



JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM

May 16, 2024

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
& U.S. Department of Defense



JOINT SURVIVORS' FORUM

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

WELCOME

Ann Duff, Director
Office of Survivors Assistance

DIC: School-Age Children

Garrett Schmidt

Program Analyst



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Benefits Administration

Pension & Fiduciary Service (P&F)

School Age Children

May 16, 2024

Presenter: Garrett Schmidt



Choose **VA**

FOR VA INTERNAL USE ONLY

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Agenda

Topic	Slide(s) #
Benefits for a Surviving Child	3
Surviving Child for VA Benefits	4
Benefit Effective Dates	5
Restrictions and Considerations	6
Interim Solutions	7
Long Term Solutions	8
Questions	9



Benefits for Surviving Children

- The surviving child of a Veteran may be:
 - a dependent on the surviving spouse's award, or
 - in receipt of benefits in their own right if...
 - ...they are age 18 or over and in receipt of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), or
 - ...there is no surviving spouse.
- A surviving child of a Veteran will cease being entitled to benefits on their 18th birthday.
 - This is done to prevent overpayment, since additional eligibility must be shown to pay benefits to or for a child aged 18 or older.
- If a child is not permanently incapable of self-support, they can only be eligible for continued pension or DIC benefits based on school attendance until up to age 23.



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of Veterans Affairs

Surviving Child for VA Benefits

- If a child aged 18 or older is seeking benefits based on school attendance, an application for school attendance is necessary to establish entitlement.
 - The required application for school attendance is VA Form 21-674 *Request for Approval of School Attendance*.
- An automatic notice is sent to the parent/guardian 60 days prior to the child's 18th birthday and includes the appropriate form to continue benefits based on school attendance.
- School children on **Survivors Pension** may continue as a dependent on the parent's award on or after age 18.
 - The same requirements for school attendance or permanent incapacity for self-support apply.



Benefit Effective Dates

- Entitlement to benefits based on school attendance is effective on the child's 18th birthday if a proper claim is received within one year of that birthday.
 - The child must have attended school continuously.
- If a claim is received after their 19th birthday, benefits may be awarded effective the first day of the month following the beginning of school attendance.
 - The claim must be received within one year of the start of school attendance.
- Benefits are payable until age 23 or when school attendance terminates, whichever is sooner.



Restrictions and Considerations

Application Restrictions

- Parents/guardians cannot submit claims for continued entitlement for a school age child until 3 months prior to the child's 18th birthday
 - a parent must sign the form for the minor if the form is signed prior to the child's 18th birthday
- Currently, if a child under the Federal age of majority signs VA Form 21-674, the form will be returned with a request for a signature from the payee/parent.

Processing Considerations

- Claims are established based on the date received.
- The processing of these claims incorporate unique considerations.
- In some cases, if there are multiple surviving children of a Veteran, the amount of monthly DIC benefits is impacted by the number of children receiving payments.
 - This may make a claim decision take longer.
- A child may not receive DIC and education benefits at the same time.
 - This may also impact timelines as communication with VA's Education Department may be necessary.



Interim Solutions

- P&F distributes a weekly list of workload that includes a priority list of pending dependency claims related to school aged children.
- This weekly list identifies all dependency claims pending over 75 days since July 2023.
- P&F has further ensured that a list specific to all school aged child workload, regardless of days pending, has been distributed since April 2024.
- P&F will continue to distribute the above lists until there is no longer a need.
- Improved claims processing training related to dependency items, with a special focus on school aged children, has been designed and is being shared with all Survivors claims processors.



Long Term Solutions

- P&F is beginning to work on regulatory changes to improve the signature and submission requirements for school aged children DIC benefits (in a child's own right).
- As this process progresses, P&F will also amend the relevant VA Form(s).
- Procedural changes which impact how these claims are processed will continue to be revised where possible.
- P&F will also continue to work with greater VA to make improvements in how work is distributed related to school age children.



Questions



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DOD UPDATES

Deborah Skillman

*Program Director | Casualty, Mortuary Affairs,
and Military Funeral Honors*



DoD Casualty, Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors Update

Ms. Deborah Skillman

Director

**Casualty, Mortuary Affairs, and Military Funeral Honors
Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP)**

VA/DoD Survivor's Forum

May 16, 2023



Agenda

- **Mission**
- **Interim Rule**
- **Updates**
- **Reminders**
- **Gold Star and Surviving Family Member Representatives**





Mission

The mission of the Casualty, Mortuary Affairs, and Military Funeral Honors program is to provide oversight of DoD and Service policies pertaining to casualty, mortuary, and military funeral honors programs and to provide authorized and necessary assistance to eligible family members of **deceased, missing, ill, or injured personnel**. Assistance may include, but is not limited to: transportation assistance; applying for and receiving benefits and entitlements; obtaining copies of records, reports, and investigations; legal assistance; receipt of personal effects; mortuary, burial, and funeral honors assistance; relocation assistance, including shipment of household goods; liaison with other federal agencies; information and referral, including emotional and spiritual support, and other assistance as requested.

1st Qtr CY 2024

Fatalities: 235

Wounded/III: 447

Missing: 0

**Military Funeral Honors Provided:
42,823**





Interim Rule

- Interim Rule Defining “gold star survivor” and “gold star family”
 - The History of the Gold Star (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/gold-star-surviving-family/support-after-loss/honoring-gold-star-families/>)

The screenshot shows the Military OneSource website interface. At the top left is the "MILITARY ONE SOURCE" logo. To the right of the logo is the phone number "800-342-9647" and the text "Call Us OCONUS | Call Us TTY/TDD". Further right are icons for chat, search, and a menu. The main content area features a video player with a dark background and an American flag. In the center of the video is a gold star medal with a purple center. The text "The Gold Star. America's promise to never forget." is overlaid on the video. The video player shows a progress bar at 0:00 / 1:07. In the bottom right corner of the video player, there is a red circular icon with a white exclamation mark inside a triangle, indicating a warning or error.

