South Dakota's Voice For Veterans

RESOURCE BOOKLET

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

425 E. Capitol

Pierre, SD 57501-3100

605.773.3269

https://vetaffairs.sd.gov

Date: 3/4/22

Message from Secretary Whitlock

The primary mission of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs is to advocate with purpose and passion for veterans and link them to superior services, benefits, and support. Our team is at the forefront of the most demanding challenges confronting our state's veterans, whether they are veterans from the World War II generation, Korean War, Vietnam War, Cold War, or veterans who most recently served in support of Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn.

Our team at the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA), believes it is a privilege and an honor to serve our veterans and their family members. On a daily basis, our team labors tirelessly to ensure that the State of South Dakota preserves our reputation as "a veteran friendly state."

Greg Whitlock, Secretary
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

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South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
Claims Office - c/o VA Regional Office
2501 W. 22nd Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57105-1305
605.333.6869

What is a Veterans Service Officer

The County or Tribal Veterans Service Officer provides information, assistance, counseling and referrals on a wide range of subjects, benefits, and veteran programs.

Each County or Tribal Veterans Service Officer receives training from our Department on a wide range of topics. The topics are not limited to the ones listed here but these do indicate the variety of issues in which they might work with. This list includes VA home loans, compensation, pensions, education (GI Bill®, on-the-Job training, and apprenticeship training), rehabilitation, medical and dental treatment, hospitalization, outpatient treatment, nursing home care, state benefits, Social Security, alcoholism and drug dependency treatment, employment, small business loans, military records, discharges, burial expense reimbursement, obtaining flags, as well as veterans' preferences.

It is each veteran's responsibility to know who their service officer is and how to contact them. The service officers are a veteran's friend and they are willing to assist in any way they can.

Click here to locate a Veterans Service Officer near you
(click control and enter)

VA Healthcare Hospitals

Sioux Falls VA Healthcare System
2501 West 22nd Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57117-5046
Toll Free Number: 1.800.316.8387
Switchboard: 605.336.3230

Fort Meade VA Medical Center
113 Comanche Road
Fort Meade, SD 57741-1099
Toll Free Number: 1.800.743.1070
Switchboard: 605.347.2511

Hot Springs VA Medical Center
500 North 5th Street
Hot Springs, SD 57747-1497
Toll Free Number: 1.800.764.5370
Switchboard: 605.745.2000

Fargo VA Medical Center
2101 N. Elm
Fargo, ND 58102
Toll Free Number: 1.800.410.9723

Community Based Outpatient Clinics

The VA currently has over 800 Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) throughout the country. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) implemented these clinics to make access to health care easier. These clinics provide the most common outpatient services, including health and wellness visits, without the hassle of visiting a larger medical center. VHA continues to expand their network of CBOC's to include more rural locations, making access to care closer to home. To find a CBOC nearest to you please visit: **https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp?dnum=1&isFlash=0**

Mental Health Centers in SD

SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNCIL OF MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS, INC.
Terrance L. Dosch, Executive Director
P.O. Box 532
2520 East Franklin Street
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-0532
Phone: (605-) 224-0123 (Voice & FAX)
E-Mail: tladosch@dakota2k.net
Web: http://www.sd-mentalhealth.org/directory

A complete listing of community mental health centers in South Dakota can be found at the following links:

https://dss.sd.gov/formsandpubs/docs/BH/cmhc_flyer.pdf

http://www.sddental.org/docs/librariesprovider46/private-library-south-dakota/mental-health-centers-in-south-dakota.pdf?sfvrsn=0

How to File a Disability Claim

Step 1: File a Claim

Filing for veterans benefits is a free service provided by the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and local County and Tribal Veteran Service Officers (CTVSOs). Claims can also be filed by National Service Offices such as: Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Disabled American Veterans (DAV), etc. The disability claim process begins the moment you file a claim. To file, veterans must sign a power of attorney (POA) which authorizes our team to act on your behalf when preparing, presenting and prosecuting your claim for many benefits from the VA.

Step 2: Submit Evidence

You must submit evidence to support your disability claim. Evidence submitted at the time of the filing will help expedite your claim. Your disability evaluation will be based on the evidence so it is essential that the information is accurate and complete. Our staff, or the CTVSOs, can assist you in this process.

Step 3: Get a VA Physical Exam

The exams the VA requests will depend on your claim and treatment history. The VA or contractor will contact you to let you know when and what exams are scheduled. After the exams, a report will be prepared and sent back to the VA for your claim to be rated. You can help the process go faster by keeping your appointments.

(Continued on next page)

Step 4: Obtain VA Decision

The VA will consider all evidence submitted and make a decision about whether or not the claim supports injuries and disabilities that are chronic incurred in, aggravated or contains certain presumptive conditions while in service. If the VA approves the claim, then a rating is decided based on how severe your conditions are. The rating is defined and set based on federal law.

Options For Denied Claims or if you Disagree With a Decision

If the VA denies your claim you may appeal the decision. You may also appeal if your claim was approved, but you disagree with any part of the rating. The VA provides 3 options to appeal a decision that can be used in any order.

1. Supplemental Claim: You may re-open any claim at any time by filing a Supplemental claim with new and relevant evidence. To find out what "relevant evidence" would be, read through the VA decision you are appealing. This notification will indicate the reason for the VA decision. Any new evidence must pertain to those issues. A VSO would be happy to help review those points with you.
2. Higher Level Review: If your unsatisfactory VA notification has been within the last 365 days, then you may file a Higher Level Review. This option asks a higher level VA employee to review your case as it stands with no additional facts or evidence.
3. Notice of Disagreement to the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA): You may file an appeal directly to the BVA if your VA notification was within the last 365 says. You may elect to have a BVA judge review your case as it stands, submit new evidence, or elect to have a hearing. Choosing to appeal to the BVA may result in the veteran waiting for several years to receive a resolution.

The appeals process has strict rules for evidence submission to be sure to work with a service officer to be made aware of the best options for veterans.

A veteran may also appeal a case to the US Court of Veterans Claims (CAVC) within 120 days of a unsatisfactory result from BVA.

Note: It is always best to consider the reason for VA's decision and consider providing new and relevant evident to request a supplemental claim. This can save time and effort. It is advisable to talk with a local VSO before filing any appeals.

Tips to Assist you in being prepared to file your claim

- **Bring** a copy of your DD 214 and evidence that supports your claim. Never assume the VA has the necessary information on file.

- **Be Sure** your VA file number is included on every page of your correspondence and documentation.

- **Respond** quickly and completely to the VA's request for further information.

- **Keep** all scheduled medical appointments.

- **Notify** the VA immediately if your address or phone number changes.

- **Know** your service dates and Social Security number. If you are a spouse of a deceased veteran, you should know this information, along with any previous marital status of your veteran.

- **Consider** using direct deposit to receive VA payment and be prepared to provide a voided check.

