



Loss of a Veteran

A survivor's guide and checklist: the first days, burial and military honors, who to notify, and the benefits your family may be owed

We're sorry for your loss. This printable guide walks you through what to do, in order, after a Veteran dies, with the phone numbers, forms, addresses, and deadlines in one place. You don't have to do everything at once. Keep it with the Veteran's papers, and use the checklist and contact log at the back to track your progress.

Free help is available. You never have to pay anyone to file for these benefits.

A free accredited representative from a Veterans Service Organization, or a county or state Veterans service officer, can help with every VA form in this guide. Be cautious of anyone who charges a fee to "get" burial or survivor benefits. Find one: va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative

Key phone numbers

Who	Number	What for
VA benefits hotline	800-827-1000 TTY: 711	Report a death (press 5), survivor benefits, burial allowance. Mon to Fri, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET
National Cemetery Scheduling Office	800-535-1117 TTY: 711 Fax: 866-900-6417	Schedule burial in a VA national cemetery. Email papers: NCA.Scheduling@va.gov
Headstones, markers, medallions	800-697-6947 TTY: 711	Government headstones and markers for private cemeteries
Military funeral honors (for funeral directors)	877-645-4667 877-MIL-HONR	Your funeral director uses this line to arrange honors
Arlington National Cemetery	877-907-8585	Arlington burial or inurnment
Social Security	800-772-1213 TTY: 800-325-0778	Confirm the death was reported, survivor benefits, \$255 payment
DFAS (military retired pay and SBP)	800-321-1080	Report a military retiree's death, final pay, Survivor Benefit Plan
DEERS support (military ID, TRICARE eligibility)	800-538-9552	Update records after the death of a sponsor
VGLI and SGLI life insurance claims (OSGLI)	800-419-1473	Veterans' Group Life Insurance claims
Other VA life insurance (VALife, S-DVI, and others)	800-669-8477	VA-administered life insurance
Office of Personnel Management	888-767-6738	If the Veteran was a federal civilian retiree
Vet Center grief counseling	877-927-8387 TTY: 711	Free bereavement counseling, 24/7
TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors)	800-959-8277	24/7 helpline for those grieving a military loved one
Veterans Crisis Line	Dial 988, press 1 Text 838255	For you or any family member, 24/7



1. The first 24 to 72 hours

Right away

1. **Get the death legally pronounced.** If the death happened at home and wasn't expected, call 911. If the Veteran was in hospice, call the hospice nurse. In a hospital, nursing home, or VA facility, staff handle this.
2. **Choose a funeral home and tell them the deceased was a Veteran.** A funeral director can request military funeral honors, help schedule burial in a VA national cemetery, get the burial flag, and report the death to Social Security.
3. **Find the discharge papers (DD214).** They prove eligibility for burial, honors, a headstone, and most benefits. If you can't find them, tell the funeral director and the scheduling office, and request a copy through VA.gov or the National Archives.
4. **Look for a VA pre-need burial eligibility letter,** a will, burial instructions, a cemetery deed, or a pre-paid funeral contract.

Within the first few days

1. **Report the death to VA** if the Veteran received VA compensation or pension: call 800-827-1000 and press 5. Payments deposited after death are taken back.
2. **Schedule the burial** (section 3) and **ask the funeral director to request military funeral honors** (section 4).
3. **Order certified death certificates.** Get more than you think you need, and ask for copies that show the **cause of death**. VA and DFAS need it.
4. **If the Veteran was a military retiree,** report the death to DFAS at 800-321-1080 or online.
5. **Don't spend VA or military retired pay deposited after the death** until you know whether it's yours to keep (section 8).

In the weeks after

- Notify the agencies and companies in section 7.
- Apply for survivor benefits, ideally **within 1 year** of the death (section 9).
- Update health coverage and ID cards (section 10).
- Order memorial items the cemetery didn't provide (section 5).
- Take care of yourself. Free grief counseling may be available (section 11).

2. Documents to gather

Put these in one folder. You won't need all of them for every step.

