

## **What Is a Veteran's Dependent Parent Benefit?**

A veteran whose parent(s) are dependent upon him/her for financial support may be paid additional benefits. Dependency of a parent is based on need. Both the parental relationship and dependency of the parent must be established for VA to pay.

## **What Are the Eligibility Criteria?**

1. Veteran is in receipt of compensation with a combined evaluation of at least 30 percent, or
2. Veteran is in receipt of VA educational benefits based on enrollment of ½ time or more.

## **Who Are Eligible Parents?**

The term "parent" means a biological father or mother, or adoptive father or mother, or a person (i.e., foster parent, stepparent, etc.) who for a period of not less than one year stood in the relationship of a parent to a veteran at any time before his or her entry into active service.

The term "dependent parent" does not necessarily mean that the parent is not self-supporting. Rather, it means that either:

- the parent's income and net worth are minimal, or
- a parent with substantial income or assets has correspondingly high expenses

## **Why Is the Dependent Parent Benefit Based on Income and Net Worth?**

Since the benefit is based on need, VA cannot pay additional benefits for a dependent parent(s) if their countable income is greater than the limit set by law, or whose net worth is sufficient to meet basic needs without assistance from VA. To determine need, the parent(s) must report their income from all sources, such as gross wages, Social Security, retirement, pension, insurance, interest, and dividends for the last 12 months. The parent(s) must also report the current value of all interests, such as annuities, stocks, bonds, businesses, and bank accounts. They do not have to report personal property such as a home, car, furniture, or clothing.

## **Can Parents' Income Be Reduced?**

Yes. A portion of medical expenses may be used to reduce countable income for VA. The dependent parent(s) should report the amount of expenses they paid, that were not reimbursed by insurance, for the last 12 months and current month for themselves and for relatives they are under an obligation to support. Expenses for rent (or housing), home repairs, maintenance, clothing, medical care, utilities, groceries, taxes, etc., should also be reported.

## **How Much Does VA Pay?**

Please refer to *VA Compensation Rate Tables* at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/> for current rates.

## **How Can You Apply?**

Fill out [VA Form 21-509](#), *Statement of Dependency of Parents*, and submit it to your local [VA regional office](#). Call the toll-free number below for information about supporting materials that VA may need to process your claim.

**For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000  
or Visit Our Web Site at <http://www.va.gov/>**