

# Planning Your Legacy

VA Survivors and Burial Benefits



*Our Mission: To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.*

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Introduction

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers this survivors and burial benefits kit as a source of pre-need planning information and record storage for Veterans and their families. This kit is intended to be used as a supplement to the [Summary of VA Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits pamphlet](#)<sup>1</sup>.

Included you will find a section entitled *Planning for the Future* to guide you through end-of-life and survivors' benefits eligibility. This section will tell you what benefits are offered and when and how you should apply.

For your convenience, we have provided space for you to add your own personal information that can be kept in a centralized location for your use, and for the use of loved ones. This *Record of Personal Affairs* section identifies the location of important documents, account numbers, military discharge documents, and marital information.

Additionally, we have provided samples of completed forms that may be needed in the application process. VA forms change periodically; current versions can be found online at [www.va.gov/vaforms](http://www.va.gov/vaforms).

It is our sincere desire that the information and documents contained in this brochure assist you and your loved ones.

On behalf of a grateful nation, we respectfully thank all Veterans for their service.

***Honor is not a word,  
but a way of life.***

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<sup>1</sup> <https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-summary/SummaryofVADependentsandSurvivorsBenefits.pdf>

# Planning for the Future

VA has benefits designed to aid you and your family in preparing for the future. The documents in this packet will help guide you and your loved ones as you plan, and ensure your survivors know what benefits are available to them.

The following benefits are available to Veterans and their families:

## Pre-Need Eligibility for National Cemetery Burial or Memorialization

VA provides for a final resting place for eligible Veterans, spouses, and their eligible dependents, as well as a headstone or marker, a flag to drape the casket, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate.

## Memorial or Burial Flags

A United States flag is provided at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn for each family of an eligible deceased Veteran in the U. S. Armed Forces. U.S. Post Offices are the primary issuing point for burial flags. Each family of a decedent is entitled to one flag.

## Government Headstones or Markers

VA can provide a single headstone, columbarium niche cover, or a flat marker for a Veteran's final resting place (private, state, or national cemeteries).

## Cemetery Medallions

VA can provide a medallion for use on a headstone or other memorial in a private cemetery to signify a decedent's status as Veteran. Multiple sizes are available.

## Presidential Memorial Certificates

VA can provide a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) to the family of the deceased Veteran. A PMC is an engraved paper certificate signed by the current President.

## Burial Benefits and Burial Automatic Payments

Burial benefits are paid to a spouse, designated family member, or executor to partially offset the cost of burial expenses, plot costs, and transportation costs for a Veteran's remains. These benefits are paid at different rates based on whether the Veteran's death was service-connected or non-service connected.

If the Veteran was receiving VA benefits prior to passing and had a spouse of record, these benefits will usually be paid automatically to that spouse. However, if someone other than the spouse paid for the burial and submitted an application, additional benefits, including a plot or interment allowance and transportation allowance, may also be payable.

An application for non-service-connected burial benefits must be submitted within two years from the date of death. There is no time limit for a service-connected death.

## Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a monthly tax-free benefit provided to an eligible surviving spouse, dependent child/children, and/or the parent/parents of a Service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, inactive duty training, or to survivors of Veterans who died from service-connected disability/disabilities.

DIC benefits paid to surviving spouses and children are not income based. Parents DIC is an income-based benefit for parents who were financially dependent on a Service member or Veteran who died from a service-related cause.

On August 10, 2022, President Biden signed the Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022, also known as the PACT Act, into law. This law increases eligibility for benefits by expanding lists of locations, timeframes, and presumptive conditions related to toxic exposure(s) experienced by Veterans. Survivors may qualify for expanded eligibility for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). Please see [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) for additional information on the PACT Act.

## Dependents' Educational Assistance Program

The Dependents' Educational Assistance Program offers education and training opportunities to eligible dependents, including dependents of Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition, dependents of Service members who died during active military service, or dependents of Veterans who died as a result of a service-related condition.

## Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship

The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship provides eligible beneficiaries with financial support for tuition and fees, books and supplies, and housing. You may be eligible for up to 36 months of Fry Scholarship benefits if you are the surviving spouse or child of a Service member who died during active duty after September 10, 2001. If you are the child of the Service member, you must use your benefits between your 18th and 33rd birthdays, and you may still be eligible if you are married. If you are the surviving spouse and you remarry, you will no longer be eligible.