Document	Used for
DD214 or other discharge papers (all periods of service)	Cemetery eligibility, honors, headstone, flag, burial allowance, survivor benefits. Guard and Reserve: activation orders or NGB-22
Certified death certificates, showing cause of death	VA burial allowance, DIC, DFAS, life insurance, Social Security, banks
Veteran's Social Security number, date of birth, VA file number	Every agency
Marriage certificate and any prior divorce decrees	Proving you're the surviving spouse for DIC, pension, CHAMPVA, TRICARE, and burial
Children's birth or adoption certificates	Added amounts and benefits for dependent children



Document	Used for
VA rating decision or benefit summary letter	Showing service connection or a permanent and total rating
Itemized funeral, burial, and transportation receipts	Plot allowance, transportation reimbursement, reimbursement from money VA owed
Retirement orders, SBP election, last retiree account statement	DFAS final pay and Survivor Benefit Plan claims
Life insurance policies and beneficiary forms	Insurance claims
Pre-need letter, will, cemetery deed, funeral contract	Scheduling burial and following the Veteran's wishes
Your ID, bank account for direct deposit, income and asset information	Survivors Pension and other applications

3. Choosing a cemetery and scheduling burial

Option 1: A VA national cemetery

Who's eligible: Veterans who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, service members who died on active duty or certain training, and the **spouse or surviving spouse** of a Veteran, even if they remarried after the Veteran's death. Minor children, and in some cases unmarried adult dependent children, also qualify. Some Guard and Reserve members qualify too.

Free to the family: a gravesite in any national cemetery with space, opening and closing of the grave, a government burial liner, a government headstone or marker, and perpetual care. Veterans also get a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate, and military funeral honors on request. **Gravesites can't be reserved in advance.**

How to schedule (you or the funeral director)

1. **Gather:** discharge papers; the deceased's full name, Social Security number, dates of birth and death, and marital status; casket or cremation; the cemetery you want; and next-of-kin and funeral home contact information. If a family member is already buried in a national cemetery, have their name, date of death, and the cemetery.
2. **Send the discharge papers:** fax to **866-900-6417**, or scan and email to **NCA.Scheduling@va.gov** with the deceased's name in the subject line.
3. **Call 800-535-1117** (TTY: 711) to confirm and set the date. You'll also choose the headstone or marker type, an emblem of belief, and any inscription.

Other options

- **State or tribal Veterans cemetery:** eligibility usually mirrors VA's, but some add residency rules or charge a fee for a spouse. Contact the cemetery or your state Veterans agency.
- **Private cemetery:** you pay for the plot and services, but the Veteran can still get a government headstone, marker, or medallion, a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate, and military funeral honors. The family may qualify for burial and plot allowances (section 6). Spouses buried in a private cemetery don't get their own government headstone but may be added as an inscription on the Veteran's.
- **Arlington National Cemetery:** run by the Army with stricter rules. In-ground burial is limited to certain groups, such as those who died on active duty, military retirees, and recipients of certain decorations. Most Veterans with at least one day of active service (other than training) and an honorable discharge qualify for above-ground inurnment. Call **877-907-8585**.



- **Cremation, burial at sea, or donation to science:** VA burial allowances cover all legal methods. If remains were scattered, lost, donated, or not recovered, you can request a memorial headstone or marker.

4. Military funeral honors

Federal law entitles every eligible Veteran to military funeral honors at no cost when the family requests them (10 U.S.C. § 1491).

Question	Answer
What's included, at minimum	At least two uniformed service members , at least one from the Veteran's branch, who fold and present the U.S. flag to the next of kin, and the playing of Taps (bugler if available, otherwise a ceremonial bugle or recording)
Possible extras	Rifle detail, color guard, or pallbearers when available. Volunteer honor guards from Veterans organizations often help
Who requests them	The funeral director , through 877-MIL-HONR (877-645-4667). At a VA national cemetery, the scheduling office and cemetery staff can also help
What's needed	DD214 or other proof of service showing discharge under conditions other than dishonorable
Timing	Tell the funeral director as early as possible

5. Headstones, flags, and memorial items

Item	Who can get it	How to get it
Burial flag	Next of kin or a close friend of an eligible Veteran or Reservist. One per Veteran	VA Form 27-2008 , taken to the funeral director, a VA regional office, or a U.S. post office (call ahead). VA can't replace lost flags
Headstone or marker	Veterans in an unmarked grave anywhere. Automatic at national cemeteries	Private cemetery: VA Form 40-1330 . Mail with a DD214 copy to NCA FP Evidence Intake Center, PO Box 5237, Janesville, WI 53547, or use QuickSubmit online. Help: 800-697-6947
Medallion	Veterans in a private cemetery with a privately bought headstone	Attaches to the private headstone. VA Form 40-1330M
Presidential Memorial Certificate	Loved ones of an eligible deceased Veteran. You can request more than one	VA Form 40-0247
Headstone or marker allowance	Family bought a private headstone and VA didn't furnish one (deaths on or after Oct. 1, 2025)	Up to \$441
Urn or plaque	Cremated Veterans not buried in a national, state, or tribal cemetery	See VA's urns and plaques page

Also consider: the Veterans Legacy Memorial, a free online memorial page where family can add photos and stories. If medals were lost, the National Archives can help replace them.



