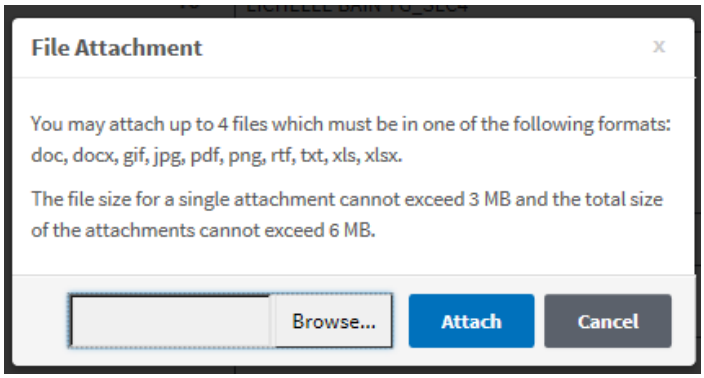
## Step 1 (a) - Include an Attachment with Your Message

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:

1. Select the Health Care Team you wish to contact by selecting the drop-down arrow for **To.** Only your participating VA Health Care Team will appear in the list.

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




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

4. Then select the **Attach** button.

In order 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 at a later date.

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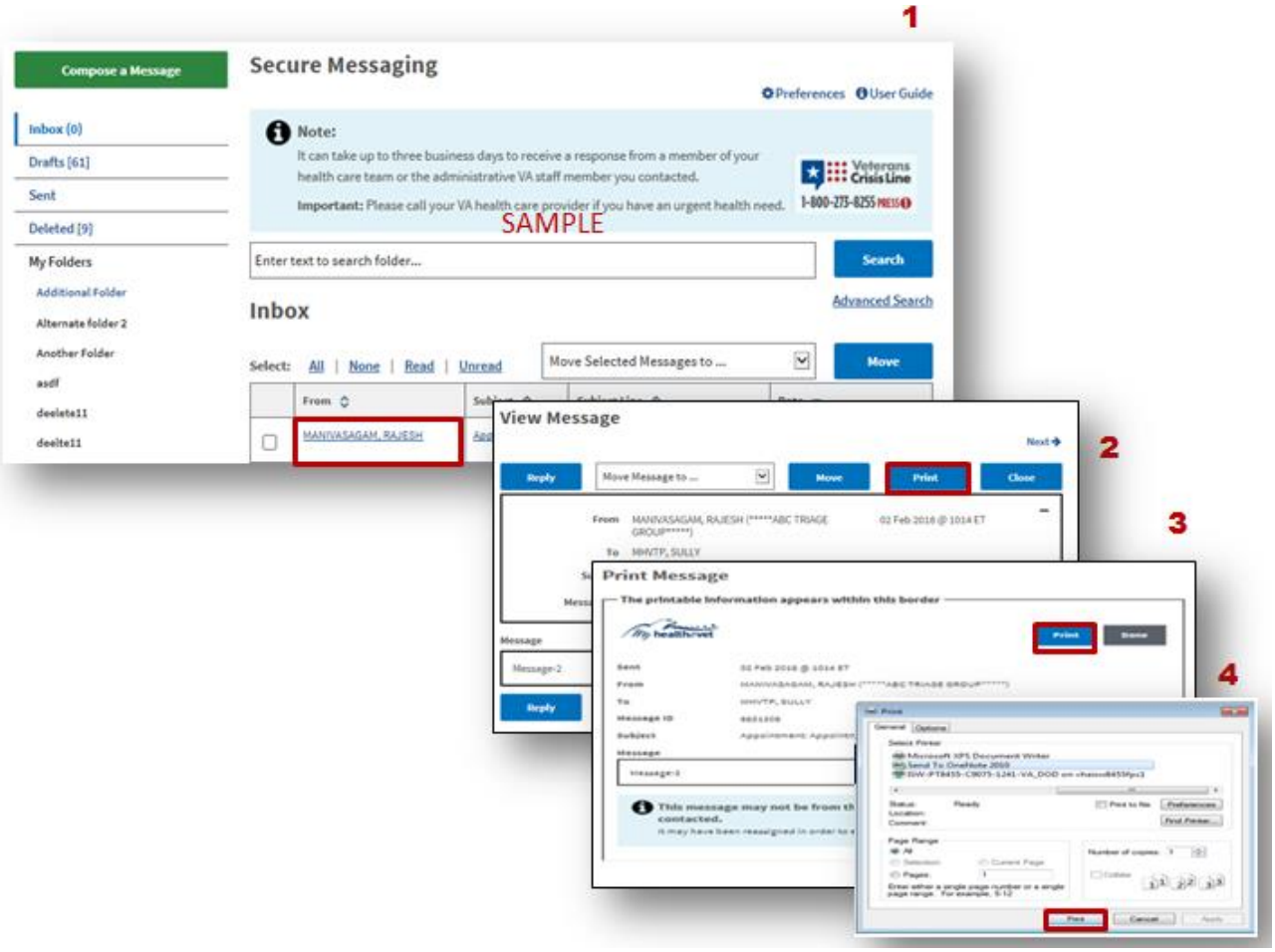
You can print messages. 1) Select the name under the **From** column of the message you want to open. 2) On the **View Message** page, select the **Print** button. 3) Select the **Print** button on the **Print Message** page. The print window opens in your browser. 4) Select the **Print** button.

