

Veterans Benefits Administration

Connecting With Those We Serve

You are here

We are here
to help you
find your way



VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Goals

Four Goals for Today's briefing:

- Provide an overview of Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA)
- Outline the eligibility criteria to VA Benefits
- Identify VA benefits Programs available to disabled Veterans
- How to apply



VBA has Seven Services

- Benefits Assistance Service
- Compensation Service
- Education Service
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Service
- Loan Guaranty Service
- Insurance Service
- Pension and Fiduciary Service

Benefits Assistance Service

Benefits Assistance Service (BAS)

Mission

To serve as advocates for Veterans, Servicemembers, eligible beneficiaries and other stakeholders, to ensure they are knowledgeable and informed about accessing and receiving VA benefits and services.

Vision

To be the premier outreach organization for Veterans, transitioning Servicemembers, their dependents, and stakeholders that interface with VBA; to proactively provide information and knowledge about VA benefits and services, in a positive 21st century experience that is consistent, concise, and relevant.

Compensation Service

What is a Veteran?

- A Veteran for VA disability compensation purposes is a person who served federal active duty and was discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.
- VA also considers individuals who are disabled or die from an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty during active duty for training or inactive duty for training as Veterans
- For Veterans with an other than honorable discharge, VA will provide an administrative decision to determine if the Veteran's service is considered "honorable for VA purposes".



Disability Compensation

What is it?

Service-connected disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to Veterans for a disability that arose during service, was worsened or aggravated by service, or is presumed by VA to relate to military service.

Who Qualifies?

A typical beneficiary for disability compensation is a Veteran who became injured physically during service or has psychological issues related to service.





Eligibility for VA Benefits

The three main groups that are eligible for VA benefits are:

- Veterans,
- Servicemembers, including National Guard and Reserve members, and
- Dependents and Survivors of Servicemembers or Veterans.



Reserve Member



Veteran



National Guard Member



Dependents and Survivors



Eligibility for Disability Compensation

- **Direct** — Veteran's current disability resulted from an in-service injury, disease, or incident and there is no evidence of pre-service incurrence (ie TBI, loss of limbs, a disease first diagnosed in service, etc)
- **Aggravated** — A pre-existing condition that becomes worse in service unless medical evidence shows the increased severity is due to natural progression. (ie: preexisting joint condition that gets worse due to repeated use in service)
- **Secondary** — A new condition that is caused by a previously established service connected condition.
- **Presumptive** — A condition that is presumed to be service connected if the disability manifested to a degree of 10 percent or more within applicable time limits (38 CFR 3.309)

Additional Benefit Information

- Special Monthly Compensation
- Clothing Allowance
- Automobile Allowance/Adaptive Equipment
- Specially Adapted Housing/Special Home Adaptation Grants



Additional Benefit Information

Clothing Allowance: Annual payments for Veterans whose service-connected condition requires treatment (e.g., orthopedic appliance, skin cream) that irreparably damages outer garments.

- Additional clothing allowance per prosthetic or orthopedic appliance, or medication that affects more than one type of clothing garment.

Automobile Allowance: A **one-time allowance** to purchase an automobile or conveyance. (New or used automobile or other conveyance)

- Automatically qualifies for adaptive equipment

Adaptive Equipment Allowance: May be paid **more than once** for adaptive equipment to accommodate certain severe service-connected disabilities.

Specially Adapted Housing (SAH)/Special Housing Adaptation (SHA): Helps Servicemembers and Veterans with certain severe service-connected disabilities purchase, construct, or modify a home to accommodate the disability.

Pension & Fiduciary Service



Pension Service

What is Veterans Pension?

Pension is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements.

Eligibility Requirements

- Income is below the yearly limit set by Congress
 - As of December 2013 - **\$12,652** (Veteran no dependents)
- Veterans must have at least 90 days active duty, including one day during a wartime period
- After September 7, 1980, Veterans must have served at least 24 months or the full period called to serve.
- Age 65 or older with limited or no income



Fiduciary Service

- The VA Fiduciary Program provides oversight of VA's most vulnerable beneficiaries who are unable to manage their VA benefits because of injury, disease, the infirmities of advanced age, or under 18 years of age.
- To help protect beneficiaries' financial interests, VA appoints fiduciaries who manage VA benefits for these beneficiaries.
- VA also conducts oversight of VA-appointed fiduciaries to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the beneficiaries they serve.