6. Burial allowances and reimbursement

These are flat payments to help with costs, not full funeral coverage. **If you're the surviving spouse listed on the Veteran's VA record, VA pays a set burial amount automatically when it learns of the death, with no claim needed** (38 CFR § 3.1702). You can still file for the plot allowance or transportation.

Situation	Maximum amount	Filing deadline
Service-connected death on or after Sept. 11, 2001	\$2,000. If buried in a national cemetery, VA may also repay some or all transportation	No time limit
Non-service-connected death on or after Oct. 1, 2025	\$1,002 burial allowance plus \$1,002 plot or interment allowance	Burial allowance: 2 years after burial. No limit for plot or transportation
Died while receiving VA care (VA or VA-contracted facility)	\$1,002 burial plus \$1,002 plot; transportation may be repaid	No time limit
Private headstone not furnished by VA	\$441	Ask VA

For a non-service-connected death, the Veteran must also meet one of VA's conditions, such as receiving VA compensation or pension at death, having a qualifying claim pending, receiving military retired pay instead of compensation, or dying under VA care. No burial allowance is paid for deaths on active duty, while serving in Congress, or while serving a federal prison sentence.

How to apply for burial allowances

Apply online at VA.gov, or mail **VA Form 21P-530EZ** to: **Department of Veterans Affairs, Pension Intake Center, PO Box 5365, Janesville, WI 53547-5365**. Include the death certificate, the DD214, and itemized receipts for any transportation costs you paid.

7. Who to notify

Use the last column to write the date you called and any reference number.

Who	When it applies	How, and what to have ready	Date / ref. #
VA benefits	Veteran received VA compensation or pension, or had a claim pending	800-827-1000 , press 5, or a VA regional office. Veteran's name, SSN or VA file number, date of death, your contact info	
VA medical center	Veteran used VA health care	Call the facility to cancel appointments, prescriptions, and deliveries, and ask about returning VA equipment	
Social Security	Almost always	Funeral home usually reports it. Call 800-772-1213 to confirm and apply for survivor benefits and the \$255 payment. Can't be reported online	
DFAS	Veteran was a military retiree	askDFAS online form or 800-321-1080 . SSN and date of death. DFAS mails the final pay and SBP forms	
DEERS	Survivors using TRICARE or a military ID	ID card office with a death certificate, fax a copy to 800-336-4416, or mail it to DMDC/DEERS Support Office, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955-6771. Phone 800-538-9552. Also tell Express Scripts if the sponsor used TRICARE pharmacy	



Who	When it applies	How, and what to have ready	Date / ref. #
Life insurance	VGLI, VALife, S-DVI, or private policies	VGLI/SGLI: 800-419-1473 , Form SGLV 8283. Other VA insurance: 800-669-8477 . Private: each insurer	
OPM	Veteran was a federal civilian retiree	888-767-6738	
State or county Veterans office	Almost always	State burial benefits, state cemeteries, surviving spouse property tax and state benefits	
Banks, credit cards, credit bureaus	Always	Prevent identity theft and stop automatic payments. Ask how post-death VA or DFAS deposits will be handled before closing joint accounts	
Employer, pensions, insurers, Medicare, Medicaid	If applicable	Final pay, employer life insurance, pension survivor benefits	
Veterans organizations	If a member	Honor guards, chaplains, help with the service	