- Enroll in this brief MilLife Learning course, "[Recognizing Military Service](#)"
- Contact your respective military service – [Army](#), [Marines](#), [Navy](#), [Air Force](#) or [Coast Guard](#)



Updates

- **Products recommended by the Casualty Assistance Reform Working Group**
 - **We continue to advertise the Online Survivors Benefit Report and our Family Assistance Team by:**
 - **Hosting Another Online Survivors Benefit Reports Webinar**
(<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty-assistance/survivor-financial-legal/accessing-your-online-survivor-benefits-reports/>)
 - **Publishing a Podcast** **(<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/podcasts/?filter-categories=casualty-assistance&filter-clicked=1#generic-filter-module>)**
 - **Published a Survivor's Journey Checklist**
(<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products/survivors-journey-checklist-for-active-duty-service-member-deaths-1249/>)
 - **Created the "Making Your Last Wishes Known" e-Learning Course**
(<https://millifelearning.militaryonesource.mil/course-catalog>)



Updates

- **Products recommended by the Casualty Assistance Reform Working Group (Continued)**
 - **Published Article for Survivor Contacts for Questions and Requests to Increase Awareness of Entry Points for Support and Issue Escalation**
(<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty-assistance/survivor-support/survivors-guide-to-access-resources/>)
 - **Published Funeral Planning for Arlington National Cemetery Brochure**
(<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/search/?s=ARlington+National+Cemetery>)
 - **Arlington National continues to advertise their ANC Explorer App and to improve their education program for all generations**
(<https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil>)



Updates

- **Products recommended by the Casualty Assistance Reform Working Group (Continued)**
 - Created a flyer for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community & Family Policy to share with senior leaders and for Service members (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products/dd-form-93-make-your-wishes-known-1199/>)
 - Promoted the E-Learning Course on Completing the DD Form 93 and its importance throughout Military OneSource:
 - (<https://millifelearning.militaryonesource.mil/course-catalog>)
 - (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/millife-guides/military-deployment-support/>)
 - (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/deployment/pre-deployment/securing-the-home-front-deployment-paperwork-prep/>)
 - (<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty-assistance/survivor-support/death-gratuity/>)



Updates

- **Products recommended by the Casualty Assistance Reform Working Group (Continued)**
 - **Published Article on Heart Act**
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/the-heart-act/>
 - **Heart Act advertised on the “I am a Survivor” page on Military OneSource**
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/role/survivor/>
 - **Join the Defense Department for the first Virtual Survivor Symposium:**
June 21, 2024, 12:00 – 3:00 p.m. EST
 - **Tune in to learn about survivor benefits — including how they change if you remarry, tips for keeping accounts in order, and applying for death gratuity.**
Register at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/role/survivor/>

More Updates



- **Podcasts - <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/training-resources/podcasts/>**
 - **Survivor Benefit Plan Eligibility**
 - **Surviving Milestones as a Survivor**
- **Webinars - <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/training-resources/webinars/>**
 - **2023 Changes to the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) – pending posting on Military OneSource**
- **Tips and Tools for Navigating Relationships as You Grieve - <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty-assistance/survivor-support/navigating-grief-tips-tools/>**
- **The Survivor Connection – <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/epublications/the-survivor-connection-newsletter-archives/>**
 - **9th edition sent to all subscribers on May 2nd**

The Survivor Connection eNewsletter

Subscribe at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/epublications/>.

.MIL Email Account Version

From: The Survivor Connection News <subscriptions@militaryonesource.dod.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 9:48 AM
To: firstname.lastname.civ@mail.mil>
Subject: Navigating Relationships, Virtual Survivor Symposium & Understanding Benefits

An official communication from the United States Defense Department.

If the following web addresses are not highlighted, copy and paste the entire website address into the address bar of the browser and press enter.

May 2024

[View in Browser](#)

*Navigating Grief & Relationships

It's normal to feel disconnected from friends and family after the death of a loved one. Learn how to navigate relationship changes, find your support system and practice self-care as you move through your grief.

[Read More >>](#)

*Virtual Survivor Symposium: June 21

Join the Defense Department for its first virtual Survivor Symposium. Tune in to learn about survivor benefits — including how they change if you remarry, tips for keeping your accounts in order and applying for the death gratuity.

[Register Now >>](#)

*Remembering Our Heroes

The Defense Department recognizes the commitment of those who have died in service to their country every day. Honor the legacy of your loved one by adding their name to the Military In Lasting Tribute of [Honor a Loved One >>](#)

*Spouse Career Events

Throughout May, eligible spouses can [tune in to virtual events](#) from Spouse Education and Career Assistance (SECA) for free help to achieve your career goals with:

- The Virtual Military Spouse Symposium, May 14-16
- SECO Career Coach Webinars & Workshops, May 21-23
- Military Spouse Employment Partnership Virtual Hiring Fairs, May 29 and 30

*Lifetime Access to National Parks

Step into the healing power of nature with the America the Beautiful passes. Surviving families may be eligible for the MWR Lifetime Pass that offers free access to many of America's national parks and other federal recreation areas. [Apply for your free pass](#) today and check out other MWR benefits, such as [travel discounts](#).

*Making the Final Move

If you're preparing to move after the death of your service member, you're not alone. [Get information](#), resources and support made to help you understand your allowances, navigate decisions and take some of the stress out of your final military move.

1

Personal Email Account Version



Navigating Grief & Relationships

It's normal to feel disconnected from friends and family after the death of a loved one. Learn how to navigate relationship changes, find your support system and practice self-care as you move through your grief.

[Read More](#)



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[Register Now](#)

More than
10,750
Subscribers



Quality of life policies and programs that help our guardians of country, their families and survivors be well and mission ready.



Reminders

- **Survivor Inquiry Form for personalized and timely support available on Military OneSource at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/gold-star-surviving-family/>**
- **Launched Military In Lasting Tribute in November 2021 at <https://tribute.militaryonesource.mil/>**
- **Survivors need to keep their information up to date in order to participate in the DoD Survivor Survey**



Gold Star and Surviving Family Member Representatives

U.S. Army

Office: Installation Management Command G-9,
Survivor Outreach Services

Phone number: 833-313-1960

Email: usarmy.jbsa.imcom-hq.mbx.sos-survivor-advocate@mail.mil

U.S. Marine Corps

Office: Long Term Assistance Program Office

Phone number: 866-210-3421, ext. 2

Email: Gold.Star.Advocate@usmc.mil

U.S. Navy

Office: Long Term Assistance Program Office

Phone number: 901-874-0083

Email: MILL_LTAP@navy.mil

U.S. Air Force

Office: USAF/A1SAA, Airman and Family Care Division

Phone number: 703-693-0683

Email: usaf.pentagon.af-a1.mbx.af-a1saa@mail.mil

U.S. Coast Guard

Office: Coast Guard Casualty Matters Office

Phone number: 202-795-6637

If you are not satisfied with the casualty assistance provided by your service advocate, you may contact the DoD's Gold Star Advocate:

Department of Defense

Office: Casualty and Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors

Phone number: 571-372-5319

Email: osd.pentagon.rsrcmgmt.list.ousd-p-r-gold-star-advocate-mbx@mail.mil

BREAK 1

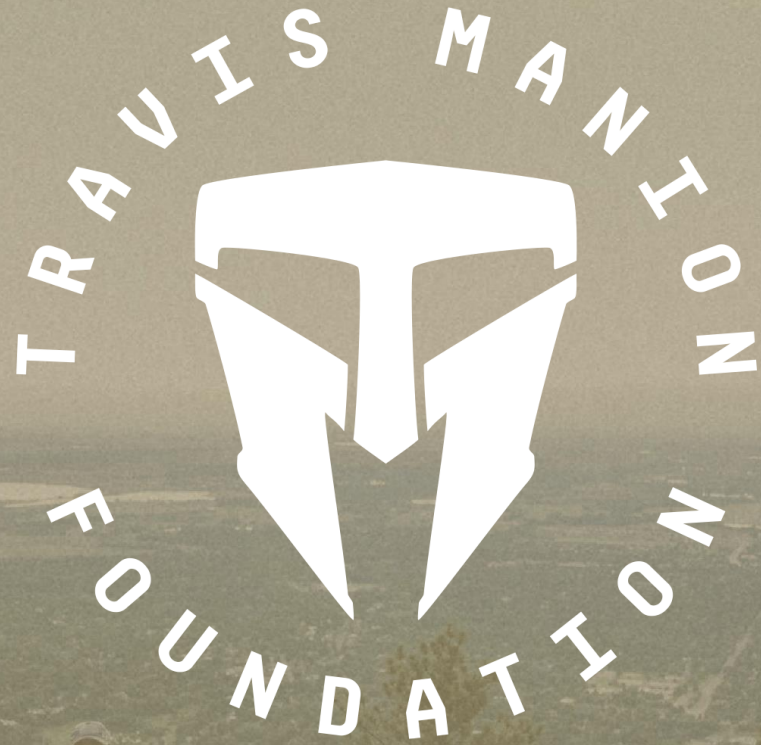


www.surveymonkey.com/r/73VCHB9

TRAVIS MANION FOUNDATION

Robyn Magee

Manager, Survivor Engagement



Joint VA / DoD Survivors' Forum
May 16th at 12:30PM EST



Robyn Magee

Manager, Survivor Engagement & Survivor Expeditions



Robyn.Magee@travismanion.org



TMF OVERVIEW

TMF: A community led by Veterans & Survivors, but open to all, that serve together and support each other.

Personal Development

- Leading With Your Strengths seminars
- Spartan Leadership Program
- Survivor Expeditions
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

Opportunities to Serve:

- Character Does Matter
- Chapters
- Service Events: Memorial Day, Back-to-School, Veterans Day, MLK Day
- Athletic Events: 9/11 Heroes Run & Manion WOD



OUR IMPACT

“If Not Me, Then Who..”

- + **Members:** TMF improves overall mental health & well-being scores by 20% for Veterans by promoting a sense of community, engagement, and meaning.
- + **Youth** involved with CDM have significant increases in positive behaviors such as caring, prosocial attitudes, and educational expectation as well as a decrease in negative behaviors such as crime and substance abuse.
- + **Community:** As a result, communities are strengthened



NATIONAL STATS

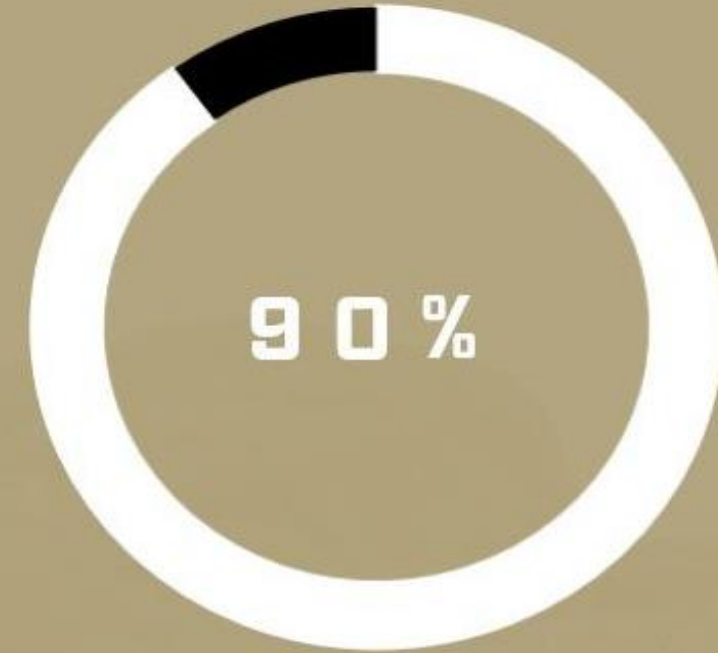
Since Inception:

- 200,000+ members of the Spartan community (veterans, families of the fallen, and inspired civilians)
- 78,000+ veterans and families of the fallen empowered
- 3,000 Veteran Mentors delivering Character Does Matter program to 600,000 youth impacted
- 120 communities mobilized

Last Year (FY24):

- 268 Service events engaging 8,000 volunteers
- Veteran Mentors engaged 60,000 youth through 935 presentations & courses throughout the year

INSPIRED



of TMF members say they are more inspired to serve their communities due to their involvement with TMF.





TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

TMF Survivor Service Expeditions



Expedition Framework

★ Develop SELF:

- Learn about and cultivate your character strengths
- Intention setting-introspection
- Self-reflection and ability to share and learn from others

★ Connect and Challenge:

- Meeting new people and building community
- Challenging yourself to go outside of your comfort zone
 - Service project: meeting new people, being somewhere new

★ Serve:

- Working through your grief in a constructive way
- Stepping up and serving others
- “If Not Me, Then Who...”

★ Build a Legacy

- Honoring your loved one
- Think about your own legacy. How do you want to be remembered?



TMF Survivor Service Expeditions

- Unique, 4–7-day service-based trips designed specifically for families of the fallen.
- Find community, practice self-reflection and personal development, and reflect on their legacy and how to carry on their loved one's legacy of service.
- Open to immediate family members (spouses, parents, siblings, and children of fallen military heroes).
- At TMF we consider a family member of the fallen if their loved one died while on active duty, or if their death post-service was service related.
- TMF has found the greatest benefits occur when participants are at least 24 months out from their loss.





