

TOP 10 QUESTIONS ASKED BY VETERANS OF BUCKS COUNTY

1. How can I get a copy of my DD Form 214?

The quickest way to receive a certified copy of your DD form 214, it is recommended you contact your local congressman. You will be instructed to complete two forms: a Privacy Act release and a Standard Form 180. These will then be sent to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. A response is typically generated in 3-5 weeks.

2. How do I apply for the Pennsylvania Property Tax benefit?

In order to qualify for this state benefit, a veteran must have a 100% disability rating from the VA. A surviving spouse must be receiving Death and Indemnity Compensation (This means her spouse passed away rated at 100% or as a result of a service-connected disability). For additional information please contact your local state legislature.

3. Am I eligible for the VA Pension benefit?

The VA Pension benefit is a need-based program. In order to qualify, your “countable” income must fall below a yearly limit set by federal law. A veteran applying for this benefit must have 90 days of active duty (including 1 day during wartime). You must also be:

- 65 or older, OR
- Totally and permanently disabled, OR
- A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, OR
- Receiving SSDI, OR
- Receiving SSI
- For additional information, please visit: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/pension/>

4. Am I eligible for the VA Surviving Spouse benefit?

The deceased Veteran must have met the following service requirements:

- For service on or before September 7, 1980, the Veteran must have served at least 90 days of active military service, with at least one day during a war time period.
- If he or she entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally he or she must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty with at least one day during a war time period.
- Was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions.

Survivors Pension is also based on your yearly family income, which must be less than the amount set by Congress to qualify. For additional information, please visit:

<http://benefits.va.gov/pension/spousepen.asp>

5. Can I get a replacement set of medals awarded during my service?

Yes, the quickest way would be to contact your Congressman. You will be instructed to complete two forms: a Privacy Act release and a Standard Form 180. These will then be sent to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. The typical time for a medal request varies, depending on the availability of the veteran's records.

6. I filed a claim with the Philadelphia VA Regional office, how can I check the status?

You can check on the status of a pending claim by contacting a Veterans Case Advocate at your Congressman's office.

7. Is there any way I can expedite my claim for benefits?

Claims can be expedited on the grounds of financial distress, or for worsening medical conditions. For either condition to be considered, the veteran must provide documentation detailing the financial distress (such as an eviction or shut-off notice), or medical problems (doctor's statement and medical reports detailing such).

8. Why is it taking so long for the VA to process my claim?

Currently, the Philadelphia VA Regional Office is facing an immense backlog of pending claims. Due to this large number of unprocessed claims, the average claim will take much longer to come to a resolution.

9. Am I eligible for VA Medical Benefits?

If you served in the active military service and were separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for VA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits as well.

Note:

Reserves or National Guard members with active duty for training purposes *only* do not meet the basic eligibility requirement.

For additional information, please visit: <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/veterans.asp>

10. Are VA Medical Benefits an acceptable form of coverage under the ACA?

Yes, Veterans enrolled in VA health care programs have health coverage that meets the new health care law's standard. You do not have to take any additional steps to have health coverage. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.va.gov/health/aca/>