8. Final payments, overpayments, and money owed

- **VA payments deposited after death are taken back**, usually through the bank, even from a joint account. Report quickly. If repayment would cause hardship, you can ask VA for a waiver.
- **Month-of-death payment**: if the Veteran was receiving VA compensation or pension, the **surviving spouse may keep a payment for the month the Veteran died**, equal to what the Veteran would have received, when the spouse isn't separately paid DIC or pension for that month (38 U.S.C. § 5310; 38 CFR § 3.20). Ask VA before returning it.
- **Accrued benefits**: money VA owed the Veteran but didn't pay before death goes to the surviving spouse, then dependent children, then dependent parents. **Apply within 1 year** of the death on VA Form 21P-534EZ.
- **Pending claim or appeal**: an eligible survivor can ask to take it over (substitution) and add evidence, which can lead to back pay.
- **Last illness and burial expenses**: if there's no surviving spouse, child, or dependent parent, whoever paid may be reimbursed from money VA owed, using VA Form 21P-601.
- **Military retired pay**: DFAS pays a final prorated amount through the date of death to the named beneficiary. File **SF 1174**, signed by two witnesses, with a death certificate showing cause or manner of death. DFAS reclaims full payments made after death.
- **Social Security**: no payment is due for the month of death, even if the death was on the last day. Payments for that month or later must be returned.



9. Monthly survivor benefits

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

A tax-free monthly payment. **The Veteran must have met one of these:**

- Died on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive-duty training, **or**
- Died from a **service-connected** illness or injury, **or**
- Didn't die from a service-connected condition, but had a service-connected disability rated **totally disabling (including TDIU)** for at least **10 years** before death, or since discharge and for at least **5 years** before death, or for at least **1 year** if a former POW who died after Sept. 30, 1999 (38 U.S.C. § 1318).

A surviving spouse must also have lived with the Veteran continuously until death (or been separated through no fault of their own), **and** have been married at least 1 year, **or** had a child together, **or** married within 15 years of the Veteran's discharge from the period of service when the qualifying condition began. Unmarried children under 18 (under 23 in school) and low-income parents can also qualify.

Don't rule out DIC because of what the death certificate says. A service-connected condition that contributed to the death can qualify, and the PACT Act added many presumptive conditions. If VA denied DIC before, you can reapply.

2026 DIC for a surviving spouse (Veteran died on or after Jan. 1, 1993)	Monthly
Basic rate	\$1,699.36
Add if the Veteran was rated totally disabled for the 8 continuous years before death, and you were married those same 8 years	+ \$360.85
Add for each dependent child under 18	+ \$421.00
Add if you need Aid and Attendance	+ \$421.00
Add if you're housebound	+ \$197.22
Transitional amount for the first 2 years, if you have a child under 18	+ \$359.00

How to apply for DIC

Surviving spouses and children of a Veteran: **VA Form 21P-534EZ** (also covers Survivors Pension and accrued benefits). Parents: **VA Form 21P-535**. Survivors of those who died on active duty: a casualty assistance officer helps with **VA Form 21P-534a**. Mail to **Department of Veterans Affairs, Pension Intake Center, PO Box 5365, Janesville, WI 53547-5365**, upload through QuickSubmit, or get help at a VA regional office.

File within 1 year of the death so payments can start from the month of death (38 CFR § 3.400(c)). Need more time? Submit an intent to file first.

Survivors Pension

A needs-based monthly payment for a surviving spouse or unmarried children of a Veteran with **wartime service**, whatever the cause of death. VA pays the difference between your countable income and the yearly limit, and unreimbursed medical expenses can lower countable income. You can't get DIC and Survivors Pension at the same time; VA pays the higher one.

Surviving spouse, Dec. 1, 2025 to Nov. 30, 2026	Limit
Maximum annual pension rate, no dependent children	\$11,699 a year



Surviving spouse, Dec. 1, 2025 to Nov. 30, 2026	Limit
With Aid and Attendance, no dependents	\$18,697 a year
Net worth limit (assets plus income, not counting your home, car, and most furnishings)	\$163,699

Survivor Benefit Plan (military retirees)

If the retiree enrolled, the named beneficiary can get a monthly annuity from DFAS. File **DD Form 2656-7** with a death certificate and marriage certificate. Final retired pay (SF 1174) is a separate claim, and the beneficiaries can be different people. Since January 2023, SBP is no longer reduced for surviving spouses who also receive DIC.

Social Security survivor benefits

A surviving spouse, surviving divorced spouse, unmarried child, or dependent parent may get monthly benefits on the Veteran's work record, separate from VA. The one-time \$255 death payment must be claimed within 2 years. Call 800-772-1213.

