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Information Paper

Death Pension

Death Pension is a benefit paid to eligible dependents of deceased wartime veterans. You may be eligible if:

- the deceased veteran was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, **and**
- he or she served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war¹, **and**
- you are the surviving spouse or unmarried child of the deceased veteran, **and**
- your countable income is below a yearly income limit ²set by law.

Anyone enlisting after September 7, 1980, generally must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty.

VA pays the difference between your countable income and the yearly income limit. This difference is generally paid in 12 equal monthly payments. Certain un-reimbursed medical expenses, education expenses, or expenses related to the last illness or burial of the veteran or a dependent paid by you are taken into consideration when arriving at your countable income.

Who can help me Apply?

Some authority suggests that agents and/or attorneys may charge for consultation about VA benefits before the initial application is filed. However, for the initial application itself, a fee may not be charged. The best alternative for many veterans is to see their local **County VA Counselor** or **Veterans Service Organization** to help in the initial application for benefits. Beware of organizations that charge you a fee to help you apply for benefits.

¹ See Periods of War for VA purposes at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Pension/wartime.htm>

² See VA income limits at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/pen02.htm>

NOTE: This information is re-posted from various sources for informational purposes only. Your situation may be different from the next Veterans and so you should ask specific questions and seek help from a qualified attorney, Veterans Service Organization, or your local county VA office for more information.