Veterans claims and advocacy for veterans, their survivors and dependents—

The Federal VA benefit system actually is a legal system. In order to qualify for benefits, veterans must file a claim against the United States proving they are eligible for these benefits through the submission of legal, military and medical evidence. SDDVA employs federally accredited and state certified Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) who are subject matter experts in Federal VA law (Chapter 38 United States Code and Chapter 38 Code of Federal Regulations) and are allowed to practice by taking Power of Attorney for veterans seeking benefits. These VSOs represent veterans, their dependents and survivors before the Federal VA in their claims and appeals.

Compensation

Compensation is a monetary benefit paid to veterans who are disabled by an injury or illness incurred or aggravated during active military service. These disabilities are considered to be service connected.

Military Retired Pay

Historically, veterans have not been permitted to receive full military pay and VA compensation for benefits at the same time. Veterans who were entitled to both have had to either waive a portion of their retirement equaling the amount of awarded VA compensation or elect not to receive VA compensation at all. Receiving both benefits and retirement pay is commonly known as "concurrent receipt."

In 2004, Congress passed the Concurrent Retired and Disability Pay and Combat Related Special Compensation Acts, allowing many veterans to receive 100 percent of the military retirement and VA compensation if the requirements are met.

Disability Compensation

Disability compensation is paid monthly and varies with the degree of disability, the impairment to a veteran's earning capacity and the number of dependents. Veterans with certain severe disabilities may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation. These benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax.

National Guard/Select Reserve

Reservists who serve on active duty establish veteran status and may be eligible for the full range of VA benefits, depending on the length of active military service and a discharge or release from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable. In addition, reservists not activated may qualify for some VA benefits. National Guard members can establish eligibility for VA benefits if activated for federal service during a period of war or domestic emergency. Activation for other than federal service does not qualify guard members for all VA benefits. Claims for VA benefits based on federal service filed by National Guard members should include a copy of their DD214.

Aid and Attendance (A&A)

An A&A benefit can be paid in addition to monthly pension or compensation. A&A is allowed if the veteran: requires the aid of another person in order to perform his or her daily living activities; is bedridden; is a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity; or has corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less, in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less.

Housebound Benefits

Qualifying veterans must have a single permanent disability (rated 100 percent disabled), and need assistance, or have a single permanent disability (100 percent disabled) and another disability, or disabilities, evaluated as 60 percent or more disabling. A veteran cannot receive both A&A and Household Benefits at the same time.

VA Healthcare Basic Eligibility

A person who served in the active duty military and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits.

Reservists and National Guard members also may qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

Veterans who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to veterans discharged for hardship, early out, or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Enrollment

For most veterans, entry into the VA health care system begins by applying for enrollment. To apply, complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits, which may be obtained from a VA health care facility or regional benefits office, online or by calling VA. Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system are afforded privacy rights under federal law. During enrollment, each veteran is assigned to a priority group based on their service connected disability rating and other factors. VA uses priority groups to balance demand for VA health care enrollment with resources.

Standard Benefits

VA's medical benefits package provides the following healthcare services to all enrolled veterans:

Preventive Care Services
Ambulatory (Outpatient)
Diagnostic and Treatment Services
Hospital (Inpatient)
VA prescribed Medications and Supplies
Acute Care Services
Durable Medical equipment
Eyeglasses
Hearing Aids
Home Health Care Services
Non-VA Health Care Services
Orthopedic, Prosthetic, and Rehabilitative Devices
Rehabilitative Services
Readjustment Counseling
Sexual Trauma Counseling

Military Sexual Trauma

Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is the term that the Department of Veterans Affairs uses to refer to sexual harassment that occurred while the veteran was in the military. It includes any sexual activity where someone is involved against his or her will—he or she may have been pressured into sexual activities (for example, with threats of negative consequences for refusing to be sexually cooperative, implied faster promotions, or better treatment in exchange for sex), and may have been unable to consent to sexual activities (for example, when intoxicated), or may have been physically forced into sexual activities. Other experiences that fall into the category of MST include unwanted sexual touching or grabbing; threatening, offensive remarks about a person's body or sexual activities; and/or threatening or unwelcome sexual advances.

Both women and men can experience MST during their service. All veterans seen at Veterans Health Administration's facilities are asked about experiences of sexual trauma because they know that any type of trauma can affect a person's physical and mental health, even many years later. People can recover from trauma and the VA has free services to help veterans do this. You do not need to have a VA disability (service connected) rating to receive these services and may be able to receive services even if you are not eligible for other VA care. You do not need to have reported the incident(s) when they happened or have other documentation that they occurred.

For more information, veterans can speak with a VA healthcare provider. Contact the MST Coordinator at nearest VA Medical Center, or contact local Vet Center. More MST information can be found at **mentalhealth.va.gov.**

Women Veterans Healthcare

Comprehensive health services are available to women veterans including primary care, mental health care and reproductive health care services. VA provides management of acute and chronic illnesses, preventive care, contraceptive services, menopause management, cancer screenings, including pap smear, mammograms, and gynecology.

Maternity care is covered in the medical benefits package to include care for newborn children of women veterans for up to 7 days after birth. VA is also mandated to implement pilot programs to provide child care to women veterans receiving medical care, and to provide readjustment services to women veterans. Infertility evaluation and limited treatments also are available.
Women Veterans Program Managers are available at all VA facilities to help veterans seeking treatment and benefits.

Sioux Falls VA Health Care System Women Veterans Program Manager
Brenda Fredericks—605-336-3230 Ext. 6250

VA Black Hills Health Care System Women Veterans Program Manager
Jennifer Hataway—605.720.7422

Online Management

Managing your health information appointments, prescriptions, labs, blood tests and even exchanging messages with your health care team has never been easier. My HealtheVet, your online Personal Health Record, helps you gain a better understanding of your health status and allows you to explore a variety of ways to monitor and improve your health, 24 hours a day/7days a week. To get the most out of My HealtheVet, veterans are urged to visit their local VA health care facility to get an upgraded account, known as In-Person Authentication (IPA). This simple process allows you to use My HealtheVet to:

- View your VA appointments
- Access VA wellness reminders
- Communicate online through secure messaging
- View laboratory results, and more

To begin using My HealtheVet, register today at **www.myhealth.va.gov**.

CHAMPVA and TriCare

The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) is a comprehensive health care program in which the VA shares the cost of covered health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries. The program is administered by Health Administration Center. Due to the similarity between CHAMPVA and the Department of Defense (DOD) TRICARE program (sometimes referred to by its old name, CHAMPUS) the two are often mistaken for each other. CHAMPVA is a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) program whereas TRICARE is a regionally managed health care program for active duty and retired members of the uniformed services, their families, and survivors. In some cases a veteran may look to be eligible for both/either program on paper. However, if you are a military retiree, or the spouse of a veteran who was killed in action, you are and will always be a TRICARE beneficiary.

Care in the Community

Veterans may be eligible for care through a provider in their local community depending on their health care needs or circumstance and if they meet specific eligibility criteria. Even if a Veteran is eligible for community care, they generally still have the option to receive care from a VA medical facility.

In most cases, Veterans must receive approval from VA before receiving care from a community provider to avoid being billed for the care. VA staff members generally make all eligibility determinations for community care.

