



VETERANS BENEFITS TIMETABLE
Information for Veterans Recently Separated from Active Military Service

BENEFITS AND SERVICES		TIME LIMIT	WHERE TO APPLY
Disability Compensation: VA pays monthly compensation to veterans for disabilities incurred or aggravated during military service. This benefit is not subject to Federal or State income tax. Entitlement is established from the date of separation if the claim is filed within one year from separation. Generally, military retirement pay is reduced by any VA compensation received. Income from Special Separation Benefits (SSB) and Voluntary Separation Incentives (VSI) affects the amount of VA compensation paid.		None	Any VA office or call 1-800-827-1000 or file at www.va.gov
Disability Pension: This income-based benefit is paid to veterans with honorable war-time service who are permanently and totally disabled due to nonservice-connected disabilities or who are 65 or older.		None	
Medical: VA provides a wide range of health care services to veterans including treatment for military sexual trauma, and for conditions possibly related to exposure to Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, and other environmental hazards in the Persian Gulf. Generally, veterans must be enrolled in VA's Health Care System to receive care.		None	
Combat Veterans: VA provides free health care for veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, for any illness possibly related to their service in that theater.	If discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003	Five years from date of discharge from active duty	Any VA medical facility or call 1-877-222-8387 or file at www.va.gov
	If discharged from active duty before January 28, 2003, and were not enrolled as of January 28, 2008	Until January 27, 2011	
Dental: Veterans may receive one-time dental treatment if they were not provided treatment within 90 days before separation from active duty. The time limit does not apply to veterans with dental conditions resulting from service-connected wounds or injuries.		180 days from separation	
Education and Training: Up to 36 months of benefits for:	Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty (Chapter 30)	10 years from release from last period of active duty. Limited extensions available.	
	OR Post- 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)	15 years from last discharge or separation. Limited extensions available.	
	OR Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (Chapter - 1606)	14 years from the date of eligibility for the program, or until released from the Selected Reserve or National Guard, whichever occurs first. Some extensions available if activated.	
	OR Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP/Chapter 1607)	No time limit as long as individual remains in the same level of the Ready Reserve from which called to active duty. There are exceptions for discharge due to disability or transfer from the IRR to the Selected Reserve. REAP participants who separated from the Selected Reserve after completing their service contract under other than dishonorable conditions are now eligible for REAP benefits for 10 years after they are separated from the Selected Reserve.	
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment: VA helps veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare for, find and keep suitable employment. For veterans with serious service-connected disabilities, VA also offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Some of the services offered are: job search, vocational evaluation, career exploration, vocational training, education training and rehabilitation service.		Generally 12 years from VA notice to veteran of at least a 10 percent disability rating.	Any VA office or call 1-800-827-1000 or file at www.va.gov
Home Loan: Veterans with qualifying service are eligible for VA home loan services including guaranteed loans for the purchase of a home, manufactured home, manufactured home and lot, certain types of condominiums, or to build, repair, and improve homes. Certain disabled veterans can receive grants to have their homes specially adapted to their needs. Native Americans living on Trust Land may qualify for a direct home loan.		None	Any VA office or call 1-800-827-1000

**Medical Benefits Package
(Standard Benefits)**
<http://www1.va.gov/health/>

VA's medical benefits package provides the following health care services to all enrolled veterans.

Preventive Care Services

Immunizations
Physical Examinations
Health Care Assessments
Screening Tests
Health Education Programs

Ambulatory (Outpatient) Diagnostic and Treatment Services

Emergency outpatient care in VA facilities
Medical
Surgical (including reconstructive/plastic surgery as a result of disease or trauma)
Chiropractic Care
Mental Health
Bereavement Counseling
Substance Abuse

Hospital (Inpatient) Diagnostic and Treatment

Emergency inpatient care in VA facilities
Medical
Surgical (including reconstructive/plastic surgery as a result of disease or trauma)
Mental Health
Substance Abuse

Medications and Supplies

Prescription medications
Over-the counter medications
Medical and surgical supplies

Generally, they must be prescribed by a VA provider and be available under VA's national formulary system

Will VA pay for medications written by a non-VA physician?

