

Apply for Survivor Benefits

This guide will help you identify VA Survivor Benefits and services you may be eligible for after your Veteran loved one has passed. It provides information about the different survivor benefits and programs available, contact information, required forms, application process, and where to find assistance.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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A checklist to help you (spouse) and/or dependents apply for survivor benefits

1 PREPARATION

- Learn about different **types of survivor benefits and services** you and/or family members may be eligible for (see back for list)
- Collect the documents necessary to apply for survivor benefits:
 - Veteran's Discharge paperwork (DD214 or other separation documents)
 - Veteran's death certificate (copy)
 - Proof of your relationship to Veteran (marriage certificate, birth certificates)

2 APPLICATION

- Apply by submitting all required documents, to include the applicable VA Form and the Veteran's death certificate, to the required servicing location (see back for more information) in one of these ways:
 - Mail to the appropriate VA office that serves your state OR
 - Work with an accredited Veterans Service Organization OR
 - Go directly to a VA Regional Benefit Office for assistance
 - For Life Insurance claims, call (800) 669-8477

3 NEXT STEPS

- Visit us online at www.eBenefits.va.gov to track the status of your claim
- Provide more information/documentation if requested by VA
- If approved, take steps to access your awarded benefits

Where can I find a Veteran's separation documents?

→ If you do not have a copy, you can visit www.archives.com to request a copy of the DD214

→ Visit www.eBenefits.va.gov to request a copy of your DD214

→ Surviving family members should make duplicate copies of all documents and retain them for their personal files if mailing to processing centers.

→ Survivors can also receive free, in-person help preparing the claim from a Veterans Service Organization (VSO). Find an accredited VSO online by visiting: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search

→ Find a local Regional Benefit Office by visiting: www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp

Find additional information about Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service and Online Will Preparation: www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/bfcs.asp

Information a spouse or dependent(s) will need to know to file a claim and receive the survivor benefits they may be eligible for:

How would a spouse or dependent(s) know what survivor benefits they may be eligible for:

- Surviving family members can access detailed information on the benefits that may be available on the VA websites – www.va.gov/survivors or www.va.gov/family-member-benefits
- Contact VBA directly at (800) 827-1000
- Contact the Office of Survivors Assistance at (202) 461-1077

What benefits and services are available for surviving family members?

These are the benefits and services that **may** be available to eligible surviving family members:

→ **BENEFITS:**

- Interment in a National Cemetery
- Burial Benefits (VA Form 21P-530)
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (VA Form 21P-534EZ)
- Parents' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (VA Form 21P-535)
- Survivor's Pension (VA Form 21P-534EZ)
- Dependent's Educational Assistance Program (VA Form 22-5490)
- Fry Scholarship
- Home Loan Guaranty
- Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)

→ **SERVICES:**

- Bereavement Counseling
- Educational and Vocational Counseling (VA Form 28-8832)
- Beneficiary Financial Counseling
- Fiduciary Services
- Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service
- Online Will Preparation

- visit www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage for more information or call (800) 827-1000.

OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

As a surviving spouse am I eligible for healthcare?

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers CHAMPVA healthcare coverage to family members that meet specific eligibility criteria. The Civilian Health and Medical Program of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) is a comprehensive health care program in which the VA shares the cost of covered health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries.

Call : (844) 698-2311 or visit www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/dependents/champva/index.asp for more information.

What is the difference between DIC and SBP?

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is managed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. DIC is an entitlement benefit paid to eligible survivors (spouse, unmarried child or possibly parent) of certain deceased Servicemembers and Veterans that meet specific criteria. For further details, please visit:

www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/types-dependency-and-indemnity.asp

- The Survivor Benefit Program (SBP) is managed by the Department of Defense (DoD). SBP is a voluntary annuity program offered for purchase to Servicemembers as a retirement benefit for family members. Servicemembers who die on active duty have never contributed to SBP but are automatically covered. As noted, participation in this program is voluntary and not all Servicemembers opt to participate. DoD is the agency that has the authority to offset benefits. To learn more about SBP, please visit: www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html

What form gets sent where?

- DIC, Death Pension, Accrued Benefits and – mail to the Pension Intake Center for your state – www.va.gov/pension/pension-management-centers/

Burial benefits -- mail to the VA Regional Office in your state --

www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp