



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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In Reply Refer To:

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SAMPLE LETTER

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX⁶:

We are writing to inform you that we will no longer require you to complete an annual Eligibility Verification Report (EVR) form to continue receiving Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pension or parents' dependency and indemnity compensation benefits.

Why is VA Discontinuing the Use of EVRs?

Technological improvements, including expansion of data matching agreements with the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration, will allow VA to verify a pension applicant's income before awarding benefits. VA will continue to conduct data matching with these and other Federal agencies after awarding benefits to ensure that it is making benefit payments only to Veterans and survivors who remain eligible.

What are My Responsibilities?

You must still notify VA of any changing in income for you or a family member (parent, spouse, or child), such as:

- Earnings
- Interest or dividend payments from stocks, bonds or savings
- Retirement pension payments or other retirement income
- Money or property you inherit
- Rental income
- Other state or Federal benefits
- Any other income changes

You may report any of the above changes on VA Form 21-527, *Income-Net Worth and Employment Statement*.

If you have dependents (spouse or child), you must tell us about any changes in their status and income as well. For example:

- Tell us if you and your spouse separate or divorce
- Tell us if one of your children, over age 18 years old, marries or is no longer in school
- Tell us if you get married, have a child or adopt a child
- Tell us if you lose a dependent

You may report any of the above changes on VA Form 21-686c, *Declaration of Status of Dependents*.

In the event that you change your address, please notify us. You may report a change of address on VA Form 21-4138, *Statement in Support of Claim*.

You may locate these forms in addition to other VA Forms at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>.

If You Have Medical Expenses

You may be eligible for a deduction from your income and a corresponding increase in your pension benefits if you paid for medical expenses, including Medicare Part B premiums. VA will only deduct medical expenses from your income if you paid for them from your own funds. Do not report any amounts paid by your insurance company, Medicaid, or anyone else.

VA can only consider the unreimbursed medical expenses that you report before the end of the next calendar year. For example, a report of unreimbursed medical expenses paid in 2012 must be received at VA on or before December 31, 2013.

You may report any unreimbursed medical expenses on VA Form 21-8416, *Medical Expense Report*. You may locate this form in addition to other VA Forms at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms/>.

What Is Enhanced or Special Monthly Pension?

You may be eligible for pension at a higher rate based on additional disability. **Aid and Attendance (A&A)** is an increased monthly pension amount paid to a Veteran or surviving spouse. You may be eligible for pension at the A&A rate if:

- You require the aid of another person in order to perform activities of daily living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, toileting, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting yourself from the hazards of your daily environment, **OR**,
- You are bedridden, in that your disability or disabilities requires that you remain in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment, **OR**,
- You are a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity, **OR**,
- You have corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less, in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less.

Housebound is an increased monthly pension amount paid to a claimant who is substantially confined to his or her home because of permanent disability. Additionally, if you are a Veteran, you may qualify for the increased **housebound** amount if:

- You have a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling **AND**, due to such disability, you are permanently and substantially confined to your immediate premises, **OR**,
- You have a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling **AND**, another disability, or disabilities, evaluated as 60-percent or more disabling.

You may apply for pension at the A&A or housebound rates by having your physician complete VA Form 21-2680, *Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid and Attendance*.

If You Have Questions or Would Like to Report Changes in Income and Dependency

If you have any questions, or if you would like to report changes in income or dependency, call us toll-free by dialing 1-877-294-6380 or write us at the address listed on top of this letter. Our TDD number for the hearing impaired is 711. *If you call, please have this letter with you.*

If you are looking for general information about benefits and eligibility, you should visit our website at <https://www.va.gov>, or search the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at <https://iris.va.gov>.

If You Have Questions and Live Outside the United States

If you have questions or want to report any changes, call or visit the nearest American Embassy or Consulate for assistance. In Canada, call or visit the local office of Veterans Affairs Canada. If you call, please have this letter with you.

If You Do Not Have a Service Organization or Representative

You can contact us for a listing of the recognized veterans' service organizations and/or representatives. Veterans' service organizations, which are recognized or approved to provide services to the veteran community, can also help you with any questions.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX⁷
PENSION MANAGEMENT CENTER MANAGER

Enclosure: **VAF 21P-8416⁸**

Other Things You Should Know

Department of Treasury Mandate

The Department of the Treasury has mandated that all recurring federal benefits be administered through either Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or Direct Express® Debit MasterCard®. VA encourages you to select the method for payment of your VA benefits before **March 1, 2013**. If you do not change your payment method before **March 1, 2013**, the Treasury will contact you directly.

- To have your Federal benefits electronically transferred to your designated financial institution, please call VA at **1-877-294-6380** with your banking information.
- To have your Federal benefits issued through Direct Express® Debit Mastercard® issued by Comerica Bank, please call 1-800-333-1795 to enroll in the program.

What Is eBenefits?

eBenefits provides electronic resources in a self-service environment to service members, Veterans, and their families. Through the eBenefits website you can:

- Track the status of your claim or appeal
- View your payment history
- Obtain verification of your military service, civil service preference, or VA benefits
- Receive a copy of your military discharge documents
- Manage your VA life insurance policy

Enrolling in eBenefits is easy. Just visit www.eBenefits.va.gov for more information on this joint Department of Defense and VA service.