GUN SAFETY MATTERS ...

because no one can unfire a firearm

Simple actions you can take to keep your family safe
Owning a gun is both a right and a responsibility. The power is in your hands to safely handle and store firearms in your home. You should also ensure only authorized family members have access and are educated about gun safety and responsible storage.

For someone in crisis or a child who does not understand the harm a gun can cause, a safely stored firearm can mean the difference between a tragic outcome and a life saved.

Though many Veterans are well-versed in gun safety, all Veterans and their families should understand who is authorized to access firearms and how to properly handle and store firearms in their home.

A 2012 study showed that firearms could be found in roughly 34% of homes nationwide.

-- General Social Survey, 2013

Firearms — along with poisonings, motor vehicle crashes, falls, and suffocations — were one of the top five leading causes of injury-related deaths nationwide in 2013.

-- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2013

The risk of unintentional firearm deaths among youths drops by 80% when guns and ammunition are stored separately in a lockbox.

-- Journal of the American Medical Association, 2005
Gun Safety Checklist

Knowing how to properly care for and store your gun and ammunition can reduce the risk of unintentional firearm deaths.

Take these simple steps to keep your family safe:

☐ Make sure firearms cannot be accessed by children and unauthorized adults by keeping guns locked and unloaded when not in use.

☐ Store ammunition separately from firearms and out of reach of children and unauthorized adults.

☐ Regularly reassess steps to ensure safe storage and use of firearms, especially during periods of increased stress or emotional crisis.

REQUEST A GUNLOCK
from your local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator or VA Police Office.

VA Pittsburgh Suicide Prevention Coordinators: 412-360-6515
University Drive campus | Building 29, room 1M-109

Find more SPCs at VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator.
Warning Signs of Distress

There are times when taking additional steps to ensure firearm safety are particularly important.

Take extra precaution when someone in your home is:

- Increasingly isolated or violent
- Has experienced a major life event such as a divorce, illness or loss of a job
- Depressed
- Experiencing an emotional crisis or displaying significant behavioral change
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol or increasing the use of alcohol or drugs

At a minimum, all firearms should be stored unloaded and locked when not in use. Other storage options may include locked gun safes, cabinets, or storage cases. Temporary off-site storage may be advisable if there are concerns about storing a firearm in the home.

If you or a Veteran you know is in crisis, call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text to 838255.