Department of Veterans Affairs

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

What Is DIC?

DIC is a monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of a

- military service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training,OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease, OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a non service-related injury or disease, and who was receiving, or was entitled to receive, VA Compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling
  - for at least 10 years immediately before death, OR
  - since the veteran's release from active duty and for at least five years immediately preceding death, OR
  - for at least one year before death if the veteran was a former prisoner of war who died after September 30, 1999.

Who Is Eligible?

The ***surviving spouse*** if he or she:

- validly married the veteran before January 1, 1957, OR
- was married to a service member who died on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training, OR
- married the veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service in which the disease or injury that caused the veteran's death began or was aggravated, OR
- was married to the veteran for at least one year, OR
- had a child with the veteran, AND
- cohabited with the veteran continuously until the veteran's death or, if separated, was not at fault for the separation, AND
- is not currently remarried.*

Note: *A surviving spouse who remarries on or after December 16, 2003, and on or after attaining age 57, is entitled to continue to receive DIC.*

The ***surviving child(ren)***, if he/she is:

- not included on the surviving spouse's DIC
- unmarried AND
- under age 18, or between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending school.

Note: *Certain helpless adult children are entitled to DIC. Call the toll-free number below for the eligibility requirements.*

The ***surviving parent(s)*** may be eligible for an income-based benefit. See our fact sheet, *Parents' DIC.*

How Much Does VA Pay?

The basic monthly rate of DIC is $1,154 for an eligible surviving spouse. The rate is increased for each dependent child, and also if the surviving spouse is housebound or in need of aid and attendance. VA also adds a transitional benefit of $286 to the surviving spouse's monthly DIC if there are children under age 18. The amount is based on a family unit, not individual children. Benefit rate tables, including those for children alone and parents, can be found on the Internet at http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates or call the toll-free number below.

How Should a Claimant Apply?

Claimants should complete VA Form 21-534 *Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child.*

What Are Some Related Benefits?

Health Care (CHAMPVA)
Home Loan Guaranty
Federal Employment Preference
Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance

For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000
or Visit VA's Web Site at www.va.gov.

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