

Contra Costa County Veterans Service Office

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Disability Compensation

I. Benefit Description

The VA compensation program provides monthly benefits if you are disabled because of an injury or disease incurred in or aggravated during your military service and for certain conditions which may develop after your release from active duty. Benefits are authorized based upon the severity of your claimed disability(ies). If your service-connected disabilities are evaluated as 30 percent or more, you are entitled to additional allowances for your dependents.

II. Eligibility

You may be entitled to VA disability compensation for any medical condition or injury that was incurred in or aggravated by your military service if you were released from active military duty with an other than dishonorable discharge. There is no time limit to apply for VA disability compensation. However, you are encouraged to apply within one year of your release from active duty as entitlement is established retroactively to the date of separation if your claim is filed within this period. The effective date of eligibility for benefits will be based upon the date of your claim if you apply beyond the one-year period.

III. How to Apply

Your Veterans Service Representative will help complete the necessary forms.

The following supporting evidence and/or documents should be submitted with your application:

Service Medical Records - Those applicants who have their service medical records are encouraged to submit them with their application to expedite processing. Otherwise, VA will contact the service department to obtain them.

Other Medical Records - Medical records to substantiate all treatment by private doctors and hospitals.

Dependency Documents - Original or copies of birth and marriage certificates and copies of divorce/death record terminating all of your prior marriages and those of your spouse.

Military Discharge/DD Form 214 - (Copy 4 - Member Copy) Those applicants who have a copy of their DD-214 are encouraged to provide a copy with their claim to expedite processing. Otherwise, VA will attempt to obtain verification from the service department.

Your representative may ask for other documents or information, if needed.

IV. Other Related Benefits

- Priority Inpatient and Outpatient Medical Care
- Prosthetics, Sensory and Rehabilitative Aids
- Clothing Allowance
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Disabled Veterans Life Insurance
- Preference for Employment in the Federal Government
- Burial Benefits
- Dependents Educational Assistance Program
- Medical Care for Dependents and Survivors (CHAMPVA)
- Certain State and Local Benefits

Other Benefits/Payments May Affect Your VA Compensation

Military Retired Pay - By law, the payment of VA compensation benefits is affected by the receipt of military retired pay. If you receive military retirement, you may initiate a waiver of your retired pay to receive the full amount of VA compensation. Until the waiver takes effect, your compensation will be adjusted or withheld depending on the amount of military retired pay you are entitled to. The advantage of waiving military retired pay for VA compensation is that VA benefits are not taxable.

Disability Severance Pay - By law, payment of VA compensation and military disability severance pay for the same medical condition or disability is prohibited. VA compensation will be withheld on a monthly basis until the total amount of military severance pay has been recovered. Special Separation Benefit (SSB) - VA compensation will be withheld in full until the amount of the SSB has been recovered.

Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) - Your annual VSI payment will be reduced by an amount equal to the amount of VA compensation paid for the same period.

Selected Reserve and National Guard - By law, if you are an active member of the Selected Reserve or National Guard, your VA compensation will be withheld at the rate of one day of pay for each drill period served. In addition, VA compensation is not payable while serving fulltime on active duty.