Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

Eligibility Criteria Fact Sheet

VA Caregiver Support

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) offers enhanced clinical support for Family Caregivers of eligible Veterans.

Veteran Eligibility Requirements:

A Veteran or Service member may be eligible for a Family Caregiver if all of the following requirements are met:

1. The individual is either:
   - A Veteran; or
   - A member of the Armed Forces undergoing a medical discharge from the Armed Forces.
2. The individual has a serious injury (including serious illness) incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.
   - For purposes of PCAFC, serious injury means any service-connected disability that: (1) Is rated at 70 percent or more by VA; or (2) Is combined with any other service-connected disability or disabilities, and a combined rating of 70 percent or more is assigned by VA.
3. The individual is in need of in-person personal care services for a minimum of six (6) continuous months based on any one of the following:
   - An inability to perform an activity of daily living;
   - A need for supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological or other impairment or injury; or
   - A need for regular or extensive instruction or supervision without which the ability of the Veteran to function in daily life would be seriously impaired.
4. It is in the best interest of the individual to participate in the program.
5. Personal care services that would be provided by the Family Caregiver will not be simultaneously and regularly provided by or through another individual or entity.
6. The individual receives care at home or will do so if VA designates a Family Caregiver.
7. The individual receives ongoing care from a Primary Care Team or will do so if VA designates a Family Caregiver.

To apply online, visit
https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Family Caregiver Eligibility Requirements

A Family Caregiver must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Be either:
   - The eligible Veteran's spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member; or
   - Someone who lives with the eligible Veteran full-time or will do so if designated as a Family Caregiver.
3. Be initially assessed by VA as being able to complete caregiver education and training.
4. Complete caregiver training and demonstrate the ability to carry out the specific personal care services, core competencies, and additional care requirements.

In addition, there must be no determination by VA of abuse or neglect of the eligible Veteran by the caregiver.

Stipend Levels:

The amount of the monthly stipend the Primary Family Caregiver is eligible to receive, is determined based on information gathered during VA's evaluation of the Veteran's personal care needs.

Level One: The Primary Family Caregiver's monthly stipend is calculated by multiplying the monthly stipend rate [Office of Personnel Management (OPM) General Schedule (GS) Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1, based on the locality pay area in which the eligible Veteran resides] divided by 12 multiplied by 0.625.

- For example, the GS rate at grade 4, step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2022 was $34,916 annually.
- Thus, the monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate ($34,916, divided by 12 multiplied by 0.625) was approximately $1,818.54 in 2022.

Level Two: If VA determines the eligible Veteran meets the definition of "unable to self-sustain in the community" for the purposes of PCAFC, the designated Primary Family Caregiver's monthly stipend is calculated by multiplying the monthly stipend rate (OPM GS Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1, based on the locality pay area in which the eligible Veteran resides) divided by 12 multiplied by 1.00.

- For example, the GS rate at grade 4, step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2022 was $34,916 annually.
- The 2022 monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate ($34,916, divided by 12 multiplied by 1.00) was approximately $2,909.67

Veterans and caregivers can find their local CSP Team by:

Calling the VA Caregiver Support Line **1-855-260-3274**
(Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET; Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm ET) Toll free

Using the CSP Teams locator at
www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp

Definitions

Unable to Self-sustain in the Community

For purposes of PCAFC, "unable to self-sustain in the community" means that an eligible Veteran either:

- Requires personal care services each time he or she completes three or more of the seven activities of daily living (ADL) listed in the definition of an inability to perform an activity of daily living in this section, and is fully dependent on a caregiver to complete such ADLs; or
- Has a need for supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological or other impairment or injury on a continuous basis; or
- Has a need for regular or extensive instruction or supervision without which the ability of the Veteran to function in daily life would be seriously impaired on a continuous basis.

Inability to Perform Activity of Daily Living (ADL)

For purposes of PCAFC, the "inability to perform an ADL" means the Veteran or Service member requires personal care services each time he or she completes one or more of the ADLs listed below.

- Dressing or undressing oneself
- Bathing
- Grooming oneself in order to keep oneself clean and presentable
- Adjusting any special prosthetic or orthopedic appliance, that by reason of the particular disability cannot be done without assistance (this does not include the adjustment of appliances that nondisabled persons would be unable to adjust without aid, such as supports, belts, lacing at the back, etc.)
- Toileting or attending to toileting
- Feeding oneself due to loss of coordination of upper extremities, extreme weakness, inability to swallow, or the need for a non-oral means of nutrition
- Mobility (walking, going up stairs, transferring from bed to chair, etc.)

Requiring assistance with an ADL only some of the time does not meet the definition of an "inability to perform an ADL."

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