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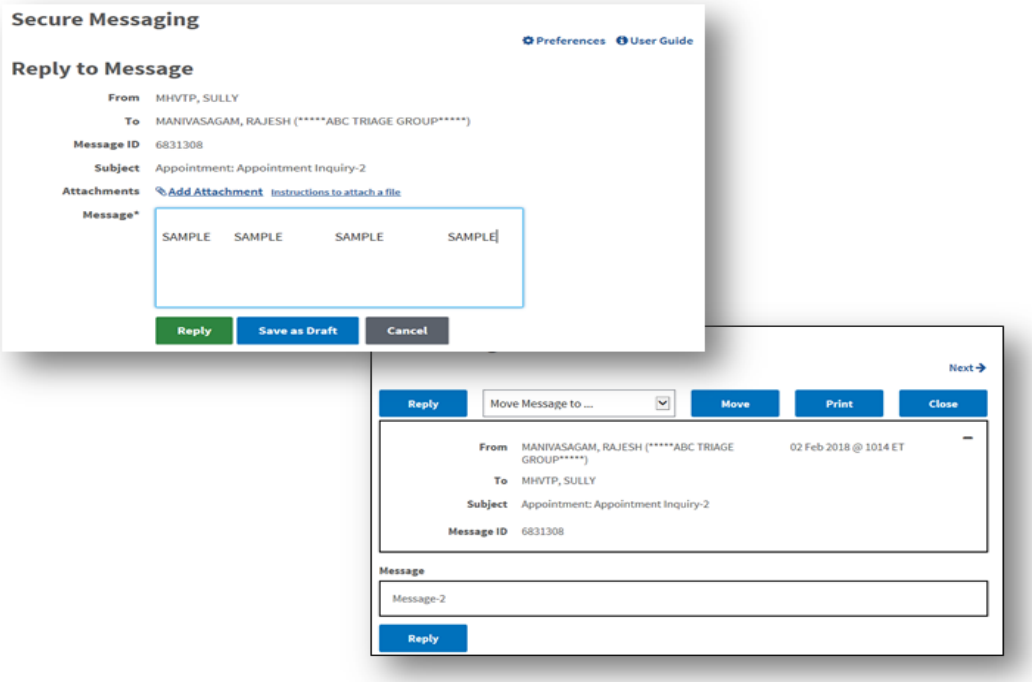
## Step 3 - Reply to Messages

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.