TRAVIS MANION
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#TheHonorProject

Remember Their Names, Share Their Stories

What is #TheHonorProject?

#TheHonorProject is a national movement that began in 2021 after TMF recognized many surviving families and battle buddies of those interred at national cemeteries were unable to visit their loved ones on Memorial Day.

That year, TMF mobilized hundreds of veterans, surviving families, and volunteers to place commemorative tokens at resting places of fallen heroes and pause to reflect on their service and sacrifice.

In 2024, #TheHonorProject will empower 2,000 volunteers to visit 10,000 fallen heroes at over 30 cemeteries. TMF Veteran Mentors will also use the effort to connect with youth and instill the importance of character and carrying on a legacy of our fallen.



How #TheHonorProject Works

1. Surviving family members of the fallen and battle buddies submit names of fallen heroes resting at participating cemetery locations via the TMF website.
2. Throughout Memorial Day weekend, TMF volunteers visit resting places of submitted fallen heroes - as well as thousands of others - leaving behind hand-crafted commemorative tokens.
3. Volunteers share photos documenting their visit to fallen heroes, showcasing the hand-crafted token left behind. TMF then shares photos with families of fallen heroes and battle buddies who submitted a name, so they know their loved one was visited on Memorial Day weekend.



GET INVOLVED THIS
MEMORIAL DAY WITH
#THEHONORPROJECT



2024 Locations (May 25-27)

- Arlington National Cemetery - **Arlington, VA**
- Albert G. Horton Veteran Cemetery - **Suffolk, VA**
- ***Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial - **Wrightstown, NJ**
- Florida National Cemetery - **Bushnell, FL**
- Fort Logan National Cemetery - **Denver, CO**
- Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery - **San Diego, CA**
- Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery - **San Antonio, TX**
- ***Fort Snelling National Cemetery - **Minneapolis, MN**
- Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery - **Glennville, GA**
- Great Lakes National Cemetery - **Holly, MI**
- Hampton National Cemetery - **Hampton, VA**
- Jacksonville National Cemetery - **Jacksonville, FL**
- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West - **Hopkinsville, KY**
- ***Massachusetts National Cemetery - **Buzzards Bay, MA**
- ***National Cemetery of the Alleghenies - **Bridgeville, PA**
- ***National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona - **Phoenix, AZ**
- Tahoma National Cemetery - **Kent, WA**
- ***Utah Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park - **Salt Lake City, UT**
- Washington Crossing National Cemetery - **Newtown, PA**
- West Point Cemetery - **CLOSED**

**Submit
your Fallen Hero**



Call to Action

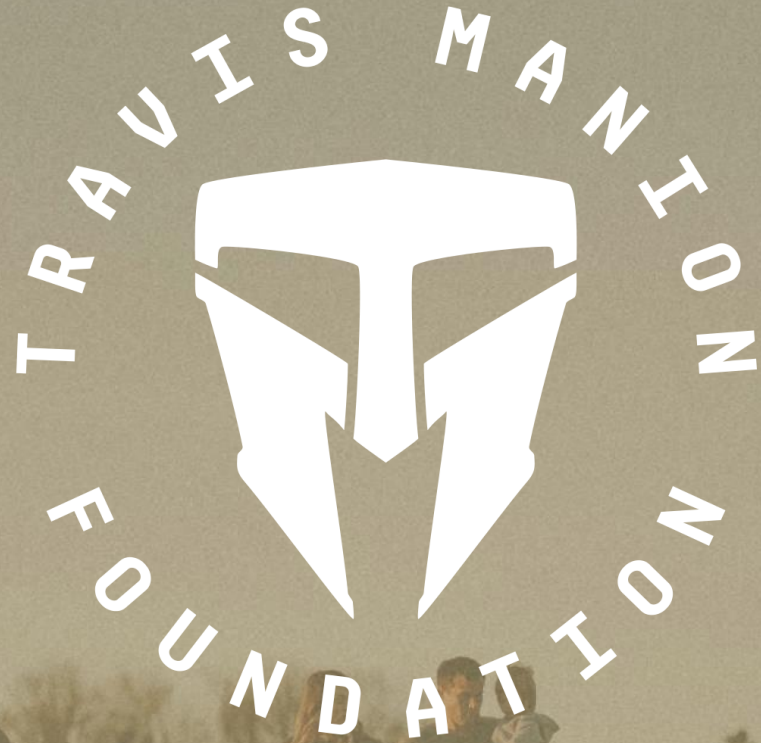
- “Join The Mission” at www.travismanion.org
- Become a Veteran or Survivor Mentor: [Character Does Matter](#)
- Run/Volunteer at a 9/11 Heroes Run: [9/11 Heroes Run](#)
- Upcoming Expeditions:
 - Montana TEEN ages 15-18
 - 8/5-8/9
 - Phoenix, Arizona
 - 10/28-11/1



Q & A

**Any
Questions?**





Robyn Magee

Manager, Survivor Engagement
Robyn.Magee@travismanion.org

www.travismanion.org

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE

Nathan Lynix

Financial Systems Specialist



Retired and Annuitant Pay

Defense Finance and Accounting Service

Nathan Lynix
Financial Systems Specialist
May 16, 2024



The Annuitant Account Statement (AAS)



- ▶ The AAS provides a snapshot of your Account
- ▶ **Gross Pay**
 - ✓ This is total monthly amount before any offsets or deductions
- ▶ **Offsets**
 - ✓ An offset is a reduction in pay due to another entitlement
- ▶ **Deductions**
 - ✓ Recurring monthly amount subtracted from your annuity
 - Example – Federal Income Tax
- ▶ **Net Pay**
 - ✓ This is the amount paid via direct deposit or hard copy check

GROSS TO NET PAY	PRIOR	CURRENT
GROSS PAY		
SBP	\$2,278.00	\$2,350.00
OFFSET(S)		
NONE		
DEDUCTIONS		
FEDERAL TAX WITHHELD	\$683.40	\$705.00
NET PAY	\$1,594.60	\$1,645.00





Other Information

- ✓ Statement Date
- ✓ Payment Date
- ✓ Annuitant's SSN
- ✓ Retiree's SSN

Tax Information

- ✓ Tax status
- ✓ Year to date totals



OTHER INFORMATION	
STATEMENT DATE	DEC 14 2023
PAYMENT DATE	JAN 02 2024
ANNUITANT'S SSN	***-**-XXXX
RETIREE'S SSN	***-**-XXXX
TAX INFORMATION	
TAX STATUS	00
CUMULATIVE YEAR TO DATE TOTALS	
FEDERAL INCOME	
TAX WITHHELD	\$705.00
CURRENT TAXABLE INCOME	\$2,350.00