Urgent Care Benefit

This benefit provides eligible Veterans with access to non-emergency care for certain conditions in the VA network of community providers. Veterans can go to any urgent care or walk-in care provider in VA's network without prior authorization from VA. There may be copayments associated with this benefit depending on a Veterans assigned priority group and the number of times the benefit is used.

To find a participating provider in VA network, go to https://www.va.gov/find-locations/

Burial and Cemetery Benefits

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits Administration oversees a burial benefits program designed to assist claimants in meeting the funeral and burial costs of a deceased veteran. The VA does not make funeral arrangements with a funeral provider or cremation office. You should advise your family of your wishes and where your discharge papers are kept. These papers are very important in establishing your eligibility. You may wish to make pre-need arrangements with a funeral home.

Service Connected Death

If a veteran's death is service-connected, the VA will pay burial allowance of up to $2,000 for deaths on or after Sept. 11, 2001. If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of moving the veteran's body to the national cemetery nearest the veterans home may also be reimbursed. There is no time limit for applying for a service- connected burial allowance. The person who bore the veteran's burial expense may claim reimbursement from any VA regional office.

Non—Service Connected Death

If a veteran's death is not service-connected, there are two types of payments the VA may make: burial and plot expense allowances. The VA will pay a burial and plot allowance if the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and the veteran was in receipt of VA pension or compensation at the time of death. If a veteran died while in a VA facility or as a patient at an approved state nursing home, the VA may also pay this allowance.

Burial and Cemetery Benefits

Burial Plot Allowance

When a veteran is buried in a cemetery that is not under the U.S. government jurisdiction, the VA may also pay a plot allowance, provided that the veteran was discharged under a condition other than dishonorable; and met other qualifications similar to that of a non-service-connected death.

Filing a Claim for Reimbursement of Expenses

To file for reimbursement of burial expenses, an Application of Burial Allowance form must be submitted to the VA. The person filing the claim must also provide a certified copy of the veteran's death certificate and proof of the veteran's military service (Form DD-214), and itemized bills of the funeral and burial expenses.

Burial Flag

A United States flag is provided, at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of a veteran's military service to his or her country. When burial is in a national, state or post cemetery, a burial flag will automatically be provided. When burial is in a private cemetery, the funeral director will generally help the next of kin with this process.

Military Funeral Honors Stipend Reimbursement

The 2015 South Dakota Legislature approved funding for a $50 reimbursement to congressionally chartered veterans service organizations for their services in conducting military funeral honors on or after July 1, 2015. Forms must be submitted, by the veterans service organization, after services have been performed. Forms must be submitted to the: South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (425 E. Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501). Reimbursement will be paid quarterly.

Headstone and Marker

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death. For eligible veterans that died on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone, VA may also furnish a headstone or marker to supplement the grave or a medallion to be affixed to the privately purchased headstone. Eligible veterans are entitled to either a Government-furnished headstone or marker, or the new medallion, but not both.

Bronze Medallions for Headstone and Marker

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) may also provide a medallion, by request, to be affixed to an existing privately purchased headstone or marker to signify the deceased's status as a veteran. If requested, the medallion is furnished in lieu of a traditional Government headstone or marker for veterans that died on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker.

Burial at Sea

Ihe VA National Cemetery Administration cannot provide burial at sea. For information, contact the U.S. Navy Mortuary Affairs office toll free at: (866) 787-0081.

Presidential Memorial Certificates

A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current president, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased veterans.

National Veterans Cemetery in South Dakota

Black Hills National Cemetery
20901 Pleasant Valley Drive
Sturgis, SD 57785
Phone: 605-347-3830
FAX: 605-347-0269
http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/blackhills.asp

Burial Allowance for Veterans and Survivors

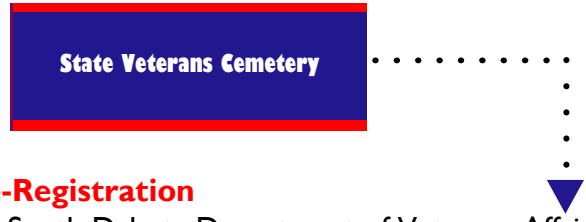
A payment of up to $100 may be paid by the state to help defray the burial and funeral expenses of any honorably discharged veteran or the wife, widow or widower of a veteran when the estate, or immediate family, of the deceased is lacking in funds to pay the expenses. The veteran must have been a citizen of the United States for one year preceding entrance into military service or one year preceding the death. This payment CAN NOT be made to another unit of government. The surviving spouse, or relatives, must furnish an affidavit to the C/TVSO that sufficient funds are not available for payment of the expenses. Application for the Burial Allowance must be submitted to the Pierre office within one year from the date of the burial.

State Headstone Setting Fee

The state will pay $100 towards the cost of setting a government headstone or marker at the grave of a veteran who was a resident of this state for one year preceding entrance into the military service or one year preceding death. Application for the Headstone Setting Fee must be submitted to the Pierre South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Office within one year from the date of setting of the headstone or marker.

Dependent Burial Benefits

Dependents and surviving spouses of an eligible veteran are eligible to be buried in national cemeteries. When a death occurs and eligibility for interment in a national cemetery is determined, grave space is assigned by the cemetery director in the name of the veteran or family member. One gravesite is permitted for the interment of all eligible family members, unless soil conditions or the number of family decedents necessitate more than one grave. There is no charge for burial in a national cemetery.



Pre-Registration

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs operates the State Veterans Cemetery spanning 60 acres in Sioux Falls. Burial sites at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery include casket gravesites, cremation gravesites, columbaria for cremated remains, and a scattering garden. The South Dakota Veterans Cemetery compliments services provided by the National Cemetery Administration. The National Cemetery Administration provides support to state cemeteries in the form of grants that are used for development, expansion, and/or improvement of state veterans cemeteries.

Anyone interested in burial at the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery is encouraged to complete the pre-registration application. Pre-registration establishes the veteran's eligibility for burial at the time of application. It does not, however, reserve a specific gravesite. The cemetery administrative staff assigns gravesites at the time of death. Pre-registration applications are available at the cemetery office, through your local County and Tribal Veterans Service Officer or on SDDVA's website.

Cemetery Burial Arrangements

The person(s) coordinating burial should contact the South Dakota Veterans Cemetery to make arrangements for burial. A DD214, or equivalent military discharge document, must be provided to establish the veteran's eligibility. If these documents are not available, the cemetery must be provided with sufficient military information to allow the cemetery to access VA and/or military records to establish eligibility. Cemetery staff will set a tentative date for the committal service pending verification of service and character of discharge; and will notify the applicant when the committal service is scheduled. The proposed date and time will be approved only when the ceme-

Committal Services

The cemetery can conduct seven committal services per day, Monday - Friday, every hour from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (3 p.m. is cremation only). Committal services are limited to 20 minutes. All committal services should be brief and need to start on the hour at the scheduled time. Families who extend their services can greatly affect others who have scheduled services following theirs. All committal services are held at the committal service shelter rather than at the gravesite. This ensures the family's safety and provides a fitting location for military honors and the ability of our staff to conduct cemetery operations. The remains are removed from the committal service building for burial following the family's departure and are never left unattended by cemetery staff. Clergy services and other arrangements are the responsibility of the family or family representative. These arrangements are normally coordinated through a funeral director.

