

# Office of General Counsel

## Accreditation Frequently Asked Questions

| [Accreditation and Recognition Search \(http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp\)](http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp) |  
| [Recognition of Organizations \(http://www.va.gov/ogc/recognizedvsos.asp\)](http://www.va.gov/ogc/recognizedvsos.asp) |

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### Attorney Accreditation; Acts Requiring Accreditation

**Question:** I am an attorney accredited by VA and I also operate a law-related business. What are my ethical obligations with regard to my other business interest?

**Response:** There are an increasing number of agents and attorneys seeking VA accreditation to represent claimants on VA benefit claims who also have law-related businesses, such as an accounting, financial planning, referral, or elder care business. When a VA-accredited representative performs law-related services, or controls an organization that does so, there is a heightened potential for ethical conflicts and violations of VA's standards of conduct and state bar rules of professional conduct.

It is a VA-accredited representative's professional responsibility to adequately address all conflicts of interest and obtain informed consent before entering into law-related business transactions with VA claimants. See MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT R. 1.7(a)(2) (conflict of interest exists if "there is a significant risk that the representation ... will be materially limited by ... a personal interest of the lawyer"), 1.8(a), (b), (f), 5.7 (AM. BAR ASS'N 2016), available at [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional\\_responsibility/publications/model\\_rules\\_of\\_professional\\_conc](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/publications/model_rules_of_professional_conduct) (see also 38 C.F.R. § 14.632(c)(11) (VA-accredited representative may not "engage in any [ ] unlawful or unethical conduct"), (d) (VA-accredited attorney shall not "engage in behavior or activities prohibited by the rules of professional conduct of any jurisdiction in which the attorney is licensed to practice law").

It is paramount that a VA-accredited representative "not allow related business interests to affect representation, for example, by referring clients to an enterprise in which the lawyer has an undisclosed financial interest." MODEL RULE 1.7, cmt. [10]. A VA-accredited representative should not "enter into a business transaction with a client" unless specific safeguards are provided, including full disclosure "of the material and reasonably foreseeable ways that the [transaction] could have adverse effects on the interests of that client," and the provision of written advice "of the desirability of seeking ... the advice of independent legal counsel on the transaction." MODEL RULES 1.8(a), 1.7, cmt. [18]. Given the relationship of trust and the imbalance of legal knowledge between the representative and client, it is imperative that the client

understand the risk that the representative “will structure the transaction or give legal advice in a way that favors the lawyer’s interests at the expense of the client.” MODEL RULE 1.8, cmts. [1] and [3].

It is also important to note that, when a representative operates a law-related business in a manner not readily distinguishable from the VA benefits representation, both the business and the representation must be in compliance with VA’s standards of conduct (and, if applicable, the rules of professional conduct for the state in which the attorney is barred). MODEL RULE 5.7(a); see 38 C.F.R. § 14.632(c)(11) and (d). This means that any unlawful or unethical conduct with regard to the law-related business would be considered a violation of VA’s standards of conduct. 38 C.F.R. § 14.632(c)(11). Moreover, even if the business and the representation are distinguishable (for example, through separate entities), the representative must ensure that the client understands that the business is not a legal service and that the protections of the client-lawyer relationship do not apply. MODEL RULE 5.7(b). If this is not communicated clearly to the client, then the law-related business will be subject to VA’s standards of conduct. *Id.* We stress that disclosing information relating to a VA benefits representation is strictly prohibited absent specific circumstances. See MODEL RULE 1.6; see also 38 C.F.R. § 14.632(c)(10), (11) and (d).

Finally, we caution that advertising in any way associated with VA benefits representation must be presented in an ethical manner. See MODEL RULES 7.1 thru 7.3; see also 38 C.F.R. § 14.632(c)(3), (8), (11) and (d).

**Question:** I am an attorney not yet accredited by VA; however, in response to a request for representation by a veteran, I have filed a VA Form 21-22A (Appointment of Individual as Claimant’s Representative) with a VA Regional Office indicating my appointment as a claimant’s representative. What will VA do with my VA Form 21-22A until I am accredited?

**Response:** When VA receives a VA Form 21-22A from an unaccredited attorney, it will contact the claimant and advise him or her that VA will not recognize the unaccredited attorney as the representative of record until he or she is accredited. VA will advise the claimant that he or she may (1) seek other representation, or (2) proceed without representation until the attorney is accredited. VA will direct the claimant to <http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/> (<http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/>), VA’s Office of the General Counsel’s accreditation search page, as a means to find an accredited attorney, accredited agent, or accredited representative of a recognized veterans service organization. VA will not return a claims application because it was accompanied by the VA Form 21-22A of an unaccredited attorney.

**Question:** If an attorney works with pension benefit clients and advises clients as to eligibility requirements, but does not file the application for them, do they need to be accredited?

**Response:** Yes. In answering this question, we assume that (1) a “pension benefit client” means a veteran not currently receiving VA pension but one who has expressed intent to file for such benefit, and (2) that the advice provided includes those acts in making the claim ready for filing, but not the actual filing of the claim. Here, the advice constitutes preparation of a claim and therefore requires accreditation. This is because the advice is given in regards to a specific application for benefits rather than general advice not related to a specific claim. The difference is significant in that the purpose of VA’s accreditation program is to ensure that claimants for VA benefits receive qualified assistance in preparing and presenting their claims.

**Question:** Is VA accreditation required to assist a veteran in preparing his or her claim?

**Response:** Yes. Accreditation means the authority granted by VA to assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for benefits. 38 C.F.R. § 14.627(a). Unaccredited individuals may provide other services to veterans so long as they do not assist in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for benefits.

**Question:** I am providing pro bono representation to a veteran. Does this require VA accreditation?

**Response:** Yes. Generally, all attorneys who assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits must be accredited by VA. An exception exists for attorneys who initiated representation on a claim prior to June 23, 2008 (effective date of VA's final rules that implemented section 101 of Public Law 109-461 (Dec. 22, 2006)). Those attorneys need not seek accreditation for representation provided on that claim. Initiation of a representation before June 23, 2008 would be indicated by appointment on a VA Form 21-22a or an attorney's letterhead.

**Question:** In a law office with attorneys and paralegals working under the supervision of a single VA-accredited attorney, who needs to apply for VA accreditation using a VA Form 21a (Application for Accreditation as a Claims Agent or Attorney)?

**Response:** Accreditation means the authority granted by VA to representatives, agents, and attorneys to assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits. 38 C.F.R. § 14.627(a). Without accreditation, an individual may not independently assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits.

VA regulations allow legal interns, paralegals, and law students to assist in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits of claimants for benefits, but only under the direct supervision of the attorney of record, and with the specific written consent of the claimant. 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(c)(3). VA does not accredit these individuals. With the written consent of the claimant, attorneys affiliated or associated with the attorney of record may assist in the representation of the claimant, and may do so without the requirement for direct supervision by the attorney of record. 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(c)(2).

Thus, in a law firm where several attorneys and paralegals work on VA claims for a single accredited attorney properly appointed on a VA Form 21-22a as the attorney of record, each attorney must be accredited if their work involves assisting claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for veterans benefits. Paralegals may assist the attorney of record subject to the written consent of the claimant but may not independently provide representation to claimants.

**Question:** Do VA regulations permit accreditation of attorneys licensed only in foreign countries?

**Response:** No. Although 38 U.S.C. § 5904(a) provides that the "Secretary [of Veterans Affairs] may recognize any individual as an agent or attorney," VA regulations do not permit attorney accreditation based on membership in the bar of a foreign country.

VA's accreditation regulations define an attorney as "a member in good standing of a State bar who has met the standards and qualifications in § 14.629(b)." 38 C.F.R. § 14.627(d). "State includes any State, possession, territory, or Commonwealth of the United States, and the District of Columbia." 38 C.F.R. § 14.627(p). VA's regulatory definition of the term "State" is in harmony with the statutory definition of the term. See 38 U.S.C. § 101(20) (defining a State as "each of the several states, territories, and possessions of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico"). Because attorney accreditation is premised on membership in a State bar as defined by law, VA may not accredit attorneys based on membership in the bar of a foreign country.

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### **Continuing Legal Education (CLE)**

**Question:** Would you provide a list of CLE providers?

**Response:** We do not maintain a list of CLE providers. Contact your State bar association to obtain information regarding local CLE providers or search the internet for relevant courses.

**Question:** I live in a state that does not require CLE. Can otherwise qualifying veterans law training accredited for CLE in a State other than mine satisfy VA's CLE requirement?

**Response:** Pursuant to 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii) and (iv), a qualifying CLE course must be approved for a minimum of 3 hours of CLE credit by any State bar association; therefore, CLE approved by a State other than the one in which you are licensed or admitted is acceptable for purposes of VA accreditation.

**Question:** Can otherwise qualifying CLE attended prior to my VA accreditation be used to satisfy VA's CLE requirement?

**Response:** Because VA's regulations require completion of qualifying CLE "during the first 12-month period following the date of initial accreditation by VA," at this time, we cannot accept CLE courses taken before accreditation as satisfying the requirements of 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii).

**Question:** I teach a State-bar approved CLE course on veterans law. Does an attendee have to have the VA Form 21a submitted to your office *before* getting credit for attending a workshop/CLE course?

**Response:** Your question is more appropriately framed as whether an agent or attorney may complete qualifying CLE before accreditation. Because VA's regulations require completion of qualifying CLE "during the first 12-month period following the date of initial accreditation by VA," at this time, we cannot accept CLE courses taken before accreditation as satisfying the requirements of 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii).

**Question:** What specific proof of attendance and State bar approval is required by VA for purposes of accreditation?

**Response:** VA regulations do not specify a particular form of proof for verifying attendance at qualifying CLE. Instead, VA regulations require that accredited agents and attorneys certify in writing to VA's Office of the General Counsel that they have completed qualifying CLE. The certification must include the title of the CLE, the date and time of the CLE, and identification of the CLE provider.

VA regulations do not specify a particular form of proof for verifying State bar approval of qualifying CLE. We note that State bar associations generally require sponsors of CLE activities to seek approval for the activity and communicate such approval to the sponsor in writing. In the event that VA would need to verify whether a State bar association had approved a particular veterans law course for CLE credit, VA would look for some sort of official communication from the bar association to the sponsor of the CLE activity granting approval for CLE credit.

**Question:** Does the presenter of the workshop get credit for presenting the workshop and providing the CLE or would he or she need to actually attend a different CLE course?

**Response:** VA regulations require the completion of qualifying CLE as a condition of accreditation. If a State bar association awards an individual credit for presenting qualifying veterans law CLE, VA will accept that for purposes of accreditation provided that it meets all the other requirements of 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii).

**Question:** Will VA accept for purposes of accreditation otherwise qualifying veterans law CLE distributed via means other than live, in-person conferences?

**Response:** Yes. Many States approve for CLE purposes courses distributed through a variety of technological means including, but not limited to, the internet, telephone conferences, CD-ROM, audio, and video. So long as a veterans law course has been approved for CLE credit by a State bar association and satisfies the requirements of 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii), VA will accept it for purposes of accreditation.

**Question:** Are there any guidelines in VA regulations that govern the content of the qualifying veterans law CLE?

**Response:** Yes, VA regulations prescribe the content required for qualifying veterans law CLE: “[t]o qualify under this subsection, a CLE course must be approved for a minimum of 3 hours of CLE credit by any State bar association and, at a minimum, must cover the following topics: representation before VA, claims procedures, basic eligibility for VA benefits, right to appeal, disability compensation (38 U.S.C. Chapter 11), dependency and indemnity compensation (38 U.S.C. Chapter 13), and pension (38 U.S.C. Chapter 15).” 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii).

**Question:** I am a CLE provider developing a program to satisfy VA CLE requirements. Do we have to include all the topics listed in 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(iii) to meet VA requirements?

**Response:** Yes. Section 14.629(b)(1)(iii) provides that the qualifying CLE attended taken during the first year after accreditation “at a minimum, must cover the following topics: representation before VA, claims procedures, basic eligibility for VA benefits, right to appeal, disability compensation (38 U.S.C. Chapter 11), dependency and indemnity compensation (38 U.S.C. Chapter 13), and pension (38 U.S.C. Chapter 15).”

VA does not require that a CLE presentation allocate the same amount of time to each topic. As long as all the topics in section 14.629(b)(1)(iii) are adequately addressed, a CLE provider may use his or her discretion in deciding how much time should be spent on a given topic. Such discretion is appropriate to account for different factors such as the experience level or practice focus of the CLE audience.

In addition to the initial CLE requirement prescribed in section 14.629(b)(1)(iii), VA requires the completion of follow-up CLE not later than 3 years from the date of the initial accreditation and every 2 years thereafter. In complying with section 14.629(b)(1)(iv), follow-up CLE may be dedicated to any topic within the broad “veterans benefits law and procedure” category.

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### **Disclosure of Claimant Information**

**Question:** I am a VA accredited attorney and currently represent many claimants in proceedings before VA Regional Offices, the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, and at the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Each of my clients has properly executed a VA Form 21-22a appointing me as their representative of record. I employ an administrative staff and paralegals to help me in my practice, but VA call centers will not disclose claimant information to my staff. This seems impracticable given the number of claimants I represent. Why won’t VA disclose claimant information to my staff?

**Response:** Claimant information is protected by the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a, and by 38 U.S.C. §§ 5701 and 7332, and implementing VA regulations. Section 5701 provides that all claimant records are confidential and prohibits disclosure with certain exceptions. Section 5701 also provides that any disclosure of claimant information must be in accordance with the Privacy Act.

Under the Privacy Act, VA may not disclose claimant information without the express written consent of a claimant. However, the express written consent provided by a claimant for purposes of authorizing VA’s disclosure to an individual attorney appointed on a VA Form 21-22a does not extend to that attorney’s staff. Extending the claimant’s specific consent authorizing VA’s disclosure to a named attorney to the attorney’s staff constitutes an impermissible form of “implied consent” prohibited by the Privacy Act. In such a situation, the attorney, not the claimant, would be authorizing VA’s disclosure of the claimant’s protected information to his or her staff based solely on employment affiliation, a result not contemplated by the Privacy Act.

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### **Effective Date**

**Question:** When is a fee agreement considered effective?

**Response:** For purposes of whether a fee agreement is subject to the accreditation and fee regulations found at 38 C.F.R. §§ 14.626-14.637, a fee agreement is considered effective the date on which the parties entered into a legally binding contract under the laws of the appropriate jurisdiction. Note that this assumes the other requirements in 38 C.F.R. § 14.636(c) have been satisfied.

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### **Fee Agreements**

**Question:** How do I submit fee agreements?

**Response:** Fee agreements should only be filed with VA in one location. Any fee agreement calling for VA to directly pay the agent or the attorney fees from the claimant's past-due benefit award must be filed with the VBA Regional Office. For information on where to mail the fee agreement, visit:

[www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/ mailingaddresses.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/ mailingaddresses.asp)

(<http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/ mailingaddresses.asp>). A fee agreement between an attorney or agent and a VA claimant that does not request for VA direct payment, to the attorney or agent, from the claimant's past-due benefits should be filed with OGC at: VA Accreditation Program (022D), 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington DC 20420 or via fax 202-273-0197. Do not send any other documents regarding the adjudication of the claim or copies of such documents to OGC.

**Question:** I represent clients at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (Veterans Court) only; do I need to provide VA's Office of the General Counsel with a copy of the fee agreement?