If you remarry

Benefit	Effect of remarriage
DIC	Continues if you remarried on or after Jan. 5, 2021, at age 55 or older , or on or after Dec. 16, 2003, at 57 or older. Otherwise it stops, but may be restored if the later marriage ends
CHAMPVA	Continues if you remarry on or after your 55th birthday . Earlier remarriage ends it, but you may qualify again if that marriage ends
TRICARE	Ends on remarriage (unless you marry another TRICARE sponsor) and doesn't come back if the new marriage ends
Burial beside the Veteran in a national cemetery	Still eligible, even after remarriage

10. Health coverage for survivors

CHAMPVA

For the surviving spouse or dependent child of a Veteran who **died from a service-connected disability**, or who was **rated permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected disability at death**, or in some cases of a service member who died in the line of duty. You generally can't have CHAMPVA if you're eligible for TRICARE. If you're entitled to Medicare Part A, you generally must also have Part B. Apply with **VA Form 10-10d**.

TRICARE

- **Survivors of military retirees** keep the same plan options and costs. Spouses stay eligible until they remarry; children until they age out.
- **Survivors of service members who died on active duty** are covered at active duty family member costs for 3 years, then as retiree family members.
- Survivors can get TRICARE Dental Program survivor coverage with premiums paid by the government while eligible.
- **Update DEERS and get a new ID card.** TRICARE recovers claims paid while you weren't eligible.

Other coverage

If the Veteran carried family coverage through an employer, ask about COBRA. Losing coverage may open a special enrollment period on the Health Insurance Marketplace. If you're 65 or older, confirm your Medicare



enrollment is in your own name.

11. Education, home loans, state benefits, and grief support

- **DEA (Chapter 35) education:** for the surviving spouse and children of a Veteran who died from a service-connected disability or was rated permanently and totally disabled at death, among others.
- **Fry Scholarship:** for the children and surviving spouse of a service member who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001, paid at the full Post-9/11 GI Bill level. Survivors eligible for both must choose one.
- **VA home loan:** a surviving spouse of a Veteran who died in service or from a service-connected disability may qualify, and survivors receiving DIC are generally exempt from the VA funding fee.
- **State benefits:** many states let an unremarried surviving spouse keep the Veteran's property tax exemption, and some offer tuition waivers for children. Ask your state Veterans agency.
- **Free grief counseling at Vet Centers (877-927-8387, 24/7):** for the spouse, child, or parent of a service member who died while serving, a Guard or Reserve member who died on active duty, a Veteran receiving Vet Center services at death, or a Veteran or service member who died by suicide.
- **TAPS** offers a free 24/7 helpline: 800-959-8277.

12. Key deadlines

What	Deadline	Why it matters
Report the death to VA and DFAS	As soon as possible	Payments deposited after death are reclaimed
DIC (VA Form 21P-534EZ)	1 year from death	Filed within 1 year, payments can start from the month of death
Accrued benefits	1 year from death	Money VA owed the Veteran can be lost
Non-service-connected burial allowance	2 years from burial	No limit for service-connected burial, plot, or transportation
Social Security \$255 death payment	2 years from death	Not automatic unless you already got spouse benefits
A VA decision you disagree with	1 year from the decision letter	Keeps your original effective date

Things families often don't think of

- Ask for extra death certificates that show the **cause of death**. Some states issue a short form without it.
- Give the funeral home the Veteran's Social Security number so they can report the death.
- **Don't close the joint bank account right away.** Reclaimed payments and the month-of-death payment run through it.
- Check for a pending VA claim or appeal. A survivor can take it over.
- A surviving spouse can later be buried with the Veteran in a national cemetery, even after remarrying, and the name can be added to the headstone.
- Keep a copy of every form you send, and log dates and names of people you speak with.
- Request more than one Presidential Memorial Certificate so each family member can have one.
- Notify the credit bureaus, and watch for scams offering to "speed up" VA benefits for a fee.
- For military retirees, the final pay beneficiary and SBP beneficiary are separate designations, and each person files their own claim.



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- If you later become housebound or need help with daily activities, ask about added amounts for DIC or pension.



