

## Burial Benefits

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA), a division of the VA, provides the following burial benefits: a gravesite; a headstone or marker; opening and closing of the grave; and perpetual care in a VA national cemetery.

### To be eligible for burial benefits, the following must apply:

1. Your veteran was discharged or separated from military service under conditions other than dishonorable; and
2. Your veteran completed his/her required period of service.

Spouses and minor children of eligible veterans and service personnel may be buried in a national cemetery, as may certain adult children incapable of supporting themselves.

Gravesites may not be reserved; a funeral director or others making the arrangements must apply for the site after the veteran's death.

For more information on benefits from the NCA see:  
<http://www.cem.va.gov>

In addition to VA national cemeteries, most states maintain cemeteries for their eligible veterans. For information on state cemeteries, contact your State Veterans Services Office or see: <http://www.nasdva.net>

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VA) will reimburse funeral expenses paid by the family or funeral home upon receipt of an application with paid bill receipts. For service-connected deaths, the VBA will reimburse up to \$2,000.

For non-service-connected deaths, the VA will pay toward burial and funeral expenses and also plot-interment allowance.

If the veteran died while in a VA hospital or under VA-contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the veteran's remains may be reimbursed.

**For more information, contact an accredited AVVA or VVA Veteran Service Officer, or call the VBA at (800) 827-1000.**

## Key Documents to Keep On Hand:

As the spouse of a veteran, it is recommended that you maintain a record of the following documents:

1. Your veteran's discharge papers, DD214, or separation papers;
2. All marriage and divorce decrees for you and your veteran;
3. All minor children's birth certificates;
4. Social Security numbers for your entire family;
5. All medical evaluation boards, disability ratings, or Social Security awards;
6. All hospital records, surgical reports, and treatment records; and
7. A certified copy of the death certificate.



Together Always

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Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America

Are you the  
**survivor** of  
a **veteran?**

You may be  
eligible for  
**survivor's**  
**benefits.**





# The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers two types of benefits for the survivors of veterans...

## Service-connected Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

If your spouse was a veteran, and he or she dies, you, as the surviving spouse (and your children) may be eligible for monthly, tax-free compensation through the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program (DIC). Your children may also be eligible for certain tax-free education benefits.

To be eligible for DIC, one of the following must apply:

### 1. Your veteran's cause of death was the result of:

- A disease or injury incurred or aggravated while on active duty; or
- An injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, while on active duty or inactive duty for training; or
- A disability the VA can pay compensation benefits for.

### 2. Your veteran was rated 100% disabled, and the cause of death was not due to a service-connected disability, if:

- Your veteran was rated 100% service-connected for ten years or more preceding death; or
- Your veteran was rated 100% service-connected for five years from the date of discharge from military service; or
- Your veteran was a former POW and rated 100% service-connected for at least one year preceding death.

### The following also apply:

- The veteran's death may not be the result of willful misconduct, unless certain conditions are applicable. Contact an accredited Service Officer for details.
- The veteran and spouse must have been married at the time of the veteran's death, and also must have been married for at least the one-year period

immediately prior to the veteran's death, unless they have children together or were married by a certain delimiting date (before, during, or within a set period after the veteran's military service.)

- If the veteran's widow/widower remarries before the age of 57, he or she will lose eligibility to receive DIC. However, eligibility may be restored upon termination of the marriage.

## Non-service-connected Survivor's Pension (need-based)

If you are a widow, widower, or child of a veteran whose death was not related to his/her military service, you may be eligible for a non-service-connected survivor's pension if your veteran's estate is incapable of supporting you.

### To be eligible for non-service-connected survivor's pension, the following must apply:

1. Your veteran must have served on active duty, under honorable conditions, for at least 90 consecutive active-duty days, with at least one day during a period of war;
2. You meet the income-eligibility requirement.

The Survivor's Pension allows for payments to bring an eligible person's income to a level established by law. These payments may be reduced by income from any other source, including Social Security benefits. Medical expenses may be deducted from the annual income to reduce the individual's income level. For more information:

[www.vba.va.gov/survivors](http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors)

## Word of Caution

AVVA and VVA Veterans Service Officers focus on helping veterans and dependents obtain VA benefits, including aid & attendance benefits, but they are not experts on elder law, estate law, federal and state tax law, Medicare, or Medicaid. A veteran, spouse, or family member who is in need of assisted living may be in a situation that overlaps all these areas of law. A decision made in one area can significantly affect the other areas, and there can be severe state and federal tax implications. It is wise to consult with an attorney specializing in elder law.

## Dependent's Education

Assistance is available to dependents for education and training, provided the following criteria apply:

- The veteran's cause of death is a service-connected condition; or
- The veteran was rated by the VA as 100% service-connected permanent and total.

Up to 45 months of education benefits may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training.

Eligibility rules can be complex. Contact an accredited AVVA or VVA Veterans Service Officer. For more information on VA education benefits: [www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/other\\_programs/dea.html](http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/other_programs/dea.html)