**Response:** Because our authority to regulate representation extends only to practice before VA Regional Offices and the Board of Veterans' Appeals, 38 C.F.R. § 14.636(a), VA does not require attorneys to provide the Office of the General Counsel with copies of fee agreements for representation provided solely before the Veterans Court. If the fee agreement, in addition to covering representation before the Veterans Court, also includes provisions for representation before the Regional Offices or the Board of Veterans' Appeals, however, agents and attorneys must provide the Office of the General Counsel with a copy of the fee agreement.

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## The Application Process

**Question:** May I submit my application for accreditation via facsimile?

**Response:** Yes. You may fax a completed application for accreditation to (202) 495-5457.

**Question:** May I submit an application for accreditation via e-mail?

**Response:** Yes. You may send a pdf version of the document to [OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov](mailto:OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov) (<mailto:OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov>).

**Question:** How long does the attorney accreditation application process take?

**Response:** We are currently making attorney accreditation determinations on complete applications with accurate information in 60-90 days.

**Question:** What if I don't know three people who can attest to my character and qualifications?

**Response:** We cannot process applications that are incomplete. An application that is submitted without the required references will be considered incomplete unless the applicant provides an acceptable written explanation for being unable to list references.

**Question:** What if my references don't understand veterans law and therefore are not qualified to attest to

my qualifications as an attorney?

**Response:** Because the regulation allows you to take the qualifying CLE up to 12 months after accreditation, your references need only be able to attest to your character and qualifications as an attorney – not necessarily as a veterans law attorney.

**Question:** Why do I have to provide references as to my qualifications if I have been certified by the State bar?

**Response:** Although VA will generally accept a State bar's character and fitness determination, 38 C.F.R. § 14.629(b)(1)(ii), it may be necessary to speak with references if the information provided by the applicant raises questions about his or her fitness to practice before VA.

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## Representation

**Question:** May an accredited agent or attorney charge fees for preparing a claims form?

**Response:** No. Accredited agents and attorneys may only charge fees for representation. VA regulations define “representation” as those acts associated with representing a claimant in a proceeding before VA pursuant to appointment on a VA Form 21-22a, “Appointment of Individual as Claimant’s Representative.” Generally, to charge fees for representation before VA, an agency of original jurisdiction (AOJ) must have issued a decision on a claim and a claimant must have filed a notice of disagreement (NOD) on or after June 20, 2007, with respect to that decision.

**Question:** Can attorneys assist with and charge to help veterans complete and file the EVR (eligibility verification report) at the end of each year?

**Response:** Accredited attorneys may assist with filing the EVR, but in most cases may not charge claimants for doing so. As a starting point, VA accreditation is required to assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for benefits before VA regardless of whether fees are charged. Unless the EVR is being prepared subsequent to an adverse decision of an AOJ involving a pension claim and the claimant has filed a NOD regarding that decision, no fees may be charged for such assistance.

**Question:** If a current service connected veteran/widow who is receiving compensation wants to see if they would be eligible for additional service connected benefits or for a change in benefit to pension with aid and attendance, can an attorney charge to assess whether they would be eligible for the different or increase in benefits?

**Response:** No. As discussed above, unless the assistance is provided subsequent to an adverse decision of an AOJ involving a claim and the claimant has filed a NOD with respect to that decision, no fees may be charged for such assistance.

For further questions or comments, please email us at [OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov](mailto:OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov) (mailto:OGCAccreditationMailbox@va.gov)

[return to top ▲](#)

## RESOURCES

[Administrative Investigations \(/ogc/investigations.asp\)](/ogc/investigations.asp)

[Accreditation \(/ogc/accreditation.asp\)](/ogc/accreditation.asp)

[Chief Counsels in the Districts \(/OGC/DistrictOffices.asp\)](/OGC/DistrictOffices.asp)

[Claims Under the FTCA \(/OGC/FTCA.asp\)](/OGC/FTCA.asp)

[Gifts to VA \(/OGC/GiftsToVA.asp\)](/OGC/GiftsToVA.asp)

[HIPAA Information \(/ogc/hipaa.asp\)](/ogc/hipaa.asp)

[Legal Help for Veterans \(/OGC/LegalServices.asp\)](/OGC/LegalServices.asp)

[Precedent Opinions \(/ogc/precedentopinions.asp\)](/ogc/precedentopinions.asp)

[Privacy Act System of Records \(/ogc/privacyact.asp\)](/ogc/privacyact.asp)

[OGC Opportunities \(/OGC/Opportunities.asp\)](/OGC/Opportunities.asp)

[VA Medical Care Recovery \(/OGC/Collections.asp\)](/OGC/Collections.asp)

[38 U.S.C. § 3683 Waiver Requests \(/OGC/38\\_USC\\_3683.asp\)](/OGC/38_USC_3683.asp)

[Approved 38 U.S.C. § 3683 Waivers \(/OGC/38\\_USC\\_3683\\_Approved.asp\)](/OGC/38_USC_3683_Approved.asp)

## CONNECT WITH US

Subscribe to Receive  
Email Updates

Benefits:

1-800-827-1000

Health Care:

1-877-222-VETS (8387)

VA Inspector General: 1-800-488-8244

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 Press 1

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(<http://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs>) (<http://www.twitter.com/VeteransAffairs>) (<http://www.blog.gov>) (<http://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransAffairs>) (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/VeteransAffairs>)

# Access and manage your VA benefits and health care

## **Health care**

[Refill and track your prescriptions](#)

[Send a secure message to your health care team](#)

[Schedule and view your appointments](#)

[View your lab and test results](#)

[Apply now for VA health care](#)

## **Disability**

[Check your claim or appeal status](#)

[View your payment history](#)

[Upload evidence to support your claim](#)

[File for a VA disability increase](#)

[File a claim for compensation](#)

## **Education**

[Check your Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits](#)

[View your payment history](#)

[Change your current education benefits](#)

[Compare GI Bill benefits by school](#)

[Apply for education benefits](#)

## **Records**

[Get Veteran ID cards](#)

[Get your VA medical records](#)

[Download your benefit letters](#)

[Change your address](#)

[Request your military records \(DD214\)](#)



## **Service member benefits**

Find out what benefits you may be eligible for during service and which time-sensitive benefits to consider when separating or retiring.

## **Family member benefits**

Learn about the benefits you may qualify for as a spouse, dependent, or survivor. And find out what you're eligible for as a family member caring for a Veteran with disabilities.

## **Burials and memorials**

Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial item to honor a Veteran's service, and apply for survivor and dependent benefits.

## **Careers and employment**

Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, get support for your Veteran-owned small business, and access other career resources.

## **Housing assistance**

Find out if you're eligible for a VA-backed home loan. If you have a service-connected disability, see if you qualify for

## **Pension**

Apply for monthly payments for wartime Veterans and survivors with limited or no income who meet certain age and disability requirements.

a housing grant to help you live more independently.

## [Life insurance](#)

Explore VA life insurance options for Veterans, service members, and families. Manage your policy online, file claims for benefits, and access helpful resources.

## [Education and training](#)

Apply for and manage your GI Bill and other education benefits to help pay for college and training programs.

## [Records](#)

Apply for a printed Veteran ID card, get your VA benefit letters and medical records, and learn how to apply for a discharge upgrade.

## [Health care](#)

Apply for VA health care, find out how to access services, and manage your health and benefits online.

## [Disability](#)

File a claim for disability compensation for conditions related to your military service, and manage your benefits over time.



**Find a VA health facility, benefit office, or cemetery**

**Talk to a Veterans Crisis Line responder now**



**Sign in or create an account to use more tools**

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Video of VA Secretary Robert

Graphic of Iwo Jima Veteran

Graphic for the Vantage Point

**[Welcome to the new VA.gov!](#)**

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie talks about the redesign intentionally built with Veterans, for Veterans.

**[74th Anniversary of Iwo Jima](#)**

Marine Corps Veteran Woody Williams shares his story.

**[VAntage Point: news you can use](#)**

VAntage Point is VA's official blog. Here you will find stories from around VA and the Veteran community.

# File for disability compensation

Equal to VA Form 21-526EZ (Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits).

## **i** Save time—and save your work in progress—by signing in before starting your application

When you're signed in to your VA.gov account:

- We can prefill part of your application based on your account details.
- You can save your application in progress, and come back later to finish filling it out. You'll have 1 year from the date you start or update your application to submit it. After 1 year, we'll delete the form and you'll need to start over.

**Note:** If you sign in after you've started your application, you won't be able to save the information you've already filled in.

**Sign in to Start Your Application**

By clicking the button to start the disability application, you'll declare your intent to file. This will reserve a potential effective

date for when you could start getting benefits. You have 1 year from the day you submit your intent to file to complete your application.

## **Follow the steps below to file a claim for a new or secondary condition or for increased disability compensation.**

### **1**

#### **Prepare**

**When you file a disability claim, you'll have a chance to provide evidence to support your claim. Evidence could include:**

- VA medical records and hospital records that relate to your claimed condition or that show your rated disability has gotten worse
- Private medical records and hospital reports that relate to your claimed condition or that show your disability has gotten worse
- Supporting statements from family, friends, coworkers, clergy, or law enforcement personnel with knowledge about how and when your disability happened or how it got worse

In some cases, you may need to turn in one or more additional forms to support your disability claim. For example, you'll need to fill out another form if you're claiming a dependent or applying for aid and attendance benefits.

[Learn what additional forms you may need to file with your disability claim.](#)

#### **What if I need help with my application?**

If you need help filing a disability claim, you can contact a VA regional office and ask to speak to a counselor. To find the nearest regional office, please call [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

An accredited representative, like a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), can help you fill out your claim.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

### **i** **Disability ratings**

For each disability we assign a rating from 0% to 100%. We base this rating on the evidence you turn in with your claim. In some cases we may also ask you to have an exam to help us rate your disability.

Before filing a claim for increase, you might want to check to see if you're already receiving the maximum disability rating for your condition.

## **2** **Apply**

Complete this disability compensation benefits form. After submitting the form, you'll get a confirmation message. You can print this for your records.

## **3** **VA Review**

We process applications in the order we receive them. The amount of time it takes to process your claim depends on how many injuries or disabilities you claim and how long it takes us to gather evidence needed to decide your claim.

## 4 Decision

Once we've processed your claim, you'll get a notice in the mail with our decision.

By clicking the button to start the disability application, you'll declare your intent to file. This will reserve a potential effective date for when you could start getting benefits. You have 1 year from the day you submit your intent to file to complete your application.

Respondent burden: **25 minutes**

OMB Control #: **2900-0747**

Expiration date: **03/31/2021**

[Privacy Act Statement](#)

## **Need help?**

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For help filling out this form, or if the form isn't working right, please call VA Benefits and Services at [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 711.

Select One

- Transition and Economic Development
- Compensation
- Compensation Home

Types of Compensation

▸ Types of Claims

Claims Process

▸ Evidence Requirements

Compensation & Pension Exam

Effective Dates

Fully Developed Claims

Apply

Benefit Rates

Add a Dependent

Education & Training

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Pension

Appeals Modernization

Special Groups

Services

Applying for Benefits

Locations

VBA Performance

Media and Publications

About VBA

# Compensation

## Veterans Compensation Benefits Rate Tables - Effective 12/1/18

Go to our [How to Read Compensation Benefits Rate Tables](#) to learn how to use the table..

### Rates (No Dependents): 10% - 20%

Basic Rates - 10%-100% Combined Degree Only  
Effective 12/1/18

Without Children	With Children
<a href="#">30% - 60%</a>	<a href="#">30% - 60%</a>
<a href="#">70% - 100%</a>	<a href="#">70% - 100%</a>

### 10% - 20% (No Dependents)

Percentage	Rate
10%	\$140.05
20%	\$276.84

### 30% - 60% Without Children

Dependent Status	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran Alone	\$428.83	\$617.73	\$879.36	\$1,113.86
Veteran with Spouse Only	\$479.83	\$685.73	\$964.36	\$1,215.86
Veteran with Spouse & One Parent	\$520.83	\$739.73	\$1,032.36	\$1,297.86
Veteran with Spouse and Two Parents	\$561.83	\$793.73	\$1,100.36	\$1,379.86
Veteran with One Parent	\$469.83	\$671.73	\$947.36	\$1,195.86
Veteran with Two Parents	\$510.83	\$725.73	\$1,015.36	\$1,277.86
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$47.00	\$62.00	\$78.00	\$94.00

### 70% - 100% Without Children

Dependent Status	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran Alone	\$1,403.71	\$1,631.69	\$1,833.62	\$3,057.13
Veteran with Spouse Only	\$1,522.71	\$1,767.69	\$1,986.62	\$3,227.58
Veteran with Spouse and One Parent	\$1,617.71	\$1,876.69	\$2,109.62	\$3,364.37
Veteran with Spouse and Two Parents	\$1,712.71	\$1,985.69	\$2,232.62	\$3,501.16
Veteran with One Parent	\$1,498.71	\$1,740.69	\$1,956.62	\$3,193.92
Veteran with Two Parents	\$1,593.71	\$1,849.69	\$2,079.62	\$3,330.71
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$109.00	\$125.00	\$141.00	\$156.32

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### 30% - 60% With Children

Dependent Status	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran with Spouse and Child	\$516.83	\$735.73	\$1,026.36	\$1,290.86
Veteran with Child Only	\$462.83	\$662.73	\$935.36	\$1,181.86
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child	\$557.83	\$789.73	\$1,094.36	\$1,372.86
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child	\$598.83	\$843.73	\$1,162.36	\$1,454.86
Veteran with One Parent and Child	\$503.83	\$716.73	\$1,003.36	\$1,263.86
Veteran with Two Parents and Child	\$544.83	\$770.73	\$1,071.36	\$1,345.86
Add for Each Additional Child Under Age 18	\$25.00	\$33.00	\$42.00	\$50.00
Each Additional Schoolchild Over Age 18 (see footnote a)	\$82.00	\$109.00	\$136.00	\$164.00
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$47.00	\$62.00	\$78.00	\$94.00

### 70% - 100% With Children

Dependent Status	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran with Spouse and Child	\$1,609.71	\$1,867.69	\$2,098.62	\$3,352.41
Veteran with Child Only	\$1,482.71	\$1,722.69	\$1,935.62	\$3,171.12
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child	\$1,704.71	\$1,976.69	\$2,221.62	\$3,489.20
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child	\$1,799.71	\$2,085.69	\$2,344.62	\$3,625.99
Veteran with One Parent and Child	\$1,577.71	\$1,831.69	\$2,058.62	\$3,307.91
Veteran with Two Parents and Child	\$1,672.71	\$1,940.69	\$2,181.62	\$3,444.70
Add for Each Additional Child Under Age 18	\$59.00	\$67.00	\$76.00	\$84.69
Each Additional Schoolchild Over Age 18 (see footnote a)	\$191.00	\$218.00	\$246.00	\$273.58
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$109.00	\$125.00	\$141.00	\$156.32

#### FOOTNOTES:

- a. Rates for each school child are shown separately. They are not included with any other compensation rates. All other entries on this chart reflecting a rate for children show the rate payable for children under 18 or helpless. To find the amount payable to a 70% disabled veteran with a spouse and four children, one of whom is over 18 and attending school, take the 70% rate for a veteran with a spouse and 3 children, \$ 1786.71, and add the rate for one school child, \$191.00. The total amount payable is \$1977.71.
- b. Where the veteran has a spouse who is determined to require A/A, add the figure shown as "additional for A/A spouse" to the amount shown for the proper dependency code. For example, veteran has A/A spouse and 2 minor children and is 70% disabled. Add \$109.00, additional for A/A spouse, to the rate for a 70% veteran with dependency code 12, \$1,668.71. The total amount payable is \$1,777.71.

