

VA Survivors Pension

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A VA Survivors Pension offers monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress. Find out if you qualify and how to apply.

Get the latest information about in-person services, claim exams, extensions, paperwork, decision reviews and appeals, and how best to contact us during this time.

Red print is what the VA does not disclose and cannot help with

Am I eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as a surviving spouse?

You may be eligible for this benefit if you

- if the deceased Veteran didn't receive a dishonorable discharge
- Your yearly family income **(income is the net income after deducting unreimbursed medical expenses, there is no specific amount that is too much)**
- your net worth meet certain limits set by Congress **(2023 it is \$158,538)**. Your net worth includes all personal property you own (except your house **(any acreage over 2 acres will be counted)**), your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe **(not true, the value of assets that are security for a debt will be reduced by the amount of the debt)**. Your net worth includes the net worth of you **and your dependent children**.

And at least one of these must be true about the veterans service:

- **They started on active duty before September 8, 1980, and they served at least 90 days on active duty with at least 1 day during a qualified war period (there is no requirement that the veteran had to serve in combat zone, or**
- **They started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions) with at least 1 day during wartime, or**
- **They were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and they had not previously served on active duty for at least 24 months**
- And at least one of these must be true:
 - **were married to a qualified veteran and the time of their death**
 - **were married at least 12 months before the veterans' death unless you and the veteran had a child**
 - haven't remarried after the Veteran's death

And at least one of these must be true **to qualify for Aid and Attendance:**

- You have a permanent and total disability, or
- You're a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability, or
- You're getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income
- **Transfers of noncountable assets (residence, car, person property) will not be penalized**
- **The value of any acreage with the house over 2 acres will be included in countable assets. The value of the excess acreage could result in a penalty period**

Maximum Pension amount is determined by the health of the claimant.

- **The Widow(er) or dependent children of the deceased Veteran is the claimant regardless of their health**
- **There are three levels of Pension:**
 - **Basic- no health issue, but income is low enough**
 - **Housebound- can care for self at home but cannot transport self**
 - **Aid and Attendance- needs help with at least activities of daily living**

You may be disqualified if:

- **Have made any transfers of countable assets for less than full market value in the 36 month period prior to filing a Pension Claim**
- **The Gift will result in a penalty period**
- **Gifts can be corrected**
- **The penalty is determined by dividing the market value less the amount received by the Maximum Pension amount for a Veteran rated A&A with a dependent**
- **The Maximum penalty is 60 months**
- **Filing an informal claim without knowing the financial issues could be disastrous for a claimant**

At least one of these must be true:

- **The Veteran entered active duty on or before September 7, 1980, and served at least 90 days on active military service, with at least 1 day during a covered wartime period (there is NO requirement that the veteran actually served in a combat zone, or**
- **The Veteran entered active duty after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least 1 day during a covered wartime period or**
- **The Veteran was an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months**

Am I eligible for a VA Survivors Pension as the child of a deceased wartime Veteran?

You may be eligible for this benefit if you're unmarried and you meet at least one of these requirements.

At least one of these must be true:

- **You're under age 18, or**
- **You're under age 23 and attending a VA-approved school, or**
- **You're unable to care for yourself due to a disability that happened before age 18**

2023 Pension amounts

Pension Benefits	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY
<u>WIDOW(ER)</u>		
Basic Improved Pension	\$ 896	\$10,752
Housebound	\$1,096	\$13,152
Aid and Attendance	\$1,432	\$17,184

Note: While there are ways to change the claimant's situation to comply with these rules, the VSOs, State Service officers, and VA Employees cannot give any advice as to what can be changed to comply with these rules. Only a VA Accredited Attorney or Agent should be trusted to give correct advice.

Eligibility for Veterans Pension

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The Veterans Pension program provides monthly payments to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or disability requirements, and who have income and net worth within certain limits. Find out if you're eligible for this benefit.

Red print is what the VA does not disclose

Am I eligible for Veterans Pension benefits?

You may be eligible for the Veterans Pension program if you meet these requirements.

Both of these must be true:

- You didn't receive a dishonorable **discharge (the claimant can seek to have the discharge upgraded)**, and
- Your yearly family income (**income is the net income after deducting unreimbursed medical expenses from your gross income, there is no specific amount that is too much**) and net worth meet certain limits set by Congress (**2023 it is \$158,538**). Your net worth includes all personal property you own (except your house (**any acreage over 2 acres will be counted**), your car, and most home furnishings), minus any debt you owe (**not true, only the value of assets that are security for a debt will be reduced by the amount of the debt**). Your net worth includes the net worth of your spouse **and dependent children**.

[Find out about Veterans Pension rates](#)

And at least one of these must be true about your service:

- You started on active duty before September 8, 1980, and you served at least 90 days on active duty with at least 1 day during wartime **a qualified war period (there is no requirement that the veteran had to serve in combat zone)**, or
- You started on active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and served at least 24 months or the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions) with at least 1 day during wartime, or
- You were an officer and started on active duty after October 16, 1981, and you hadn't previously served on active duty for at least 24 months

And at least one of these must be true **to qualify for Aid and Attendance**:

- You're at least 65 years old, or
- You have a permanent and total disability, or
- You're a patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability, or
- You're getting Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income

Disqualifiers:

- **Transfers of countable assets for less than full market value in the 36 month period prior to filing a Pension claim will result in a penalty period**
- **The penalty is determined by dividing the market value less the amount received by the Maximum Pension amount for a Veteran rated A&A with a dependent**
- **The Maximum penalty is 60 months**
- **Filing an informal claim without knowing the financial issues could be disastrous for a claimant**

Transfers of noncountable assets (residence, car, person property) will not be penalized

- **Any acreage with the house over 2 acres will be a countable asset and must be valued**
- **may result in a penalty period**

Maximum Pension amount is determined by the health of the claimant.

- **The veteran is the claimant regardless of the health of the spouse or dependent children**
- **There are three levels of Pension:**
 - **Basic- no health issue, but income is low enough**
 - **Housebound- can care for self at home but cannot transport self**
 - **Aid and Attendance- needs help with at least 2 activities of daily living**

	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY
<u>VETERAN WITH ONE DEPENDENT</u>		
Basic Improved Pension	\$1,750	\$21,000
Housebound	\$2,046	\$24,552
Aid and Attendance	\$2,642	\$31,704
<u>SINGLE VETERAN</u>		
Basic Improved Pension	\$1,336	\$16,032
Housebound	\$1,633	\$19,596
Aid and Attendance	\$2,229	\$26,748