The 15-year time limitation for using Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits is eliminated for qualifying dependents (Fry children who became eligible on or after January 1, 2013, and all Fry spouses).

## Survivors Pension

A tax-free monetary benefit payment to a low-income, un-remarried surviving spouse and/or eligible unmarried child/children of a deceased wartime Veteran, whose death is not service-related. Certain deductible expenses, such as an unreimbursed medical expense, may be used to reduce the survivor's countable income.

## Special Monthly Pension Benefits

The Special Monthly Pension Benefits are additional funds allocated for certain survivors who are eligible for VA pension benefits and require the aid and attendance of another person, or are housebound, may be eligible for additional monetary payment. These benefits are in addition to monthly pension, and they are not paid without eligibility to Pension.

## The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs

A program that provides reimbursement for some medical expenses to certain surviving spouses or children of deceased Veterans, or spouses or children of Veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities who are not eligible for TRICARE.

## Home Loans

VA can help eligible unmarried surviving spouses (or those remarried after reaching age 57) become homeowners. This benefit may be used to help you buy, build, refinance, repair, and retain a home for your own personal occupancy. You must be in receipt of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and the surviving spouse of a Veteran who died: a) on active or select reserve service, b) from a service-connected cause, or c) was rated totally disabled for a certain period of time preceding death. Other surviving spouses include: a) spouse of a Service member missing in action or a prisoner of war, and b) spouse of a certain totally disabled Veteran whose disability may not have been the cause of death. For more information visit the [home loan web page](#)<sup>2</sup> or call 1-877-827-3702.

## Veterans Month of Death Benefits

If a Veteran who is receiving VA compensation or pension benefits passes away, their last month of benefits can be paid to their surviving spouse. This payment is usually automatic, but if it is not received, it can be claimed via a phone call to 1-800-827-1000, or through your Veterans Service Officer (VSO) or County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO).

For additional information regarding eligibility requirements see the [Summary of VA Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits](#)<sup>3</sup>.

## VA Life Insurance

As part of our mission to serve Service members, Veterans, and their families, VA provides valuable life insurance benefits to give you the peace of mind that comes with knowing your family is protected. VA's life insurance programs were developed to provide financial security for your family given the extraordinary risks involved in military service.

VA has several different insurance programs. To get the insurance benefits you've earned,

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<sup>2</sup> [www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans](http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans)

<sup>3</sup> [www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-summary/SummaryofVADependentsandSurvivorsBenefits.pdf](http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/benefits-summary/SummaryofVADependentsandSurvivorsBenefits.pdf)

explore your options, manage your policy, update your life insurance beneficiary designation(s), or file claims, visit [www.benefits.va.gov/insurance](http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance).

- **Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife):** Provides guaranteed acceptance whole life coverage of up to \$40,000 to Veterans with service-connected disabilities. No medical underwriting is required and there is no time limit to apply for Veterans aged 80 and under. Veterans aged 81 and over are eligible in some circumstances. Under this plan, the elected coverage takes effect two years after enrollment as long as premiums are paid during the two-year period. More information available at [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/valife/](http://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/valife/).
- **Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI):** Offers mortgage protection insurance to the families of Service members and Veterans with severe service-connected disabilities, who have received a specially-adapted housing grant from VA. VMLI provides decreasing term insurance up to \$200,000 or the amount you owe on your mortgage, whichever is less. More information available at [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/vmli/](http://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/vmli/).
- **Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI):** Provides automatic maximum coverage up to \$500,000 in \$50,000 increments. Coverage expires 120 days after separation from service but can be extended with the SGLI Disability Extension (SGLI-DE) for up to two years following separation if you are totally disabled. You must apply for the SGLI-DE; it is not automatic. More information available at [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/sgli/](http://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/sgli/).
- **Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI):** allows separating Service members to convert their SGLI coverage to renewable group term insurance. The initial amount of VGLI available is equal to the amount of SGLI at separation but can be increased in \$25,000 increments beginning one year after enrollment, and then every five years until you are 60 years old. No health questions are required if you apply within 240 days after separation. You have up to 1 year and 120 days after separation to apply but must meet good health requirements if you apply more than 240 days after separation. More information available at [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/vgli/](http://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/vgli/).
- **Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI):** Offers coverage for the spouse and dependent children of Service members covered under full-time SGLI. Spouse coverage is up to \$100,000 or the amount of the member's coverage, whichever is less. Dependent children are covered for \$10,000 each at no cost to the member. Spouses who have Family SGLI coverage at the time of the Service member's passing have 120 days to apply to convert their coverage to a permanent plan of insurance with a participating insurer. They can also convert their coverage upon other key events such as the Service member's separation from service. More information available at [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/fsgli/](http://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/fsgli/).