Survivor checklist

First days

- ☐ Death pronounced; funeral home chosen and told the deceased was a Veteran
- ☐ Found the DD214 or requested a copy
- ☐ Ordered certified death certificates that show cause of death
- ☐ Reported the death to VA (800-827-1000, press 5)
- ☐ Military retiree: reported the death to DFAS (800-321-1080)

Funeral and burial

- ☐ Chose a cemetery and scheduled burial (national cemetery: fax papers to 866-900-6417, then call 800-535-1117)
- ☐ Asked the funeral director to request military funeral honors
- ☐ Requested the burial flag (VA Form 27-2008)
- ☐ Ordered a headstone, marker, or medallion if the cemetery didn't provide one (VA Form 40-1330 or 40-1330M)
- ☐ Requested Presidential Memorial Certificates (VA Form 40-0247)

Notifications

- ☐ Confirmed Social Security was notified; asked about survivor benefits and the \$255 payment
- ☐ Called the VA medical center to cancel appointments, prescriptions, and equipment
- ☐ Updated DEERS and got a survivor ID card (if TRICARE or military ID)
- ☐ Notified life insurers (VGLI 800-419-1473; other VA insurance 800-669-8477; private policies)
- ☐ Notified banks, credit bureaus, employer, pension plans, and OPM if a federal retiree
- ☐ Contacted the state or county Veterans office about state benefits

Benefits

- ☐ Filed VA Form 21P-530EZ for burial, plot, or transportation allowances (if not paid automatically)
- ☐ Filed VA Form 21P-534EZ for DIC, Survivors Pension, and accrued benefits within 1 year
- ☐ Asked VA about the month-of-death payment and any pending claim or appeal
- ☐ Military retiree: filed SF 1174 (final pay) and DD Form 2656-7 (SBP)
- ☐ Applied for CHAMPVA (VA Form 10-10d) or confirmed TRICARE coverage
- ☐ Asked about DEA or Fry education, VA home loan eligibility, and state benefits
- ☐ Talked with a free accredited representative
- ☐ Looked into free grief counseling (Vet Centers 877-927-8387; TAPS 800-959-8277)

Information to keep handy

Fill this in once so you don't have to look it up for every call.

Veteran's full name	
Social Security number	
VA file number (if different)	
Date of birth / date of death	
Branch and dates of service	
Where the DD214 is kept	
Funeral home and phone	
Funeral director's name	
Cemetery and burial date	
Accredited representative and phone	
VA claim or reference number	
DFAS or SBP reference number	
Life insurance policy numbers	
Where death certificates are kept	



[illegible]

Official sources

What	Where to find it
Burial eligibility, VA national cemetery	va.gov/burials-memorials/eligibility
Schedule a burial	va.gov/burials-memorials/schedule-a-burial
Burial allowances and amounts	va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance
Burial benefit rules: 38 CFR §§ 3.1700 to 3.1713	ecfr.gov , 38 CFR part 3, subpart B
Military funeral honors (10 U.S.C. § 1491)	cem.va.gov/military funeral honors
Headstones and markers	va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/headstones-markers
Burial flags	va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/burial-flags
Arlington National Cemetery	arlingtoncemetery.mil funeral FAQs
Reporting a Veteran's death to VA	department.va.gov/reporting a death
Month-of-death payment: 38 U.S.C. § 5310; 38 CFR § 3.20	ecfr.gov , section 3.20
DIC eligibility	va.gov DIC
DIC rates	va.gov DIC survivor rates
Survivors Pension rates	va.gov Survivors Pension rates
Accrued benefits	va.gov accrued benefits
CHAMPVA	va.gov CHAMPVA
TRICARE for survivors	tricare.mil survivors
DFAS: death of a military retiree, SBP	dfas.mil/retdeath
Social Security survivors benefits	ssa.gov survivors FAQ
VA life insurance and VGLI claims	benefits.va.gov insurance
Military service records (DD214)	va.gov/records/get-military-service-records
Bereavement counseling	va.gov bereavement counseling
Decision reviews	va.gov /decision-reviews
Find a free accredited representative	va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative

Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988 then press 1 · Text 838255

Grief is hard. If it's getting to be too much, call, text, or chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat. Free, confidential, 24/7.

This guide provides general educational information about VA, Department of Defense, and Social Security survivor benefits. It isn't legal or financial advice, doesn't guarantee any outcome, and isn't affiliated with or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, or any agency. Veterans Claims Education does not prepare, present, or prosecute claims for VA benefits. Amounts are 2026 rates: DIC and pension effective December 1, 2025, and burial allowances for deaths on or after October 1, 2025. Rules, rates, and phone hours change, so confirm details with the agency or a free accredited representative before acting.

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