



VETERANS CLAIMS EDUCATION · FREE GUIDE

Clothing Allowance Guide & Worksheets

Who qualifies · Items that count · How many allowances · August 1 and the 1-year rules · Automatic renewal · How to apply on VA Form 10-8678 · If denied · Item list, damage log, checklist and contact log

Before you start: we are a free education resource. We are not VA, a VSO, an attorney or an accredited claims agent, and we don't assist with or file claims. Only VA decides. Examples are made up to show how the rules work. Describe your own experience truthfully; false statements to VA can have serious consequences.

\$1,053.19 per allowance, every year, tax-free

For veterans whose service-connected condition needs a device or skin medicine that wears out, tears or permanently stains clothing. You can get more than one, and once approved it renews automatically. Online version with a free estimator: veteransclaimsedu.com/clothing-allowance

Three things to know first: (1) Send VA Form 10-8678 to the Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service at your VA medical center, not the regional office. (2) VA asks for it by August 1, but first-time applicants have until July 31 of the next year to be paid for that year. (3) Any rating can qualify, even 0%.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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1 · WHO QUALIFIES

- ☐ A service-connected condition (or one compensated under 38 U.S.C. § 1151), and
- ☐ A prescribed prosthetic or orthopedic appliance, including a wheelchair, that tends to wear or tear clothing, or
- ☐ A prescribed skin medicine for a service-connected skin condition that causes permanent damage to outer garments.
- ☐ Not service-connected? It doesn't qualify, unless it's compensated under 38 U.S.C. § 1151 (caused or made worse by VA care). Check whether it can be connected as secondary or by aggravation; a 0% rating is enough. Once connected, apply within 1 year of that decision. VA may still provide the device without the allowance.
- ☐ Covered clothing: shirts, blouses, pants, skirts, shorts and similar outer clothing. Not covered: shoes, hats, scarves, underwear, socks.
- ☐ Amount: \$1,053.19 per allowance (effective Dec. 1, 2025), rising with the cost-of-living increase each December 1.

Official sources: [38 U.S.C. § 1162](https://www.uscourts.gov/uscourts/38-usc-1162) · [38 CFR § 3.810](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-38/chapter-I/part-38/subpart-B/section-38.810) · VA: [Special benefit allowance rates](https://www.va.gov/compensation-rates/)

2 · ITEMS THAT COUNT

Item	Usually?	Why
Prosthetic leg, foot, arm or hand	Yes	Sockets and hard parts wear clothing
Braces with metal hinges, hard plastic or rigid stays	Yes	Hard edges rub and tear fabric
Wheelchairs	Yes	Named in the law
Crutches and other mobility aids	Sometimes	If they actually wear your clothing
Prescribed skin medicine (service-connected skin condition)	Sometimes	Must permanently stain or damage outer clothing
Other prescribed appliances	Ask	VA reviews each one
Elastic, neoprene or fabric-covered braces	Usually not	Soft materials
Shoe inserts, soft orthotics, compression socks	No	Shoes and socks aren't covered

VA looks at your actual item. A “soft” brace with metal stays that tear your pants can qualify; describe it and bring photos.

3 · HOW MANY ALLOWANCES

Situation	Allowances
One item damaging one type of clothing	1
Items damaging different types of clothing (for example, shirts and pants)	One for each
Two or more items wearing out the same type of clothing faster together	2 for that type

EXAMPLE

Two items, two types of clothing

Ana wears a rigid back brace (shirts) and uses a prescribed medicine for service-connected psoriasis on her legs that stains her pants.

Two allowances: \$2,106.38 a year.

Official sources: [38 CFR § 3.810\(a\)\(2\)–\(3\)](#)

4 · DEADLINES AND RENEWAL

- ☐ August 1 is the yearly date. VA asks for applications on or before August 1.
- ☐ First time: you can file within 1 year of the August 1 date your eligibility started (through July 31 of the next year) and still be paid for that year.
- ☐ Service connection decided after August 1: you have 1 year from the decision letter.
- ☐ Automatic renewal: since a 2022 law, an approved allowance is paid every year without reapplying, unless you stop it or VA finds you no longer qualify. File again only to add a new item.
- ☐ Reviews: generally no sooner than 5 years after it starts (except for conditions that won't change); VA may ask you to confirm you still use the item, no more than once a year.
- ☐ Report if you stop using the item or medicine. Incarcerated more than 60 days with clothing provided: reduced for those days.

EXAMPLE

Missed August 1

Lena got a hinged knee brace in March 2026 for her service-connected knee and learned about the allowance in December 2026.

First time, so she can apply by July 31, 2027 and be paid for the August 1, 2026 allowance. Then it renews automatically.

Official sources: [38 CFR § 3.810\(b\)–\(d\)](#) · [38 U.S.C. § 1162\(b\)–\(d\)](#)

5 · HOW TO APPLY

1. Service-connect the condition first if it isn't already (VA Form 21-526EZ).
2. Get the item or medicine prescribed for that condition.
3. Complete VA Form 10-8678 ([va.gov form link](#)): for each item, the service-connected condition, the device or medicine, and the body area (upper/lower, left/right). Up to four items.
4. Send it to Prosthetics (Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service) at your VA medical center. Keep a copy and the date.
5. Add proof: photos of damaged clothing and a short provider note about the hard parts or staining.
6. Follow up if you hear nothing by fall.

Need help writing it? Use our free Statement Writer at [veteransclaimsedu.com/statement-writer](#) to draft your statement or a buddy statement, then copy it onto the VA form.

6 · IF VA SAYS NO

VA says	What to do
Not service-connected	Connect it first, then apply within 1 year of that decision
Item doesn't wear clothing	Photos of damage; describe hard parts; ask for a clinical review of the device
Medicine doesn't stain	Photos and the prescription; provider note on staining
Filed too late	Check the 1-year rules; otherwise apply now for next year
One allowance instead of two	Explain the different clothing types, or the same type wearing out faster

You have 1 year from the decision to request a Higher-Level Review, file a Supplemental Claim or appeal to the Board ([va.gov/decision-reviews](#)). Free help: [va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative](#)

WORKSHEET 1

My items

List each device or medicine. This mirrors items 6 to 8 on VA Form 10-8678.

Service-connected condition	Device, appliance or skin medicine	Body area (upper/lower, L/R)	Clothing it damages	Prescribed by
Right knee (service-connected)	Knee brace with metal hinges	Lower, right	Pants	Dr. Lee, VA ortho

Same type of clothing for two items? You may get 2. Different types? One each.

WORKSHEET 2

Application checklist

Tick each step as you finish it.

- ☐ Condition is service-connected (check your rating decision)
- ☐ Item or medicine is prescribed for that condition
- ☐ Downloaded VA Form 10-8678
- ☐ Listed every item, condition and body area
- ☐ Photos of damaged clothing
- ☐ Short provider note on hard parts or staining
- ☐ Sent to Prosthetics at my VA medical center
- ☐ Kept a copy and the date sent
- ☐ Applied by August 1 (or within the 1-year rules)
- ☐ Followed up if no answer by fall
- ☐ Told VA when I stopped using an item
- ☐ Added any new item with a new 10-8678

Date	Item that caused it	Clothing damaged	What happened (tear, wear, stain)	Photo?
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