Generally only veterans with special eligibility, such as veterans receiving Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits, or who are approved by a VA health care facility for Fee Basis are eligible to receive medications at VA expense.

How do I get an Identification Card?

When you apply for enrollment in person at any VA, your picture will be taken for your Veteran Identification Card (VIC) at that time. If you apply via mail or on-line, you will need to go to your local VA medical center and a staff person will take your picture. Once your eligibility for VA health care has been verified, the card will be automatically mailed to you within 7-10 days. To ensure the VIC Card is received at the appropriate address, please be sure we have your correct mailing address. If the U.S. Postal Service cannot deliver the card, it will be returned to the facility where the Veteran requested the card.

The VIC does not contain any sensitive, identifying information such as your social security number or date of birth on the face of the card. The VIC now displays the following special eligibility indicators: Service Connected, Purple Heart, and Former POW (see photo below).

VICs cannot be used as a credit or an insurance card and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA facilities.

If you lose your card or do not receive your card in the mail, contact the VA where your picture was taken to request a new card be sent to you. You may also contact 877-222-VETS (8387) to check on the status of your card.

Sample of the Veterans Identification Card (VIC):



For more information on VA Health Benefits, visit: <http://www1.va.gov/health/> or contact the Orange County Veterans Service Office (www.veterans.ocgov.com) at (714) 567-7450 or email: OCVSO@hcs.ocgov.com



What Is VA Pension?

Pension is a benefit paid to wartime veterans with limited income, and who are permanently and totally disabled or age 65 or older.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible if:

- you were discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, AND
• you served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war time*, AND
• your countable family income is below a yearly limit set by law, AND
• you are permanently and totally disabled, OR
• you are age 65 or older.

*Note: Anyone who enlists after September 7, 1980, generally must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty. Service from August 2, 1990 to present is considered to be a period of war (Gulf War) in addition to other periods of war such as World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

FAMILY INCOME LIMITS (EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2008)

Table with 2 columns: 'If you are a...' and 'Your yearly income must be less than...'. Rows include categories like 'Veteran with no dependents' (\$11,830), 'Veteran with a spouse or a child' (\$15,493), 'Housebound veteran with no dependents' (\$14,457), etc.

Note: Some income is not counted toward the yearly limit (for example, welfare benefits, some wages earned by dependent children, and Supplemental Security Income.)

How Much Does VA Pay?

VA pays you the difference between your countable family income and the yearly income limit that describes your situation (see chart above). This difference is generally paid in 12 equal monthly payments rounded down to the nearest dollar. Call the toll-free number below for details.

Note: Certain expenses (i.e., medical expenses, education expenses, or expenses related to the last illness or burial of a dependent) paid by you are taken into consideration when arriving at your countable family income.

How Can You Apply?

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-526, Veteran's Application for Compensation and/or Pension. If available, attach copies of dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates) and current medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports). You can also apply online through our web site at http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp.

Related Benefits

- Vocational Rehabilitation Program
Medical Care

For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000 or Visit Our Web Site at www.va.gov.

What Is Death Pension?

Death pension is a benefit paid to eligible dependents of deceased wartime veterans.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible if:

- the deceased veteran was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, **AND**
- he or she served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war*, **AND**
- you are the surviving spouse or unmarried child of the deceased veteran, **AND**
- your countable income is below a yearly income limit set by law.

***Note:** Anyone who enlists after September 7, 1980, generally must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty. Service from August 2, 1990 to present is considered to be a period of war (Gulf War) in addition to other periods of war such as World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

INCOME LIMITS (EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2008)

<i>If you are a...</i>	<i>Your yearly income must be less than...</i>
Surviving spouse with no dependent children	\$ 7,933
Surviving spouse with one dependent child	\$ 10,385
(Add \$2,020 to the limit for EACH additional child)	
Housebound surviving spouse with no dependents	\$ 9,696
Housebound surviving spouse with one dependent	\$12,144
Surviving spouse who needs aid and attendance with no dependents	\$12,681
Surviving spouse who needs aid and attendance with one dependent	\$15,128
Surviving child (no eligible parent)	\$ 2,020

Note: Some income is not counted toward the yearly limit (for example, welfare benefits, some wages earned by dependent children, and Supplemental Security Income)

How Much Does VA Pay?