## Historical Rate Tables

[2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014/2015](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2011](#) | [2010-2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999](#)

[return to top ▲](#)

I AM A...

Select One

Transition and Economic Development

Compensation

Compensation Home

Types of Compensation

▸ Types of Claims

Claims Process

▸ Evidence Requirements

Compensation & Pension Exam

Effective Dates

Fully Developed Claims

Apply

Benefit Rates

Add a Dependent

Education & Training

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Pension

Appeals Modernization

Special Groups

Services

Applying for Benefits

Locations

VBA Performance

Media and Publications

About VBA

VA » Veterans Benefits Administration » Compensation » Benefit Rates

# Compensation

## Benefit Rates

### Access Current Rates

Select the compensation program below to view current rates. Historical rates are linked from the current rates page, as well.

- [Veterans Compensation Benefits Current Rates](#)
- [Special Monthly Compensation \(SMC\) Current Rates](#)
- [Dependency Indemnity Compensation \(DIC\) Current Rates](#)
- [Parents DIC Current Rates](#)
- [Automobile Allowance, Clothing Allowance and Medal of Honor Rates](#)
- [Birth Defects \(Spina Bifida, Children of Women Vietnam Veterans\) Rates](#)

### Learn More about VA Compensation Rates

- [How VA Calculates Compensation Rates](#)
- [Cost-of-Living Adjustments \(COLA\)](#)
- [Combined Ratings](#)

### How VA Calculates Compensation Rates

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges, depending on how disabled you are. VA makes a determination about the severity of your disability based on the evidence you submit as part of your claim, or that VA obtains from your military records. VA rates disability from 0% to 100% in 10% increments (e.g. 10%, 20%, 30% etc.). See the [Combined Ratings section](#) below for information about how VA calculates disability percentage for multiple disabilities.

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

### Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA)

Periodically, VA makes cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to VA compensation and pension benefits to ensure that the purchasing power of VA benefits is not eroded by inflation. Under federal law, the cost-of-living adjustments to VA's compensation and pension rates are the same percentage as for Social Security benefits. You can learn more about COLA's on the [Social Security Administration's COLA webpage](#).

### Combined Ratings

If VA finds that a Veteran has multiple disabilities, VA uses the [Combined Ratings Table](#) below to calculate a combined disability rating. Disability ratings are not additive, meaning that if a Veteran has one disability rated 60% and a second disability 20%, the combined rating is not 80%. This is because subsequent disability ratings are applied to an already disabled Veteran, so the 20% disability is applied to a Veteran who is already 60% disabled.

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Below you will find the steps VA takes to combine ratings for more than one disability and examples using the [Combined Ratings Table](#) to illustrate how combined ratings are calculated.

1. The disabilities are first arranged in the exact order of their severity, beginning with the greatest disability and then combined with use of [Combined Ratings Table](#) below
2. The degree of one disability will be read in the left column and the degree of the other in the top row, whichever is appropriate
3. The figures appearing in the space where the column and row intersect will represent the combined value of the two
4. This combined value is rounded to the nearest 10%
5. If there are more than two disabilities, the combined value for the first two will be found as previously described for two disabilities
6. The exact combined value (without rounding yet), is combined with the degree of the third disability
7. This process continues for subsequent disabilities and the final number is rounded to the nearest 10%

### Examples of Combining Two Disabilities

If a Veteran has a 50 percent disability and a 30 percent disability, the combined value will be found to be 65 percent, but the 65 percent must be converted to 70 percent to represent the final degree of disability.

Similarly, with a disability of 40 percent, and another disability of 20 percent, the combined value is found to be 52 percent, but the 52 percent must be converted to the nearest degree divisible by 10, which is 50 percent.

### Example of Combining Three Disabilities

If there are three disabilities ratable at 60 percent, 40 percent, and 20 percent, respectively, the combined value for the first two will be found opposite 60 and under 40 and is 76 percent. This 76 will be found in the left column, then the 20 rating in the top row. The intersection of these two ratings is 81. Thus, the final rating will be rounded to 80%.

**Table I-Combined Ratings Table**  
**[10 combined with 10 is 19]**

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
<b>19</b>	27	35	43	51	60	68	76	84	92
<b>20</b>	28	36	44	52	60	68	76	84	92
<b>21</b>	29	37	45	53	61	68	76	84	92
<b>22</b>	30	38	45	53	61	69	77	84	92
<b>23</b>	31	38	46	54	62	69	77	85	92
<b>24</b>	32	39	47	54	62	70	77	85	92
<b>25</b>	33	40	48	55	63	70	78	85	93
<b>26</b>	33	41	48	56	63	70	78	85	93
<b>27</b>	34	42	49	56	64	71	78	85	93
<b>28</b>	35	42	50	57	64	71	78	86	93
<b>29</b>	36	43	50	57	65	72	79	86	93
<b>30</b>	37	44	51	58	65	72	79	86	93
<b>31</b>	38	45	52	59	66	72	79	86	93
<b>32</b>	39	46	52	59	66	73	80	86	93
<b>33</b>	40	46	53	60	67	73	80	87	93
<b>34</b>	41	47	54	60	67	74	80	87	93
<b>35</b>	42	48	55	61	68	74	81	87	94
<b>36</b>	42	49	55	62	68	74	81	87	94
<b>37</b>	43	50	56	62	69	75	81	87	94
<b>38</b>	44	50	57	63	69	75	81	88	94

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
39	45	51	57	63	70	76	82	88	94
40	46	52	58	64	70	76	82	88	94
41	47	53	59	65	71	76	82	88	94
42	48	54	59	65	71	77	83	88	94
43	49	54	60	66	72	77	83	89	94
44	50	55	61	66	72	78	83	89	94
45	51	56	62	67	73	78	84	89	95
46	51	57	62	68	73	78	84	89	95
47	52	58	63	68	74	79	84	89	95
48	53	58	64	69	74	79	84	90	95
49	54	59	64	69	75	80	85	90	95
50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95
51	56	61	66	71	76	80	85	90	95
52	57	62	66	71	76	81	86	90	95
53	58	62	67	72	77	81	86	91	95
54	59	63	68	72	77	82	86	91	95
55	60	64	69	73	78	82	87	91	96
56	60	65	69	74	78	82	87	91	96
57	61	66	70	74	79	83	87	91	96
58	62	66	71	75	79	83	87	92	96
59	63	67	71	75	80	84	88	92	96
60	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	92	96
61	65	69	73	77	81	84	88	92	96
62	66	70	73	77	81	85	89	92	96

Table I-Combined Ratings Table (cont.)

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
63	67	70	74	78	82	85	89	93	96
64	68	71	75	78	82	86	89	93	96
65	69	72	76	79	83	86	90	93	97
66	69	73	76	80	83	86	90	93	97
67	70	74	77	80	84	87	90	93	97
68	71	74	78	81	84	87	90	94	97
69	72	75	78	81	85	88	91	94	97
70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97
71	74	77	80	83	86	88	91	94	97
72	75	78	80	83	86	89	92	94	97
73	76	78	81	84	87	89	92	95	97
74	77	79	82	84	87	90	92	95	97
75	78	80	83	85	88	90	93	95	98
76	78	81	83	86	88	90	93	95	98
77	79	82	84	86	89	91	93	95	98
78	80	82	85	87	89	91	93	96	98
79	81	83	85	87	90	92	94	96	98
80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98
81	83	85	87	89	91	92	94	96	98
82	84	86	87	89	91	93	95	96	98
83	85	86	88	90	92	93	95	97	98

	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>84</b>	86	87	89	90	92	94	95	97	98
<b>85</b>	87	88	90	91	93	94	96	97	99
<b>86</b>	87	89	90	92	93	94	96	97	99
<b>87</b>	88	90	91	92	94	95	96	97	99
<b>88</b>	89	90	92	93	94	95	96	98	99
<b>89</b>	90	91	92	93	95	96	97	98	99
<b>90</b>	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
<b>91</b>	92	93	94	95	96	96	97	98	99
<b>92</b>	93	94	94	95	96	97	98	98	99
<b>93</b>	94	94	95	96	97	97	98	99	99
<b>94</b>	95	95	96	96	97	98	98	99	99

[return to top ▲](#)

More in this section

# Add Dependents to Your VA Disability Benefits

Find out how to add a dependent spouse, child, and/or parent to your VA disability benefits for additional compensation.

## Am I eligible for additional VA disability compensation for my dependent(s)?

You may be eligible for additional disability compensation for a spouse, child, and/or parent if you meet both of the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true. You:

- Are eligible for VA disability compensation, **and**
- Have a combined disability rating of at least 30%

Adding a dependent may make you eligible to receive a higher compensation payment (also called a benefit rate).

## Who does VA consider a dependent?

### A dependent is:

- A spouse (**Note:** we recognize same-sex and common-law marriages)
- A parent, if you're directly caring for them and their income and net worth are below a certain amount
- An unmarried child (including an adopted child or stepchild) who meets one of the eligibility requirements listed below

**To be considered a dependent, one of these must be true of an unmarried child. They:**

- Are under 18 years old, **or**

- Are between the ages of 18 and 23 years old and enrolled in school full time, **or**
- Became permanently disabled before they turned 18

## **When should I add a dependent to my benefits?**

This depends on where you are in the process of filing for disability compensation.

### **If you haven't yet filed a claim for disability compensation**

You can file a claim for additional compensation for a dependent at the same time as you file your original claim for disability compensation.

If you receive a combined disability rating of at least 30%, we'll automatically consider your eligibility for additional compensation for your dependent.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

### **If you have one or more dependents, but you didn't claim them when you originally filed for disability compensation**

If you have a combined disability rating of at least 30%, you can file a claim for additional disability compensation now.

### **If something changes in your family status after you received a combined disability rating of at least 30%**

You can file a claim for additional disability compensation whenever you add a dependent.

### **You can add a dependent if:**

- You get married
  - You have or adopt a child
  - Your child is between 18 and 23 years old and enrolled in school full time
  - We determine that your child, who is at least 18 years old, became permanently disabled before turning 18
  - You become the caregiver for a parent whose income and net worth is below a certain amount
- 

## **How do I add a dependent to my benefits?**

### **To file a claim for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse**

You can file a claim for additional compensation for a child or spouse online right now through our eBenefits website.

**Note:** You may need to provide more information or forms along with your claim.

#### **Go to eBenefits to Add a Dependent Child or Spouse**

**If you're claiming your child who became permanently disabled before they turned 18,** you'll need to turn in all private medical records relating to the child's disabilities with your application.

**If your dependent is a child who's between 18 and 23 years old and attending school full time,** you'll also need to submit a Request for Approval of School Attendance (VA Form 21-674) with your application.

[Download VA Form 21-674.](#)

## To file a claim for additional disability compensation for a dependent parent

You'll need to fill out and submit a Statement of Dependency of Parent(s) (VA Form 21P-509) by mail or fax.

[Download VA Form 21P-509.](#)

**Please send all correspondence related to compensation claims to this address:**

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Evidence Intake Center  
PO Box 4444  
Janesville, WI 53547-4444

**Or fax it to:**

[1-844-531-7817](tel:1-844-531-7817) if you live in the U.S., **or**

[1-248-524-4260](tel:1-248-524-4260) if you live outside of the U.S.

## What if I need help with my claim?

You can work with an accredited Veterans Service Officer (VSO). We trust these professionals because they're trained and certified in the VA claims and appeals process. A VSO can answer your questions or even file your claim for you.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

# More questions about adding a dependent to your VA disability compensation

**Can I file a claim for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse by mail or fax?**

**What should I do if I already submitted a paper form for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse, and I'm still waiting for a decision?**

**Can I get paid back to the date my spouse and I got married, or the date when my child was born or adopted?**

**When will I start receiving payment if VA approves my claim for additional disability compensation?**

**How do I know if I'm already receiving additional disability compensation for my dependent(s)?**

## Questions about adding or removing certain kinds of dependents

**What if my spouse is also a Veteran with a combined disability rating of at least 30%? Can we both receive additional disability compensation for each other and for our children? Or can only one of us receive the additional benefit?**

**What happens if I get divorced or need to remove a dependent?**

**How will VA know it needs to continue paying me additional disability compensation for my child when they turn 18 and remain in school? Do I have to file another claim?**

**Do I need to ask VA to stop paying me additional disability compensation for my child when they turn 18?**

## **More VA benefits for you and your dependents**

---

### **Pension Benefits**

Apply for monthly pension benefits for wartime Veterans and survivors.

### **Life Insurance**

Explore your VA life insurance options, manage your policy, and file claims.

### **Transfer Your Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits to Your Spouse and Dependents**

If you have unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, find out if you can transfer your benefits to your spouse or dependent children.

More in this section

# Increased Disability Rating for Time Spent in a Hospital

Did you spend time in a VA hospital or a VA-approved hospital for a disability related to your military service (called a service-connected disability)? If you did, you may be able to get added disability compensation or benefits with a temporary 100% disability rating for the time you spent in the hospital. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if one of the situations below describes your experience.

### One of these must be true:

- You spent more than 21 days in a VA hospital or other approved hospital for a service-connected disability, **or**
- You were under hospital observation for more than 21 days at our expense for a service-connected disability

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of disability benefits can I get?

- Health care
  - Increased compensation (payments) for the time you spent in the hospital
- 

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

**Note:** If you weren't in a VA hospital, when filing your claim you'll need to give us your hospital discharge summary showing the length and cause of your hospital stay.

**Example:** A Veteran with a 40% service-connected disability rating for diabetes had to stay in a VA hospital after going into a diabetic coma. He needed to stay in the hospital for 25 days because of the coma and related infections. We raised his rating to 100% during his hospital stay. After he got out of the hospital, his disability rating went back to 40%.

More in this section

# Temporary Disability Rating After Surgery or Getting a Cast

Are you recovering from surgery or a disability related to your military service that's left you unable to move? You may be able to get a temporary 100% disability rating and disability compensation or benefits if you have this kind of immobilizing disability. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if you've had surgery or received other treatment at a VA hospital, approved hospital, or outpatient center for a disability related to your military service (called a service-connected disability).

### If you had surgery, both of these must true for you:

- The surgery required a recovery time of at least 1 month or reports show that the surgery or treatment was for a service-connected disability, **and**
- The surgery resulted in severe issues, like:
  - Surgical wounds that haven't totally healed
  - Stumps of recent amputations
  - Being unable to move due to being put in splints or casts to help with healing (known as therapeutic immobilizations)
  - Being unable to leave your house (known as house confinement)

- Being required to use a wheelchair or crutches

**If you didn't have surgery, this must be true:**

You had one or more major joints immobilized by a cast.

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of disability benefits can I get?

- Health care
  - Added compensation (payments) while you recover
  - A temporary 100% disability rating
- 

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

Recovery time from either a surgery or the immobilization of a joint by a cast without surgery requires a temporary 100% disability rating for a service-connected disability. The temporary 100% rating may continue for 1 to 3 months—depending on your unique case. You may be able to get an extension for up to 3 more months if your case is severe.

**Example:** A Veteran had a left knee injury that resulted in a 30% disability rating. As the knee problem got worse, the Veteran's VA doctor recommended surgery to stop more damage from happening. Since the doctor wouldn't know if the surgery was successful until 3 months after the Veteran's 1-week stay in the hospital, we granted the Veteran a temporary 100% disability rating for 3 months.

