U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

Veterans and Survivors Pension For School-Age Children Ages 18–23

What Happens When a Dependent Child on a VA Pension Award Turns 18?

If a parent is receiving an additional monthly payment for a dependent child, this extra amount will stop when the child turns 18 unless action is taken **before** their 18th birthday. To avoid any interruption in payments, the parent must submit an application showing that the child will remain in school after turning 18. VA will generally continue payments while the child is attending school, including during regular school breaks like summer.

Who Qualifies as a School-Age Child?

A "school-age child" is an unmarried child between ages 18 and 23 who meets one of the following:

- is currently attending high school
- has been accepted to start higher education at a VA-approved educational institution in the fall after high school graduation
- is currently attending an accredited college or approved educational program

How to Maintain a Dependent School-Age Child (Ages 18-23):

A parent must submit *VA Form 21-674 Request for Approval of School Attendance* ***no earlier than*** three months **before** the child turns 18 in order for the child to remain on the award. If the form is submitted **after** the child turns 18, it must be received within one year of the child's birthday to allow entitlement back to the date of their birthday.

Note: A child's Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) income is counted under the parent's pension award. This may cause the parent to exceed the pension income limit. To avoid an overpayment, please report new income sources to VA as soon as possible by calling 800-827-1000 or uploading a statement through a www.va.gov account at https://www.va.gov/supporting-forms-for-claims/submit-statement-form-21-4138/introduction.

For general information on survivor benefits, visit https://www.va.gov/family-and-caregiver-benefits/survivor-compensation/.