Burial Options

A pre-placed graveliner is provided by the cemetery for all casket burials. Casket gravesites are permanently marked with an upright headstone. In-ground cremation gravesites provide a traditional burial option for cremated remains. In-ground cremation gravesites are permanently marked with an upright headstone. The columbarium provides an above-ground option for cremated remains. Columbarium niches are permanently marked with a niche cover. A designated garden-type area where cremated remains are scattered in the landscape. A site used for the scattering of cremated remains is not individually marked, but the deceased is acknowledged on a memory wall. An individual whose ashes are scattered in the Veterans cemetery may not have a memorial marker placed in the memorial section of the cemetery.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

(DIC) is a monthly monetary benefit payable to surviving dependents of a deceased veteran. This benefit is payable if the veteran died on active duty or in the line of duty and the death was not due to willful misconduct; or, if death was after service, the death was caused by or attributed to a service-connected disability, or, if service member was rated 100% compensation for certain statutory time limits. The rate is increased for each dependent child, and also if the surviving spouse is housebound or in need of aid and attendance. VA also adds a transitional benefit to the surviving spouse's monthly DIC if there are children under age 18. The amount is based on a family unit, not individual children.
For further rates information visit:
www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/current_rates_dic.asp

Death Pensions

Survivors' (Death) Pension is a needs-based benefit paid to a surviving spouse, or an unmarried child, (who meets certain age or disability requirements), of a deceased wartime veteran. In order to qualify for a VA Death Pension, the VA calculates income received from most sources by the surviving spouse and any eligible children. It includes earnings, disability and retirement payments, unemployment insurance payments, interest and dividends payments, and net income from farming, business or rental property. If the income is below a certain level, the dependent or surviving spouse may be eligible for this pension.

Additional Benefits

The following Benefits are available to all veterans with a 0% Service-Connected Disability and Higher:

•Home Guaranty Certificate of Eligibility.

•Service Disabled Veterans Life Insurance. Must file within 2 years from initial notice of service connected disability. (Insurance only.)

•Outpatient treatment for: (1) service-connected conditions, and (2) for all medical conditions if enrolled in VA healthcare program. Co-payment for treatment may apply for non-service-connected conditions.

•Travel allowance for scheduled appointment for care of service-connected conditions at VA Medical Centers, and out patient clinics. (Eligibility based on the distance traveled 40 miles or more or a veteran's income.)

•Medical treatment for any condition: Enrollment in a VA healthcare program is encouraged but not required for treatment of a service connected condition. (A co-payment will apply for treatment of non-service connected conditions and prescription drugs.)

•Prosthetic Devices: for service-connected conditions, to include but not limited to wheelchairs, canes, crutches, hospital beds, nebulizer, oxygen tanks, and electric scooters. The issue of any prosthetic devices requires a VA Doctor's prescription.

•Medical Treatment in non-VA facilities for service connected conditions may be authorized by the VA Medical Center. (Certain restrictions apply.)

•Ten Point Civil Service Preference. (10 points added to Civil Service test score only after veteran achieves at least 70 on a test.)

Benefits for Service Connected Disabled Veterans

- Annual Clothing Allowance is available for veterans with a service-connected condition that requires the use of a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance (artificial limbs, braces, wheelchairs) or use prescribed medications for a skin condition which tends to wear, tear, or soil clothing. The items used must be prescribed and dispensed at a VA Medical Center.
- Temporary ratings of 100%, based on the hospitalization for a service-connected disability requiring at least one month of convalescence or immobilization by cast.
- Dental treatment for: (1) service-connected dental condition, or (2) follow- up dental treatment which has begun while hospitalized at a VA Medical Center, or any former Prisoner of War with 90 consecutive days or more of confinement. Some restrictions may apply.
- Home Improvement and Structural Alteration Grant Program is administered by the Prosthetics Department at VA Medical Facilities for medically required improvements and/ or structural changes to the veteran's residence. This Grant requires a VA Doctor's prescription. Service-connected veterans can receive up to a $6,800 grant. Non- service-connected veterans may receive a grant up to $2,000. The grant is to be used for allowing entrance or exit improvements for residence, essential lavatory and sanitary facilities, and kitchen and bathroom accessibility to sinks and counters. This grant is not for complete remodeling of a veteran's bath or kitchen.

Benefits for Service Connected Disabled Veterans

10% Service Connected and Higher, All of the Above Plus:

- Vocational Rehabilitation which includes full medical and dental care (dental if determined to be essential to finish training), a subsistence allowance in addition to disability payments, payment for all required school related supplies and direct payment of tuition. Funding fee waived for Home Loan Guarantee loans.
- Annual eye exams and prescribed eye wear.
- Eligible for hearing aids.

30% Service Connected and Higher, All of the Above Plus:

- Additional compensation for dependents (spouse, children, adopted children, and dependent parents).
- Non-Competitive Civil Service appointment: Job appointment without the requirement of an interview.
- Affirmative action in employment: A disabled veteran cannot be passed over to hire a nondisabled veteran or non-veteran unless at least three interviews have been conducted by the employer.
- Additional allowance for a spouse who is a patient in a nursing home: (Helpless or blind, or so nearly helpless as to require the aid and attendance of another person.)

40% Service Connected and Higher, All of the Above Plus:

- Automobile Grant: (A one-time payment up to $21,488.29) Veteran must have a service-connected loss of one hand, or one foot, or permanent loss of use of one hand or one foot, or a permanent impairment of vision of both eyes. A veteran must be rated for loss of use before this is granted.
- Payment of special adaptive automobile equipment: In addition to the automobile grant, the veteran must be entitled to the automobile grant as outlined above, or have a service -connected ankylosis (immobility) of one knee or one hip. (This requires a VA doctor's prescription for the adaptive equipment and can include: an automatic transmission, air conditioner, hand controls, power brakes, hand brakes, cruise control, ramps or wheelchair lifts, and any other adaptive equipment the doctor may deem necessary.)

50% Service Connected and Higher, All of the Above Plus:

- Medical treatment for any condition at VA Medical Centers: Enrollment in a VA health care program is encouraged but not required for treatment of a service-connected condition. No copayments for treatment of non-service-connected care or non-service-connected prescription drugs.

60-90% Service Connected and Higher, All of the Above Plus:

- Individual unemployability (increased compensation) payable at the 100% rate based on the inability to work due to service-connected disability plus:
- Dental treatment if S/C for Dental Claim.
- Specially Adapted Housing Program information can be found at this link: **http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/sahat.asp**
- Home Loan information can be found at this link: **http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/sahat.asp**
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance: Decreasing term mortgage insurance up to $200,000 for veterans who have received a Specially Adaptive Housing grant and have an existing mortgage.
- Waiver of cost of Service Disabled Life Insurance: and additional $20,000 of life insurance at cost to veteran. Veteran must have applied for insurance within two years of initial disability rating or within two years of a new disability rating. An increase in a disability rating does not qualify as a new disability.
- Emergency treatment in non-VA facilities if VA facilities are not available.

