



Eastern Regional Military Affairs Sentinel January 2025 Edition



Here's to a New Start in 2025

As we're entering a new year, we ask that you continue to look out for our fellow veterans. If you know of any local services offering a warm place to stay, employment opportunities, or just someone to lean an ear, be sure to provide them with these information and locations.

Be sure to check out our revised Eastern Regional website which now includes a military affairs section. Also visit our Military Affairs Facebook page for additional news and updates.

We're looking to plan a Blue and White Military Affairs Cruise in 2026. If interested be sure to let us know.

The December additional of the Afterburner, Newsletter for Department of the Air Force Retired Personnel, is now available online at:Afterburner

- See
Your

**2025
VA
Disability
Pay
Rates****

The following tables show 2025 Department of Veterans Affairs monthly disability rates for veterans with a rating of 10% or higher. These amounts are effective Dec. 1 of each year. They are tax-free. VA disability payments are made to veterans who got sick or injured while

serving
in
the
military
and
to
veterans
whose
service
made
an
existing
condition
worse.

*You may qualify for VA disability benefits for physical conditions (such as a chronic illness or injury) and mental health conditions (such as post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD) that developed before, during, or after service.

Related: [Here's the 2025 Pay Raise for Vets and Military Retirees](#)

An annual payment increase is tied to an increase in Social Security payments by the U.S. government known as a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

10%-20% Disability

Percentage Rate

10% \$175.51

20% \$346.95

30%-60% Disability

Dependent Status 30% 40% 50% 60%

Veteran Alone \$537.42 \$774.16 \$1,102.04 \$1,395.93

Veteran with Spouse \$601.42 \$859.16 \$1,208.04 \$1,523.93

Veteran with Spouse and Child \$648.42 \$922.16 \$1,287.04 \$1,617.93

Veteran with Child \$579.42 \$831.16 \$1,173.04 \$1,480.93

Each Additional Child Under 18 \$31.00 \$42.00 \$53.00 \$63.00

Each Additional Schoolchild Over Age 18 \$102.00 \$137.00 \$171.00 \$205.00

Additional for A/A Spouse

\$58.00 \$78.00 \$98.00 \$117.00

70%-100% Disability

Dependent Status 70% 80% 90% 100%

Veteran Alone \$1,759.19 \$2,044.89 \$2,297.96 \$3,831.30

Veteran with Spouse \$1,908.19 \$2,214.89 \$2,489.96 \$4,044.91

Veteran with Spouse and Child \$2,018.19 \$2,340.89 \$2,630.96 \$4,201.35
Veteran with Child \$1,858.19 \$2,158.66 \$2,425.96 \$3,974.15
Each Additional Child Under 18 \$74.00 \$84.00 \$95.00 \$106.14
Each Additional Schoolchild Over 18 \$239.00 \$274.00 \$308.00 \$342.85
Additional for A/A Spouse \$137.00 \$157.00 \$176.00 \$195.92

30%-60% Disability (With Dependent Parents)

Dependent Status 30% 40% 50% 60%

Veteran with One Parent \$588.42 \$842.16 \$1,187.04 \$1,497.93
Veteran with Two Parents \$639.42 \$910.16 \$1,272.04 \$1,599.93
Veteran with One Parent and Child \$630.42 \$899.16 \$1,258.04 \$1,582.93
Veteran with Two Parents and Child \$681.42 \$967.16 \$1,343.04 \$1,684.93
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child \$699.42 \$990.16 \$1,372.04
\$1,719.93
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child \$750.42 \$1,058.16 \$1,457.04
\$1,821.93

70%-100% Disability (With Dependent Parents)

Dependent Status 70% 80% 90% 100%

Veteran with One Parent \$1,879.19 \$2,181.89 \$2,451.96 \$4,002.74
Veteran with Two Parents \$1,999.19 \$2,318.89 \$2,605.96 \$4,174.18
Veteran with One Parent and Child \$1,978.19 \$2,295.89 \$2,579.96 \$4,145.59
Veteran with Two Parents and Child \$2,098.19 \$2,432.89 \$2,733.96 \$4,317.03
Veteran with Spouse, One Parent and Child \$2,138.19 \$2,477.89 \$2,784.96
\$4,372.79
Veteran with Spouse, Two Parents and Child \$2,258.19 \$2,612.89 \$2,938.96
\$4,544.23

Increased Disability Payments for Veterans With Dependents

Veterans entitled to compensation who have a disability rated at 30% or more are entitled to additional compensation for dependents. Dependent children between the ages of 18 and 23 must be attending school and a dependent for tax purposes.

Parents may be considered dependents if the veteran provides more than 50% of their support. Veterans with a disabled spouse may also be eligible for increased benefits. Check with the VA for details.

There is also a Dependency & Indemnity Compensation benefit for survivors of some disabled veterans.

How the PACT Act Works for Current VA Beneficiaries

The Department of Veterans Affairs screened more than 4 million U.S. military

veterans in the first year of the new PACT Act to find out if they thought they'd been exposed to toxins during their military service. The vast majority of those screened were already enrolled in VA health care.

Of those millions of veterans, 1.7 million had "screened positive" for possible exposure, Steve Miska, the VA's PACT Act transitional executive director, told Military.com.

As a result, the VA is reaching back out to those veterans, "encouraging them to file a supplemental claim that could potentially increase benefits, whether on the health-care side or many of the other benefits," Miska said.

The PACT Act linked a variety of medical conditions with toxins common during specific eras or circumstances of military service. Rather than require veterans or their survivors to prove that a toxic exposure caused a given condition, the law assumes that some illnesses are service-connected if the person served in a certain place at a certain time. This means that veterans may be eligible for additional VA benefits based on past toxic exposure during their service.