More in this section

# VA Title 38 U.S.C. 1151 Claims

If you suffered an added disability—or your existing injury or disease got worse—while you were getting VA medical care or taking part in a VA program designed to help you find, get, or keep a job, you may be able to get compensation.

## **Can I get compensation from VA?**

You may be able get compensation from VA if you suffered an added disability or your existing disability got worse as the direct result of any of the reasons listed below—and the added disability wasn't a reasonably expected result or complication of treatment.

**At least one of these must have led directly to an added disability or to your injury or disease getting worse:**

- VA carelessness or negligence, **or**
- VA medical or surgical treatment, **or**
- A VA health exam, **or**
- A VA vocational rehabilitation course (under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 31), **or**
- VA compensated work therapy (CWT)(under 38 U.S.C. 1718)

## **Who's covered?**

Veterans

## **What kind of benefits can I get?**

Compensation

---

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation. When you file, you'll have to show that the added disability happened because of VA medical care or a VA program designed to help you find, get, or keep a job.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

We'll award any compensation payments in the same way we would if your disability was related to your military service (a service-connected disability).

More in this section

# VA Temporary Disability Benefits (Prestabilization Rating)

If you recently ended your active military service and you have a disability related to your service (called a service-connected disability), you may be able to get temporary disability compensation or benefits right away.

If you qualify for these benefits, you'll get what's called a prestabilization rating. This rating may be 50% or 100%, depending on the severity of your disability. Your prestabilization rating will continue for 1 year after your discharge from active service.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if you recently ended your active military service and you meet both of the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true:

- You have a severe service-connected disability that is unstable (meaning an illness or injury that will change or hasn't yet been fully treated), **and**

- Your disability is expected to continue for an unknown amount of time

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of benefits can I get?

- Health care
- Compensation (payments)

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation. When you file, you'll have to show that you have a severe, service-connected disability that's unstable and expected to continue for an unknown amount of time. This information will normally be part of your Service Treatment Record.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

**Example:** While in active service, a Servicemember was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease and began chemotherapy that continued during and after her medical discharge process. She continued to get treatment through her local VA medical center, and we gave her a prestabilization rating of 100% for 1 year from her date of discharge.

More in this section

# VA Aid and Attendance Benefits and Housebound Allowance

If you need help with your daily activities, or you're housebound, you may qualify for Aid and Attendance or Housebound allowances in addition to your pension benefits. Find out if you can get these monthly payments added to the amount of your monthly pension.

## Can I get Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits?

**You may qualify for Aid and Attendance** if you get a VA pension and you meet at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true:

- You need another person to help you perform daily activities, like bathing, feeding, and dressing, **or**
- You have to stay in bed—or spend a large portion of the day in bed—because of illness, **or**
- You are a patient in a nursing home due to the loss of mental or physical abilities related to a disability, **or**
- Your eyesight is limited (even with glasses or contact lenses you have only 5/200 or less in both eyes; or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less)

**You may qualify for Housebound benefits** if you get a VA pension and you spend most of your time in your home because of a permanent disability (a disability that doesn't go away).

**Note:** You can't get Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits at the same time.

**Who's covered:**

- Qualified Veterans
- Qualified surviving spouses

## How do I get this benefit?

There are 2 ways you can get this benefit:

### Write to your Pension Management Center (PMC)

You can write to the PMC for your state.

[Find your PMC.](#)

Include this information:

- Evidence, like a doctor's report, that shows you need Aid and Attendance or Housebound care, or VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance), which your doctor can fill out.  
[Download VA Form 21-2680.](#)
- Details about what you normally do during the day and how you get places
- Details that help show what kind of illness, injury, or mental or physical disability affects your ability to do things, like take a bath, on your own

If you're in a nursing home, you'll also need to fill out a Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance (VA Form 21-0779).

[Download VA Form 21-0779.](#)

## **Apply in person**

You can bring your information to a VA regional benefit office near you.

[Find your nearest VA regional benefit office.](#)

## **How long does it take VA to make a decision?**

It depends. We process claims in the order we receive them, unless a claim requires priority processing.





**VA DATE STAMP**  
**(Do Not Write In This Space)**

**REQUEST FOR NURSING HOME INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH CLAIM FOR AID AND ATTENDANCE**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have any questions about completing this form, call VA toll-free at 1-800-827-1000 (Hearing Impaired TDD federal relay number is 711).

**Section I - VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION**

**NOTE:** You can *either* complete the form online or by hand. If completed by hand, print the information requested in ink, neatly, and legibly to expedite processing the form.

1. VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last)

[Grid for name entry]

2. VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

[Grid for Social Security Number]

3. VA FILE NUMBER

[Grid for VA File Number]

4. VETERAN'S DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)

Month [ ] Day [ ] Year [ ]

5. VETERAN'S SERVICE NUMBER (If applicable)

[Grid for Service Number]

**SECTION II - NURSING HOME INFORMATION**

6. NAME OF NURSING HOME

7. ADDRESS OF NURSING HOME (Number and street or rural route, P.O. Box, City, State, ZIP Code and Country)

No. & Street [ ] Apt./Unit Number [ ] City [ ] State/Province [ ] Country [ ] ZIP Code/Postal Code [ ]

**SECTION III - GENERAL INFORMATION (To be completed by a Nursing Home Official)**

8. DATE ADMITTED TO NURSING HOME (MM/DD/YYYY)

Month [ ] Day [ ] Year [ ]

9. IS THE NURSING HOME FACILITY MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT APPROVED?

YES  NO

10. HAS THE PATIENT APPLIED FOR MEDICAID?

YES  NO

11A. IS THE PATIENT COVERED BY MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT PLAN?

YES  NO (If "YES," complete Item 11B)

11B. DATE MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT PLAN BEGAN

Month [ ] Day [ ] Year [ ]

12. MONTHLY AMOUNT PATIENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OUT OF POCKET

\$

13. I CERTIFY THAT THE CLAIMANT IS A PATIENT IN THIS FACILITY BECAUSE OF MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND IS RECEIVING: (Check one)

SKILLED NURSING CARE  INTERMEDIATE NURSING CARE

14. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S NAME (First and Last) (Please print)

15. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S TITLE (Please print)

16. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code)

**SECTION IV - DECLARATION OF INTENT**

I CERTIFY THAT the statements on this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

17. SIGNATURE OF NURSING HOME OFFICIAL (Sign in ink)

18. DATE SIGNED (MM/DD/YYYY)

**PRIVACY ACT NOTICE:** The VA will not disclose information collected on this form to any source other than what has been authorized under the Privacy Act of 1974 or Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations 1.526 for routine uses (i.e., civil or criminal law enforcement, congressional communications, epidemiological or research studies, the collection of money owed to the United States, litigation in which the United States is a party or has an interest, the administration of VA programs and delivery of VA benefits, verification of identity and status, and personnel administration) as identified in the VA system of records, 58VA21/22/28 Compensation, Pension, Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records - VA, published in the Federal Register. While you are not required to respond, your cooperation in providing this relevant and necessary information will help us determine the claimant's maximum benefit entitlement under the law. Information that you furnish may be utilized in computer matching programs with other Federal or state agencies for the purpose of determining the claimant's eligibility to receive VA benefits, as well as to collect any amount owed to the United States by virtue of the claimant's participation in any benefit program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**RESPONDENT BURDEN:** We need this information to determine eligibility for benefits and the proper rate of payment (38 U.S.C. 5503, 38 U.S.C. 1115 (1)(E)), 38 U.S.C. 1311(c), 38 U.S.C. 1315(h)). Title 38, United States Code, allows us to ask for this information. We estimate that you will need an average of 10 minutes to review the instructions, find the information and complete this form. VA cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed. You are not required to respond to a collection of information if this number is not displayed. Valid OMB control numbers can be located on the OMB Internet Page at [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). If you desire, you can call 1-800-827-1000 to get information on where to send comments or suggestions about this form.

More in this section

# Veterans Pension Eligibility

If you're a wartime Veteran who meets certain age or disability requirements, and your income and net worth are within certain limits, you may qualify for monthly payments through our Veterans Pension program. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get Veterans pension benefits from VA?

You may be able to get pension benefits if you meet the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true:

- You didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **and**
- Your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your net worth includes all personal property you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe. Your net worth includes the net worth of your spouse.

[Find out about Veterans pension rates.](#)

### And at least one of these must be true about your service. You:

- Started on active duty before September 8, 1980, and you served at least 90 days on active duty with at least 1 day during wartime, **or**
- Started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which

you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions) with at least 1 day during wartime, **or**

- Were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and you hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

**And at least one of these must be true. You:**

- Are at least 65 years old, **or**
- Have a permanent and total disability, **or**
- Are a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability, **or**
- Are getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income

## **How do I know if I served under an eligible wartime period?**

Under current law, we recognize the following wartime periods to decide eligibility for pension benefits:

- Mexican Border period (May 9, 1916, to April 5, 1917, for Veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders, or in adjacent waters)
- World War I (April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918)
- World War II (December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946)
- Korean conflict (June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955)
- Vietnam War era (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served outside the Republic of Vietnam.)
- Gulf War (August 2, 1990, through a future date to be set by law or presidential proclamation)

## **What should I do if I received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable discharge?**

If you've received one of these discharge statuses, you may not be eligible for VA benefits.

**There are 2 ways you can try to qualify:**

[Find out how to apply for a discharge upgrade.](#)

[Learn about the VA Character of Discharge review process.](#)

## **How do I apply?**

You can apply online right now.

### **Apply for Veterans Pension Benefits**

[Learn more about how to apply.](#)

## **Other pension benefits**

---

### **VA Survivors Pension**

Find out if you're eligible and how to apply for VA pension benefits as a surviving spouse or child of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

### **Aid and Attendance Benefits and Housebound Allowance**

If you need help with daily activities or you're housebound, find out how to apply for extra VA pension benefits.

# Apply for Veterans pension benefits

Equal to VA Form 21P-527EZ (Application for Pension).

## **i** Save time—and save your work in progress—by signing in before starting your application

When you're signed in to your VA.gov account:

- We can prefill part of your application based on your account details.
- You can save your application in progress, and come back later to finish filling it out. You'll have 60 days from the date you start or update your application to submit it. After 60 days, we'll delete the form and you'll need to start over.

**Note:** If you sign in after you've started your application, you won't be able to save the information you've already filled in.

**Sign in to Start Your Application**

[Start your application without signing in.](#)

## Follow the steps below to apply for a Veterans pension.

### 1 Declare Your Intent to File

If you'd like to submit an intent to file to set the earliest possible date that you can start getting benefits, you'll need to complete an Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension, and/or DIC (VA Form 21-0966). Starting your pension application doesn't show your intent to file.

[Download VA Form 21-0966.](#)

**Note:** Your date of claim is the date that we receive your completed application.

### 2 Prepare

**To fill out this application, you'll need your:**

- Social Security number or VA file number (required)
- Military history (required)
- Financial information—and your dependents' financial information (required)
- Bank account direct deposit information
- Medical information

**If you're under 65 years old, you may also need:**

- Your work history
- Any medical evidence that supports your claim

#### **Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program**

The Fully Developed Claim (FDC) program is the fastest way to get your claim processed, and there's

no risk for you to participate. With this program, you send in all the evidence, or supporting documents, you have when you file your claim. We can make a decision on your application without asking you for more information.

[Learn more about the FDC Program.](#)

### **You might qualify for Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits**

[Learn more about Aid and Attendance and Housebound Benefits.](#)

**What if I need help filling out my application?** An accredited representative, like a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), can help you fill out your claim. [Get help filing your claim.](#)

**Learn about Veterans pension rates**  
[Find out how we decide pension rates.](#)

3

## **Apply**

Complete this pension benefits form.

After submitting the form, you'll get a confirmation message. You can print this for your records.

4

## **VA Review**

We process claims in the order we receive them.

We'll let you know by mail if we need more information.

## **5 Decision**

After we process your claim, you'll get a notice in the mail about the decision.

Respondent burden: **25 minutes**

OMB Control #: **2900-0002**

Expiration date: **04/30/2019**

[Privacy Act Statement](#)

## **Need help?**

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For benefit related questions, or if the form isn't working right, please call VA Benefits and Services at [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 711.

More in this section

# VA Survivors Pension Rates

If you qualify for survivors pension benefits, the amount you get will be based on the difference between your countable income and a limit that Congress sets (called the Maximum Annual Pension Rate, or MAPR).

- **Your countable income** is how much you earn, including your salary, investment and retirement payments, and any income you may have from your dependents. Some expenses, like non-reimbursable medical expenses (paid medical expenses not covered by your insurance provider), may reduce your countable income.
- **Your MAPR amount** is the maximum amount of pension payable to a Veteran, surviving spouse, or child. Your MAPR is based on how many dependents you have and whether you qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits. MAPRs are adjusted each year for cost-of-living increases. You can find your current MAPR amount using the tables below.

**Example:** You're a qualified surviving spouse with 1 dependent child. You also qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits. Your yearly income is \$10,000.

Your MAPR amount = \$16,837

Your yearly income = \$10,000

Your VA pension = \$6,837 for the year (or \$569 paid each month)

# What's the net worth limit to qualify for a Survivors Pension?

We've recently changed the way we assess net worth to make the pension entitlement rules more clear. Net worth is the total of your or your beneficiary's assets and annual income. You should report all of your net worth. The net worth limit to qualify for a Survivors Pension as of December 1, 2018, is \$127,061.

**Note:** In the future, the net worth limit will increase by the same percentage as Social Security cost-of-living increases. We'll update the limit here when there's an increase.

# What's the 3-year look-back period for asset transfers?

When we receive a pension claim, we review the terms and conditions of any assets the survivor may have transferred in the 3 years before filing the claim.

If you transfer assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period, and those assets would have pushed your net worth above the limit for a VA Survivors Pension, you may be subject to a penalty period of up to 5 years. You won't be eligible for pension benefits during this time.

**Note:** This new policy took effect on October 18, 2018. If you filed your claim before this date, the look-back period doesn't apply. (A look-back period never includes a date before October 18, 2018.)

# What's a penalty period?

A penalty period is a length of time when a survivor isn't eligible for pension benefits because they transferred assets for less than fair

market value during the look-back period. We won't pay pension benefits during a penalty period.

## Find your Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR) amount

*Date of Cost-of-Living Increase: December 1, 2018*

*Increase Factor: 2.8%*

*Standard Medicare Deduction: Actual amount will be determined by SSA based on individual income.*

### For qualified surviving spouses with at least 1 dependent:

<b>If you have 1 dependent child and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$11,881
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$13,893
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$17,309
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits <b>and</b> you're the surviving spouse of a Veteran who served in the Spanish-American War (SAW)	\$17,833

#### Notes:

- The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/Minimum Income Annuity (MIW) limitation is \$9,078.
- **If you have more than one child**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional child.

- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$594 for a surviving spouse with 1 dependent).

## For qualified surviving spouses with no dependents:

If you have no dependents and...	Your MAPR amount is:
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$9,078
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$11,095
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$14,509
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits and you're the surviving spouse of a Veteran who served in the Spanish-American War (SAW)	\$15,097

### Notes:

- The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/Minimum Income Annuity (MIW) limitation is \$9,078.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$453 for a surviving spouse with no dependent child).