Compensation Higher Than the 100% Rate:

- Special Compensation: Veteran must be rated for Special Compensation due to the loss of limbs, eyesight, aid and attendance, housebound, or two separate medical conditions that are rated 60% each or 100% each.
- Educational Assistance for Dependents: (under chapter 35).
- Free entry into State Parks.
- Commissary and Exchange privileges for veteran and dependents: the veteran must request a letter from the VA specifying veteran is in receipt of 100% disability, and then apply for a military ID card at the nearest DEERS Station (see page 43).

VA Disability Pension Benefits for Wartime Veterans

A non-Service Connected Disability VA Pension is a benefit paid to wartime veterans who have limited or no income, and who are age 65 or older, under 65 and are permanently and totally disabled, a patient in a nursing home or are receiving Social Security disability payments.

The amount that's payable depends on the type and amount of income the veteran and family members receive from other sources.

Veterans who are more seriously disabled may qualify for Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits. These benefits are paid in addition to the basic pension rate. Monthly payments are made to qualified veterans to bring their total income to a congressionally established support level (including other retirement and Social Security income).

South Dakota Vet Centers

The Vet Center Combat Call Center is an around the clock confidential call center where combat veterans and their families can call to talk about their military experiences or any other issues they are facing in their readjustment to civilian life. The staff is comprised of combat veterans from several eras, Services provided at the Vet Center include bereavement and readjustment counseling to individuals, groups, couples, and families. If you served in a combat zone and received a campaign ribbon, you and your family are eligible for Vet Center services. In addition, parents, siblings, spouses and children of any active duty servicemember who dies while on active duty are eligible for bereavement counseling services. Services are also provided to any veteran who experienced military related sexual trauma while on active duty.

Sioux Falls Vet Center
3200 W. 49th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57106
Phone: 605.330.4552

Rapid City Vet Center
21 East Omaha Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
Phone: 605.348.0077

Mobile Vet Center
621 6th Street—Suite 101
Rapid City, SD 57701-2790
Phone: 605.348.0077

South Dakota Bonus

South Dakota is paying a bonus to members of the Armed Forces who were legal residents of the state for no less than six months before their period of active duty and who served on active duty during one or more of the following periods.

1. August 2, 1990 to March 3, 1991 - All active service counts for payment.
2. March 4, 1991 to December 31, 1992 - Only service in a hostile area qualifying for the Southwest Asia Service Medal counts for payment.
3. January 1, 1993 to September 10, 2001 - Only service in a hostile area qualifying for any United States campaign or service medal awarded for combat operations against hostile forces counts for payment.
4. September 11, 2001 to a date to be determined - All active service counts for payment.

Veterans with qualifying service from August 2, 1990, to December 31, 1992, (Desert Storm) may receive one bonus of up to $500. Veterans with qualifying service after January 1, 1993, may receive another bonus of up to $500. Active Duty for training is not allowed for Bonus purposes. Only Federal Active Duty is applicable for Bonus purposes.

Applicants living outside of South Dakota may request an application and instructions by writing SD Veterans Bonus, 425 E. Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501 or by calling 605-773-3269.

Applicants living in South Dakota may apply through the nearest County or Tribal Veterans Service Officer.

Presumptive Health Conditions

Veterans and service members who were close to burn pit smoke or exposed for longer periods may be at greater risk for health problems. Health effects from burn pit exposure will vary and depend on a number of factors such as the kind of waste being burned, pre-existing conditions, and wind direction. Veterans and service members can use the registry questionnaire to report exposures to airborne hazards (such as smoke from burn pits, oil-well fires, or pollution during deployment), as well as other exposures and health concerns. Registry participation is open to any Veteran or Service Member who served in: OEF/OIF/OND or in Djibouti, Afghanistan, Syria, Uzbekistan, Africa, after September 11, 2001, or Operations Desert Shield or Desert Storm or the Southwest Asia theater of operations after August 2, 1990. The Southwest Asia theater of operations includes the following locations: Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, waters of the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations. For more information and to register visit: **www.veteran. mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry**

There are three categories in which veterans may qualify for service-connected disability based on a condition to be presumed by military service. These groups are:

1) Veterans who were diagnosed with a chronic disease such as arthritis, diabetes, or hypertension within one year of being released from active duty;

2) Veterans diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) anytime after discharge of service and have at least 90 days of continuous service; and

3) Veterans who served in the conflicts / geographic regions associated with those diagnosed conditions identified below. For more information on presumptive health conditions, please contact a VSO.

Presumptives Due to Exposures

Former POW's Imprisoned for not less than 30 days and a disability of at least 10 percent disabling.

Vietnam Veterans [Exposed to Agent Orange] Served in the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7,1975.

Blue Water Navy Veterans [Exposed to Agent Orange} Veterans who served on the coastal waters within 12 nautical miles of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7,1975.

Thailand Veterans [Exposed to Agent Orange} Veterans who served in Thailand who worked near the flight line, security forces or dog handlers between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975.

Korean Demilitarized Zone Veterans [Exposed to Agent Orange] Veterans who were in units that operated along the DMZ between Sept. 1, 1967, and August 31, 1971.

Atomic Veterans [Exposed to Ionizing Radiation] Participated in atmospheric nuclear testing; occupied or was a POW in Hiroshima or Nagasaki; service before Feb. 1, 1992 at diffusion plant in Paducah, KY, Portsmouth, OH, or Oak Ridge, TN; or service before Jan. 1, 1974 at Amchitka Island, AK.

Gulf War Veterans Served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations during the Gulf Wars with conditions that are medically unexplained, including chronic multi-symptom illnesses defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms that have existed for six months or more.

Camp Lejeune Stationed at Camp Lejeune for at least 30-days (cumulative), between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987.

Agent Orange Registry—Health Exam for Veterans

VA's Agent Orange Registry health exam alerts Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to Agent Orange exposure during their military service. The registry data helps VA understand and respond to these health problems more effectively. This comprehensive health exam includes an exposure history, medical history, physical exam, and any tests if needed. A VA health professional will discuss the results face-to-face with the Veteran and in a follow-up letter. Contact your local VA Environmental Health Coordinator about getting an Agent Orange Registry health exam.

Gulf War Registry Health Exam for Veterans

VA's Gulf War Registry Health Exam alerts Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to environmental exposures during their military service. The registry data helps VA understand and respond to these health problems more effectively. This comprehensive health exam includes an exposure and medical history, laboratory tests, and a physical exam. A VA health professional will discuss the results face-to-face with the Veteran and in a follow-up letter. Important points about registry health exams:

- Free to eligible Veterans and no co-payment
- Not a disability compensation exam or required for VA benefits
- Enrollment in VA's health care system not necessary
- Based on recollection of service, not on their military records
- Veterans can receive additional registry exams, if new problems develop
- Veterans' family members are not eligible for registry exams
- Veterans who served in the Gulf during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn are eligible for the Gulf War Registry exam. You do not need to be enrolled in VA health care to take part.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health issue that can occur after someone goes through a traumatic event such as war, assault, disaster, or a car accident. Most people have some stress reactions after a trauma. Each service member will have their own experiences. All service members will need time to readjust after being in a war zone. This can be especially intense during the first months at home. Common stress reactions are a normal part of readjustment. The stigma of mental health issues can be a huge barrier for people who need help, but knowing when and how to get help is actually part of military training.