What is a VA Fiduciary?

A VA Fiduciary is an individual or entity appointed by VA to receive VA benefits on behalf of a beneficiary for the use and benefit of the beneficiary and his or her dependent (38 U.S.C. § 5506).

Fully Developed Claims Program

- About the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Program
- eBenefits
- Partnering with a VSO
- FDC eligibility
- FDC statistics and trends

Fully Developed Claim (FDC) Program

- The Fully Developed Claims Program is an optional program that enables Veterans and their families to:
 - Submit all evidence and medical records (both private treatment records and records available at a Federal facility) at the time of claim submission, and
 - Certify he or she has no further evidence to submit.
- When an FDC is filed, VA is able to expedite the claim which:
 - Benefits the Veterans,
 - Decreases the amount of time VA spends developing a claim, and
 - Contributes to reducing the claims backlog.
- Since the FDC Program began nationwide in June 2010, VA completed more than 75,000 FDC claims, and the percentage of Veterans using the FDC Program instead of the standard process continues to rapidly increase.
- Learn more about the FDC Program here: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/fdc/>.

Who can file an FDC?

Veterans and their dependents or survivors can file an FDC, per the following chart:

Who	When to file an FDC
Veteran	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For disability compensation• For pension
Survivor or Dependent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For survivor benefits• For death pension• For death and indemnity compensation (DIC)

We've completed more than 75K Fully Developed Claims since implementation, with an Average Days to Completion (ADC) of 129

- FDCs identify the information and evidence needed to substantiate a claim at the time of application
- On average, FDCs provide an overall improvement of approximately 50% in claims processing timeliness

ROs with high adjusted percent of FDC submissions Jan-Mar 31:

- **41.3%** - Indianapolis
- **29.2%** - Togus
- **23.4%** - Nashville
- **16.3%** - Waco
- **14.9%** - Chicago

Two Steps to Submitting an FDC

Step 1

Log into www.ebenefits.va.gov and start filling out a:

- VA Form 21-526ez (compensation)
- VA Form 21-527ez (pension)
- VA Form 21-534ez (survivor's DIC, death pension, and/or accrued benefit claim)

Hit "SAVE"

Step 2

Gather all necessary evidence described in eBenefits and **submit simultaneously** with your claim. This may include:

- DoD service medical and personnel records
- Applicable DBQs
- Private medical records
- Personal and/or buddy statements

Applying Online

Below are the steps to filing an FDC using eBenefits once the eBenefits account has been created:

1. Log on to eBenefits.va.gov.
2. Enter personal information.
3. Choose a VSO.
4. Tell VA about federal/state records.
5. Choose your type of claim.
6. Enter treatment and direct deposit information.
7. Review special circumstances
8. Upload the documents.
9. Perform Final Review and Submit the Application.

Start a New Application

Use these wizard-based applications to manage your benefits.

 Dependent Benefits Select this application to manage the list of dependents you claim as part of your benefits profile. Apply Now	 Compensation Benefits Select this application to apply for, or manage, your compensation benefits. Apply Now	 Request for Representative Claimants appoint representatives to serve as Power of Attorney (POA) and act on their behalf in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits (38 U.S.C. 5902, 5903, and 5904). Apply Now	 Release Medical Records Select this application to authorize non-VA medical centers to release medical information to the VA. Apply Now
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Open Applications

Unsubmitted applications will be deleted upon reaching their expiration date.

Application Type	Created	Last Updated	Last Opened	Expires	Actions
No open requests are available.					

Completed Applications

Completed applications greater than 365 days old will be deleted. If any information in a completed application is incorrect, you must either complete a new application or [contact the VA](#)

Application Type	Interview Completed	Submitted Online	Expires	Actions
No completed requests are available.				

Contact Information

Paulette Maten

Chief, Military and Veterans Outreach
BAS

Desiree Tiggart

Program Analyst
BAS

(202) 530-9111

vavbaoutreach@va.gov

Thank You



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