▶ Message Information

- ✓ This section provides a narrative about any changes that were made to your account
- ✓ There may also be other useful information about how to make changes you want to your account

▶ Contact Information

- ✓ Be sure to verify your mailing address and your payment information
- ✓ How to contact DFAS is also listed on page 2:
 - Mailing address
 - Fax
 - Phone
 - myPay





► Survivor Benefit Plan

- ✓ The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) is a Department of Defense program. It provides financial support to military spouses or children when a military member dies while on duty or after retirement.
- ✓ There is only **one Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity**.
 - It is paid **either** to the spouse **or** to the child/children.
 - If paid to multiple children, the annuity is split into equal shares.

► SBP Payments

- ✓ SBP is paid on the **first business day of the month**.
- ✓ If the first of the month is on a weekend or holiday, the payment will be made on following business day
- ✓ A direct deposit of SBP in a bank account will be labeled similar to this: **“DEPOSIT – DFAS-CLEVELAND AR ANN PAY”**





▶ VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) - Overview

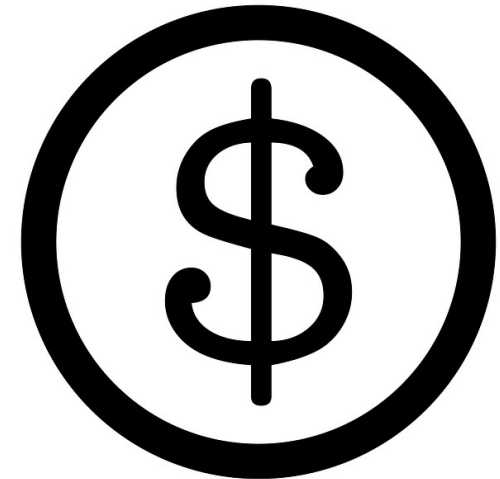
- ✓ Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members **who died in the line of duty** or eligible survivors of members **whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease**.
- ✓ DIC payments may be made for **BOTH** a surviving spouse and a surviving child or children. The SBP payment is made to either the spouse **OR** a surviving child or children.
 - **DIC is paid in one monthly deposit**, even if the payment includes a spouse benefit and a benefit for a child or for multiple children.
- ✓ A direct deposit of DIC in a bank account will be labeled similar to this:
“DEPOSIT – VACP TREAS 310 XXVA BENEF”



▶ Two primary types of debts for Annuity accounts

- ✓ Cost debts
 - SBP Premium payments not paid by member
 - Withhold 100% of annuity until debt is paid

- ✓ Over payment
 - DIC Eligibility can cause an overpayment of SBP
 - Miscalculation of gross pay
 - Multiple child eligibility changes





www.dfas.mil

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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wear blue: run to remember

Sarah Vargo
Manager

Anthem Video

wear blue:
run to remember®



For the fallen. For the fighting. For the families.



Our Mission

To honor the service and sacrifice of the American military
through active remembrance

Sarah & Jason



SARAH VARGO

DIRECTOR OF GOLD STAR YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

- Survivor Outreach Services, Support Coordinator
- DOD
- Degree in Early Childhood Education
- wear blue volunteer since 2017

CONTACT

sarah.vargo@wearblueruntoremember.org
425.299.4088

SARAH IS THE SURVIVOR OF HER LATE HUSBAND, SGT. JASON VARGO, 23 MAY 2012.

WE ENHANCE AND EXEMPLIFY COMMUNITY, WELLNESS, RESPECT, GRIT, AND EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING WE DO:

COMMUNITY:

We believe we are stronger together. We meet people where they are. We actively seek out meaningful, positive, purposeful change for everyone. We support, strengthen, and sustain those who serve and have served in our armed forces, the families who support them, and all who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

WELLNESS:

We improve, enhance, and sustain healthy living through active remembrance. We navigate mental, emotional, physical, spiritual hardship through camaraderie, solidarity, and physical movement.

RESPECT:

We respect our community and everyone in it, which is the heart of everything we do. We embrace our diversity and provide unconditional positive respect for all people. We believe every person's story has significance, meaning, and purpose. We value our dedicated team of volunteers, employees, donors, and community partners who sustain everything we strive to achieve.

GRIT:

We are ready for battle, for transition, for the unexpected. We are resilient. We are courageous and conscientious. We are not afraid to fail but embrace it as part of a process. We believe our practice has a purpose toward achieving long-term goals. We keep our head up, move forward, and persevere despite whatever obstacles we face along the way. We know everything will be alright in the end, and if it is not alright, it is not the end. We endure.

EXCELLENCE:

We strive for continuous improvement. We incorporate the best management practices, foster creativity, and we recruit and sustain the best workforce. We adapt. We are accountable. We achieve.



Circle of Remembrance



At the beginning of wear blue events, participants form a circle, where we honor the fallen by saying the names of each military member killed on that day or weekend since September 11, 2001. The community also speaks the names of those for whom they personally run or walk – husbands, wives, parents, siblings, battle buddies, neighbors, and friends.