Visit your local Vet Center if you would like to talk to someone about what you are experiencing. You can learn more about PTSD at **ptsd.va.gov**.

PTSD Coach has now been downloaded over 100,000 times in 74 countries around the word. The PTSD Coach app can help you learn about and manage symptoms that commonly occur after trauma. Features include: Reliable information on PTSD and treatments that work; Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms; Convenient, easy-to-use skills to help you handle stress symptoms; and direct links to support and help. Together with professional medical treatment, PTSD Coach provides you dependable resources you can trust. If you have, or think you might have PTSD, this app is for you. Family and friends can also learn from this app. Free PTSD Coach download from: iTunes (iOS)* and Google Play (Android)*. Also see PTSD Coach ONLINE: 17 tools to choose from available for desktop. PTSDCoach was created by the VA's National Center for PTSD and the DoD's National Center for Telehealth and Technology

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Major advancements in protective and medical technology have vastly increased survivability rates among wounded U.S. service members. They have also introduced new challenges to care for increasing numbers of veterans and service members with extremely complex injuries, particularly polytrauma and traumatic brain injury. A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) happens when something outside the body hits the head with significant force.

This could happen when the head hits a windshield during a car accident, when a piece of shrapnel enters the brain, or during an explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED). Individuals who sustain a TBI may experience a variety of effects, such as an inability to concentrate, an alteration of the senses (hearing, vision, smell, taste, and touch), difficulty speaking, and emotional and behavioral changes. If you experienced head trauma during your service, please contact the VA to schedule an examination. To learn more about TBI, visit **www.polytrauma.va.gov** .

ID Cards

ID Cards

If you are an Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard service member, dependent, or retiree, you can get a Military ID at any DEERS location within South Dakota. Veterans receiving VA benefits may be able to get an ID card (medical benefits card) at VA Medical Centers or Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC).

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)

Facility	Address	Phone Number
Brookings Armory	300 5th Street South	605.696.5442
Camp Rapid	2823 W. Main Street	605.737.6632
Ellsworth AFB	1958 Spaatz Drive	605.385.2427
Huron Armory	309 W. 3rd Street	605.353.7327 (Ext. 2210, 2209)
Mitchell Armory	5501 Airport Road	605.995.1656
Pierre Armory	3440 HWY 34	605.773.3449 (Ext. 7242)
Rapid City Duke Corning Armory	2823 W. Main Street	605.737.6332
Sioux Falls Armory	801 N. National Guard Drive	605.357.2900
Sturgis Armory	E. Hwy 34	605.737.6400
Watertown Readi-ness Center	1951 N. Highway 20	605.882.9330

Veteran ID on Drivers License

Veterans who have been honorably discharged from the military have the option of adding the word "Veteran" to the front of their South Dakota drivers license or identification card. Veterans who wish to add the designation to their driver license or non-driver ID card may visit any South Dakota driver license office. They will need to present their DD-214, which shows their honorable discharge status from active duty, their DD Form 2 (Retired), their DD Form 2A (Reserve Retired), or present a certificate signed by a county or tribal veterans service officer verifying their status. They will also need to provide the other documents required of any applicant and pay the appropriate duplicate or renewal fee.

Click here for more information.

Click here for sites.

What is Hud VASH
What are Stand Downs

HUD-Vash

This joint Supportive Housing Program with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides permanent housing and ongoing case management treatment services for homeless veterans who would not be able to live independently without the support of case management.
HUD's Section 8 Voucher Program has designated more than 10,000 Vouchers to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) throughout the country for veterans who are homeless. This program allows veterans to live in veteran selected apartment units with a Housing Choice voucher.
These vouchers are portable so that veterans can live in communities served by their VA medical facility where case management services can be provided. See your local county social services office for more information.

Stand Downs

Stand Downs are one-to three-day events that provide homeless veterans a variety of services and allow VA and community-based service providers to reach more homeless veterans in a temporary refuge where they obtain food, shelter, clothing and a range of community and VA assistance. In many locations, Stand Downs provide health screenings, referral and access to long- term treatment, benefits counseling, ID cards and access to other programs to meet their immediate needs. For more information on Stand Down dates and locations, please contact the Homeless Veterans Programs Office at 1-877-424-3838 or visit www.va.gov/HOMELESS.

Military Records and Medals

Veterans or their next of kin who need assistance in obtaining service records, a DD-214, or replacement awards and medals must formally request them through the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). The NPRC is the records custodian for most discharged and retired members of all branches of service. The fastest way to obtain a copy is through their website. If you do not have access to the internet, you can order a copy by mailing or faxing a Standard Form 180. The forms are available in any CVSO office or online at: **www.archives.gov/veterans.**

Veterans Records

South Dakota counties may not charge for certified copies of birth, death, marriage, adoption, divorce, guardianship or conservatorship papers when such records are required in support of a claim against any agency of the federal or state government by, or on behalf of, a service member or veteran, or the spouse, surviving spouse or dependents of a service member or veteran. Veterans are encouraged to register their discharge papers with their local county Register of Deeds.

Veterans Preference

State and Local Government Employment

South Dakota defines an eligible veteran as:

Honorably discharged.

A citizen of the United States.

Having served under qualifying conditions (see South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL 33A-2).

Eligible veterans receive preference for appointment, employment and promotion at all levels of government, including state, counties, municipalities and school districts. If the applicant possesses at least the minimum qualifications necessary to fill the position, the veteran shall be granted an interview. They may not be disqualified by their age, by loss of a limb or by any other physical impairment which is not incapacitating. However, they must possess the qualifications necessary to do the job in question. A veteran disabled due to a service-connected cause is given preference over a non-disabled veteran.

Unmarried Spouse of Deceased Veteran

The unmarried spouse of an eligible veteran who died while in service, or died later from a service-connected cause, is entitled to the same preference as an eligible veteran, provided the spouse possess the qualifications necessary to do the job in question.

Spouse of Disabled Veteran

If a disabled eligible veteran is unable to exercise his or her right to a veteran employment preference due to the disability, the veteran's spouse is entitled to the same preference, provided the spouse has the qualifications to do the job in question.

Education Benefits

As a veteran, there are education benefits available which you may use for a wide variety of approved education and training programs, including: apprenticeship, on-the-job training, college degrees and certificate programs, flight training, and correspondence courses. Each State has a State Approving Agency (SAA). Some states have one agency to approve all school programs, another agency to approve all on-the-job training programs, and then possibly a third agency to approve the flight schools.