Under SGLI, FSGLI, and VGLI, terminally ill Service members, spouses of Service members, and Veterans can obtain up to 50% of their insurance coverage prior to death if they have a medical prognosis of 9 months or less to live.

Beneficiaries under the SGLI, FSGLI, and VGLI programs are eligible for free financial counseling and online will preparation services for two years from the date of payment of the claim. Information is provided to beneficiaries at the time of payment.

# What to Do, and When

Preparing for the passing of a loved one, or even oneself, can be a difficult and confusing time. The following informs you of what you may need to do, and when, to ensure your survivors have the information and documents needed to obtain the benefits for which they may be entitled.

## **For the Veteran, when discussing your final wishes with your loved ones:**

- Discuss your military service and any VA disability rating information with your family and if possible, locate copies of your military separation document(s), such as your DD214.
- Use [VA-Form 21-686C](#) to document your and your spouse's marital histories. This information may be needed if your spouse applies for VA benefits after your passing.
- Discuss your final wishes regarding your remains. If you wish to be buried in a national cemetery, consider applying now for pre-need burial eligibility.
- Discuss if any of the life insurance programs VA offers are needed to cover any of your or your family's expenses.
- Be sure to complete and annually review your life insurance beneficiary designation(s), which will make it much easier to file a claim and receive benefits quickly.

## **For the Veteran's family, as the Veteran is approaching end of life:**

- Speak to the Veteran's doctor about how to obtain copies of medical records before and after the Veteran's passing in case they may be needed in the future.
- Discuss with the Veteran where and when they have received treatment for any medical conditions which you believe may have been incurred in, or exacerbated by, their military service.
- If you believe the Veteran may be entering into their period of final illness, begin keeping a record of any medical expenses related to that final illness.
- If the Veteran wishes to be interred in a national cemetery, locate their pre-need burial approval (if they applied), or clarify their wishes as to where they would like to be interred.

## **For the Veteran's parents, spouse, or dependent children, after the Veteran's passing:**

- Consider if you wish to apply for VA Survivors Pension or DIC.
- If the Veteran had a VA Life Insurance policy, or other policy, prepare and submit a claim required supporting documentation.
- If you have a medical condition, disease, or injury which necessitates the aid and attendance of another person in performing your activities of daily life, or are housebound, have your physician complete a statement outlining your medical condition.
- If you believe the Veteran's death was related to a condition incurred during military service, or exacerbated by military service, obtain copies of any private medical records from the Veteran's physician (VA hospital records and military medical records can be obtained by VA).



## How to Apply for Benefits

When applying for benefits there are basic forms that must be completed. The table below lists the forms required to apply for various VA benefits, as well as the additional documents that may be required to show eligibility. This booklet includes copies of the VA forms listed, so you can familiarize yourself with them now. You can find current versions online at

[www.va.gov/vaforms](http://www.va.gov/vaforms)

DESIRED APPLICATION:	FORM REQUIRED:	ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS THAT MAY BE REQUIRED:
If you wish to apply for pre-need eligibility in a National Cemetery	<a href="#">VA Form 40-10007</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for a Burial Flag	<a href="#">VA Form 27-2008</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for a Government Medallion	<a href="#">VA Form 40-1330M</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for a Headstone/Marker	<a href="#">VA Form 40-1330</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for burial benefits	<a href="#">VA Form 21P-530EZ</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge Death Certificate Transportation Invoice
If you wish to apply for DIC benefits for the Veteran's surviving spouse, child/children	<a href="#">VA Form 21P-534EZ</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge Death Certificate Declaration of Status of Dependents ( <a href="#">VA Form 21-686c</a> )
If you wish to apply for DIC benefits for the Veteran's surviving parent/parents	<a href="#">VA Form 21P-535</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge Death Certificate Declaration of Status of Dependents ( <a href="#">VA Form 21-686c</a> )
If you wish to apply for DIC benefits for the Veteran's surviving spouse, child/children as a result of combat-related death	<a href="#">VA Form 21P-534a</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge Death Certificate Declaration of Status of Dependents ( <a href="#">VA Form 21-686c</a> )

