

Resources

Don't do it alone. A number of resources are available to help all Gulf War-era veterans and their families.

- ◆ The American Legion:
 - To file a VA claim, call:
Helpline: 1 - (800) 433 - 3318
 - Latest info on web-page:
<<www.legion.org/gulftoc.htm>>

- ◆ Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):
 - Helpline: 1 - (800) PGW - VETS
 - Local VA office: 1 - (800) 827 -1000
 - Gulf Illnesses homepage:
<<www.va.gov/health/environ/persgulf.htm>>

- ◆ Department of Defense (DoD):
 - To schedule clinical evaluation:
1 - (800) 796 - 9699
 - To report suspicious incidents:
1 - (800) 472 - 6719
 - Gulf Illnesses homepage:
<<www.gulflink.osd.mil>>



The Legion

One out of every five disabled Gulf War veterans received help from the American Legion to prepare their disability claims. Help with claims is a free service.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been given by the Legion as grants to needy vets under the Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program.

The Legion also publishes the free "Gulf War Veterans' Guide to Benefits." To order, call 1 - (800) 433 - 3318.

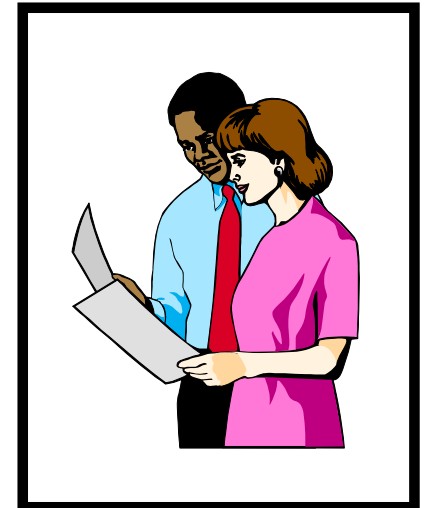


For more information contact:

*Persian Gulf Task Force
The American Legion
1608 "K" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 861-2700*

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Gulf War Benefits & Programs



*A Guide For
Veterans and Families*



Basic Benefits for Gulf Veterans

Serving in the military sets apart some of America's men and women. They were willing to sacrifice their time -- and perhaps much more -- when the nation called.

The government has a wide variety of programs that acknowledge the contributions of veterans. These benefits are available to our newest generation of veterans, the men and women who served in uniform during the Gulf War.

Some veterans benefits are token "thank you's." Others can be decisive to those in need. But all share a common trait -- they were earned by military service.

The Basics on Benefits

People who served on active duty during the Gulf War are eligible for the same benefits offered to U.S. veterans of other conflicts.

For most benefits, what counts is that you wore the uniform. Being in the Gulf during the war is a factor in only two benefits -- veterans preference and VA pension.

Education: The Montgomery GI Bill offers nearly \$440 monthly for 36 months of study. Veterans must make \$1,200 deductions from pay before their discharges.

Home Loans: No money down and low interest rates are features of the GI Bill home-loan program. Mortgage companies decide whether vets have sufficient

income to pay back loans.

Insurance: Vets can convert their SGLI active-duty life insurance to Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) within 120 days of discharge without a medical exam. Can be made up to a year with a physical.

VA Pension: Indigent vets who served during an official period of war can receive annual payments of at least \$8,700.

Veterans Preference: Veterans of war periods also get an edge in filling federal civil service jobs.

Upgraded Discharges: A discharge that isn't officially stamped "honorable" can limit access to VA benefits and affect employment opportunities. Vets can have those discharges improved -- or "upgraded" -- long after they leave the military.

Medical Problems

You were healthy when you entered the military. If you're not healthy when you leave, the government provides free medical and, if the problem is severe enough, tax-free disability pay for your lifetime.

The pay, called "VA disability compensation," ranges from \$96 a month for a 10 percent disability to \$1,989 monthly for 100 percent.

For vets with the severest problems, the government can offer rehabilitation, vocational training, and even stipends for spouses and children.

Getting Help

The American Legion has trained professionals called "service officers" who give free help to any veteran -- Legionnaires and non-members alike -- filing an application for VA disability benefits.

Service officers can also represent vets in formal hearings. They understand the way things are done. They know the key points

that must be made and how things are best proven.

Don't go it alone. The stakes are too high. Get people who've been down that path before to help you.

Family Members

Most veterans benefits are for veterans. But spouses sometimes qualify for their own VA benefits. These include:

- Stipends for spouses of severely disabled vets.
- Education benefits for spouses of severely disabled vets.
- Monthly pensions for widows and widowers of veterans who die while getting VA disability compensation.
- Free health exams for sick family members of Gulf veterans who suspect Gulf-related causes for the illnesses.

All the benefits for family members require paperwork and supporting documents to establish eligibility. Patience and expert advice are indispensable.

Contact a Legion service officer before starting. There are no fees or membership requirements for assistance.

To contact a service officer in your area, call 1 (800) 433-3318.



Legion at a Glance

- World's largest vets group.
 - 2.8 million members in 14,000 posts.
 - 60,000 members from Gulf War era.
 - Members served on active duty -- not necessarily in-theater -- during a war.
 - Creator of original GI Bill; sponsor of Scout troops, blood drives and Boys State.
- Are you giving back? Join the ranks of America's veterans who are still serving their communities. Become a Legionnaire.