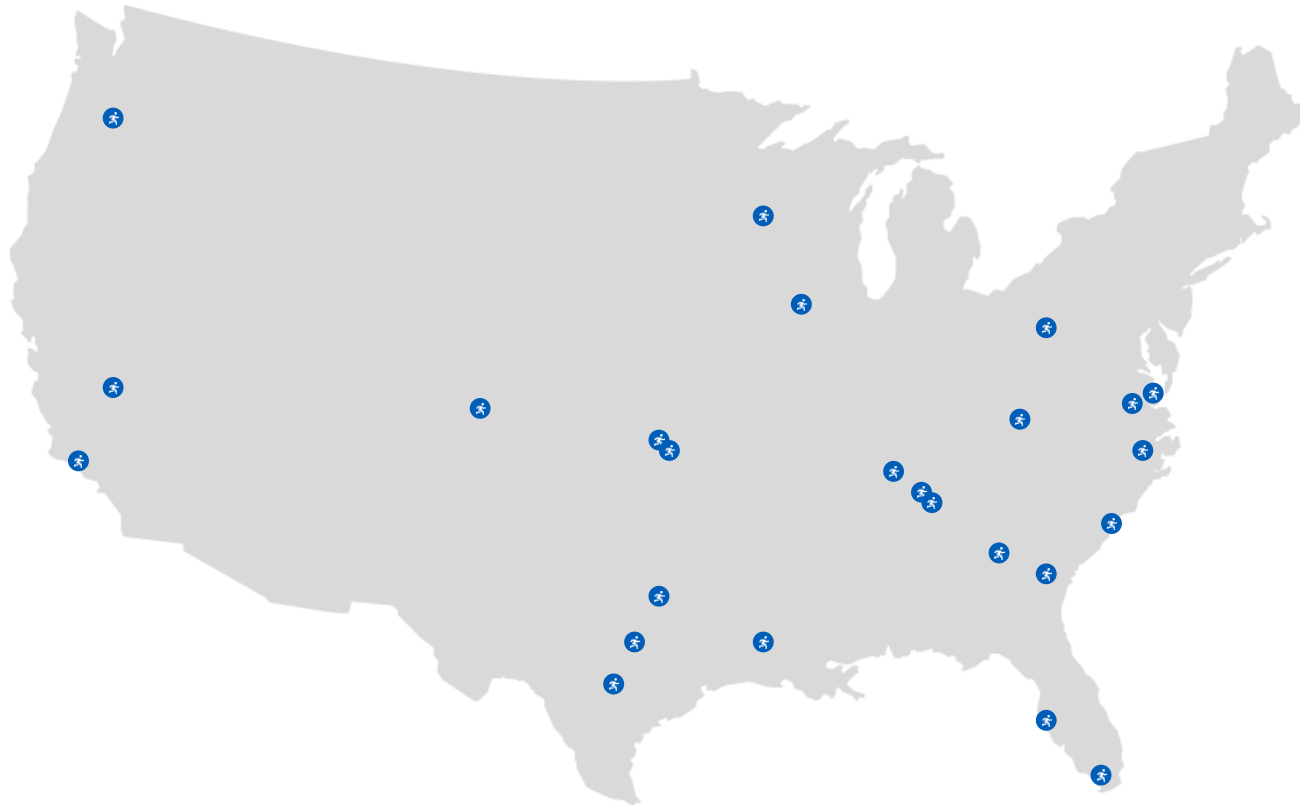


“...this was an active component. We’re going and physically doing something for them; we’re not sitting around in stasis. I just thought this was incredibly innovative, incredibly impactful. ...when we’re forced to get up and go, and deliberately do something physical for the fallen service men and women.”

COL Dave Leach | U.S. ARMY, Retired

WEAR BLUE VOLUNTEER SINCE 2012

[Click to play video: https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/impact-story-2](https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/impact-story-2)



- **60 COMMUNITIES**
- **CONNECTS MILITARY, VETERANS, SURVIVORS, & SUPPORTING COMMUNITY**
- **ENGAGEMENT WITH MAJOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS**
- **HOSTS**
 - GOLD STAR YOUTH MENTORSHIP
 - FOR THE FIGHTING
 - DONOR EVENTS

; for me. I mean dealing with PTSD for one and going out there and being around fellow Soldiers and leaders that have some of the same issues and being able to talk about it is a very good thing. The other thing is the positive vibe you get out there, it is such a large support group.”

James McMillon | U.S. Army Veteran

Gold Star Youth Mentorship Program



A ten-week run-focused mentorship program for school age youth who have lost a parent or sibling serving in the military, or as a result of their military service. Gold star and surviving youth are matched with currently serving or recently separated service members. The matches meet on Saturday mornings to set and work toward S.M.A.R.T. Goals, learn about a life of military service, develop a friendship and train for a 5k that they run together on memorial day.



Impact Story

“As a mom, I want the world to know how incredible this program and organization has been.”

Lupa Urdaneta, Surviving Spouse of SFC Dennis Urdaneta



BECAUSE OF GSYMP,

87%

OF OUR PARTICIPANTS KNOW THAT THEY HAVE PEOPLE OUTSIDE THEIR FAMILIES WHO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THEM

94%

OF OUR MENTORS FEEL THAT THE GSYMP HELPED THEM DEVELOP HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES OF MILITARY LIFE



Run. Honor. Belong.



Click to play video:

<https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/gsymp-impact-story>

EMPOWERING CHILDREN OF THE FALLEN THROUGH MOVEMENT, MENTORSHIP, AND COMMUNITY.

WA • NC • TX • CO • KY



Gold Star Race Program

A program that gives families the support to tackle a daunting endurance run in honor of their fallen loved ones, and provide the support, training, and community, to ensure their success. As our families of the fallen run through our tribute wear blue mile with hundreds of community members holding American flags in honor of their heroes, they are visually reminded that we are a grateful nation, their loved one will not be forgotten, and they will not be left behind.



Impact Story

“Being a part of wear blue, everybody learns her story and we can continue to keep her legacy going.”

Rusty Eagle, Gold Star father of HN Shianne Soles



“Being around other people that understand the loss is huge in our healing process. It’s a lot of remember Shianne but also remembering who I am and who I need to be for my [family] and just taking those purposeful steps for others.”

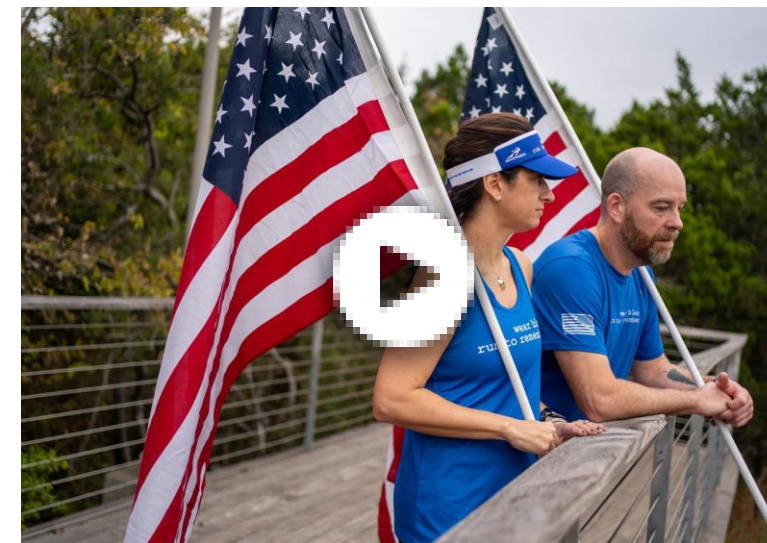
Shawna Eagle, Gold Star mother of HN Shianne Soles

As a part of the Gold Star Race Program, Shawna and Rusty Eagle ran their very first full marathon in honor of their daughter, Corpsman Shianne T. Soles, who gave the ultimate sacrifice on May 4, 2019.

