



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Benefits Administration

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## **VA BENEFITS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS CONSIDERED FOR MEDICAL DISCHARGE**

The following is important information about VA benefits for Service members who were medically discharged.

### **WHAT IS VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION?**

Disability compensation is a monthly benefit. Veterans who have disabilities from military service receive payment. It also includes injuries or diseases aggravated during service. The amount of benefit varies. It depends on the type of disabilities and number of dependents. The amount paid varies due to:

- Receipt of military longevity
- Disability retirement
- Disability severance pay
- Separation incentives

Service members who participate in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) can file a claim for VA compensation.

### **What is the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES)?**

VA developed IDES with the Department of Defense (DoD). The goal is to improve the quality of service to those medically discharged. By aligning resources with DoD, IDES streamlines the evaluation process. IDES participants undergo a single set of medical exams and receive a single-source disability rating. This serves as the basis for both VA's and DoD's disability benefit determinations.

## **How Can I Enroll in IDES?**

First, your Military Service Department must refer you to the program. You do not submit an application and cannot elect to participate. If referred, you will be assigned a Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer (PEBLO) and a VA Military Services Coordinator (MSC). Your PEBLO and MSC will give you further information about the IDES program.

## **How Can I Apply for Compensation if I Am Not Referred To IDES?**

If you aren't referred to IDES, you can submit an application for VA compensation. You have to wait until 180 days before your separation or retirement date. However, you can apply at any time after discharge. For more information on the VA Pre-Discharge claims program, Benefits Delivery at Discharge, and how to apply visit [www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/general/BDDFactSheet.pdf](http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/general/BDDFactSheet.pdf).

## **Am I Eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Services?**

If awaiting discharge due to a disability, you may be eligible for VR&E services. VR&E is a rehabilitation program based on each participant's specific needs and abilities. It helps disabled Veterans gain employment or achieve independence in daily living. Visit [www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp) to learn more.

## **What VA Health Care Benefits Are Available?**

VA provides free health care to Veterans with conditions likely related to military service for a period of five years. The five-year period begins on the date of separation from active military service. VA health care also includes a one-time dental treatment if you did not receive treatment within 90-days prior to separation. This must occur within 180 days following separation.

VA health care is also available while on active duty. This is for emergency situations or upon referral by military treatment facilities or TRICARE. Veterans with disabilities related to military service are entitled to free lifetime health care. You will be assigned to priority groupings in the VA health care system.

## **What is Important to Know About VA Insurance Benefits?**

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) is low-cost life insurance. Service members and reservists qualify. Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is post-separation insurance. It allows Service members to convert their SGLI coverage to renewable term insurance. If you are disabled, you may be able to keep your SGLI coverage for up to two years after separation. This would be at no cost. Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI) is a disability rider to the SGLI program. It provides automatic coverage to Service members who experience severe losses due to traumatic injuries. If this applies to you, call 800-419-1473 to learn how to make a claim.

To learn more about applying for VA benefits, or to locate the nearest VA office, call 800-827-1000 or visit [www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp](http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp).