

VeteranAid.org

How to Apply for Aid and Attendance

Veterans and their families seeking help in applying for Aid and Attendance pension benefit can use this information about eligibility requirements and application forms.

Eligibility for Aid and Attendance Pension

Any **War-Time Veteran** with 90 days of active duty, 1 day beginning or ending during a period of War, is eligible to apply for the Aid & Attendance Improved Pension. A **surviving spouse** (marriage must have ended due to death of veteran) of a War-Time Veteran may also apply. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially.

To Qualify Medically:

- A War-Time Veteran or surviving spouse must need the assistance of another person to perform daily tasks, such as eating, dressing, undressing, taking care of the needs of nature, etc. Blind individuals, patients in a nursing home for mental or physical incapacity, or residents in an assisted living facility also qualify.
- Eligibility must be proven by filing the proper **Veterans Application for Pension or Compensation**.
- This application will require a copy of DD-214 (see below for more information) or separation papers, Medical Evaluation from a physician, current medical issues, net worth limitations, and net income, along with out-of-pocket Medical Expenses.

To Qualify Financially:

- An applicant must have on average less than \$80,000 in assets, EXCLUDING their home and vehicles.

The Aid and Attendance Application



Step 1: Gather the necessary documents

There is much information that needs to be gathered and prepared when applying for the Aid & Attendance Improved Pension. We have compiled a list of the documents you will need, as well as links to download some of the VA and Government Forms that you will need. While it may seem like a daunting task, we recommend that you read

through this site to better your understanding of the application process so you are prepared before you speak with any Veterans' Affairs Office.

To apply for the Aid & Attendance Improved Pension, you will need the following documents. Prepare these before making your filing.

- **Discharge/Separation Papers (DD-214)**. If you need to request military records, you can either fill out [Standard Form 180](#) or, you can visit the [National Archives website](#) for further instructions on how to request military records.
- **Copy of Marriage Certificate** and all marital information.
- **Copy of the Death Certificate** (surviving spouses only).
- **Copy of current Social Security Award Letter** (the letter that Social Security sends at the beginning of the year stating what your monthly amount will be for the following year).
- **Net Worth information**, including bank accounts, CDs, Trusts, Stocks, Bonds, Annuities, etc.
- **Proof of all income** from pensions, retirement, interest income from investments, annuities, etc.
- If you are a **court-appointed guardian** of the veteran or surviving spouse, a certified copy of the court order of the appointment is required.
- **Proof of insurance premiums**, medications, medical bills or any other medical expenses that are not reimbursed by insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid.
- **Physician statement** that includes current diagnosis, medical status, prognosis, name and address, ability to care for self, ability to travel unattended, etc. If you are a veteran in a nursing home, or a family member of a veteran in a nursing home, you can use this form as a certification of that status: [Nursing Home Status Statement](#).
- **Banking information** for Direct Deposit of A&A monthly payments (include a voided check).
- **Employment history** (does not apply if you are over 65).
- **List of all doctors and hospitals visited in the last year**. For a list of possible medical expenses, [click here](#). For a medical expense report (VA Form 21P-8416), [click here](#).



Step 2: Complete the necessary VA Form for filing

Once you have this information compiled, you will need to obtain and complete **VA Form 21-527EZ** and/or **VA Form 21-534EZ** for Special Improved benefits with Aid & Attendance. These forms can be downloaded in PDF format here:

- [VA Form 21-527EZ](#) (For Veterans)
- [VA Form 21-534EZ](#) (For Spouses)

Now that you have all your information, follow the instructions on Form 21-527EZ or Form 21-534EZ to file for your Aid & Attendance Improved Pension. If you need assistance with filing your paperwork, you can contact the VA. We encourage you to explore all the available options and services provided through the VA and service agencies to find the option that's right for you and your circumstances.



Step 3: Mail the application

In mailing your application, we highly recommend that you send your completed application via Certified Mail "Return Receipt" to help avoid the potential of the VA stating that the application was not received. Be certain to keep a copy of the entire application for your own records as well as any other correspondence to and from the VA.

The VA has established various processing center across the country that are solely dedicated to processing applications for Improved Pension. When mailing your application, you need to make certain that you send it to the appropriate center assigned for the state where the applicant resides (the applicant is the veteran or spouse). Listed below is the correct mailing address by state:

<p>AL, AR, IL, IN, KY, LA, MI, MO, MS, OH, TN, WI</p>	<p>AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, IA, ID, KS, MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OK, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WY</p>	<p>CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, MA, MD, ME, NC, NH, NJ, NY, PA, PR, RI, SC, VA, VT, WV</p>
<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>	<p>↓</p>
<p>Milwaukee Pension Maintenance Center Veterans Administration 5400 West National Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53214</p>	<p>St. Paul Pension Maintenance Center Veterans Administration 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling St. Paul, MN 55111-4050</p>	<p>Philadelphia Pension Maintenance Center Veterans Administration 5000 Wissahickon Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19144</p>

What to Expect after Filing for Aid & Attendance

It is hard to speculate on what you will experience while filing for the Aid & Attendance Pension. **Each case is unique and carries its own set of challenges.** It will also depend on which processing center will be handling the claim. For unknown reasons, some centers do a more efficient job than others. How complete the application package is will also impact the process.

One thing you can expect is that it will take between 8-10 months on average for your application to be processed and to receive a determination letter. Due to the current backlog of claims to be processed this timeframe can be much longer.

Many families can't afford to pay for care while waiting for the pension to be approved and funds to be released, which places an additional burden. Some Assisted Living Facilities will work with you if they know the resident qualifies for A&A. **Fortunately, all benefits are retro-dated back to the original filing date.**

If you or your loved one is age 90 or older, you should request the application process be expedited. The VA's own law states that applications for benefits for a veteran/widow age 90 or older are to be given priority. It is advised that you include a cover letter with the application noting this request.

Additional Forms That May Be Needed When Filing

The following forms are not required when filing for Aid & Attendance on your own, but rather may help when you are using outside help to apply for Aid & Attendance.

If you are using a Fiduciary:

You can request to be appointed as Fiduciary. The VA does not recognize Power of Attorney (POA) or Durable Power of Attorney (DPOA). Please see our [FAQ Section](#) for more detailed information on this subject.

The VA will have to approve the individual who acts as the fiduciary as someone reputable to handle the financial affairs according to their guidelines. This will require a meeting with a Field Agent if you request to be appointed. Due to a lack of Field Agents, the wait time for this meeting to be scheduled can be several months. Be sure to include [VA Form 21-0845](#) (Authorization to Disclose Personal Information to a Third Party), so that you will be able to call the VA on behalf of the claimant. Without this form the VA will not discuss the application with you.

As a special note: The person asking to be appointed as Fiduciary needs to be aware that a felony conviction or a filing of bankruptcy will make you an unacceptable candidate to hold this position. For more information on the fiduciary process, [click here](#).

If you are using a service organization:

If you would prefer to have a service organization assist you with your claim, you may use [VA Form 21-22: Appointment of Veterans Service Organization As Claimant's Representative.](#)

- http://www.veteranaid.org/docs/FDC_Surviving_Spouse.pdf
- http://www.veteranaid.org/docs/FDC_VET.pdf
- <http://www.veteranaid.org/docs/21-526.pdf>

If you are still needing assistance, we are here to help! Head on over to our Forums to ask your questions and join the discussions about Aid and Attendance.

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