

Overview of Veterans Affairs Canada's Benefits and Services

October 2019

Who We Serve

- VAC serves approximately 186,080 people - approximately 18% of the Veteran population in Canada
- They include:
 - War-service Veterans: Second World War and Korean War (15,644)
 - Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel and Veterans (101,049)
 - RCMP Members (13,136)
 - Survivors (56,251)

Benefits and Services

Disability Benefits – Recognize the impact of a service-related injury or disease. The amount depends on the degree to which a condition is related to service (entitlement) and the severity of the condition, including its impact on quality of life (assessment). Disability Benefits are paid as either a Disability Pension or Pain and Suffering Compensation.

Disability Pension (*Pension Act*)

- A tax-free, life-time monthly benefit primarily for Second World War and Korean War Veterans and RCMP. Additional amounts are paid on behalf of a spouse, common-law partner and/or dependent children.

Pain & Suffering Compensation (Veterans Well-being Act)

- A tax-free life-time monthly benefit for CAF members and Veterans. The monthly amount can be cashed out, if requested, for a lump sum payment.

Survivor's Pension (*Pension Act*)

- Monthly payment to the surviving spouse or common-law partner of a disability pensioner. The amount is dependent on the assessed level of the deceased Veteran's disability pension.

Death Benefit (*Veterans Well-being Act*)

- Lump-sum benefit paid to a CAF members' eligible survivors if the member dies as a result of a service-related injury or disease provided the death occurred within 30 days of the injury or illness.
- If the death occurs more than 30 days after the injury or onset of illness, this support is provided through disability benefits.

Benefits and Services

Additional Pain & Suffering Compensation (*Veterans Well-being Act*)

- A tax-free, monthly benefit to recognize and compensate for the non-economic loss associated with service-related permanent and severe impairments, for which a VAC disability benefit has been granted, that cause barriers to life after service.

Critical Injury Benefit (*Veterans Well-being Act*)

- Lump-sum benefit for Veterans and CAF members in recognition of the consequences of a sudden, single incident leading to an immediate, severe and traumatic illness or injury.

Benefits and Services

Other Related Benefits

- Exceptional Incapacity Allowance
- Clothing Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Detention Benefit
- Prisoner of War
- Educational Assistance Program

Benefits and Services

Income Replacement Benefit – a taxable, monthly payment for a Veteran to maintain their income while they are taking part in the VAC rehabilitation program. This benefit ensures their total income will be at least 90 percent of their gross pre-release military.

Caregiver Recognition Benefit - monthly payment to an informal caregiver who provides daily assistance and support to a Veteran to remain in their home.

Veterans Emergency Fund – emergency financial support to Veterans, their families or their survivors whose well-being is at risk due to an urgent and unexpected situation.

Benefits and Services

War Veterans Allowance - financial assistance for low-income Veterans of the Second World War and/ or the Korean War

Treatment Benefits - financial support to eligible Veterans for health care services or benefits, such as:

- Prescription drugs
- Vision Care
- Dental services
- Audio services
- Prosthetic devices

Health-Related Travel - VAC may also reimburse travel related expenses incurred when travelling to receive treatment.

Benefits and Services

Veterans Independence Program (VIP):

- Helps Veterans remain healthy and independent in their own homes
 - Recipients include over 53,000 Veterans and close to 35,000 Survivors and primary caregivers*
- Services include:
 - Grounds Maintenance
 - Housekeeping
 - Personal Care
 - Access to nutrition
 - Home Adaptations

* Survivors and primary caregivers are only eligible for grounds maintenance and/or housekeeping.

Benefits and Services

Long-term Care – financial support for eligible Veterans in provincially licensed, regulated or governed health care/ long-term care facilities including:

- nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that are open to Veterans as well as other provincial residents; and
- health care and long-term care facilities with beds designated through contractual arrangements with the province, health authority and/or facility for priority access for Second World War and Korean War Veterans.
- In certain facilities (primarily former Veterans hospitals), additional funding is provided to support special programs for War Veterans.
- As of December 2018, the Department is supporting over 4,500 Veterans in approximately 1,200 facilities.

Benefits and Services

Support for Members and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions

- **Operational Stress Injury (OSI) Clinics** - a network of 11 VAC-funded clinics located across the country (10 outpatient and 1 inpatient) as well as 9 satellite service sites.
- **National Network of Mental Health Professionals** -a well-established national network of approximately 4,000 independent mental health professionals across Canada who are registered with the Department to deliver mental health treatments to eligible Veterans.
- **Veterans Affairs Canada Assistance Service** - offers a 24-hour toll-free help line, face-to-face psychological support, bereavement support and referral services to Veterans, eligible RCMP and their families close to where they live.

Benefits and Services

VAC Support for Members and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions

- **A Veteran-specific version of Mental Health First Aid** - mental health literacy training for the Veteran community across the country, provided in partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

On-line supports:

- PTSD Coach Canada
- OSI Connect
- Operational Stress Injury Resource for Caregivers
- Veterans and Mental Health

Benefits and Services

Case Management – a collaborative process of assessment, planning, coordination, evaluation and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's needs. Case Management is available to all Veterans, releasing CAF members and their families, and releasing RCMP members who may be finding it difficult to navigate a transition or change in their lives.

Guided Support - assistance for those who require a moderate level of support, but who do not require the level of assistance provided through case management services.

Benefits and Services

Rehabilitation is available to Veterans and releasing CAF members who have a health issue resulting from service that is causing a barrier to re-establishment to life at home, in the community or at work.

Individual's needs are assessed and a rehabilitation plan is developed which may include treatments and therapies related to:

- **Medical rehabilitation** – services to improve their health to the fullest extent,
- **Psychosocial rehabilitation** – health services to help regain their independence.
- **Vocational rehabilitation** - training and skills development needed to help start a new career.
 - Eligibility for vocational assistance can be transferred to a spouse if the Veteran's health does not allow for participation

Benefits and Services

Transition Services - VAC provides releasing members of the CAF, RCMP and their families with a range of services to assist with the transition to civilian life, such as:

- Professional, standardized and personalized support through Transition Centres (TCs), located on CAF bases/wings;
- Enhanced Transition Services for medically releasing members;
- VAC Transition Interview;
- Veteran Family Program; an expansion of the Military Family Services Program to offer services to medical releasing members, Veterans and their families; and
- enhanced Post Release Follow-up

- VAC and DND are working closely together to ensure a seamless transition for Canadian Armed Forces members from military to civilian life.

Benefits and Services

Education and Training Benefit - financial support to help a Veteran achieve their education and career goals.

Career Transition Services – provides career counselling, help with resume writing, interview preparation, and finding a job.

Benefits and Services

Veteran and Family Well-being Fund

- Announced as part of Budget 2017, the Veteran and Family Well-Being Fund provides \$3M in grants and contributions, per fiscal year, to organizations to conduct research and implement initiatives and projects that support the well-being of Veterans and their families.
- Administered by Policy and Research Division, the Fund may provide grants up to a maximum of \$250,000 per fiscal year, for a maximum of five years and contributions up to a maximum of \$1,000,000 per fiscal year, for a maximum of five years.
- Following the 2018-19 Call for applications, 21 applications were selected for funding including 5 contributions and 16 grants ranging in duration from one to 5 years.
- The 2019-20 Call for applications resulted in 22 applications selected for funding including 6 grants and 16 contributions ranging from one to five years.