



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

Veteran's Additional Payment for a Dependent Parent

What is a Dependent Parent Benefit?

A Veteran whose parent(s) are dependent upon him or her for financial support may be paid additional benefits. The dependent parent benefit is paid based on need. The parental relationship must be established, and it must be verified that the parents are financially dependent upon the Veteran in order to qualify.

What Are the Eligibility Criteria?

To qualify, one of the following must be true:

- The Veteran receives compensation with a combined evaluation of at least 30 percent
- The Veteran receives VA educational benefits and is enrolled half time or more

Who Are Eligible Parents?

The term "parent" means one of the following:

- A biological mother or father
- An adoptive mother or father
- A person who served as a parent to a Veteran for at least one year prior to his or her entry into active service

The term "dependent parent" means either:

- The parent's income and net worth meet certain limits, as defined by law
- A parent with substantial income or assets has correspondingly high expenses

Why Is the Dependent Parent Benefit Based on Income and Net Worth?

Since the benefit is based on need, VA cannot pay additional benefits for a dependent parent(s) whose countable income is greater than the limit set by law or whose net worth is enough to meet basic needs without help from VA.

To determine need, the parent(s) must report their income from all sources, including:

- Gross wages
- Social Security
- Retirement
- Pension
- Insurance
- Interest
- Dividends for the last 12 months

The parent must also report the current value of all assets, including:

- Annuities
- Stocks
- Bonds
- Businesses
- Bank accounts

They do not have to report personal property, such as:

- Home
- Car
- Furniture
- Clothing

Can Parents' Income Be Reduced?

Yes. A portion of medical expenses may be used to reduce the amount of income VA considers when deciding upon eligibility. The dependent parent(s) should report the amount of expenses paid that were not reimbursed by insurance. The following expenses should also be reported:

- Rent
- Home repairs
- Maintenance
- Clothing
- Medical care
- Utilities
- Groceries
- Taxes
- Any other significant expenses

How Much Does VA Pay?

Please see the “VA Compensation Rate Tables” at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/rates-index.asp> for current rates.

How Do Veterans Apply?

Fill out VA Form 21-509, “Statement of Dependency of Parents,” located at <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-21-509-are.pdf>. Submit the completed form to your local VA regional office: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp>. If you need more information about the supporting materials VA will need to process your claim, call 800-827-1000.