

What Is the VA Survivors Pension?



The VA Survivors Pension is a benefit offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs to eligible surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased veterans. To qualify for the VA Survivors Pension, **survivors must meet income and net worth requirements**, the limits of which are determined by Congress. The current net worth limit is \$138,489 (through November 30, 2022); if your net worth is higher than this limit, you are not eligible for the VA Survivors Pension.

A survivor may be eligible for both [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation](#) (DIC) and VA Survivors Pension. The VA will not pay both; they will pay the higher of the two amounts, which is almost always DIC.

Are there other eligibility requirements for the VA Survivors Pension?

Surviving spouses must not have remarried after the death of the veteran. Surviving children must be unmarried and one of the following:

- Under 18 years old, *or*
- Between 18 and 23 years old and enrolled in an approved educational or training institution, *or*
- Permanently incapable of self-support due to an illness or disability that occurred prior to age 18

Furthermore, the veteran must not have been dishonorably discharged and meet one of the following service requirements:

- Entered active duty on or before September 7, 1980, served a minimum of 90 days, and served at least one day during a covered wartime period; *or*
- Entered active duty after September 7, 1980, and served a minimum of 24 months or their full period of active service, and served at least one day during a covered wartime period; *or*



- Entered active duty after October 16, 1981, as an officer, and had not served on active duty for the previous 24 months

Covered wartime periods include the Mexican Border period (1916–1917), World War I (1917–1918), World War II (1941–1946), the Korean conflict (1950–1955), the Vietnam War era (1955–1975), and the Gulf War (1990–present).

How much does the VA Survivors Pension provide?

Benefit rates are based on your income and the Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR) set by Congress. Essentially, your annual income (including investments and retirement payments) is subtracted from the MAPR to determine your annual pension. This number is then divided by 12 and paid out monthly.

For surviving spouses, the MAPR used to calculate your pension payments depends on how many dependents you have and whether you qualify for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits.

Note: Housebound benefits are available to those who spend the majority of time in their home due to a permanent disability. Aid and Attendance benefits are available to those who need help performing activities of daily living, are bedridden, stay in a nursing home, or have extremely limited eyesight. You cannot receive both Housebound and Aid and Attendance benefits at the same time.

For surviving children, the current MAPR is \$2,523.

You can check current rates for your situation on the [VA's website](#).

How do you apply for the VA Survivors Pension?

You can apply for the VA Survivors Pension in a number of ways:

- You can submit the appropriate forms through [AccessVA](#).
- You can apply in person at a VA regional office.
- You can submit [VA Form 21P-534EZ](#) by mail to:
 - Department of Veterans Affairs
Pension Intake Center
PO Box 5365
Janesville, WI 53547-5365

If you need help applying for the VA Survivors Pension, Navy Mutual can help. As an accredited Veterans Service Organization, our VSO representatives can help you apply for VA benefits.

For additional information on the VA Survivors Pension or other veteran's benefits, or for help with an application or filing a claim, contact our Education and Veterans Services Department at **(888) 298-4442**.