## For qualified surviving children:

If you're...	Your MAPR amount is:
A qualified surviving child	\$2,313

**Get historic rate charts from past years** [2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2011](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999 and earlier](#)

## **Read the full regulations from Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations**

[3.23 Improved Pension Rates – Veterans and Surviving Spouses](#)

[3.24 Improved Pension Rates – Surviving Children](#)

[3.271 “Income” for VA Purposes \(IVAP\)](#)

[3.272 Exclusions from Income](#)

[3.272 Rate Computations](#)

Select One

- Transition and Economic Development
- Compensation
- Education & Training
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Home Loans
- Life Insurance
- Pension
- Pension Home Page

- ▶ Veterans Pension
- ▶ Survivors Pension
- Aid and Attendance and Housebound
- Eligible Wartime Periods
- ▶ Rates
- Appeals Modernization
- Special Groups
- Services
- Applying for Benefits
- Locations
- VBA Performance
- Media and Publications
- About VBA

# Pension

## Protected Pensions Rate Tables – Effective 12/1/18

Go to the [How to Read Pension Benefits Rate Tables](#) page to learn how to read Pension rates pages.

[2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999](#)

For historic rate charts on this topic - CLICK on one of the following:

[Section 306 Disability](#) | [Section 306 Death](#) | [Old Law Disability](#) | [Old Law Death](#)

<b>Section 306 Disability Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Veteran without Dependents</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Veteran with Dependents</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Spouse Income Exclusion Under 38 CFR 3.262(b)(2)</a></li> </ul>	<b>Section 306 Death Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Surviving Spouse/Child(ren)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation</a></li> </ul>
<b>Old Law Disability Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Income Limits</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rates Payable</a></li> </ul>	<b>Old Law Death Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Surviving Spouse/Child(ren)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation</a></li> </ul>

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Subscription Type

\*Email Address

### Section 306 Disability Pension - Veteran without Dependents 2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran Status	Condition	Income Limit
Veteran ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,394 or less
Special A/A Allowance When Income Exceeds \$15,394	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,948 or less
38 CFR 3.552 Rates (Hospital Reduction) for Special A/A Allowance	The rate entitled to (see 38 CFR 3.552 Rate Chart on page VI (1978) -1) on December 31, 1978, will be paid if the veteran is hospitalized on January 1, 2018, or later and the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,948 or less

### Section 306 Disability Pension Spouse Income Exclusion Under 38 CFR 3.262(b)(2) Effective 12/1/18 = \$4,916

### Section 306 Disability Pension - Veteran with Dependents 2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran Status	Condition	Income Limit
Veteran with Dependents	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the IVAP for 2018 is	\$20,692 or less
Special A/A Allowance When Income Exceeds \$20,732	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$21,245 or less
38 CFR 3.552 Rates (Hospital Reduction) for Special A/A Allowance	The rate entitled to (see 38 CFR 3.552 Rate Chart on page VI (1978) -2) on December 31, 1978, will be paid if the veteran is hospitalized on January 1, 2018, or later and the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$21,245 or less

**CONNECT WITH VA BENEFITS**











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& DoD Benefits  
24/7

www.ebenefits.va.gov

**Section 306 Death Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Dependent Status	Condition	Income Limit
Surviving Spouse ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the surviving spouse's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,394 or less
Surviving Spouse AND Child(ren)	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the surviving spouse's IVAP for 2018 is	\$20,692 or less
Child(ren) ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the child's IVAP for 2018 is	\$12,587 or less

**Section 306 Death Pension SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation**

Effective 12/01/18 = \$9,078

**Old Law Disability Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran's Dependent Status	Income Limits
Unmarried Veterans	\$13,480
Veteran and Spouse or Minor Child (no spouse)	\$19,429

Veteran's Entitlement	Rates Payable
Basic Rates	\$66.15
10 Years or Age 65	\$78.75
If Entitled to A/A	\$135.45
If Entitled to HB	\$100.00

**Old Law Death Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Beneficiary	Income Limit
Surviving Spouse Only or Each Child (No Surviving Spouse)	\$13,480
Surviving Spouse (With Child or Children)	\$19,429

**Old Law Death Pension SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation = \$9,078**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

[return to top ▲](#)

More in this section

# VA Pension Rates for Veterans

If you qualify for Veterans pension benefits, the amount you get will be based on the difference between your countable income and a limit that Congress sets (called the Maximum Annual Pension Rate, or MAPR).

- **Your countable income** is how much you earn, including your Social Security benefits, investment and retirement payments, and any income your dependents receive. Some expenses, like non-reimbursable medical expenses (medical expenses not covered by your insurance provider), may reduce your countable income.
- **Your MAPR amount** is the maximum amount of pension payable. Your MAPR is based on how many dependents you have, if you're married to another Veteran who qualifies for a pension, and if your disabilities qualify you for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits. MAPRs are adjusted each year for cost-of-living increases. You can find your current MAPR amount using the tables below.

**Example:** You're a qualified Veteran with a dependent, non-Veteran spouse and no children. You also qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits based on your disabilities. You and your spouse have a combined yearly income of \$10,000.

Your MAPR amount = \$26,036

Your yearly income = \$10,000

Your VA pension = \$16,036 for the year (or \$1,336 paid each month)

# What's the net worth limit to qualify for a Veterans Pension?

We've recently changed the way we assess net worth to make the pension entitlement rules more clear. Net worth is the total of your or your beneficiary's assets and annual income. Your net worth also includes the net worth of your spouse. You should report all of your net worth. The net worth limit to qualify for a Veterans Pension as of December 1, 2018, is \$127,061.

**Note:** In the future, the net worth limit will increase by the same percentage as Social Security cost-of-living increases. We'll update the limit here when there's an increase.

# What's the 3-year look-back period for asset transfers?

When we receive a pension claim, we review the terms and conditions of any assets the Veteran may have transferred in the 3 years before filing the claim.

If you transfer assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period, and those assets would have pushed your net worth above the limit for a VA pension, you may be subject to a penalty period of up to 5 years. You won't be eligible for pension benefits during this time.

**Note:** This new policy took effect on October 18, 2018. If you filed your claim before this date, the look-back period doesn't apply. (A look-back period never includes a date before October 18, 2018.)

# What's a penalty period?

A penalty period is a length of time when a Veteran isn't eligible for pension benefits because they transferred assets for less than fair

market value during the look-back period. We won't pay pension benefits during a penalty period.

## Find your Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR) amount

*Date of Cost-of-Living Increase: December 1, 2018*

*Increase Factor: 2.8%*

*Standard Medicare Deduction: Actual amount will be determined by SSA based on individual income.*

### For Veterans with no dependents:

<b>If you have no dependents and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$13,535
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$16,540
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$22,577

#### **Note:**

If you have medical expenses, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$676 for a Veteran with no spouse or child).

### For Veterans with at least 1 dependent spouse or child:

<b>If you have 1 dependent and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
	\$17,724

<b>If you have 1 dependent and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$20,731
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$26,766

**Note:**

- **If you have more than one dependent**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional dependent.
- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$886 for a Veteran with 1 dependent).

**For 2 Veterans who are married to each other:**

<b>If you're 2 Veterans who are married to each other and:</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
Neither of you qualifies for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$17,724
One of you qualifies for Housebound benefits	\$20,731
Both of you qualify for Housebound benefits	\$23,734
One of you qualifies for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$26,766
One of you qualifies for Housebound benefits and one of you qualifies for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$29,764
Both of you qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$35,813

**Note:**

- **If you have more than one dependent**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional child.
- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$886 for a Veteran with 1 dependent).

**Get historic rate charts from past years** [2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2011](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999 and earlier](#)

## **Read full regulations from Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations**

[3.23 Improved Pension Rates – Veterans and Surviving Spouses](#)

[3.24 Improved Pension Rates – Surviving Children](#)

[3.271 Computation of Income](#)

[3.272 Exclusions from Income](#)

[3.273 Rate Computation](#)

More in this section

# VA Survivors Pension

Find out if you're eligible and how to apply for a survivors pension as a surviving spouse or child of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

## Can I get this benefit as a surviving spouse?

You may be able to get this benefit if you haven't remarried after the Veteran's death, if the deceased Veteran didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, and if the Veteran's service meets at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true. The Veteran:

- Entered active duty on or before September 7, 1980, and served at least 90 days on active military service, with at least 1 day during a wartime period, **or**
- Entered active duty after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least 1 day during a wartime period **or**
- Was an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

### And this must be true for you:

Your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your net worth equals the value of everything you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe.

## How do I know if the Veteran served under an eligible wartime period?

Under current law, we recognize the following wartime periods to decide eligibility for pension benefits:

- Mexican Border period (May 9, 1916, to April 5, 1917, for Veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders, or in adjacent waters)
- World War I (April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918)
- World War II (December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946)
- Korean conflict (June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955)
- Vietnam War era (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975 for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served outside of the Republic of Vietnam.)
- Gulf War (August 2, 1990, through a future date to be set by law or presidential proclamation)

## Can I get this benefit as the child of a deceased wartime Veteran?

You may be able to get this benefit if you're unmarried and you meet at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true:

- You're under age 18, **or**
- You're under age 23 and attending a VA-approved school, **or**
- You're unable to care for yourself due to a disability that happened before age 18

## How do I apply?

You can apply in any of these ways:

## **By mail**

Fill out an Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits (VA Form 21-534EZ).

[Download VA Form 21-534EZ.](#)

Mail it to the Pension Management Center (PMC) for your state.

[Find your PMC.](#)

## **In person**

Bring your application to a VA regional benefit office near you.

[Find a VA regional benefit office near you.](#)

## **With the help of a trained professional**

You can work with a trained professional called an accredited representative to get help applying for survivors pension benefits.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

# **How long does it take VA to make a decision?**

It depends. We process claims in the order we received them, unless a claim requires priority processing.

## **More information for survivors**

---

### **VA Survivors Pension Rates**

View pension rates for surviving spouses and children.

# Access and manage your VA benefits and health care

## **Health care**

[Refill and track your prescriptions](#)

[Send a secure message to your health care team](#)

[Schedule and view your appointments](#)

[View your lab and test results](#)

[Apply now for VA health care](#)

## **Disability**

[Check your claim or appeal status](#)

[View your payment history](#)

[Upload evidence to support your claim](#)

[File for a VA disability increase](#)

[File a claim for compensation](#)

## **Education**

[Check your Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits](#)

[View your payment history](#)

[Change your current education benefits](#)

[Compare GI Bill benefits by school](#)

[Apply for education benefits](#)

## **Records**

[Get Veteran ID cards](#)

[Get your VA medical records](#)

[Download your benefit letters](#)

[Change your address](#)

[Request your military records \(DD214\)](#)



## **Service member benefits**

Find out what benefits you may be eligible for during service and which time-sensitive benefits to consider when separating or retiring.

## **Family member benefits**

Learn about the benefits you may qualify for as a spouse, dependent, or survivor. And find out what you're eligible for as a family member caring for a Veteran with disabilities.

## **Burials and memorials**

Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial item to honor a Veteran's service, and apply for survivor and dependent benefits.

## **Careers and employment**

Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, get support for your Veteran-owned small business, and access other career resources.

## **Housing assistance**

Find out if you're eligible for a VA-backed home loan. If you have a service-connected disability, see if you qualify for

## **Pension**

Apply for monthly payments for wartime Veterans and survivors with limited or no income who meet certain age and disability requirements.

a housing grant to help you live more independently.

## [Life insurance](#)

Explore VA life insurance options for Veterans, service members, and families. Manage your policy online, file claims for benefits, and access helpful resources.

## [Education and training](#)

Apply for and manage your GI Bill and other education benefits to help pay for college and training programs.

## [Records](#)

Apply for a printed Veteran ID card, get your VA benefit letters and medical records, and learn how to apply for a discharge upgrade.

## [Health care](#)

Apply for VA health care, find out how to access services, and manage your health and benefits online.

## [Disability](#)

File a claim for disability compensation for conditions related to your military service, and manage your benefits over time.



**Find a VA health facility, benefit office, or cemetery**

**Talk to a Veterans Crisis Line responder now**



**Sign in or create an account to use more tools**

---

Video of VA Secretary Robert

Graphic of Iwo Jima Veteran

Graphic for the Vantage Point

**[Welcome to the new VA.gov!](#)**

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie talks about the redesign intentionally built with Veterans, for Veterans.

**[74th Anniversary of Iwo Jima](#)**

Marine Corps Veteran Woody Williams shares his story.

**[VAntage Point: news you can use](#)**

VAntage Point is VA's official blog. Here you will find stories from around VA and the Veteran community.

# File for disability compensation

Equal to VA Form 21-526EZ (Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits).

## **i** Save time—and save your work in progress—by signing in before starting your application

When you're signed in to your VA.gov account:

- We can prefill part of your application based on your account details.
- You can save your application in progress, and come back later to finish filling it out. You'll have 1 year from the date you start or update your application to submit it. After 1 year, we'll delete the form and you'll need to start over.

**Note:** If you sign in after you've started your application, you won't be able to save the information you've already filled in.

**Sign in to Start Your Application**

By clicking the button to start the disability application, you'll declare your intent to file. This will reserve a potential effective

date for when you could start getting benefits. You have 1 year from the day you submit your intent to file to complete your application.

## **Follow the steps below to file a claim for a new or secondary condition or for increased disability compensation.**

### **1**

#### **Prepare**

**When you file a disability claim, you'll have a chance to provide evidence to support your claim. Evidence could include:**

- VA medical records and hospital records that relate to your claimed condition or that show your rated disability has gotten worse
- Private medical records and hospital reports that relate to your claimed condition or that show your disability has gotten worse
- Supporting statements from family, friends, coworkers, clergy, or law enforcement personnel with knowledge about how and when your disability happened or how it got worse

In some cases, you may need to turn in one or more additional forms to support your disability claim. For example, you'll need to fill out another form if you're claiming a dependent or applying for aid and attendance benefits.

[Learn what additional forms you may need to file with your disability claim.](#)

#### **What if I need help with my application?**

If you need help filing a disability claim, you can contact a VA regional office and ask to speak to a counselor. To find the nearest regional office, please call [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

An accredited representative, like a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), can help you fill out your claim.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

### **i** **Disability ratings**

For each disability we assign a rating from 0% to 100%. We base this rating on the evidence you turn in with your claim. In some cases we may also ask you to have an exam to help us rate your disability.

Before filing a claim for increase, you might want to check to see if you're already receiving the maximum disability rating for your condition.

## **2** **Apply**

Complete this disability compensation benefits form. After submitting the form, you'll get a confirmation message. You can print this for your records.

## **3** **VA Review**

We process applications in the order we receive them. The amount of time it takes to process your claim depends on how many injuries or disabilities you claim and how long it takes us to gather evidence needed to decide your claim.

## 4 Decision

Once we've processed your claim, you'll get a notice in the mail with our decision.

By clicking the button to start the disability application, you'll declare your intent to file. This will reserve a potential effective date for when you could start getting benefits. You have 1 year from the day you submit your intent to file to complete your application.

Respondent burden: **25 minutes**

OMB Control #: **2900-0747**

Expiration date: **03/31/2021**

[Privacy Act Statement](#)

## **Need help?**

---

For help filling out this form, or if the form isn't working right, please call VA Benefits and Services at [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 711.

I AM A...