VA pays you the difference between your countable income and the yearly income limit which describes your situation (see chart above). This difference is generally paid in 12 equal monthly payments rounded down to the nearest dollar. Call the toll-free number below for details.

Note: Certain expenses (i.e., medical expenses, education expenses, or expenses related to the last illness or burial of the veteran or a dependent) paid by you are taken into consideration when arriving at your countable income.

How Can You Apply?

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-534, *Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by Surviving Spouse or Child*. If available, attach copies of dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates).

**For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
or Visit Our Web Site at <http://www.va.gov>.**

What Is VA Disability Compensation?

Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a veteran for disabilities that are a result of or made worse by injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training. Disability compensation is also paid to certain veterans disabled from VA health care.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability and you were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

How Much Does VA Pay?

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges from \$123 to \$2,673 per month, depending on how disabled you are.

Note: *You may be paid additional amounts, in certain instances, if:*

- you have very severe disabilities or loss of limb(s)
- you have a spouse, child(ren), or dependent parent(s)
- you have a seriously disabled spouse

How Can You Apply?

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-526, *Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension*. ***If you have any of the following material, please attach it to your application:***

- Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent)
- Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)
- Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports)

You can also apply online through our web site at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>.

Related Benefits

Priority Medical Care
Vocational Rehabilitation
Clothing Allowance
Grants for Specially Adapted Housing
Automobile Grant & Adaptive Equipment
Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
Federal Employment Preference
State/Local Veterans Benefits
Military Exchange & Commissary Privileges

**For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
or Visit Our Web Site at <http://www.va.gov>.**



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

What Is DIC?

DIC is a monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of a

- military service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training, OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease, OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a non service-related injury or disease, and who was receiving, or was entitled to receive, VA Compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling
 - for at least 10 years immediately before death, OR
 - since the veteran's release from active duty and for at least five years immediately preceding death, OR
 - for at least one year before death if the veteran was a former prisoner of war who died after September 30, 1999.

Who Is Eligible?

The **surviving spouse** if he or she:

- validly married the veteran before January 1, 1957, OR
- was married to a service member who died on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training, OR
- married the veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service in which the disease or injury that caused the veteran's death began or was aggravated, OR
- was married to the veteran for at least one year, OR
- had a child with the veteran, AND
- cohabited with the veteran continuously until the veteran's death or, if separated, was not at fault for the separation, AND
- is not currently remarried.*

Note: A surviving spouse who remarries on or after December 16, 2003, and on or after attaining age 57, is entitled to continue to receive DIC.

The **surviving child(ren)**, if he/she is:

- not included on the surviving spouse's DIC
- unmarried AND
- under age 18, or between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending school.

Note: Certain helpless adult children are entitled to DIC. Call the toll-free number below for the eligibility requirements.

The **surviving parent(s)** may be eligible for an income-based benefit. See our fact sheet, *Parents' DIC*.

How Much Does VA Pay?

The basic monthly rate of DIC is \$1,154 for an eligible surviving spouse. The rate is increased for each dependent child, and also if the surviving spouse is housebound or in need of aid and attendance. VA also adds a transitional benefit of \$286 to the surviving spouse's monthly DIC if there are children under age 18. The amount is based on a family unit, not individual children. Benefit rate tables, including those for children alone and parents, can be found on the Internet at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates> or call the toll-free number below.

How Should a Claimant Apply?

Claimants should complete VA Form 21-534 *Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child*.

What Are Some Related Benefits?

Health Care (CHAMPVA)
Home Loan Guaranty

Federal Employment Preference
Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance

**For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
or Visit VA's Web Site at www.va.gov.**