In many ways, the fundamental role of state approving agencies is the same today as it was when they were founded. As state entities acting on behalf of the Federal Government, the SAA's have been an outstanding example of the workability of the State-Federal partnership, allowing Federal interests to be pursued at the local level while preserving the identity, interests, and sovereignty of States' rights in education. The primary responsibility and focus of the SAA's continues to be the review, evaluation and approval of quality programs of education and training under State and Federal criteria. SAA's continue to conduct on-site supervisory visits to approved institutions and schools seeking approval. They continue to provide technical assistance to all interested parties and are engaged in outreach activities to foster the usage of the GI Bill®. Further, they continue to act as state liaison in assisting military installations to provide base personnel with quality educational offerings. Yet, while the fundamental role of the SAA has remained the same, the SAA's have grown with the changes in our society over the past fifty years. They have become advocates for quality education and training for Veterans and other eligible persons. They have become educational partners with the institutions themselves, facilitating even greater and more diverse educational opportunities for veterans.

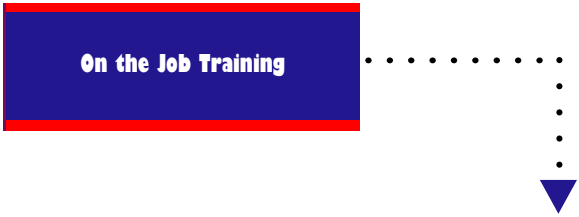
They have become strong advocates for the usage of the GI Bill® and have developed a working partnership with the Federal government.

The programs that can be approved are found in institutions of higher learning (colleges and universities), non-degree institutions (vocational and technical schools), apprenticeship programs, other on-the-job training programs, and flight training schools. Each state reviews the appropriateness of each program as to its own standards and laws in addition to VA rules and regulations along with any other applicable laws and/or regulations. Then it is either approved or disapproved; continuous supervision is required of approved programs.

The approval process is on going and involves regular monitoring of the programs. South Dakota has approximately 2,100 eligible people enrolled in programs. The programs are found in 47 schools and 326 approved facilities.

The South Dakota State Approving Agency is located in Pierre with the Department of Veterans Affairs and it approves all programs. For information or assistance call (605) 773-3269 or 773-3648 (school programs) or 773-3565 (training programs).

Click here for information about the GI Bill® http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/



On the Job Training

On the Job Training or OJT - is training you receive while performing a job and earning wages. This program can range from 6 – 24 months. Apprenticeships can run from 24-48 months long. This requires the employee to be full-time and have GI Bill® eligibility.

Examples are police officer, correctional officer, shop technician, chef, highway maintenance worker, farmer, buildings engineer, veterans benefits representative, service technician, highway patrol trooper, wellness instructor, information technology specialist, surface maintenance repairer, deputy sheriff, plant operator, truck driver, or bakers assistant.

For more information or assistance call (605) 773-3269 or 773-3565.

Post 9/11 GI Bill®

The Post-9/11 GI Bill® provides financial support for education and housing to honorably discharged veterans with at least 90 days of aggregate service on Title 10 Active Duty or Title 32 Active Guard Reserve Duty after Sept. 10, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. The Post 9/11 GI Bill® will pay eligible individuals full tuition and fees directly to the school for all public school in-state students, attending classes at a greater than halftime rate. A Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) based on the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents is also provided. Distance learning enrollee's housing allowance is equal to half the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents. An annual books and supplies stipend is paid proportionately based on years of active duty service.

Montgomery GI Bill®

Montgomery GI Bill ®(MGIB) benefits are available for service members and veterans to help with education and training costs. MGIB can be used to pay for many different programs including the following degrees; business, technical or vocational courses, distance learning including correspondence courses, apprenticeship/job training, flight training, licensing and certification exams. VA educational benefits may be used while the service member is on active duty or after the service member's separation from active duty with a fully honorable military discharge. Discharges "under honorable conditions" and "generally" discharges do not establish eligibility. Eligibility general expires ten years after the service member's discharge. However, there are exceptions for disability, re-entering active duty and upgraded discharges.

Free Tuition for Veterans

SDCL 13-55-2 to 13-55-5 Provides for certain veterans who are eligible to take undergraduate courses at a state supported university without the payment of tuition provided they are not eligible for educational payments under the GI Bill® or any other federal educational program. To qualify the veteran must:

- have been discharged under Honorable conditions
- be a current resident of South Dakota and qualify for in-state tuition
- meet one of the following criteria:
  ⇒ served on active duty at any time between August 2, 1990 and a date to be determined
  ⇒received an Armed Forces Expeditionary medal, or other United States campaign or service medal for participation in combat operations against hostile forces outside the boundaries of the United States
  ⇒have a service connected disability rated 10%, or more.

Eligible veterans may receive one month of free tuition for each month of "qualifying service" with a minimum of one, up to a maximum of four, academic years. Qualifying service is defined as: the amount of time served on active duty between the beginning and ending dates of the particular period of conflict or hostilities during which the veteran earned eligibility for this program.

The Application for Free Tuition is available at the schools' financial aid office, veterans representative, registrars offices or at the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. The completed application, along with a Member 4 copy of the veteran's DD-214 must be submitted to Shane Olivier at the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, 425 E. Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501.

Free Tuition for Children of Veterans Who Die During Service

SDCL 13-55-6 to 13-55-9 Provides that children who are under the age of 25, are residents of South Dakota, and whose mother or father was killed in action or died of other causes while on active duty, are eligible for free tuition at a state supported school, if the deceased parent was a bona-fide resident of this state for at least six (6) months immediately preceding entry into active service. The Application for Free Tuition is available at the schools' financial aid office, veterans representative, registrars offices or the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Free Tuition for Dependents of POWs and MIAs

SDCL 13-55-9.2 to 13-55-9.6 Provides for children and spouses of prisoners of war, or of persons listed as missing in action, are entitled to attend a state supported school without the payment of tuition or mandatory fees provided they are not eligible for equal or greater federal benefits. The Application for Free Tuition is available at the schools' financial aid office, veterans representative, registrars offices or the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Reduced Tuition for South Dakota National Guards Members

SDCL 33-6-5 - 33-6-8.1 Provides for Guard members, who meet the requirements for admission, are eligible for a fifty percent (50%) reduction in tuition charges at any state supported school for undergraduate programs up to 128 credits and graduate programs up to 32 credits.

OR,

one program of study, approved by the state Board of Education, at any state vocational school upon payment of fifty percent (50%) of the tuition charges.

The receipt of federal educational benefits does not affect eligibility for this program. To qualify the guard member must:

1. Be a resident of this state and a member of the SD Army or Air Guard throughout each semester or vocational program for which he or she applies for benefits
2. Have completed required active duty for training
3. Attend 90% of drills and training periods and maintain a satisfactory academic grade level
4. Provide proper notice to the institution at time of registration for the term in which benefits are sought.

