



San Francisco County Veterans Service Office

VA Pension

What is VA Pension?

Pension is a needs-based benefit program for wartime Veterans, who are age 65 or older or have a permanent and total non-service connected disability, and who have limited income and net worth. Veterans who are more seriously disabled may qualify for pension at the increased housebound or aid and attendance rates.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible if you meet the following criteria:

- You were discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, AND
- You served 90 days of active duty with at least one day during wartime, *AND
- Your countable income is below the maximum annual pension rate (MAPR), AND
- You meet net worth limitations AND
- You meet one of the following criteria:
 - You are age 65 or older.
 - You have a permanent and total nonservice-connected disability.
 - You are a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity.
 - You are receiving Social Security disability benefits.

*Veterans who entered active duty after September 7, 1980, must serve at least 24 months of active-duty service. If the length of service is less than 24 months, the Veteran must have completed their entire tour of active duty.

How much does VA pay?

Income Limits effective December 1, 2019		
<i>If you are a Veteran</i>	<i>Your yearly/monthly income must be less than...</i>	
with no dependent	\$13,742	\$1,146
Veteran with a spouse or child	\$18,008	\$1,500

Income Limits effective December 1, 2019		
<i>If you are a Veteran</i>	<i>Your yearly/monthly income must be less than...</i>	
(Veterans with additional children: add \$2313 to the limit for EACH child)		
You qualify for Housebound with no dependents	\$16,805	\$1,400
You qualify for Housebound with one dependent	\$21,063	\$1,755
You qualify for Aid and Attendance with no dependents	\$22,939	\$1,911
You qualify for Aid and Attendance with one dependent	\$27,195	\$2,266

Note:

The amount of pension payable is the difference between your countable income and the yearly income limit for your situation. The difference is generally paid in 12 equal monthly payments rounded down to the nearest dollar.

VA deducts certain expenses you pay, such as unreimbursed medical expenses from you annual household income. This will decrease your countable income and increase your monthly pension payment. If you have medical expenses, you may deduct only the amount that's above 5% of your MAPR amount (\$687 for a Veteran with no spouse or child).

Net Worth

The disability pension program is a 'needs' based program. As a result the VA cannot pay this benefit if the applicant's net worth exceeds the limits established by law. Effective December 1, 2019 the net worth limit is \$129,094. Net worth is the sum of a claimants or beneficiary's assets and annual income for VA purposes. Assets include cash on hand, checking, savings and investments. It does not include the value of your house or a reasonable area of land on which it sits or the personal things you use every day like your clothing, vehicle or furniture.

Special Monthly Pension

You may be entitled to an additional amount of disability pension in the following circumstances:

Housebound

You may be entitled to the housebound benefit if your disabilities are of such a nature that you are unable to leave your home without assistance, or if you meet certain federal regulatory requirements.

Aid and Attendance

You may be entitled to aid and attendance if you are (1) in an approved skilled nursing facility, (2) blind or so nearly blind to have corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less, or (3) if your disabilities are of such severity that you require the assistance of another person for self-care functions (e.g. preparing your meals, dressing, bathing, etc.) an additional amount of disability pension is payable.

How can you apply?

You can apply at the SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE. Your VETERANS SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE will help complete the necessary forms.

The following supporting evidence and/or documents should be submitted with your application:

- **Discharge or separation papers** - DD214 or equivalent with proof of wartime service (Copy 4 – Member Copy). Applicants who have a copy of their DD214 are encourage to provide a copy with their application to expedite processing. Otherwise, we will help you to obtain your service records from the service department.

Under the law, the VA recognizes these periods of war time:

World War I: April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918. For Veterans who served in Russia, April 6, 1917, through April 1, 1920. Extended through July 1, 1921, for Veterans who had at least one day of service between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918.

World War II: December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946.

Korean War: June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955.

Vietnam War: August 5, 1964 (February 28, 1961, for Veterans who served “in country” before August 5, 1964), through May 7, 1975.

Gulf War: August 2, 1990, through a date to be set.

- **Medical Treatment record** if Veteran is under age 65, not in receipt of SSDI, and not in nursing home
- **Dependency records** (marriage certificate and children’s birth certificates and copies of divorce/death/annulment record terminating all of your prior marriages and those of your spouse; and social security numbers of dependents)
- **Income and Net Worth.** A listing of all current income and net worth information for you and your qualified dependents such as Social Security benefits, retirement income, interest and dividends, and other annuities.
- **Unreimbursed medical expense** for the past 12 months

If you believe you may be entitled to any of the above benefits, or have questions or wish to apply, please contact our office for assistance and other details, please call (415) 934-4200 or email SFCVSO@sfgov.org.

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