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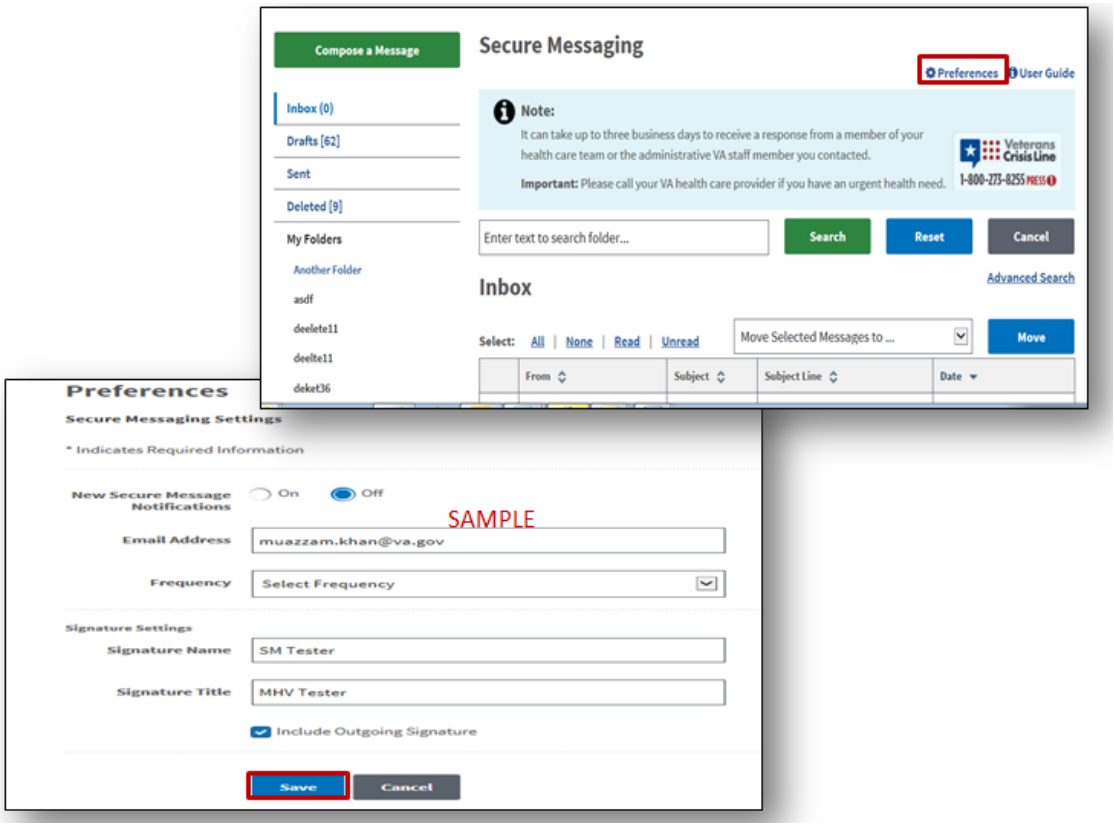
**User Preferences**

My HealtheVet Secure Messaging allows you to set various preferences within your account. 1) To access the Preferences section, select the **Preferences** link. 2) On the **Preferences** page, select your preferences for message notifications to your personal email and Signature settings for a signature block. When you are finished selecting your preferences, select the **Save** button.

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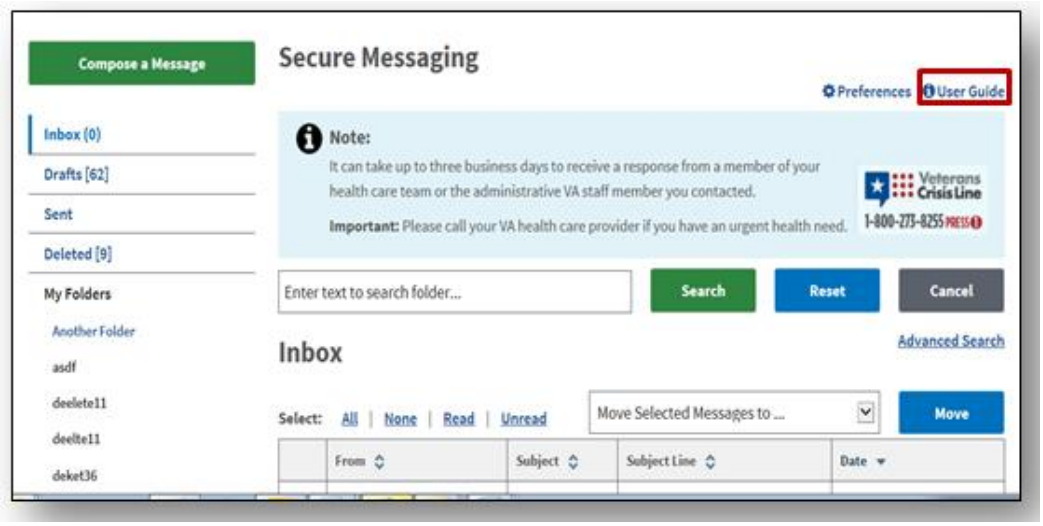
## Additional Information on Secure Messaging

*** * * 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 link located at the top left of the screen to review this guide.

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**Protecting Your Personal Information** - 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 HealtheVet provides some important points to remember. Visit Protecting Your Personal Information to learn more.

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