DESIRED APPLICATION:	FORM REQUIRED:	ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS THAT MAY BE REQUIRED:
If you wish to apply for a Survivors Pension *with aid and attendance or housebound benefits	<a href="#">VA Form 21P-534EZ</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge Death Certificate *Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Aid and Assistance ( <a href="#">VA Form 21-2680</a> )
If you wish to apply for The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)	<a href="#">VA Form 10-10d</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for the: - Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA), or the - Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship Post-9/11 GI Bill	<a href="#">VA Form 22-5490</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for a Home Loan	<a href="#">VA Form 26-1817</a>	Veteran's Military Discharge
If you wish to apply for any VA Life Insurance programs*	<a href="https://benefits.va.gov/insurance">benefits.va.gov/insurance</a>	Military or VA Disability rating documents Military separation documents Mortgage documents
If you wish to file a claim for VA Life Insurance that is in effect upon the Servicemember's, Family Member's, or Veteran Insured's passing.	<a href="#">SGLV 8283/ SGLV 8283A</a> <a href="#">SGLV 8284/ SGLV 8284A</a> <a href="#">SGLV 8721</a> <a href="#">VA Form 29-4125/</a> <a href="#">VA Form 29-4125e</a>	Copy of death certificate Estate or Will documentation

*\*For additional information or to apply for VA Life Insurance policy, visit [www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility](https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility). All VA Life Insurance Forms can be accessed at [www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/resources-forms.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/resources-forms.asp). To manage your SGLI beneficiaries as well as SGLI and Family coverage amounts, visit <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>.*

# For Help with Your Benefits

Applying for VA benefits, especially at the time of the passing of a loved one, can be difficult and confusing. However, several organizations exist to help you navigate this process, usually cost-free. Here are a few places you can go for help with the claims process:

## County Veterans Service Officers

Most local governments in the United States have a designated County Veterans Service Office or Agency, staffed by County Veterans Service Officers or (“CVSOs”). These officers operate independent of VA, but receive VA training, and can act as liaisons between claimants and VA. They are usually well versed in benefits eligibility requirements and claims processing and are available to help you locally. To find your local CVSO, you can use the directory found online at this URL: [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search).

## Veterans Service Organizations

Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) are private groups dedicated to providing Veterans and their families with various services, including assistance with claims processing. These groups can help you by representing you before VA and can assist you in completing your claim. While these groups are not formally connected to the government or VA, they receive VA accreditation and training, and do not charge for their services. To find a VSO, you can use the directory found online at this URL: [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search).

## U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

Veterans and next of kin can obtain free copies of a DD-214 and other service records. Fax or mail [Standard Form SF 180<sup>4</sup>](#) (Request Pertaining to Military Records), to the address indicated on the *back* of the form, or fill out the form online at this URL: [www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records). You may also call NARA customer service staff at **314-801-0800** if you have questions or require *same-day* service (e.g., upcoming surgery or funeral).

## VA Contact Information

If you wish to speak directly to a VA representative, contact VA at the following phone numbers:

- For burial, Survivors Pension, DIC, or other benefits: 1-800-827-1000
- For the status of VA headstones and markers: 1-800-697-6947
- For obtaining bereavement counseling: 1-877-927-8387

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/order/standard-form-180.pdf>

- For Telecommunications Device for the Deaf services: Dial 711
- For VA Life Insurance information related to Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, and Veterans' Group Life Insurance: 1-800-419-1473 or visit [www.benefits.va.gov/insurance](http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance)
- For VA Life Insurance, Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance or other VA Insurance programs call: 1-800-669-8477 or visit [www.benefits.va.gov/insurance](http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance)

**If you or somebody you know is experiencing a crisis, you can DIAL 988 for the Veteran's Crisis Line and select option 1.**

## Record of Personal Affairs

The following is a guide to assist you in consolidating information that will be beneficial for your loved ones at the time of your passing. This information is for your personal use only and **should NOT be submitted to VA.**

Be sure to keep the following guide in a secure location, as it will contain personally identifiable information.