Select One

- Transition and Economic Development
- Compensation
- Compensation Home

Types of Compensation

Types of Claims

Claims Process

Evidence Requirements

Compensation & Pension Exam

Effective Dates

Fully Developed Claims

Apply

Benefit Rates

Add a Dependent

Education & Training

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Pension

Appeals Modernization

Special Groups

Services

Applying for Benefits

Locations

VBA Performance

Media and Publications

About VBA

# Compensation

## Veterans Compensation Benefits Rate Tables - Effective 12/1/18

Go to our [How to Read Compensation Benefits Rate Tables](#) to learn how to use the table..

### Rates (No Dependents): 10% - 20%

Basic Rates - 10%-100% Combined Degree Only  
Effective 12/1/18

Without Children	With Children
<a href="#">30% - 60%</a>	<a href="#">30% - 60%</a>
<a href="#">70% - 100%</a>	<a href="#">70% - 100%</a>

### 10% - 20% (No Dependents)

Percentage	Rate
10%	\$140.05
20%	\$276.84

### 30% - 60% Without Children

Dependent Status	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran Alone	\$428.83	\$617.73	\$879.36	\$1,113.86
Veteran with Spouse Only	\$479.83	\$685.73	\$964.36	\$1,215.86
Veteran with Spouse & One Parent	\$520.83	\$739.73	\$1,032.36	\$1,297.86
Veteran with Spouse and Two Parents	\$561.83	\$793.73	\$1,100.36	\$1,379.86
Veteran with One Parent	\$469.83	\$671.73	\$947.36	\$1,195.86
Veteran with Two Parents	\$510.83	\$725.73	\$1,015.36	\$1,277.86
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$47.00	\$62.00	\$78.00	\$94.00

### 70% - 100% Without Children

Dependent Status	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran Alone	\$1,403.71	\$1,631.69	\$1,833.62	\$3,057.13
Veteran with Spouse Only	\$1,522.71	\$1,767.69	\$1,986.62	\$3,227.58
Veteran with Spouse and One Parent	\$1,617.71	\$1,876.69	\$2,109.62	\$3,364.37
Veteran with Spouse and Two Parents	\$1,712.71	\$1,985.69	\$2,232.62	\$3,501.16
Veteran with One Parent	\$1,498.71	\$1,740.69	\$1,956.62	\$3,193.92
Veteran with Two Parents	\$1,593.71	\$1,849.69	\$2,079.62	\$3,330.71
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$109.00	\$125.00	\$141.00	\$156.32

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[www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov)

### 30% - 60% With Children

Dependent Status	30%	40%	50%	60%
Veteran with Spouse and Child	\$516.83	\$735.73	\$1,026.36	\$1,290.86
Veteran with Child Only	\$462.83	\$662.73	\$935.36	\$1,181.86
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child	\$557.83	\$789.73	\$1,094.36	\$1,372.86
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child	\$598.83	\$843.73	\$1,162.36	\$1,454.86
Veteran with One Parent and Child	\$503.83	\$716.73	\$1,003.36	\$1,263.86
Veteran with Two Parents and Child	\$544.83	\$770.73	\$1,071.36	\$1,345.86
Add for Each Additional Child Under Age 18	\$25.00	\$33.00	\$42.00	\$50.00
Each Additional Schoolchild Over Age 18 (see footnote a)	\$82.00	\$109.00	\$136.00	\$164.00
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$47.00	\$62.00	\$78.00	\$94.00

### 70% - 100% With Children

Dependent Status	70%	80%	90%	100%
Veteran with Spouse and Child	\$1,609.71	\$1,867.69	\$2,098.62	\$3,352.41
Veteran with Child Only	\$1,482.71	\$1,722.69	\$1,935.62	\$3,171.12
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child	\$1,704.71	\$1,976.69	\$2,221.62	\$3,489.20
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child	\$1,799.71	\$2,085.69	\$2,344.62	\$3,625.99
Veteran with One Parent and Child	\$1,577.71	\$1,831.69	\$2,058.62	\$3,307.91
Veteran with Two Parents and Child	\$1,672.71	\$1,940.69	\$2,181.62	\$3,444.70
Add for Each Additional Child Under Age 18	\$59.00	\$67.00	\$76.00	\$84.69
Each Additional Schoolchild Over Age 18 (see footnote a)	\$191.00	\$218.00	\$246.00	\$273.58
Additional for A/A spouse (see footnote b)	\$109.00	\$125.00	\$141.00	\$156.32

#### FOOTNOTES:

- a. Rates for each school child are shown separately. They are not included with any other compensation rates. All other entries on this chart reflecting a rate for children show the rate payable for children under 18 or helpless. To find the amount payable to a 70% disabled veteran with a spouse and four children, one of whom is over 18 and attending school, take the 70% rate for a veteran with a spouse and 3 children, \$ 1786.71, and add the rate for one school child, \$191.00. The total amount payable is \$1977.71.
- b. Where the veteran has a spouse who is determined to require A/A, add the figure shown as "additional for A/A spouse" to the amount shown for the proper dependency code. For example, veteran has A/A spouse and 2 minor children and is 70% disabled. Add \$109.00, additional for A/A spouse, to the rate for a 70% veteran with dependency code 12, \$1,668.71. The total amount payable is \$1,777.71.

## Historical Rate Tables

[2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014/2015](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2011](#) | [2010-2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999](#)

[return to top ▲](#)

I AM A...

Select One

Transition and Economic Development

Compensation

Compensation Home

Types of Compensation

▸ Types of Claims

Claims Process

▸ Evidence Requirements

Compensation & Pension Exam

Effective Dates

Fully Developed Claims

Apply

Benefit Rates

Add a Dependent

Education & Training

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

Home Loans

Life Insurance

Pension

Appeals Modernization

Special Groups

Services

Applying for Benefits

Locations

VBA Performance

Media and Publications

About VBA

# Compensation

## Benefit Rates

### Access Current Rates

Select the compensation program below to view current rates. Historical rates are linked from the current rates page, as well.

- [Veterans Compensation Benefits Current Rates](#)
- [Special Monthly Compensation \(SMC\) Current Rates](#)
- [Dependency Indemnity Compensation \(DIC\) Current Rates](#)
- [Parents DIC Current Rates](#)
- [Automobile Allowance, Clothing Allowance and Medal of Honor Rates](#)
- [Birth Defects \(Spina Bifida, Children of Women Vietnam Veterans\) Rates](#)

### Learn More about VA Compensation Rates

- [How VA Calculates Compensation Rates](#)
- [Cost-of-Living Adjustments \(COLA\)](#)
- [Combined Ratings](#)

### How VA Calculates Compensation Rates

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges, depending on how disabled you are. VA makes a determination about the severity of your disability based on the evidence you submit as part of your claim, or that VA obtains from your military records. VA rates disability from 0% to 100% in 10% increments (e.g. 10%, 20%, 30% etc.). See the [Combined Ratings section](#) below for information about how VA calculates disability percentage for multiple disabilities.

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

### Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA)

Periodically, VA makes cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to VA compensation and pension benefits to ensure that the purchasing power of VA benefits is not eroded by inflation. Under federal law, the cost-of-living adjustments to VA's compensation and pension rates are the same percentage as for Social Security benefits. You can learn more about COLA's on the [Social Security Administration's COLA webpage](#).

### Combined Ratings

If VA finds that a Veteran has multiple disabilities, VA uses the [Combined Ratings Table](#) below to calculate a combined disability rating. Disability ratings are not additive, meaning that if a Veteran has one disability rated 60% and a second disability 20%, the combined rating is not 80%. This is because subsequent disability ratings are applied to an already disabled Veteran, so the 20% disability is applied to a Veteran who is already 60% disabled.

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Below you will find the steps VA takes to combine ratings for more than one disability and examples using the [Combined Ratings Table](#) to illustrate how combined ratings are calculated.

1. The disabilities are first arranged in the exact order of their severity, beginning with the greatest disability and then combined with use of [Combined Ratings Table](#) below
2. The degree of one disability will be read in the left column and the degree of the other in the top row, whichever is appropriate
3. The figures appearing in the space where the column and row intersect will represent the combined value of the two
4. This combined value is rounded to the nearest 10%
5. If there are more than two disabilities, the combined value for the first two will be found as previously described for two disabilities
6. The exact combined value (without rounding yet), is combined with the degree of the third disability
7. This process continues for subsequent disabilities and the final number is rounded to the nearest 10%

### Examples of Combining Two Disabilities

If a Veteran has a 50 percent disability and a 30 percent disability, the combined value will be found to be 65 percent, but the 65 percent must be converted to 70 percent to represent the final degree of disability.

Similarly, with a disability of 40 percent, and another disability of 20 percent, the combined value is found to be 52 percent, but the 52 percent must be converted to the nearest degree divisible by 10, which is 50 percent.

### Example of Combining Three Disabilities

If there are three disabilities ratable at 60 percent, 40 percent, and 20 percent, respectively, the combined value for the first two will be found opposite 60 and under 40 and is 76 percent. This 76 will be found in the left column, then the 20 rating in the top row. The intersection of these two ratings is 81. Thus, the final rating will be rounded to 80%.

**Table I-Combined Ratings Table**  
[10 combined with 10 is 19]

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
<b>19</b>	27	35	43	51	60	68	76	84	92
<b>20</b>	28	36	44	52	60	68	76	84	92
<b>21</b>	29	37	45	53	61	68	76	84	92
<b>22</b>	30	38	45	53	61	69	77	84	92
<b>23</b>	31	38	46	54	62	69	77	85	92
<b>24</b>	32	39	47	54	62	70	77	85	92
<b>25</b>	33	40	48	55	63	70	78	85	93
<b>26</b>	33	41	48	56	63	70	78	85	93
<b>27</b>	34	42	49	56	64	71	78	85	93
<b>28</b>	35	42	50	57	64	71	78	86	93
<b>29</b>	36	43	50	57	65	72	79	86	93
<b>30</b>	37	44	51	58	65	72	79	86	93
<b>31</b>	38	45	52	59	66	72	79	86	93
<b>32</b>	39	46	52	59	66	73	80	86	93
<b>33</b>	40	46	53	60	67	73	80	87	93
<b>34</b>	41	47	54	60	67	74	80	87	93
<b>35</b>	42	48	55	61	68	74	81	87	94
<b>36</b>	42	49	55	62	68	74	81	87	94
<b>37</b>	43	50	56	62	69	75	81	87	94
<b>38</b>	44	50	57	63	69	75	81	88	94

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
39	45	51	57	63	70	76	82	88	94
40	46	52	58	64	70	76	82	88	94
41	47	53	59	65	71	76	82	88	94
42	48	54	59	65	71	77	83	88	94
43	49	54	60	66	72	77	83	89	94
44	50	55	61	66	72	78	83	89	94
45	51	56	62	67	73	78	84	89	95
46	51	57	62	68	73	78	84	89	95
47	52	58	63	68	74	79	84	89	95
48	53	58	64	69	74	79	84	90	95
49	54	59	64	69	75	80	85	90	95
50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95
51	56	61	66	71	76	80	85	90	95
52	57	62	66	71	76	81	86	90	95
53	58	62	67	72	77	81	86	91	95
54	59	63	68	72	77	82	86	91	95
55	60	64	69	73	78	82	87	91	96
56	60	65	69	74	78	82	87	91	96
57	61	66	70	74	79	83	87	91	96
58	62	66	71	75	79	83	87	92	96
59	63	67	71	75	80	84	88	92	96
60	64	68	72	76	80	84	88	92	96
61	65	69	73	77	81	84	88	92	96
62	66	70	73	77	81	85	89	92	96

Table I-Combined Ratings Table (cont.)

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
63	67	70	74	78	82	85	89	93	96
64	68	71	75	78	82	86	89	93	96
65	69	72	76	79	83	86	90	93	97
66	69	73	76	80	83	86	90	93	97
67	70	74	77	80	84	87	90	93	97
68	71	74	78	81	84	87	90	94	97
69	72	75	78	81	85	88	91	94	97
70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	97
71	74	77	80	83	86	88	91	94	97
72	75	78	80	83	86	89	92	94	97
73	76	78	81	84	87	89	92	95	97
74	77	79	82	84	87	90	92	95	97
75	78	80	83	85	88	90	93	95	98
76	78	81	83	86	88	90	93	95	98
77	79	82	84	86	89	91	93	95	98
78	80	82	85	87	89	91	93	96	98
79	81	83	85	87	90	92	94	96	98
80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98
81	83	85	87	89	91	92	94	96	98
82	84	86	87	89	91	93	95	96	98
83	85	86	88	90	92	93	95	97	98

	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>84</b>	86	87	89	90	92	94	95	97	98
<b>85</b>	87	88	90	91	93	94	96	97	99
<b>86</b>	87	89	90	92	93	94	96	97	99
<b>87</b>	88	90	91	92	94	95	96	97	99
<b>88</b>	89	90	92	93	94	95	96	98	99
<b>89</b>	90	91	92	93	95	96	97	98	99
<b>90</b>	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
<b>91</b>	92	93	94	95	96	96	97	98	99
<b>92</b>	93	94	94	95	96	97	98	98	99
<b>93</b>	94	94	95	96	97	97	98	99	99
<b>94</b>	95	95	96	96	97	98	98	99	99

[return to top ▲](#)

More in this section

# Add Dependents to Your VA Disability Benefits

Find out how to add a dependent spouse, child, and/or parent to your VA disability benefits for additional compensation.

## Am I eligible for additional VA disability compensation for my dependent(s)?

You may be eligible for additional disability compensation for a spouse, child, and/or parent if you meet both of the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true. You:

- Are eligible for VA disability compensation, **and**
- Have a combined disability rating of at least 30%

Adding a dependent may make you eligible to receive a higher compensation payment (also called a benefit rate).

## Who does VA consider a dependent?

### A dependent is:

- A spouse (**Note:** we recognize same-sex and common-law marriages)
- A parent, if you're directly caring for them and their income and net worth are below a certain amount
- An unmarried child (including an adopted child or stepchild) who meets one of the eligibility requirements listed below

**To be considered a dependent, one of these must be true of an unmarried child. They:**

- Are under 18 years old, **or**

- Are between the ages of 18 and 23 years old and enrolled in school full time, **or**
- Became permanently disabled before they turned 18

## **When should I add a dependent to my benefits?**

This depends on where you are in the process of filing for disability compensation.

### **If you haven't yet filed a claim for disability compensation**

You can file a claim for additional compensation for a dependent at the same time as you file your original claim for disability compensation.

If you receive a combined disability rating of at least 30%, we'll automatically consider your eligibility for additional compensation for your dependent.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

### **If you have one or more dependents, but you didn't claim them when you originally filed for disability compensation**

If you have a combined disability rating of at least 30%, you can file a claim for additional disability compensation now.

### **If something changes in your family status after you received a combined disability rating of at least 30%**

You can file a claim for additional disability compensation whenever you add a dependent.

### **You can add a dependent if:**

- You get married
  - You have or adopt a child
  - Your child is between 18 and 23 years old and enrolled in school full time
  - We determine that your child, who is at least 18 years old, became permanently disabled before turning 18
  - You become the caregiver for a parent whose income and net worth is below a certain amount
- 

## **How do I add a dependent to my benefits?**

### **To file a claim for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse**

You can file a claim for additional compensation for a child or spouse online right now through our eBenefits website.

**Note:** You may need to provide more information or forms along with your claim.

#### **Go to eBenefits to Add a Dependent Child or Spouse**

**If you're claiming your child who became permanently disabled before they turned 18,** you'll need to turn in all private medical records relating to the child's disabilities with your application.

**If your dependent is a child who's between 18 and 23 years old and attending school full time,** you'll also need to submit a Request for Approval of School Attendance (VA Form 21-674) with your application.

