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End-of-Life planning: Prepare for the future with VA

September 4, 2023

By Veterans Benefits
Administration, Office of
Communication

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Talking about end-of-life planning is never easy, but it's essential. VA provides a variety of benefits and services to help Veterans and their

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Provide
financial

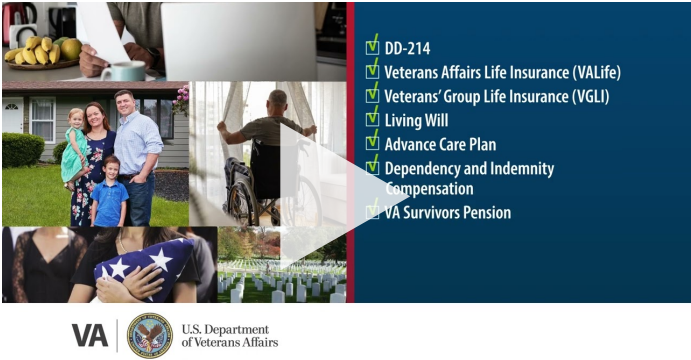
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Provide financial
protection

VA offers life insurance to help Veterans prepare for the future and protect those who matter most.

[Veterans Affairs Life Insurance \(VALife\)](#) offers guaranteed acceptance whole life coverage up to \$40,000 for Veterans with service-connected disabilities. With [Veterans' Group Life Insurance \(VGLI\)](#), you can convert and keep your [Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance \(SGLI\)](#) coverage amount after you leave the military. Learn about the two programs and [find the right coverage for you.](#)

documents

Take care
of
surviving
family

Burial
and
memorial
benefits

Keep it
all
together

In the event you're not able to make your end-of-life care wishes known, it's important to have them written down so someone else can represent them on your behalf. To help with this, VA offers [Advance Care Planning \(ACP\)](#), in which a Veteran can clarify their preferences for future health care based on personal values and beliefs. As part of ACP, you can also nominate an individual to advocate for your care preferences and make decisions on your behalf, if you're unable to do so.

Get started on your plans for the future with help from VA. You can talk to your primary care team member to determine what your first step should be, meet with a social worker to discuss advance care planning and answer your questions, or participate in [Advance Care Planning via Group Visits \(ACP-GV\)](#) where you and your loved ones can talk with other Veterans and caregivers about how to plan for the future.

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Eligible dependents of a Veteran who died from a condition related to service or who died in the line of duty may be eligible for survivor benefits, such as [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation \(DIC\)](#). DIC is a tax-free monetary benefit that some surviving family members may qualify for. When applying for DIC, include the Veteran's DD214 and death certificate indicating the cause of death.

Other benefits available to survivors include:

- [Survivors Pension](#), which offers monthly payments to qualifying spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth requirements.
- Month of Death Benefit, which is the final monthly payment of any VA compensation or pension benefits the Veteran was receiving.

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- [Burial Allowance](#), which are monetary benefits to help pay for the Veteran's burial and funeral costs.

Burial and memorial benefits

[VA burial and memorial benefits](#)

preserve and honor a Veteran's legacy. Veterans and their families can apply in advance to find out if they can be buried in a VA national cemetery by submitting an online [pre-need eligibility application](#).

Spanning a network of 155 VA national cemeteries and over 120 VA-funded state, territorial and tribal cemeteries, the burial and memorial benefits available to Veterans include a [designated final resting place](#), [headstone or marker](#), [burial flag](#), [Presidential Memorial Certificate](#) and perpetual care of the gravesite.

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Keep it all together

eligibility decision letter. Ensure loved ones know where to find it and what actions they need to take after your death. Having important VA documents organized and easily accessible to your loved ones will relieve some stress after you pass.

For more information on planning for the future, visit [VA.gov/plan-ahead](https://va.gov/plan-ahead).

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health information into the form
— it will be deleted for your
protection.

Comment...

Name (required)

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☐ Save my name, email, and website in this
browser for the next time I comment.

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8 Comments

Mark Thompson September 7, 2023 at 18:47 - [Reply](#)

More info for surviving spouses please. VA and
MHS seems to forget they are still real people!!!!!!

Cheryl rieken September 7, 2023 at 14:36 - [Reply](#)

Why is it before my husband died in April 2019 I
applied for
Care taker for David I was told the day he had his
first heart surgery I got denied this was wrong I

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made sure meds dr appointments were taken care of so someone needs to contact me. Please

George Rosales Jr September 7, 2023 at 14:06 - [Reply](#)

92 years old. Need to be prepared.

Herbert R. Reed September 7, 2023 at 13:47 - [Reply](#)

Sense the military concluded drafting wills for retired and discharged veterans, the veterans affairs End of Life Planning program is an appreciated addition to veterans benefit discharged personnel will take advantage. Pass the knowledge forward so those not connected can benefit from this information, family taking care of family, the buddy system, no one left behind. Pay it forward. Budgets get tighter each year, so when there's a program that lighten's the load, it's welcomed.

Donna September 6, 2023 at 20:29 - [Reply](#)

So is there somewhere a widow can see a pro bono lawyer to get my papers in order?? My husband was 100% permanently disabled and retired Navy Veteran with 3 tours in Vietnam and 1 in the Gulf War. So when he passed away in 2018 his money from the government went with him. Now prices go up and up. Any help out there for ME??

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George D September 7, 2023 at 10:38 - [Reply](#)

Vickie L Peters September 7, 2023 at 16:44 - [Reply](#)

There are definitely VA benefits available and there is no need for a lawyer. Get with any accredited service organization (DAV, VFW, American Legion, etc.) to begin the paperwork. DO NOT attempt it alone. These folks are experts on VA benefits whereas an attorney may not be. They know what VA needs to grant the benefit.

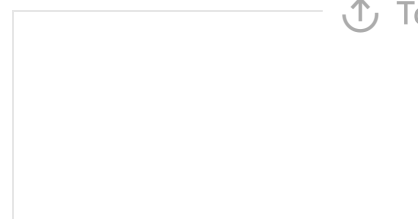
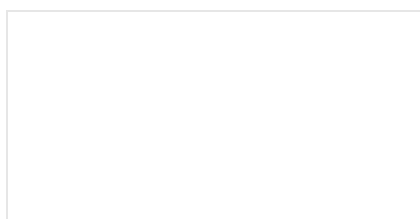
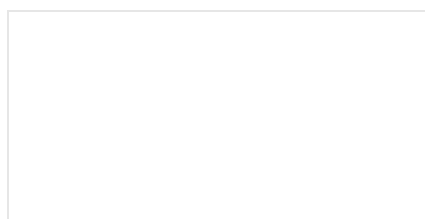
Jake September 7, 2023 at 21:54 - [Reply](#)

Go to: <http://www.dav.org>

Locate a service officer near you by using your zip code

Call and request a appointment

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ICYMI: VFW, VVA and VA Live event cover PACT Act benefits and eligibility

Recently, VA joined Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) live on Facebook to discuss PACT Act benefits eligibility, who is impacted and what Veterans need to do now.



Blind Veterans can now read decision letters

VA now offers accessibility to blind Veterans so they can independently read decision letters online.



Modernizing the disability claims process

When a Veteran files a claim for VA benefits, there are several administrative actions needed before a decision can be made, such as gathering medical records and military service records. VA is automating many of these administrative tasks, allowing claims processors to focus on more complex and analytical duties. These improvements

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claims to
Veterans and
their families.

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