

VA Caregiver Support Program FAQ

1. *What is VA Caregiver Support Program?*

- VA recognize the important role of family caregivers in supporting the health and wellness of Veterans. Eligible caregiver enrolled in the support program can qualify for a monetary compensation stipend that helps compensate the caregiver as a role in helping the veteran with their needs.

2. *Am I eligible for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers?*

- You may be eligible if you and the veteran you're caring for meets all of the requirements.
- Eligibility requirements for family caregiver. Family caregiver must be at least 18 years old and at least one of these must be true for you:
 - You must be either a spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member of the Veteran, **or**
 - Someone who lives full-time with the Veteran, or is willing to do so if designated as a family caregiver
- Eligibility requirements for veteran. All of these must be true for the Veteran you're caring for:
 - The Veteran must have a VA disability rating (individual or combined) of **70%** or higher. The Veteran's service-connected disabilities must have been caused or made worse by their active-duty service during one of these periods of time
 - On or after September 11, 2001, or
 - On or before May 7, 1975
 - And the Veteran must:
 - Have been discharged from the U.S military or have a date of medical discharge, **and**
 - Need at least 6 months of continuous, in-person personal care services

***Note:** PCAFC eligibility for all remaining eras will expand October 1, 2022.

3. *What are personal care services?*

- These are services the eligible Veteran needs from another person. They include care or assistance to support the Veteran's:
 - Health and well-being
 - Everyday personal needs like feeding, bathing, and dressing
 - Safety, protection, or instruction in their daily living environment

4. *How many caregivers can the eligible Veteran appoint?*

- Veteran can appoint; 1 Primary Family Caregiver (the main caregiver), and up to 2 Secondary Family Caregivers (people who serve as backup support to the primary caregiver when needed).
- Eligible primary and secondary family caregivers can receive; caregiver education and training, mental health counseling, travel, lodging, and financial assistance when traveling with the veteran to receive care.

- Eligible primary family caregivers may also receive; a monthly stipend (payment), access to health care benefits through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)-if you don't already qualify for care or services under another health care plan, and at least 30 days per year of respite care for the veteran.

5. *Can all Caregivers receive the stipend?*

- No. Only the designated primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran is entitled to receive a stipend. There can be only one primary family caregiver designated at a time.

6. *Will my stipend be taxable income?*

- No. the stipend is a VA enhanced service and is not considered taxable income.

7. *What is my monthly stipend rate?*

- VA bases stipend payments on the definition of "monthly stipend rate," which means the 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.
- If you would like to see VA GS level pay scale, please click, [here](#).
- VA will apply a specific percentage of the monthly stipend rate based on the amount and degree of personal care services provided to the eligible Veteran by the Primary Family Caregiver
- The amount and degree of personal care services is divided into two levels. The distinction between the two levels is based on if the Veteran is determined to be unable to self-sustain in the community.

Level 1: For an eligible Veteran who is determined not to be "unable to self-sustain" in the community, the Primary Family Caregiver's stipend amount will **be 62.5% of the monthly stipend rate.**

- For example, the GS rate at Grade 4, Step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2020 is \$33,638 annually.
- Thus, the monthly stipend amount for a primary family caregiver of an eligible veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (62.5%) of \$33,638 will be approximately \$1,751.98.

Level 2: For an eligible Veteran who is determined to be unable to self-sustain in the community, the Primary Family Caregiver's stipend amount will **be 100% of the monthly stipend rate.**

- For example the GS rate at Grade 4, Step 1, in Dallas, Texas, for 2020 is \$33,638 annually
- The 2020 monthly stipend amount for a Primary Family Caregiver of an eligible Veteran in Dallas, Texas, at this rate (100%) of \$33,638 will be approximately \$2,803.17

8. *Whom do I contact about payment issues?*

- The VHA Office of Community Care (VHA OCC) issues the recurring monthly payments and processes all updates related to the stipend. You may contact VHA OCC for information on the processing activities for the stipend benefit via:

- Phone: Call Office of Community Care toll free at 1-877-733-7927 Mon-Fri 8am-8pm EST.
- Web: <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/>

9. *What if the Veteran isn't enrolled in VA health care yet?*

- If the Veteran isn't yet enrolled in VA health care, or is on active duty and undergoing a medical discharge, they'll first need to apply for VA health care benefits ([VA Form 10-10EZ](#)).

10. *What if the Veteran I'm caring for doesn't meet the eligibility criteria for this program?*

- Family caregivers of Veterans who aren't eligible for this program may still be able to get support and resources. The VA Caregiver Support Program consists of 2 programs: this Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) and another program called the Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS). To learn more, you can:
 - For more information about the Program of General Caregiver Support Services click, [here](#). Or call the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274, Monday through Friday 0800AM to 0800PM ET.
 - You can also discuss your options with your local Caregiver support Coordinator (CSC), click [here](#) to locate your local coordinator. VA Northern California Health Care System, McClellan Outpatient Clinic, 5342 Dudley Blvd, McClellan, CA 95652. PH: 916-843-9043.

11. *How do I apply for this program?*

- You can apply by mail:
 - Fill out a joint application for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers VA Form [10-10CG](#).
 - Mail the form and any supporting document to: Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Road NE Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30329-1647
- In person:
 - Bring your completed VA Form 10-10CG to your local VA medical center's Caregiver Support Coordinator. To find the name of your local coordinator click, [here](#).
 - If you need help filling out the form, you can contact your local coordinator, or call our main VA information line at 877-222-8387.

12. *For more information about VA Caregiver Support Program, please follow the links below.*

- [VA Caregiver Support Program.](#)
- [Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#)