



Owl's Nest Recovery

ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTER



FIND YOUR FREEDOM

The Veteran's
Guide to
Addiction
Treatment

No matter what someone's years in the military looked like, getting out is often a whole new battle. The sudden lack of community, structure, and purpose, plus being left alone to reconcile memories, feelings, and the aftermath of active duty years can be a slippery slope into a dangerous situation for vets without a good support system and solid foundation of personal wellness. It's not uncommon for this perfect storm of factors to lead to substance use, growing mental health struggles, or a combination of both.

We know that veterans are all individuals too, and every individual seeking addiction treatment comes with their own personal history, challenges, and feelings. But at Owl's Nest Recovery Center, we recognize that unique factors contribute to substance abuse and co-occurring mental health struggles in veterans – and we created our veterans treatment program to address those factors head-on, so every vet has the opportunity and tools to find their best path forward.

If you're a veteran struggling with addiction, you can find true freedom. Learn more about how veterans treatment is different and what we do at Owl's Nest to get it right.



Why Should I Attend a Veteran Specific Recovery Program?

Veterans absolutely don't have to attend a veteran-specific addiction treatment program to find a fulfilling and successful path to recovery. But many choose to because the same unique factors that lead to the prevalence of substance abuse in veterans are the things that need acknowledging, addressing, and healing to truly be free of addiction and co-occurring mental health struggles.

A veteran-specific treatment program might be best for you or your loved one if:

- You feel that isolation from the military community has been a large contributing factor to your substance use or mental health struggles after your time in the service.
- You use substances to deal with combat or service-related incidents.
- You've found that other people you've sought help from don't seem to relate to what you need help with or your experiences.
- You feel that the VA hasn't provided adequate support for your needs, or you're uncomfortable with your treatment being connected to your service record.
- You know that struggling to reconcile or make sense of your time in the service is keeping you from healing.

At Owl's Nest Recovery, the structure, support, and resources in our veterans treatment program are designed to tackle all of those challenges. Our team is led by veterans, so you know you're not walking into another situation where you feel out of place. You have the opportunity to heal within your community, with people who understand you and have experienced the same things.



What's Different About Addiction in Veterans?

When it comes down to it, veterans that struggle with addiction and mental health challenges face very similar obstacles to healing as people in the general population – but our treatment begins by addressing the distinct combination of threats that lead veterans to substance abuse and co-occurring mental health problems in the first place.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that 26.2% of veterans struggle with mental illness or a substance use disorder, compared to the approximately 13% of the general population that falls into the same category. Veterans proclivity for substance use disorder skyrockets after their separation from active duty for three major (and often co-occurring) reasons:

First, though dangerous levels of substance use – namely alcohol abuse – are in fact common amongst active duty service members, UCMJ laws strictly upheld by chains of command with frequent drug testing prevent service members from using illicit substances while on active duty.





Second, no matter what someone's time in the service looked like, the combined isolation and change from their active duty day-to-day life plus new, unreconciled, or complicated feelings about their service can trigger a new mental state for many vets – and depending on the severity, can uncover dormant or acute unaddressed mental health challenges.

Third, upon leaving active duty, more than two thirds of veterans report some kind of service-related pain, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Veterans are prescribed opioids at nearly twice the rate of the general population – and those who aren't often seek access to them or other drugs to control their pain.

All together, alcohol consumption with no repercussions or limits, less the camaraderie and social aspect of drinking with other service members, and the ability to try or rely on new substances after leaving active duty whether experimentally or to cope with mental or physical pains, often makes it difficult for veterans to control their substance use before it becomes an addiction.

Veterans also often experience both internal and external barriers to treatment that make it common for them to struggle on their own for long periods of time before they seek help. According to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in their evaluation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, only about half of OEF/OIF veterans with a clear perceived need for mental health help ever seek treatment.

While that number doesn't specify how many veterans need help with substance use disorders, it does shine a light on one of the factors that veteran-specific treatment is designed to address: Many – if not most – veterans are adverse to seeking help because doing so during their time on active duty would lead to retaliation, discrimination, punishment, and judgment – both culturally and professionally.



We know that seeking treatment for mental health or substance use struggles does not deserve any stigma, shame, or judgment. Recovery for all addicts, but especially veterans, relies on first healing this cultural mindset. At Owl's Nest Recovery, we know it's paramount to help our veterans in treatment rediscover connection, trust, and honesty within their military-based community and greater community to find a better path forward.

Getting in the door at treatment is the first and biggest step towards freedom from addiction, and at Owl's Nest, we're prepared to help you step over any obstacle in your way. If you or a veteran you love is open to beginning treatment, we can give you a hand with making sure your benefits cover your program or anything else that feels insurmountable.





At Owl's Nest Recovery, our treatment program is designed to heal addiction from the source rather than giving a prescription treatment to just be better for the future. For veterans, that means taking a look at all of the factors above that make their addiction experience different – and then taking yet another step back to examine what happened to get them there. We know that more often than not, addiction is just an individual's way of coping with an underlying tangle of things they have no other way to cope with. Finding out what those things are – and healing them – are the basis of trauma-informed treatment. That's why our trauma-informed treatment program always begins with asking someone what happened to them, not what's wrong with them.

Trauma-informed treatment is critical for veterans because we know everything from the stress and brutality of normal military culture to seeing combat and everything in between can make immeasurable impacts on a person – but we also know that no two veterans experience it in the same way.

The VA reports that 13.5% of OEF/OIF veterans are screened positively for PTSD. That number probably doesn't come as a surprise – but it may come as a surprise to those who haven't served that within that percentage, the number of veterans who were deployed and the number of veterans who did not deploy are nearly the same.

At Owl's Nest, we understand that treating, healing, and supporting the veteran community has to come with the understanding that PTSD and mental health struggles after military service are not limited to combat trauma. Our veterans treatment program takes into account the stigmas, isolation, and judgments that can come with needing help to cope with any kind of experience during your time on active duty, or since you've separated. We use trauma-informed treatment because every thing you've been through or feel is valid, no matter what. We know that no one can find their personal path to healing without addressing their personal wounds.

With trauma-informed treatment as the basis of the Owl's Nest veterans program, we're able to create a personalized and effective path to recovery for every veteran.

What is Trauma-Informed
Treatment and Why is it
Important for Veterans?





What Do I Do Next?

If you're a veteran struggling with addiction of any kind or your mental health, it's not too late to find freedom and fulfillment in life again. There is a path to recovery for you – and there is still a community for you after active duty.

Our veterans treatment program at Owl's Nest Recovery Center is a mixed modality program, meaning that we make sure you're on the correct path for you, every step of the way. We utilize everything from medication-assisted treatment to yoga to make sure you have the tools for success. Our team will work with you to build a plan that may extend far beyond your time at Owl's Nest. We won't just kick you out of the nest; we'll give you the wings you need to fly.

If you're ready, reach out now.



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