



VA Benefits

Over one-third of the population above age 80 served in either World War II or Korea (or is the surviving spouse of someone who served.) Many of these wartime veterans and their spouses may be eligible for substantial benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

VA benefits are often perceived as only for men & women who were wounded or disabled while serving in the military, when in fact, benefits are available to many veterans who served & their spouses who are now senior citizens and are facing the burden of long-term care costs. For many people, utilizing a home care professional or moving to an assisted living community is prohibitively expensive. VA Pension with Aid & Attendance benefits provide tax-free monthly income to help pay for this type of care.

In 2015, the maximum monthly benefit for a veteran with a spouse is \$2,120. For a veteran with no dependents it is \$1,788, and is \$1,149 for a surviving spouse. To qualify, a veteran must have served at least 90 consecutive days in the service, at least one day of which was during wartime, be at least 65 years old or disabled, and have received a discharge that is other than dishonorable. There are income and asset limitations as well. To determine if a loved one is eligible, you are well advised to consult with an individual accredited by the VA. There are four types of persons who are authorized to help provide a veteran with assistance filing a claim: (1) an attorney licensed to practice in your state, (2) a veterans service organization such as the VFW or the American Legion, (3) a state or county official of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or (4) an individual who has gone through the accreditation process. Be cautious of any "free" services to file your claim. Always seek independent advice before you purchase.

VA Aid & Attendance benefits can help many families access services they would have otherwise been unable to afford, such as assisted living communities, skilled nursing care, or in-home care. Don't let the veteran in your life miss out on this powerful, life-changing benefit.

Sterling Estates Senior Living has information from area providers that may assist you in the filing process. Benefits are retroactive from the filing date and can be used to offset your monthly rent at Sterling Estates.

The information in this publication was provided by Miles Hurley, attorney with Hurley Elder Care Law. Complimentary telephone consultations can be arranged by calling 404.843.0121. More information can be obtained by contacting the GA Dept. of Veterans Services (404.656.2300) or the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs (202.273.5400).