In 2024, Rusty and Shawna Eagle led their own cohort of Gold Star Race Program Athletes at the Fort Worth, TX Cowtown Half Marathon. All eleven athletes crossed the finish line.



**Run.
Honor.
Belong.**



At the famous Rock'n'roll Marathon in San Antonio, TX Shawna and Rusty Eagle ran their very first full marathon in honor of their daughter, Corpsman Shianne T. Soles, who gave the ultimate sacrifice on May 4, 2019. In this video chronicling their marathon experience as part of an incredible group of Gold Star Families, Shawna and Rusty share what it means to be able to share Shianne's story as part of wear blue.

[Click to play video:](#)

<https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/impact-story-gsrp>

Tribute wear blue Mile

A one mile stretch of one of our attended races that provide a living memorial for our fallen service members. The first one half mile is filled with a-frame posters of fallen service members that have been requested by friends and family of those service members, a solemn tribute. The second one half mile is filled with our cheering and supportive volunteers holding full-sized American flags, with black ribbons with those service members names in gold, a full celebration of life and remembrance.



Honor the fallen. Speak their names. Become the living memorial.

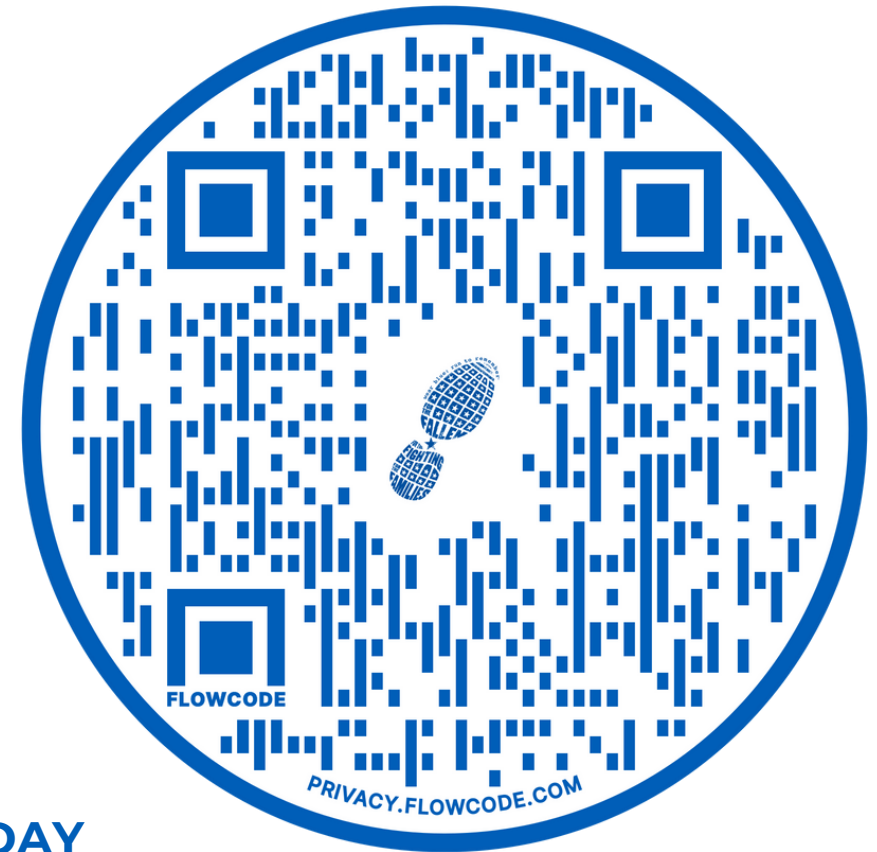
Commit to run or walk with wear blue this Memorial Day and we will share the name of a fallen service member to honor.

Together we will honor over 65,000 service members who have given their lives since the Vietnam War.

**REGISTER • RECEIVE NAME OF A FALLEN SERVICE MEMBER •
LEARN THEIR STORY • JOIN YOUR COMMUNITY • SPEAK THEIR
NAME • RUN/WALK IN THEIR HONOR**

Together, we can ensure the enduring remembrance of our fallen service members, as we learn their stories, speak their names, and honor their legacies.

WWW.WEARBLUERUNTOREMEMBER.ORG/MEMORIALDAY



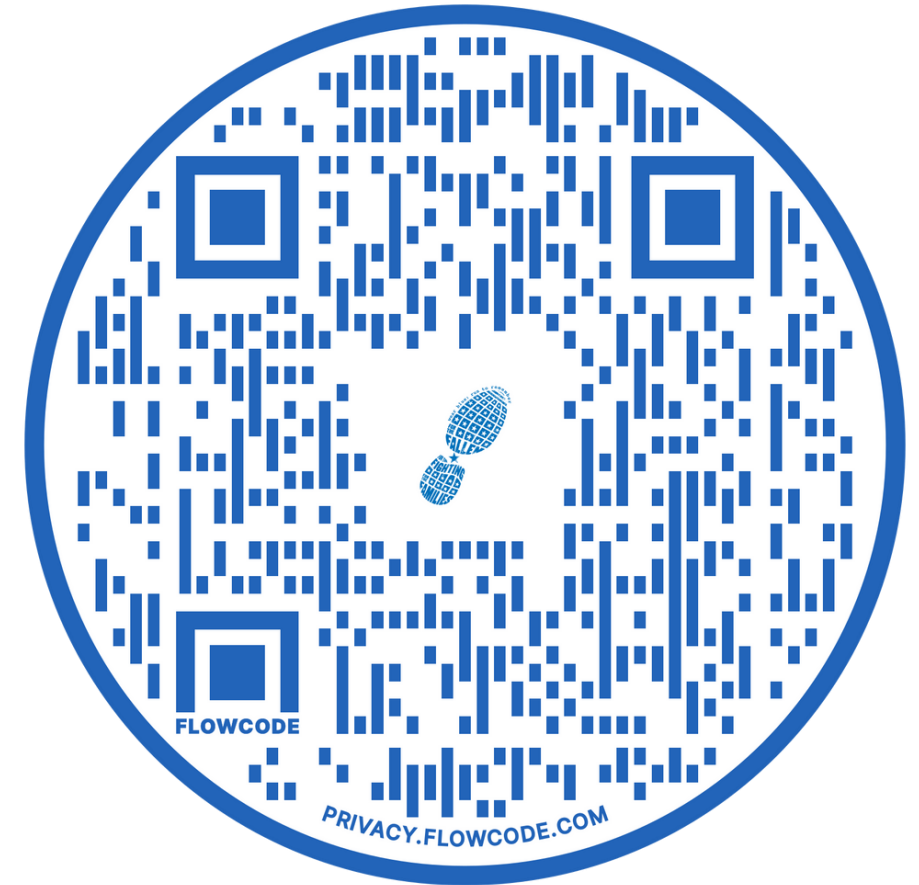


“There are certain things that are in our control, choices that we make, this is one of them. What wear blue does is incredibly important. We have a responsibility to remember those names of all the fallen so that they are never forgotten. Say the names, step off and live.”

