



Folks driving into downtown Birmingham along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street this morning probably noticed a new blue sign or two looking at them as they approached 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue N. They may have also noticed a lot of folks standing at the corner of 22<sup>nd</sup> St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue N., catty-corner from the home of *The Birmingham News* and *AL.com*.

Once you saw the buses pulling up - and did a little digging online - it all started to make sense. As of today, all veterans and visitors utilizing the [Birmingham, AL Veterans Medical Center](#) located at 700 19<sup>th</sup> St. South will need to park on the city's north side and take shuttles to the facility. There is no cost for them to park in the deck [according to the VA's website](#).

[As Mike Tomberlin reported in \*The News\* back in January](#), the VA needed to secure new parking options to replace the 799 spaces they leased from [Children's of Alabama](#). Their new facility - the Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children - [opened in early August](#), necessitating the access to the spaces itself.

The VA's current solution, the [Birmingham Parking Authority's Parking Deck #4](#), was built in 1984 and contains 673 spaces. According to [a response to a question on the medical center's Facebook page](#), the move is a temporary one "until the VA builds its clinical annex."