



VA Community Care Network

Home Health Aide Program

How Veterans Qualify & How Always Best Care Gets Authorized
Provided by Always Best Care Shalimar — Owned & Operated by a Disabled Veteran

What Is the VA Community Care Network?

The VA Community Care Network (CCN) is the VA’s system for authorizing private, community-based healthcare providers — including home care agencies — to deliver services to eligible veterans. The VA does not directly employ Home Health Aides or Homemakers, so they authorize and pay agencies like Always Best Care to provide this care on their behalf.

This is a health-based program — eligibility is determined entirely by clinical need, not by the veteran’s income or assets. Florida is served by Optum Region 3 under the CCN.

Key Facts	Details
Who pays	VA pays Always Best Care directly — not the veteran
Eligibility basis	Clinical need only — no income or asset test
Typical hours	11 to 16 hours per week (no maximum — 24/7 care possible if needed)
Florida CCN administrator	Optum, Region 3 (888) 901-6613
Services covered	Personal care, bathing, dressing, meal prep, mobility, safety, respite care

How a Veteran Qualifies: Step-by-Step

Step 1 — Enroll in VA Health Care

The veteran must be enrolled in the VA health care system. If not yet enrolled, they can apply online at va.gov/health-care/apply or visit the nearest VA facility. This is the essential first step — without enrollment, no CCN services can be authorized.

Step 2 — Schedule a VA Primary Care Appointment

The veteran, family member, or trusted designee (**Always Best Care**), schedules an appointment with their VA Primary Care Provider (PCP). During the visit, they should raise concerns about difficulty with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, mobility, or safety at home. The PCP will evaluate whether in-home support is clinically appropriate.

Tip for families: Come prepared with specific examples of daily challenges the veteran faces. The more clearly the need is documented, the stronger the case for authorization.

Step 3 — VA Social Worker Assessment

A VA social worker conducts a needs assessment to evaluate the veteran's daily living requirements. This involves the veteran, their family, and the VA care team working together to determine what level of support is needed. The social worker will document the veteran's specific deficits in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). An **Always Best Care** representative can attend the assessment and advocate for the veteran throughout.

ADLs commonly assessed include: bathing, dressing, grooming, feeding, toileting, transferring/mobility, and medication management.

Step 4 — VA Issues a Referral & Authorization

If the VA care team determines that Home Health Aide services are appropriate, the veteran's VA medical center generates an approved referral and authorization. This is then sent to Optum/TriWest (Optum Region 3 - CCN administrator for Florida) for processing.

Critical: No care should be rendered without a confirmed written authorization on file. Claims without prior authorization will be denied and may be the member's responsibility for payment.

Step 5 — Provider Is Contacted & Care Begins

Once authorized, one of two things happens: the VA contacts a provider like **Always Best Care** directly to schedule care for the veteran, or the veteran self-schedules with an authorized CCN provider. **Always Best Care Shalimar** is an authorized and credentialed provider through the Optum CCN network to receive these referrals.

Step 6 — Ongoing Care & Authorization Renewals

Authorizations are typically issued for a set period (often 180 days to one year). Before the authorization expires, a Request for Services (RFS) must be submitted to the VA for renewal. If additional hours are needed beyond what is authorized, a new RFS must be approved before providing expanded services. **Always Best Care Shalimar** can complete the RFS on behalf of the veteran or their family.

How Always Best Care Gets Authorized to Receive CCN Referrals

To receive VA CCN referrals and be paid directly by the VA, **Always Best Care Shalimar** must be credentialed as an approved CCN provider through Optum/TriWest. Here's what that requires:

1. Apply to Optum/TriWest at <https://www.myvaccn.com> or vaccn.triwest.com — complete the provider enrollment application
2. Submit required documentation: business license, liability insurance, caregiver certifications, and agency credentials
3. Complete the VA's credentialing and background check requirements for all caregivers
4. Sign the CCN provider agreement — this sets billing rates and service expectations
5. Begin receiving referrals from VA social workers and care coordinators

Optum Contact: <https://www.myvaccn.com> | **Provider Services:** 1-888-CCN-TRIW (1-877-901-6613)

TriWest Contact: vaccn.triwest.com | **Provider Services:** 1-877-CCN-TRIW (1-877-226-8749)

Always Best Care Shalimar Billing & Compliance Rules

- Never render services without a written, approved authorization on file
- Do not balance bill the veteran — VA/TriWest payment is payment in full
- Submit claims through Optum/TriWest's designated claims portal within the required timeframe
- Track authorization expiration dates and submit renewals (RFS) before they lapse
- Document all care provided accurately — the VA may audit service records
- If a veteran's needs increase, request a new authorization before expanding hours

CCN vs. Aid & Attendance — Side-by-Side Comparison

	CCN Home Health Aide	Aid & Attendance
Who pays the agency	VA pays Always Best Care directly	Veteran pays from monthly VA benefit
Eligibility basis	Clinical need only	Military service + financial means test
Income/asset test	No	Yes — net worth limit \$163,699 (2026)
Hours authorized	11–16+ hrs/week based on need	Veteran decides how to spend benefit

	CCN Home Health Aide	Aid & Attendance
Agency requirement	Must be credentialed CCN/Optum/TriWest provider	Accept private pay from veteran
Best for	Veterans with documented ADL deficits	Veterans needing ongoing flexible support

Key Local VA Contacts for Referral Relationships

Building relationships with these offices is essential — VA social workers are the gatekeepers who initiate CCN home care referrals.

Office	Address	Phone
Okaloosa County Veteran Services	1250 N. Eglin Pkwy, Shalimar, FL	(850) 651-7258
Shalimar Vet Center	4 Shalimar Court, Shalimar, FL	(850) 651-1000
VA Affair Manager	Shalimar, FL	(850) 651-7258
Eglin VA Clinic	Shalimar, FL	Contact VA.gov for current number

Ready to Start Serving Veterans Through the CCN?

As a disabled veteran and local business owner, my mission is to make sure no veteran in Okaloosa, Walton, and Santa Rosa Counties goes without the care they've earned. Always Best Care Shalimar is here to guide families through every program available — CCN, Aid & Attendance, and beyond.

 **Call or email Always Best Care Shalimar for a free, no-obligation consultation: [\(850\) 797-8710](tel:8507978710) or Shalimar@abc-seniors.com**