JOHN QUINTAS | AIR FORCE VETERAN

[Click to play video: https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/impact-story](https://www.wearblueruntoremember.org/impact-story)

Join the Conversation



bit.ly/m/wearblue

BREAK 2



www.surveymonkey.com/r/73VCHB9

CHAMPVA: Enrollment & Benefits for Survivors

Thomas Paulus

Veteran Family Member Program Management Office



CHAMPVA

**VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care
Veteran Family Member Program
(VFMP)**

**Presenter: Thomas Paulus, from the
VFMP Program Management Office**



CHAMPVA

- **Civilian Health And Medical Program** of the Department of **Veterans Affairs**
- [CHAMPVA - Community Care](#)
 - **Program Eligibility**
 - **Coverage**
 - **Meds by Mail**
 - **Customer Service**

CHAMPVA

- CHAMPVA is a comprehensive health care program in which the VA shares the cost of **covered** health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries.
- In general, CHAMPVA covers **most** health care services and supplies that are medically and psychologically necessary. Upon confirmation of eligibility, you will receive a CHAMPVA Guide that specifically addresses covered and non-covered services and supplies.

CHAMPVA-Eligibility

- [CHAMPVA Eligibility - Community Care](#)
- Veteran must:
 - be permanently and totally disabled (P&T) or,
 - have died from a service-connected condition
 - been P&T at the time of death
 - **Not just 100% rating**
- Must not be eligible for TRICARE, **beneficiaries cannot choose between the two.**

CHAMPVA-Eligibility

- Children
 - Through age 18, if enrolled in school, age 23 (**as of now CHAMPVA does not follow the ACA age of 26.**)
 - If permanently disabled and VARO determines child is a “Helpless Child” they maintain CHAMPVA for the duration of their life or until they get married or lose “Helpless Child Status.”

CHAMPVA-Eligibility

- Spouses until divorce, **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- Widow(er): until remarriage
 - If remarriage ends (by death, divorce or annulment, beneficiary may be entitled to reinstatement)
- Survivor remarried age 55 and older keeps CHAMPVA

CHAMPVA-Eligibility

- If the CHAMPVA beneficiary is Medicare eligible **at any age**, she/he must be enrolled in Parts A and B and must maintain enrollment in Part B to maintain CHAMPVA eligibility.
- If the CHAMPVA beneficiary is not eligible for Social Security/Medicare, she/he must present a letter from SSA to CHAMPVA stating such.

CHAMPVA-Eligibility - Retirement

- A CHAMPVA beneficiary whose sponsoring veteran earns a National Guard or Reserve retirement will have to switch to Tricare when the retirement is activated (usually Age 60).
- **There is no option to keep CHAMPVA once Tricare eligibility is established.**
- **If a Tricare widow(er) remarries after 55, and she/he loses Tricare, may apply for CHAMPVA. (Must be a qualified Sponsor)**

Application Process

- Application must include:
 - Application (VA Form 10-10d)
 - OHI Certification Form (10-7959c)
 - Copy of Medicare card (if on Medicare)
 - School Cert of enrollment (ages 18-23)
- Application may include copy (never an original) of:
 - Rating decision
 - Marriage license
 - Birth certificate/adoption papers
 - DD214 or Report of Separation

Application Process

- Application is submitted and verified against DEERS to ensure not TRICARE eligible.
- Information is verified with Veterans Affairs Regional Office.
 - Benefits backdated to date of qualifying event - i.e., when the sponsoring Veteran was rated P&T
- Cards, handbook, etc. mailed.

CHAMPVA APPLICATION ADDRESS

VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care
CHAMPVA Eligibility
PO Box 469028
Denver, CO 80246-9028

Fax: 303.331.7809

CHAMPVA Benefits

- [CHAMPVA-Guide](#)
- CHAMPVA shares the cost of certain medically necessary procedures and supplies with eligible beneficiaries. We do not have a network of health care providers, so you can visit most authorized providers
- Annual deductible \$50 (each ind.)/\$100 max (family).
- Once deductible is satisfied - beneficiary pays 25% of the ***allowable amount (Medicare/Tricare rate)***
- \$3,000 Catastrophic Cap (based on calendar year)
- Section 5 in the CHAMPVA Guide provides more detail on coverages and costs.

CHAMPVA Benefits (Pharmacy)

- [Meds by Mail \(MbM\) - Community Care \(va.gov\)](#)
 - Eligible CHAMPVA beneficiaries who do not have other health insurance (OHI) with pharmacy coverage are able to use MbM for nonurgent, maintenance medications. Prescribed, maintenance medication will be mailed to your home.
- [Pharmacy Benefits - Community Care \(va.gov\)](#)
 - Retail Pharmacy (Optum Rx)
 - Pharmacies that are a part of the OptumRx network will collect your 25% cost share along with the annual deductible and send the claim to CHAMPVA for the remaining amount.

Contact Information

- Phone Center (Customer Service)
 - 800-733-8387
 - Mon-Fri, 8:05 AM- 7:30 PM (Eastern)
- Preauthorization (as required)
 - 800-733-8387
 - Same Hours

Contact Information

Mail:

CHAMPVA

PO Box 469063

Denver, CO 80246-9063

Email:

[Ask VA](#) (AVA)

Informational Video: https://youtu.be/AHbIDO_nb2U

View CHAMPVA YouTube videos (search CHAMVPA theSITREP)

CHAMPVA



HOUSEKEEPING & CLOSING

Ann Duff, Director

Office of Survivors Assistance

THANK YOU



www.surveymonkey.com/r/73VCHB9