[Download VA Form 21-674.](#)

## To file a claim for additional disability compensation for a dependent parent

You'll need to fill out and submit a Statement of Dependency of Parent(s) (VA Form 21P-509) by mail or fax.

[Download VA Form 21P-509.](#)

**Please send all correspondence related to compensation claims to this address:**

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Evidence Intake Center  
PO Box 4444  
Janesville, WI 53547-4444

**Or fax it to:**

[1-844-531-7817](tel:1-844-531-7817) if you live in the U.S., **or**

[1-248-524-4260](tel:1-248-524-4260) if you live outside of the U.S.

## What if I need help with my claim?

You can work with an accredited Veterans Service Officer (VSO). We trust these professionals because they're trained and certified in the VA claims and appeals process. A VSO can answer your questions or even file your claim for you.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

# More questions about adding a dependent to your VA disability compensation

**Can I file a claim for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse by mail or fax?**

**What should I do if I already submitted a paper form for additional disability compensation for a child or spouse, and I'm still waiting for a decision?**

**Can I get paid back to the date my spouse and I got married, or the date when my child was born or adopted?**

**When will I start receiving payment if VA approves my claim for additional disability compensation?**

**How do I know if I'm already receiving additional disability compensation for my dependent(s)?**

## Questions about adding or removing certain kinds of dependents

**What if my spouse is also a Veteran with a combined disability rating of at least 30%? Can we both receive additional disability compensation for each other and for our children? Or can only one of us receive the additional benefit?**

**What happens if I get divorced or need to remove a dependent?**

**How will VA know it needs to continue paying me additional disability compensation for my child when they turn 18 and remain in school? Do I have to file another claim?**

**Do I need to ask VA to stop paying me additional disability compensation for my child when they turn 18?**

## **More VA benefits for you and your dependents**

---

### **Pension Benefits**

Apply for monthly pension benefits for wartime Veterans and survivors.

### **Life Insurance**

Explore your VA life insurance options, manage your policy, and file claims.

### **Transfer Your Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits to Your Spouse and Dependents**

If you have unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, find out if you can transfer your benefits to your spouse or dependent children.

More in this section

# Increased Disability Rating for Time Spent in a Hospital

Did you spend time in a VA hospital or a VA-approved hospital for a disability related to your military service (called a service-connected disability)? If you did, you may be able to get added disability compensation or benefits with a temporary 100% disability rating for the time you spent in the hospital. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if one of the situations below describes your experience.

### One of these must be true:

- You spent more than 21 days in a VA hospital or other approved hospital for a service-connected disability, **or**
- You were under hospital observation for more than 21 days at our expense for a service-connected disability

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of disability benefits can I get?

- Health care
  - Increased compensation (payments) for the time you spent in the hospital
- 

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

**Note:** If you weren't in a VA hospital, when filing your claim you'll need to give us your hospital discharge summary showing the length and cause of your hospital stay.

**Example:** A Veteran with a 40% service-connected disability rating for diabetes had to stay in a VA hospital after going into a diabetic coma. He needed to stay in the hospital for 25 days because of the coma and related infections. We raised his rating to 100% during his hospital stay. After he got out of the hospital, his disability rating went back to 40%.

More in this section

# Temporary Disability Rating After Surgery or Getting a Cast

Are you recovering from surgery or a disability related to your military service that's left you unable to move? You may be able to get a temporary 100% disability rating and disability compensation or benefits if you have this kind of immobilizing disability. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if you've had surgery or received other treatment at a VA hospital, approved hospital, or outpatient center for a disability related to your military service (called a service-connected disability).

### If you had surgery, both of these must true for you:

- The surgery required a recovery time of at least 1 month or reports show that the surgery or treatment was for a service-connected disability, **and**
- The surgery resulted in severe issues, like:
  - Surgical wounds that haven't totally healed
  - Stumps of recent amputations
  - Being unable to move due to being put in splints or casts to help with healing (known as therapeutic immobilizations)
  - Being unable to leave your house (known as house confinement)

- Being required to use a wheelchair or crutches

**If you didn't have surgery, this must be true:**

You had one or more major joints immobilized by a cast.

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of disability benefits can I get?

- Health care
  - Added compensation (payments) while you recover
  - A temporary 100% disability rating
- 

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

Recovery time from either a surgery or the immobilization of a joint by a cast without surgery requires a temporary 100% disability rating for a service-connected disability. The temporary 100% rating may continue for 1 to 3 months—depending on your unique case. You may be able to get an extension for up to 3 more months if your case is severe.

**Example:** A Veteran had a left knee injury that resulted in a 30% disability rating. As the knee problem got worse, the Veteran's VA doctor recommended surgery to stop more damage from happening. Since the doctor wouldn't know if the surgery was successful until 3 months after the Veteran's 1-week stay in the hospital, we granted the Veteran a temporary 100% disability rating for 3 months.

More in this section

# VA Title 38 U.S.C. 1151 Claims

If you suffered an added disability—or your existing injury or disease got worse—while you were getting VA medical care or taking part in a VA program designed to help you find, get, or keep a job, you may be able to get compensation.

## **Can I get compensation from VA?**

You may be able get compensation from VA if you suffered an added disability or your existing disability got worse as the direct result of any of the reasons listed below—and the added disability wasn't a reasonably expected result or complication of treatment.

**At least one of these must have led directly to an added disability or to your injury or disease getting worse:**

- VA carelessness or negligence, **or**
- VA medical or surgical treatment, **or**
- A VA health exam, **or**
- A VA vocational rehabilitation course (under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 31), **or**
- VA compensated work therapy (CWT)(under 38 U.S.C. 1718)

## **Who's covered?**

Veterans

## **What kind of benefits can I get?**

Compensation

---

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation. When you file, you'll have to show that the added disability happened because of VA medical care or a VA program designed to help you find, get, or keep a job.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

We'll award any compensation payments in the same way we would if your disability was related to your military service (a service-connected disability).

More in this section

# VA Temporary Disability Benefits (Prestabilization Rating)

If you recently ended your active military service and you have a disability related to your service (called a service-connected disability), you may be able to get temporary disability compensation or benefits right away.

If you qualify for these benefits, you'll get what's called a prestabilization rating. This rating may be 50% or 100%, depending on the severity of your disability. Your prestabilization rating will continue for 1 year after your discharge from active service.

## Can I get disability benefits from VA?

You may be able to get disability benefits if you recently ended your active military service and you meet both of the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true:

- You have a severe service-connected disability that is unstable (meaning an illness or injury that will change or hasn't yet been fully treated), **and**

- Your disability is expected to continue for an unknown amount of time

## Who's covered?

Veterans

## What kind of benefits can I get?

- Health care
- Compensation (payments)

## How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to file a claim for disability compensation. When you file, you'll have to show that you have a severe, service-connected disability that's unstable and expected to continue for an unknown amount of time. This information will normally be part of your Service Treatment Record.

[Find out how to file a claim for disability compensation.](#)

**Example:** While in active service, a Servicemember was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease and began chemotherapy that continued during and after her medical discharge process. She continued to get treatment through her local VA medical center, and we gave her a prestabilization rating of 100% for 1 year from her date of discharge.

More in this section

# VA Aid and Attendance Benefits and Housebound Allowance

If you need help with your daily activities, or you're housebound, you may qualify for Aid and Attendance or Housebound allowances in addition to your pension benefits. Find out if you can get these monthly payments added to the amount of your monthly pension.

## Can I get Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits?

**You may qualify for Aid and Attendance** if you get a VA pension and you meet at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true:

- You need another person to help you perform daily activities, like bathing, feeding, and dressing, **or**
- You have to stay in bed—or spend a large portion of the day in bed—because of illness, **or**
- You are a patient in a nursing home due to the loss of mental or physical abilities related to a disability, **or**
- Your eyesight is limited (even with glasses or contact lenses you have only 5/200 or less in both eyes; or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less)

**You may qualify for Housebound benefits** if you get a VA pension and you spend most of your time in your home because of a permanent disability (a disability that doesn't go away).

**Note:** You can't get Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits at the same time.

**Who's covered:**

- Qualified Veterans
- Qualified surviving spouses

## How do I get this benefit?

There are 2 ways you can get this benefit:

### Write to your Pension Management Center (PMC)

You can write to the PMC for your state.

[Find your PMC.](#)

Include this information:

- Evidence, like a doctor's report, that shows you need Aid and Attendance or Housebound care, or VA Form 21-2680 (Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance), which your doctor can fill out.  
[Download VA Form 21-2680.](#)
- Details about what you normally do during the day and how you get places
- Details that help show what kind of illness, injury, or mental or physical disability affects your ability to do things, like take a bath, on your own

If you're in a nursing home, you'll also need to fill out a Request for Nursing Home Information in Connection with Claim for Aid and Attendance (VA Form 21-0779).

[Download VA Form 21-0779.](#)

## **Apply in person**

You can bring your information to a VA regional benefit office near you.

[Find your nearest VA regional benefit office.](#)

## **How long does it take VA to make a decision?**

It depends. We process claims in the order we receive them, unless a claim requires priority processing.



**VA DATE STAMP**  
 (Do Not Write In This Space)

**REQUEST FOR NURSING HOME INFORMATION IN CONNECTION  
 WITH CLAIM FOR AID AND ATTENDANCE**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** If you have any questions about completing this form, call VA toll-free at 1-800-827-1000 (Hearing Impaired TDD federal relay number is 711).

**Section I - VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION**

**NOTE:** You can *either* complete the form online or by hand. If completed by hand, print the information requested in ink, neatly, and legibly to expedite processing the form.

1. VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last)

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2. VETERAN/CLAIMANT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

3. VA FILE NUMBER

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4. VETERAN'S DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)

Month	Day	Year							
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			

5. VETERAN'S SERVICE NUMBER (If applicable)

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**SECTION II - NURSING HOME INFORMATION**

6. NAME OF NURSING HOME

7. ADDRESS OF NURSING HOME (Number and street or rural route, P.O. Box, City, State, ZIP Code and Country)

No. & Street									
Apt./Unit Number		City							
State/Province		Country		ZIP Code/Postal Code					

**SECTION III - GENERAL INFORMATION (To be completed by a Nursing Home Official)**

8. DATE ADMITTED TO NURSING HOME (MM/DD/YYYY)

Month	Day	Year							
<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 50%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td><td style="width: 33%; height: 20px;"></td></tr></table>			

9. IS THE NURSING HOME FACILITY MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT APPROVED?

YES       NO

10. HAS THE PATIENT APPLIED FOR MEDICAID?

YES       NO

11A. IS THE PATIENT COVERED BY MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT PLAN?

YES       NO (If "YES," complete Item 11B)

11B. DATE MEDICAID OR EQUIVALENT PLAN BEGAN

Month	Day	Year							
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12. MONTHLY AMOUNT PATIENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OUT OF POCKET

\$

13. I CERTIFY THAT THE CLAIMANT IS A PATIENT IN THIS FACILITY BECAUSE OF MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND IS RECEIVING: (Check one)

SKILLED NURSING CARE       INTERMEDIATE NURSING CARE

14. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S NAME (First and Last) (Please print)

15. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S TITLE (Please print)

16. NURSING HOME OFFICIAL'S OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include Area Code)

**SECTION IV - DECLARATION OF INTENT**

I CERTIFY THAT the statements on this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

17. SIGNATURE OF NURSING HOME OFFICIAL (Sign in ink)

18. DATE SIGNED (MM/DD/YYYY)

**PRIVACY ACT NOTICE:** The VA will not disclose information collected on this form to any source other than what has been authorized under the Privacy Act of 1974 or Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations 1.526 for routine uses (i.e., civil or criminal law enforcement, congressional communications, epidemiological or research studies, the collection of money owed to the United States, litigation in which the United States is a party or has an interest, the administration of VA programs and delivery of VA benefits, verification of identity and status, and personnel administration) as identified in the VA system of records, 58VA21/22/28 Compensation, Pension, Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Records - VA, published in the Federal Register. While you are not required to respond, your cooperation in providing this relevant and necessary information will help us determine the claimant's maximum benefit entitlement under the law. Information that you furnish may be utilized in computer matching programs with other Federal or state agencies for the purpose of determining the claimant's eligibility to receive VA benefits, as well as to collect any amount owed to the United States by virtue of the claimant's participation in any benefit program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**RESPONDENT BURDEN:** We need this information to determine eligibility for benefits and the proper rate of payment (38 U.S.C. 5503, 38 U.S.C. 1115 (1)(E)), 38 U.S.C. 1311(c), 38 U.S.C. 1315(h)). Title 38, United States Code, allows us to ask for this information. We estimate that you will need an average of 10 minutes to review the instructions, find the information and complete this form. VA cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed. You are not required to respond to a collection of information if this number is not displayed. Valid OMB control numbers can be located on the OMB Internet Page at [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). If you desire, you can call 1-800-827-1000 to get information on where to send comments or suggestions about this form.



More in this section

# Veterans Pension Eligibility

If you're a wartime Veteran who meets certain age or disability requirements, and your income and net worth are within certain limits, you may qualify for monthly payments through our Veterans Pension program. Find out if you can get this benefit.

## Can I get Veterans pension benefits from VA?

You may be able to get pension benefits if you meet the requirements listed below.

### Both of these must be true:

- You didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **and**
- Your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your net worth includes all personal property you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe. Your net worth includes the net worth of your spouse.

[Find out about Veterans pension rates.](#)

### And at least one of these must be true about your service. You:

- Started on active duty before September 8, 1980, and you served at least 90 days on active duty with at least 1 day during wartime, **or**
- Started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which

you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions) with at least 1 day during wartime, **or**

- Were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and you hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

**And at least one of these must be true. You:**

- Are at least 65 years old, **or**
- Have a permanent and total disability, **or**
- Are a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability, **or**
- Are getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income

## **How do I know if I served under an eligible wartime period?**

Under current law, we recognize the following wartime periods to decide eligibility for pension benefits:

- Mexican Border period (May 9, 1916, to April 5, 1917, for Veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders, or in adjacent waters)
- World War I (April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918)
- World War II (December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946)
- Korean conflict (June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955)
- Vietnam War era (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served outside the Republic of Vietnam.)
- Gulf War (August 2, 1990, through a future date to be set by law or presidential proclamation)

## **What should I do if I received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable discharge?**

If you've received one of these discharge statuses, you may not be eligible for VA benefits.

**There are 2 ways you can try to qualify:**

[Find out how to apply for a discharge upgrade.](#)

[Learn about the VA Character of Discharge review process.](#)

## **How do I apply?**

You can apply online right now.

### **Apply for Veterans Pension Benefits**

[Learn more about how to apply.](#)

## **Other pension benefits**

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### **VA Survivors Pension**

Find out if you're eligible and how to apply for VA pension benefits as a surviving spouse or child of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

### **Aid and Attendance Benefits and Housebound Allowance**

If you need help with daily activities or you're housebound, find out how to apply for extra VA pension benefits.

# Apply for Veterans pension benefits

Equal to VA Form 21P-527EZ (Application for Pension).

## **i** Save time—and save your work in progress—by signing in before starting your application

When you're signed in to your VA.gov account:

- We can prefill part of your application based on your account details.
- You can save your application in progress, and come back later to finish filling it out. You'll have 60 days from the date you start or update your application to submit it. After 60 days, we'll delete the form and you'll need to start over.

**Note:** If you sign in after you've started your application, you won't be able to save the information you've already filled in.