**MY RECORD OF PERSONAL AFFAIRS**

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First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
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Retired Military Grade	Branch of Service	Social Security Number
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Street Address	City/State	Zip Code
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Service Number	Date of Entry	Date/Type/Character of Separation from Military
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**Date and Place of Birth**

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City/State/Zip	Month/Day/Year
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**Parent’s Information**

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Father’s First Name	Father’s Middle Name	Father’s Last Name
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Mother’s First Name	Mother’s Middle Name	Mother’s Last Name
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**Children’s Information**

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Child’s First Name	Child’s Middle Name	Child’s Last Name
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Child’s First Name	Child’s Middle Name	Child’s Last Name
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Child’s First Name	Child’s Middle Name	Child’s Last Name
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Child’s First Name	Child’s Middle Name	Child’s Last Name
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## Your Marital History

Spouse's Name	Spouse's Social Security Number	Spouse's Birthdate
Location of Marriage (City/State/Country)		Date of Marriage
Spouse's Prior Name (if applicable)		Date of Prior Marriage
Your Total Number of Marriages	Your Spouse's Total Number of Marriages	

**Trusted Associates:** List a personal lawyer or a trusted friend who may be consulted regarding your personal or business affairs.

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
Street Address		City/State/Zip
Phone Number	Email Address	

**Location of Family Records:** In the open space below, to aid your family, list the physical location of important documentation and records. Documents may include birth certificates, adoption paperwork, marriage certificates, naturalization papers, divorce decrees, death certificates, tax documents, etc.

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**Your Will:**

Do you have a will? Circle One: **YES** or **NO**

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Location of Will

Executor's Name and Contact Information

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Lawyer's Name and Contact Information

**Power of Attorney:** (Personal, not VA assigned)

Do you have a Power of Attorney? Circle One: **YES** or **NO**

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Name of POA

Location of Document

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City/State/Zip

Phone Number

**Bank Accounts:** In the open space below, list your bank accounts, including the name of the financial institution, name of joint account holders, account numbers, and phone numbers.

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**Credit Cards:** In the open space below, list your credit cards, including the name and phone numbers.

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**Location of Important Financial Documents:** In the open space below, list the location of important financial documents, including savings bonds, stocks, mutual funds, 401K, safe deposit box, etc.

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**Real Estate:** If your family needs assistance with your home loan, they can contact VA at phone number: 1-877-827-3702. You do not need a VA loan to request assistance.

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Primary Residence (address)

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Mortgage Institution (if applicable)

Location of Physical Mortgage Note

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Property Insurance Company

Property Insurance Policy Number

**Investment Properties:** In the open space below, list any investment properties, including the address and location of the deed/note.

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**Vehicles Owned:** List the year, make, model and vehicle ID number (VIN) for each vehicle you own.

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**Life Insurance:** Place a check mark beside the type/types of life insurance you have (check all that apply).

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Type of Insurance</b>
	Department of Veterans Affairs Sponsored Life Insurance
	Government Employee (Federal Employee Group Life Insurance – FEGLI)
	Private Employer Sponsored Life Insurance
	Private Life Insurance

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Insurance Company Name

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Control/Policy Number

Face Value (Dollars)

## Beneficiary Information:

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Name of Beneficiary

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Mailing Address

Telephone Number

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Payment Option

**Other Insurance:** In the open space below, list any additional health, vehicle, or other insurance you have.

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**Annuities:** Government and private.

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Payable to (full name)

Monthly Amount

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Street Address (include City, State, Zip)

Phone Number

**Employer Benefits:** If employed or retired, list any survivor benefit that may be payable.

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Employer

Survivor Benefit

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Address (Include City, State, Zip)

Phone Number

**Membership in Organizations or Associations:** List any organizations with which you are affiliated that may assist your survivors. Also list other Veteran Service Organizations which may be of assistance.

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**Veteran Affairs Record:** Survivors should contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000 to report a death and to discontinue benefits.

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VA Claim Number (if applicable)

**Social Security:** Survivors should contact their local Social Security Administration office to see if burial benefits are available.

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Social Security Monthly Payment	Location of Social Security Administration Papers
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**Retirement Pay:** Civilian and/or Military

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Finance Center	Current Deposit Location
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Beneficiary or Any Unpaid Retired Pay	Relationship	Phone Number
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**Military Documents:**

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Location of DD-214 (Separation Papers)
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Location of Other Military Documents (Awards, Medical, etc.)
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**Military Survivor/Casualty Assistance Officer:** Active and retired military personnel.