Free Tuition to Children or Spouse of South Dakota National Guards members Disabled or Deceased in the Line of Duty

SDCL 13-55-10 Provides for free tuition to children or spouse of National Guard member disabled or deceased in line of duty. Any resident of this state who is less than twenty-five years of age and whose parent has died or has sustained a total disability, permanent in nature, resulting from duty as a member of the South Dakota National Guard, while on state or federal active duty or any authorized training duty, is entitled to tuition without cost and is entitled to attend any course or courses of study in any state educational institution under the control and management of the Board of Regents. Any person who is a resident of this state whose spouse has died or has sustained a total disability, permanent in nature, resulting from duty as a member of the South Dakota National Guard, while on state or federal active duty or any authorized training duty, is entitled to tuition without cost and is entitled to attend any course or courses of study in any state educational institution under the control and management of the Board of Regents.

Veterans Recognition License Plates

Veterans Recognition License Plates

Special distinctive license plates are available for veterans who are residents of South Dakota. For additional information on eligibility and application procedures, visit the SD Department of Revenue and Regulation website.

For more information, click on this link. http://dor.sd.gov/Motor_Vehicles/License_Plates/Military_Plates/Military_Plates.aspx

MILITARY LICENSE PLATES - GENERAL

Air Force Cross
Bronze Star
Bronze Star with Valor Device
Disabled Veteran
Distinguished Flying Cross
Distinguished Service Cross
Female Veteran
Gold Star
Medal of Honor
Navy Cross
Service Organization
Pearl Harbor Survivor
Prisoner of War
Purple Heart
Silver Star
Tribal

MILITARY LICENSE PLATES - VETERANS

Air Force	Army	Coast Guard
Marine	National Guard	Navy

MILITARY LICENSE PLATES - ACTIVE

Air Force
Army
Coast Guard
Marine
National Guard
Navy

Veterans Courts

There is a growing effort nationally to institute Veterans Courts or dockets to allow district attorneys to send military members and veterans into treatment, rather than jail, when they commit a non-violent offense. These courts are staffed by people who take into consideration charges and challenges facing veterans who return home from war. They may allow some military members to enter into mental health diversion programs as treatment for non-violent infractions as opposed to automatically jailing the offender.

The law relies on the judgment of a prosecutor, who will determine, on a case-by-case basis, which defendants may be eligible for diversion. These prosecutors must consider, for example, whether a veteran who spent four years at a military base should be offered the same diversion opportunity as one who deployed twice to combat situations in Afghanistan or Iraq. Prosecutors must decide how serious the crime must be before diversion is taken off the table and must consider the victim of the offense.

South Dakota currently has Veterans Court programs in Codington, Pennington and Minnehaha Counties.

Property Tax Exemption for Veterans and their Widow or Widower

SDCL 10-4-24.10 states that dwellings or parts of multiple family dwellings which are specifically designed for use by paraplegics as wheelchair homes and which are owned and occupied by veterans with the loss, or loss of use, of both lower extremities, or by the unremarried widow or widower of such veteran, are exempt from taxation. The dwelling must be owned and occupied by the veteran for one full calendar year before the exemption becomes effective. For purposes of this statute, the term "dwelling" generally means real estate in an amount not to exceed one acre upon which the building is located.

Click here for more information. http://dor.sd.gov/Taxes/Property_Taxes/Property_and_Sales_Tax_Relief_Programs.aspx

Totally Disabled Veterans

SDCL 10-4-40 and 10-4-41states that $150,000 of the full and true value of a dwelling that is owned and occupied by a veteran who is rated permanently and totally disabled from a service connected disability(ies) is exempt from taxation. The dwelling must be owned and occupied by the veteran. Application for the exemption is made through the county assessor. The surviving spouse of veteran who was rated as permanently and totally disabled from a service connected disability qualifies for the same property tax exemption.

Click here for more information. http://dor.sd.gov/Taxes/Property_Taxes/Property_and_Sales_Tax_Relief_Programs.aspx

Property Tax Refund for Aged and Disabled Persons

SDCL 10-18A-1 to 10-18A-7 states that certain low income property owners are eligible for a property tax refund and should check with their county treasurer for details and assistance in making application. To qualify the following conditions must be met:

1. The head of the household must be sixty-five years of age, or older, or shall be disabled prior to January first of the year in which taxes are levied;
2. The applicant must have owned the property for at least three years or, have been a resident of this state at least five years if not qualified under the three year ownership criteria.

Click here for more information. http://dor.sd.gov/Taxes/Property_Taxes/Property_and_Sales_Tax_Relief_Programs.aspx

Sales Tax Refund for Certain Elderly and Disabled Persons

SDCL 10-45A-2 to 10-45A-16 states that certain low income persons who are sixty-five, or older, or who are disabled, may qualify for a sales tax refund. Applicants should check with their county treasurer for details and assistance.

NOTE: No individual may receive both a property tax and sales tax refund in the same year.

Click here for more information. http://dor.sd.gov/Taxes/Property_Taxes/Property_and_Sales_Tax_Relief_Programs.aspx

Hunting and Fishing Cards for Disabled Veterans

For a $10 fee, eligible veterans may receive a hunting and fishing card which is valid for four years. This card is the equivalent of the resident fishing and small game license. To be eligible the veteran must:

- Be rated as 40% disabled from service connected injuries OR,
- Be in receipt of the VA "K" award OR,
- Have been held as a Prisoner of War OR,
- Be in receipt of Social Security benefits because of a total disability.

Application forms are available from the Game, Fish and Parks Regional Office. The application, along with verification of eligibility, are submitted to Game, Fish and Parks, 412 West Missouri, Pierre, SD 57501.

Military General Hunting and Fishing License

Residents who are serving on Active Duty and stationed at a location outside of the state may fish and hunt small game without payment of a fee or the applicable hunting and fishing license. If the resident is hunting migratory birds, the federal migratory bird stamp and the migratory bird certification permit must be purchased.

Click here for more information. **http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/accessibility/reduced-fees.aspx**

Special Provisions for Handicapped Hunters

Individuals who are missing an upper limb, or are physically incapable of using an upper limb or who are confined to a wheelchair may use a crossbow to take game birds and animals once they have obtained a disabled hunter permit.

A legally blind or quadriplegic legally licensed individual who possesses a disabled hunter permit and who is physically present and participating in the hunt may claim game birds and animals taken by a designated hunter in accordance with the license or licenses possessed by the handicapped hunter.

Applications are obtained from the Game, Fish and Parks office in Pierre or from a game warden.
Click here for more information. http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/accessibility/

State Parks—Free Admission and Reduced Camping Fees for Veterans

Certain resident veterans may obtain free admission to any South Dakota state park and are eligible for a fifty percent discount on any camping fee or associated electrical fee. To qualify the veteran must:

1. Be totally disabled from service connected disabilities or,
2. Be in receipt of the VA "K" award OR,
3. Have been held as a Prisoner of War.

Application forms may be obtained from the local park manager or through the Game, Fish and Parks office in Pierre.

Click here for more information. http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/accessibility/reduced-fees.aspx

South Dakota's
Voice for Veterans

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

425 E. Capitol

Pierre, SD 57501

605.773.3269

https://vetaffairs.sd.gov