**Sign in to Start Your Application**

[Start your application without signing in.](#)

## Follow the steps below to apply for a Veterans pension.

### 1 Declare Your Intent to File

If you'd like to submit an intent to file to set the earliest possible date that you can start getting benefits, you'll need to complete an Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension, and/or DIC (VA Form 21-0966). Starting your pension application doesn't show your intent to file.

[Download VA Form 21-0966.](#)

**Note:** Your date of claim is the date that we receive your completed application.

### 2 Prepare

**To fill out this application, you'll need your:**

- Social Security number or VA file number (required)
- Military history (required)
- Financial information—and your dependents' financial information (required)
- Bank account direct deposit information
- Medical information

**If you're under 65 years old, you may also need:**

- Your work history
- Any medical evidence that supports your claim

#### **i Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program**

The Fully Developed Claim (FDC) program is the fastest way to get your claim processed, and there's



no risk for you to participate. With this program, you send in all the evidence, or supporting documents, you have when you file your claim. We can make a decision on your application without asking you for more information.

[Learn more about the FDC Program.](#)

### **You might qualify for Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits**

[Learn more about Aid and Attendance and Housebound Benefits.](#)

**What if I need help filling out my application?** An accredited representative, like a Veterans Service Officer (VSO), can help you fill out your claim. [Get help filing your claim.](#)

**Learn about Veterans pension rates**  
[Find out how we decide pension rates.](#)

**3**

### **Apply**

Complete this pension benefits form.

After submitting the form, you'll get a confirmation message. You can print this for your records.

**4**

### **VA Review**

We process claims in the order we receive them.

We'll let you know by mail if we need more information.

## **5 Decision**

After we process your claim, you'll get a notice in the mail about the decision.

Respondent burden: **25 minutes**

OMB Control #: **2900-0002**

Expiration date: **04/30/2019**

[Privacy Act Statement](#)

## **Need help?**

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For benefit related questions, or if the form isn't working right, please call VA Benefits and Services at [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000).

If you have hearing loss, call TTY: 711.

More in this section

# VA Survivors Pension Rates

If you qualify for survivors pension benefits, the amount you get will be based on the difference between your countable income and a limit that Congress sets (called the Maximum Annual Pension Rate, or MAPR).

- **Your countable income** is how much you earn, including your salary, investment and retirement payments, and any income you may have from your dependents. Some expenses, like non-reimbursable medical expenses (paid medical expenses not covered by your insurance provider), may reduce your countable income.
- **Your MAPR amount** is the maximum amount of pension payable to a Veteran, surviving spouse, or child. Your MAPR is based on how many dependents you have and whether you qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits. MAPRs are adjusted each year for cost-of-living increases. You can find your current MAPR amount using the tables below.

**Example:** You're a qualified surviving spouse with 1 dependent child. You also qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits. Your yearly income is \$10,000.

Your MAPR amount = \$16,837

Your yearly income = \$10,000

Your VA pension = \$6,837 for the year (or \$569 paid each month)

# What's the net worth limit to qualify for a Survivors Pension?

We've recently changed the way we assess net worth to make the pension entitlement rules more clear. Net worth is the total of your or your beneficiary's assets and annual income. You should report all of your net worth. The net worth limit to qualify for a Survivors Pension as of December 1, 2018, is \$127,061.

**Note:** In the future, the net worth limit will increase by the same percentage as Social Security cost-of-living increases. We'll update the limit here when there's an increase.

# What's the 3-year look-back period for asset transfers?

When we receive a pension claim, we review the terms and conditions of any assets the survivor may have transferred in the 3 years before filing the claim.

If you transfer assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period, and those assets would have pushed your net worth above the limit for a VA Survivors Pension, you may be subject to a penalty period of up to 5 years. You won't be eligible for pension benefits during this time.

**Note:** This new policy took effect on October 18, 2018. If you filed your claim before this date, the look-back period doesn't apply. (A look-back period never includes a date before October 18, 2018.)

# What's a penalty period?

A penalty period is a length of time when a survivor isn't eligible for pension benefits because they transferred assets for less than fair

market value during the look-back period. We won't pay pension benefits during a penalty period.

## Find your Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR) amount

*Date of Cost-of-Living Increase: December 1, 2018*

*Increase Factor: 2.8%*

*Standard Medicare Deduction: Actual amount will be determined by SSA based on individual income.*

### For qualified surviving spouses with at least 1 dependent:

<b>If you have 1 dependent child and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$11,881
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$13,893
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$17,309
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits <b>and</b> you're the surviving spouse of a Veteran who served in the Spanish-American War (SAW)	\$17,833

#### Notes:

- The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/Minimum Income Annuity (MIW) limitation is \$9,078.
- **If you have more than one child**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional child.

- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$594 for a surviving spouse with 1 dependent).

## For qualified surviving spouses with no dependents:

If you have no dependents and...	Your MAPR amount is:
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$9,078
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$11,095
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$14,509
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits and you're the surviving spouse of a Veteran who served in the Spanish-American War (SAW)	\$15,097

### Notes:

- The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/Minimum Income Annuity (MIW) limitation is \$9,078.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$453 for a surviving spouse with no dependent child).

## For qualified surviving children:

If you're...	Your MAPR amount is:
A qualified surviving child	\$2,313

**Get historic rate charts from past years** [2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2011](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999 and earlier](#)

## **Read the full regulations from Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations**

[3.23 Improved Pension Rates – Veterans and Surviving Spouses](#)

[3.24 Improved Pension Rates – Surviving Children](#)

[3.271 “Income” for VA Purposes \(IVAP\)](#)

[3.272 Exclusions from Income](#)

[3.272 Rate Computations](#)

Select One

- Transition and Economic Development
- Compensation
- Education & Training
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Home Loans
- Life Insurance
- Pension
- Pension Home Page

- ▶ Veterans Pension
- ▶ Survivors Pension
- Aid and Attendance and Housebound
- Eligible Wartime Periods
- ▶ Rates
- Appeals Modernization
- Special Groups
- Services
- Applying for Benefits
- Locations
- VBA Performance
- Media and Publications
- About VBA

# Pension

## Protected Pensions Rate Tables – Effective 12/1/18

Go to the [How to Read Pension Benefits Rate Tables](#) page to learn how to read Pension rates pages.

[2017](#) | [2016](#) | [2014](#) | [2013](#) | [2012](#) | [2009](#) | [2008](#) | [2007](#) | [2006](#) | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | [1999](#)

For historic rate charts on this topic - CLICK on one of the following:

[Section 306 Disability](#) | [Section 306 Death](#) | [Old Law Disability](#) | [Old Law Death](#)

<b>Section 306 Disability Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Veteran without Dependents</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Veteran with Dependents</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Spouse Income Exclusion Under 38 CFR 3.262(b)(2)</a></li> </ul>	<b>Section 306 Death Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Surviving Spouse/Child(ren)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation</a></li> </ul>
<b>Old Law Disability Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Income Limits</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rates Payable</a></li> </ul>	<b>Old Law Death Pension</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Surviving Spouse/Child(ren)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation</a></li> </ul>

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### Section 306 Disability Pension - Veteran without Dependents 2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran Status	Condition	Income Limit
Veteran ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,394 or less
Special A/A Allowance When Income Exceeds \$15,394	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,948 or less
38 CFR 3.552 Rates (Hospital Reduction) for Special A/A Allowance	The rate entitled to (see 38 CFR 3.552 Rate Chart on page VI (1978) -1) on December 31, 1978, will be paid if the veteran is hospitalized on January 1, 2018, or later and the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,948 or less

### Section 306 Disability Pension Spouse Income Exclusion Under 38 CFR 3.262(b)(2) Effective 12/1/18 = \$4,916

### Section 306 Disability Pension - Veteran with Dependents 2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran Status	Condition	Income Limit
Veteran with Dependents	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the IVAP for 2018 is	\$20,692 or less
Special A/A Allowance When Income Exceeds \$20,732	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$21,245 or less
38 CFR 3.552 Rates (Hospital Reduction) for Special A/A Allowance	The rate entitled to (see 38 CFR 3.552 Rate Chart on page VI (1978) -2) on December 31, 1978, will be paid if the veteran is hospitalized on January 1, 2018, or later and the veteran's IVAP for 2018 is	\$21,245 or less

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**Section 306 Death Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Dependent Status	Condition	Income Limit
Surviving Spouse ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the surviving spouse's IVAP for 2018 is	\$15,394 or less
Surviving Spouse AND Child(ren)	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the surviving spouse's IVAP for 2018 is	\$20,692 or less
Child(ren) ONLY	The rate entitled to on December 31, 1978, may be continued if the child's IVAP for 2018 is	\$12,587 or less

**Section 306 Death Pension SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation**

Effective 12/01/18 = \$9,078

**Old Law Disability Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Veteran's Dependent Status	Income Limits
Unmarried Veterans	\$13,480
Veteran and Spouse or Minor Child (no spouse)	\$19,429

Veteran's Entitlement	Rates Payable
Basic Rates	\$66.15
10 Years or Age 65	\$78.75
If Entitled to A/A	\$135.45
If Entitled to HB	\$100.00

**Old Law Death Pension**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

Beneficiary	Income Limit
Surviving Spouse Only or Each Child (No Surviving Spouse)	\$13,480
Surviving Spouse (With Child or Children)	\$19,429

**Old Law Death Pension SBP/MIW Annuity Limitation = \$9,078**

2.8% Cost-of-Living Increase Effective 12/01/2018

[return to top ▲](#)

More in this section

# VA Pension Rates for Veterans

If you qualify for Veterans pension benefits, the amount you get will be based on the difference between your countable income and a limit that Congress sets (called the Maximum Annual Pension Rate, or MAPR).

- **Your countable income** is how much you earn, including your Social Security benefits, investment and retirement payments, and any income your dependents receive. Some expenses, like non-reimbursable medical expenses (medical expenses not covered by your insurance provider), may reduce your countable income.
- **Your MAPR amount** is the maximum amount of pension payable. Your MAPR is based on how many dependents you have, if you're married to another Veteran who qualifies for a pension, and if your disabilities qualify you for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits. MAPRs are adjusted each year for cost-of-living increases. You can find your current MAPR amount using the tables below.

**Example:** You're a qualified Veteran with a dependent, non-Veteran spouse and no children. You also qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits based on your disabilities. You and your spouse have a combined yearly income of \$10,000.

Your MAPR amount = \$26,036

Your yearly income = \$10,000

Your VA pension = \$16,036 for the year (or \$1,336 paid each month)

# What's the net worth limit to qualify for a Veterans Pension?

We've recently changed the way we assess net worth to make the pension entitlement rules more clear. Net worth is the total of your or your beneficiary's assets and annual income. Your net worth also includes the net worth of your spouse. You should report all of your net worth. The net worth limit to qualify for a Veterans Pension as of December 1, 2018, is \$127,061.

**Note:** In the future, the net worth limit will increase by the same percentage as Social Security cost-of-living increases. We'll update the limit here when there's an increase.

# What's the 3-year look-back period for asset transfers?

When we receive a pension claim, we review the terms and conditions of any assets the Veteran may have transferred in the 3 years before filing the claim.

If you transfer assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period, and those assets would have pushed your net worth above the limit for a VA pension, you may be subject to a penalty period of up to 5 years. You won't be eligible for pension benefits during this time.

**Note:** This new policy took effect on October 18, 2018. If you filed your claim before this date, the look-back period doesn't apply. (A look-back period never includes a date before October 18, 2018.)

# What's a penalty period?

A penalty period is a length of time when a Veteran isn't eligible for pension benefits because they transferred assets for less than fair

market value during the look-back period. We won't pay pension benefits during a penalty period.

## Find your Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR) amount

*Date of Cost-of-Living Increase: December 1, 2018*

*Increase Factor: 2.8%*

*Standard Medicare Deduction: Actual amount will be determined by SSA based on individual income.*

### For Veterans with no dependents:

<b>If you have no dependents and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$13,535
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$16,540
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$22,577

#### **Note:**

If you have medical expenses, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$676 for a Veteran with no spouse or child).

### For Veterans with at least 1 dependent spouse or child:

<b>If you have 1 dependent and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
	\$17,724

<b>If you have 1 dependent and...</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
You don't qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	
You qualify for Housebound benefits	\$20,731
You qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$26,766

**Note:**

- **If you have more than one dependent**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional dependent.
- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$886 for a Veteran with 1 dependent).

**For 2 Veterans who are married to each other:**

<b>If you're 2 Veterans who are married to each other and:</b>	<b>Your MAPR amount is:</b>
Neither of you qualifies for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits	\$17,724
One of you qualifies for Housebound benefits	\$20,731
Both of you qualify for Housebound benefits	\$23,734
One of you qualifies for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$26,766
One of you qualifies for Housebound benefits and one of you qualifies for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$29,764
Both of you qualify for Aid and Attendance benefits	\$35,813

**Note:**

- **If you have more than one dependent**, add \$2,313 to your MAPR amount for each additional child.
- **If you have a child who works**, you may exclude their wages up to \$12,200 for 2018.
- **If you have medical expenses**, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$886 for a Veteran with 1 dependent).

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[3.24 Improved Pension Rates – Surviving Children](#)

[3.271 Computation of Income](#)

[3.272 Exclusions from Income](#)

[3.273 Rate Computation](#)

More in this section

# VA Survivors Pension

Find out if you're eligible and how to apply for a survivors pension as a surviving spouse or child of a deceased Veteran with wartime service.

## Can I get this benefit as a surviving spouse?

You may be able to get this benefit if you haven't remarried after the Veteran's death, if the deceased Veteran didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, and if the Veteran's service meets at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true. The Veteran:

- Entered active duty on or before September 7, 1980, and served at least 90 days on active military service, with at least 1 day during a wartime period, **or**
- Entered active duty after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least 1 day during a wartime period **or**
- Was an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

### And this must be true for you:

Your yearly family income and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress. Your net worth equals the value of everything you own (except your house, your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe.

## How do I know if the Veteran served under an eligible wartime period?

Under current law, we recognize the following wartime periods to decide eligibility for pension benefits:

- Mexican Border period (May 9, 1916, to April 5, 1917, for Veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders, or in adjacent waters)
- World War I (April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918)
- World War II (December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946)
- Korean conflict (June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955)
- Vietnam War era (February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975 for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period. August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975, for Veterans who served outside of the Republic of Vietnam.)
- Gulf War (August 2, 1990, through a future date to be set by law or presidential proclamation)

## Can I get this benefit as the child of a deceased wartime Veteran?

You may be able to get this benefit if you're unmarried and you meet at least one of the requirements listed below.

### At least one of these must be true:

- You're under age 18, **or**
- You're under age 23 and attending a VA-approved school, **or**
- You're unable to care for yourself due to a disability that happened before age 18

## How do I apply?

You can apply in any of these ways:

## **By mail**

Fill out an Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits (VA Form 21-534EZ).

[Download VA Form 21-534EZ.](#)

Mail it to the Pension Management Center (PMC) for your state.

[Find your PMC.](#)

## **In person**

Bring your application to a VA regional benefit office near you.

[Find a VA regional benefit office near you.](#)

## **With the help of a trained professional**

You can work with a trained professional called an accredited representative to get help applying for survivors pension benefits.

[Get help filing your claim.](#)

# **How long does it take VA to make a decision?**

It depends. We process claims in the order we received them, unless a claim requires priority processing.

## **More information for survivors**

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### **VA Survivors Pension Rates**

View pension rates for surviving spouses and children.