Here's how the PACT Act could affect existing VA beneficiaries:

Veterans Who Already Receive Partial Disability Pay

Veterans who already have a partial VA disability rating could have their rating increased now that the VA covers more conditions under the PACT Act, and they don't need to fear that applying could potentially cause their rating to decrease instead, VA officials told Military.com.

That increased rating could add up to a significant difference in monthly compensation, especially for veterans with dependents. For example, a veteran with a spouse and two dependent children under age 18 whose disability rating rises from 10% to 60% could see their pay rise from \$165.92 a month to \$1,588.65 a month in 2023.

"And we are not going [and] looking back at other service-connected issues trying to decrease those," Kaitlin Richards, assistant director in the VA's Office of Policy and Oversight, told Military.com.

Veterans Who Already Receive 100% Disability Pay

Even those veterans who already receive the maximum monthly disability benefit should file a PACT Act claim if they think they have a condition that's newly covered under the PACT Act, the VA officials told Military.com. Doing so could benefit not only the veterans now but their families later.

"What I tell everyone -- because we always get that question -- is, even if you

are 100% service-connected already, you should still file for benefits," Richards said. "Because if you get [declared] service-connected for a disability, and that is ultimately the disability that you pass away from, that -- whatever is listed on your death certificate -- is how your survivor, your spouse, will be able to file for their own benefits."

Meanwhile, veterans themselves may, depending on their condition, qualify for additional benefits if they need, for example, aid and attendance in everyday living or specially adapted housing.

This "special monthly compensation ... is paying at an even higher level," Richards said.

Establishing a service connection could ultimately help with burial, such as providing an allowance for costs.

Surviving Family Members Who Already Receive DIC

The survivors of deceased veterans who already receive the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) likely won't benefit from filing a toxic exposure claim now, "unless they have an increase in their [veteran's] disability [rating]," Richards said.

DIC beneficiaries can get an extra \$331.84 a month if their veteran was totally disabled with a service-connected disability for eight years leading up to the veteran's death.

Survivors should file a new DIC claim if they think they qualify now, even if the VA denied their claim in the past.

Surviving Family Members Who Already Receive VA Survivors Pension

Current recipients of the VA's income-based Survivors Pension could become eligible for DIC instead if their service member died of a newly presumptive condition.

Because the Survivors Pension is meant only to raise their income up to a certain threshold, depending on individual circumstances, the flat-rate DIC could pay more.

Tricare Publications

****TRICARE Active-Duty Dental Program Handbook***

This handbook provides details about how dental coverage through the Active-Duty Dental Program works. It includes details on eligibility, how to get dental

care, covered dental services, and more.

Active-duty service members

National Guard and Reserve members called to active-duty Certain others

Download the Active-Duty Dental Program Handbook PDF]

(http://file:///D:/Downloads/TRICARE_ADDP_HB_FINAL_508c.pdf)

TRICARE Choices for National Guard and Reserve Handbook

This handbook provides an overview of TRICARE healthcare options for National Guard and Reserve members and family members based on sponsor status (not activated Called or ordered to active-duty service for more than 30 days in a row., pre-activation, deactivated, and retired). It also includes information about costs, getting care, TRICARE Pharmacy Program, and dental and vision coverage options.

Audience: National Guard and Reserve members and their family members

Individual Ready Reserve members and their family members

Download the TRICARE Choices for National Guard and Reserve Handbook PDF

TRICARE Choices in the United States Handbook

This handbook provides an overview of TRICARE healthcare options in the U.S. by sponsor status (active duty, separated from service, and retired). It also includes information about costs, getting care, TRICARE Pharmacy Program, and dental and vision coverage options.

Audience: Stateside TRICARE beneficiaries

Download the TRICARE Choices in the United States Handbook PDF

TRICARE For Life Handbook

This handbook provides an overview of the TRICARE For Life program, which is Medicare-wraparound coverage for military retirees and their TRICARE-eligible family members who have both Medicare Part A and Part B. It describes how Medicare and TRICARE work together, provider options, costs, claims, and more.

Audience: TRICARE For Life beneficiaries

Download the TRICARE For Life Handbook PDF

TRICARE Dental Program Handbook

This handbook provides an overview of the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP), including eligibility, enrollment, and costs. It also includes information about benefits and exclusions, finding a dentist, filing claims, and traveling and moving.

Audience: Active duty family members

National Guard and Reserve members and their family members
Individual Ready Reserve members and their family members
Download the TRICARE Dental Program Handbook PDF

TRICARE Pharmacy Program Handbook

This handbook provides information about the TRICARE pharmacy benefit. It highlights pharmacy options, covered services, limitations, exclusions, specialty medication care management, and more.

Audience: TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries (except those enrolled in the US Family Health Plan)

Download the TRICARE Pharmacy Program Handbook PDF

DFAS quarterly Retiree Newsletter

The newsletter includes important information about making Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) or Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP) premiums payments. It also provides information about the ask DFAS tools that are now available to you online. It's COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) time again and we have information on the percentage increase and pay dates. There are also tips to help prepare for tax season, and a special spotlight article for Gray Area Retirees about VA Waiver/Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP)/ Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). In addition, we have news from partners, including news from the Air Force Assistance Fund.

To access the newsletter, please copy and paste the link below to your internet browser. You will find a list of topics in the newsletter with a brief description of each article.

We also have a downloadable PDF of the newsletter you can share with others in the military retiree community.

To continue our effective communications to include all of our military brothers , we ask that you share these newsletters ,but also complete the google form [Eastern Regional Military Data Collection Form **Eastern Regional Military Data Collection Form*

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**Thank you for your Service !,
Eastern Region Military Affairs Committee**



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