

A Benefits Presentation to VVA Chapter 1069 on 9-10-2014  
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The presentation included information about three VA claim processes that the spouse of a deceased veteran can apply for, after the veteran has passed away: (1) Accrued Benefits, (2) Death Pension, and (3) Dependency Indemnity Compensation. These three benefits are just some of the many benefits that a spouse of a deceased veteran would be entitled to if they met the eligibility requirements. All spouses of deceased veterans should contact their Veteran's Service Officer (VSO) to determine the benefits to which they may be entitled.

**ACCRUED BENEFITS:** These are benefits that the veteran was entitled to prior to the veteran passing way. The VA will determine these benefits and pay the spouse upon receipt of a completed VA Form 21-534EZ and supporting documents.

**DEATH COMPENSATION:** A death pension is provided to an eligible spouse based on the veteran's service, disability, and net worth of the veteran's survivor.

(1) The veteran must have served 90 days of consecutive service, at least one day of which was during a period of war; OR 90 days of combined service during at least one period of war; OR any length of active service during a period of war when: (a) at the time of death, the veteran was receiving (or entitled to receive) VA disability compensation or retirement pay for a service connected disability; OR (b) the veteran was discharged from active service due to a service-connected disability.

(2) The survivor's net worth and income do not exceed certain requirements. Income for a surviving spouse as of 12-1-2013 cannot exceed \$8485. The income can be reduced by non-reimbursable recurring medical expenses. For example: A spouse with an income of \$10,000 and eligible medical expenses (such as Medicare premium and other medical premiums that total to \$3915) would have the total income reduced to \$6085 (\$10,000 - \$3915 = \$6085). The VA adjusts the eligible medical expenses (not included here for simplicity sake) and the VA compensation (\$8485) is reduced by the \$6085 (income of the survivor) to leave \$2400 that the VA would pay the survivor in 12 equal payments or \$200 a month as a Death Pension. A completed VA Form 21-534EZ and supporting documents is needed to apply for a Death Pension.

**DEPENDENCY INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC):** The DIC claim is based on a service-connected disability established during the veteran's lifetime. The evidence must show that the veteran died while on active service OR the veteran had a service-connected disability/disabilities that was either the principal or contributory cause of the veteran's death OR the veteran died from non-service-connected injury or disease AND was receiving, or entitled to receive VA compensation for a service-connected disability rated totally disabling: (1) For at least 10 years immediately before death; OR (2) For at least 5 years after the veteran's release from active duty preceding death; OR (3) For at least 1 year before death, if the veteran was a former POW who died after 9-30-1999. The spouse, if awarded the DIC compensation, would receive \$1233.23 for 2014. Again, a completed VA Form 21-534EZ and supporting documents is needed to apply for Dependency Indemnity Compensation.

[Click Here to View, Copy or Print VA Form 21-534EZ](#)