



Veteran's Benefits

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Who can help me fill out the forms?

- Any non-accredited individual can assist with completing the forms; however, this person may only help one individual. A VA-accredited organization, such as your local State Veterans Office, VFW, or American Legion, may also provide assistance. Additionally, an accredited attorney or VA-accredited agent can help. No one is allowed to charge you for helping to prepare or present the VA application forms, so it is important to ensure that the person assisting you understands VA procedures.

What are the advantages of having an attorney assist me?

- An attorney can assist you with more than just the VA application. They can help ensure that all your assets are in order to prevent a denial of your claim, as well as manage other paperwork that may be needed to support your claim. An attorney must be accredited by the VA and can represent you before the VA if your claim is denied or if the award is incorrect.

Must I already be living in a care facility before I apply?

- No, you do not need to be living in a care facility to apply for VA benefits. However, if you require personal assistance, a protective environment, and your doctor confirms the need for a facility, the entire cost of the facility may be deducted from your income to help qualify you for benefits. Note that you must be a current resident to submit these expenses as income deductions. (Please note: Independent Living requires a third-party caregiver.)

How long does it take to find out if I am eligible?

- An accredited attorney should be able to provide you with an idea of your eligibility within an hour. However, to be absolutely certain of your qualification for benefits, the attorney would need to review all your financial, personal, military, and medical records, which could take more time.



How long does it take for me to get my first check?

- Once an application is submitted to the VA, it can take anywhere from one to five months on average to receive your check after being approved for benefits. If you have dementia or other memory loss issues, the VA may require a meeting with you and your representative before sending the check, which could delay your award by several additional months.

Does the money come to me or straight to the care facility?

- All award benefits are paid to the claimant, not to any facility or company.

Can I have it deposited directly into my bank account?

- Yes, the VA prefers to have all checks directly deposited into a bank account. If you have memory loss concerns, the VA will require a direct deposit.

Is it retroactive back to when I first applied, or does it start the month/day I get approved?

- Benefits are retroactive to the first day of the next month after the VA receives any notification of your intent to file. An accredited attorney may be able to help you preserve this informal award date. To receive retroactive benefits, you must live through the entire month following the VA's receipt of your application.

Note: The rules and regulations above are subject to change at any time.

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