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Name and Location	Phone Number
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**Funeral and Burial Arrangements:**

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Funeral Location	Funeral Director
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Address	Phone Number
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**Church, Clergy or Desired Officiant:**

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Clergyperson/Officiant Name	Office and/or Home Phone
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Name of Institution/Organization	Address of Institution/Organization
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**For Those Who Wish to be Interred in a VA National Cemetery:**

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Date of Birth	Social Security Number	Rank/Branch of Service
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Date of Entry into Service	Date of Separation	Service Number
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Have you applied for pre-need Eligibility? Visit [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov) to learn more.

Other Suggestions and Wishes: List in the space below.

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Wishes for Burial and Funeral Service Arrangements:

Name of Resting Place	Phone Number
Hymns, Psalms, Scriptures, Poetry, or Special Requests	
Flowers/ Memorial (in lieu of flowers)	
Memorial and Remembrances	Indicate Emblem of Choice for VA Form 40-1330

Do you have a pre-paid burial/plot? Circle One:    YES    or    NO

Pallbearers: List pallbearers in the space below.

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Special Instructions: List any additional instructions in the space below.

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Obituary Biography: Write in the space below.

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**Additional Considerations:** Please ensure the following are conducted through proper legal channels:

- Do you have a “do not resuscitate” (DNR) order? Circle One: YES or NO
- Do you have a Living Will/ Health Directive? Circle One: YES or NO

### Checklist of Important Documents

The following documents may be needed by survivors. Use the table below to check off the documents you have and provide their location:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DOCUMENT	LOCATION OF DOCUMENT (write in location)
	Military Discharge Documents	
	Death Certificate (12 copies recommended)	
	Deceased’s Birth Certificate	
	Spouse’s Birth Certificate	
	Minor or Adult Children’s Birth Certificate(s)	
	Marriage Certificate	
	Other Important Documents	

List any other resources and organizations that can assist you:

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# Completing VA Forms

Applying for any VA benefit requires that you complete an application form, and possibly additional forms. To ensure speedy and accurate processing of any claim for VA benefits, it is very important to complete these forms correctly. The following pages contain sample copies of some VA forms previously mentioned in this document; you can reference these samples to see what a properly completed form may look like.

## Tips on Completing VA Forms:

- Complete **every item** on the form, even if your answer is “not applicable”, “none”, or “0”. Incomplete applications are one of the major avoidable causes of denials and delays in processing.
- The person claiming benefits (the “claimant”; for instance, the surviving spouse claiming death pension) **must sign the form themselves**. VA cannot recognize private power-of-attorney agreements, and family members cannot sign documents for other family members.
- VA Forms are periodically updated. Current VA forms can be obtained at [www.va.gov/vaforms](http://www.va.gov/vaforms) or at your local Veterans service office.
- Visit [www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/resources-forms.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/resources-forms.asp) to obtain forms related to life insurance claims.

## Appendix 1: TABLE OF FREQUENTLY USED FORMS

NAME OF FORM	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">VBA-21P-534EZ</a>	Application for DIC, Survivors Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits
<a href="#">VBA-22-5490</a>	Dependents' Application for VA Education Benefits
<a href="#">VA26-1817</a>	Request for Determination of Loan Guaranty Eligibility – Unmarried Surviving Spouses
<a href="#">VHA-10-10d</a>	Application for CHAMPVA Benefits
<a href="#">VBA-21P-530EZ</a>	Application for Burial Benefits (Under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 23)
<a href="#">VBA-21P-530A</a>	State Application for Internment Allowance (Under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 23)
<a href="#">VA40-1330</a>	Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker
<a href="#">VA40-1330M</a>	Claim for Government Medallion for Placement in Private Cemetery
<a href="#">VBA-27-2008-ARE</a>	Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes
<a href="#">VA40-10007</a>	Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery
<a href="#">SGLV 8283</a>	Claim for Death Benefits (SGLI/VGLI)
<a href="#">SGLV 8284</a>	Servicemember/Veteran Accelerated Benefits Option Form
<a href="#">SGLV 8721</a>	Beneficiary Designation/Change Form
<a href="#">VBA-29-336-ARE</a>	Designation of Beneficiary
<a href="#">VBA-29-4125-ARE</a>	Claim for One-Sum Payment

**Veterans  
Crisis Line**



**DIAL 988 then  
PRESS 1**

If you're having thoughts of suicide:

**Call** Dial 988 then Press 1

**Chat** [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat)

**Text** 838255



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