



VA Aid & Attendance Benefits

A Step-by-Step Guide for Veterans & Surviving Spouses

Provided by Always Best Care Shalimar — Owned & Operated by a Disabled Veteran

What Is Aid & Attendance?

Aid & Attendance is a VA benefit that provides additional monthly payments to eligible veterans and surviving spouses who need help with daily activities. This money can be used directly to pay for in-home care — meaning many families can afford quality care they didn't think was possible.

2026 Maximum Monthly Benefit: Up to \$2,874/month

Step 1 — Confirm Basic Eligibility

The veteran must meet all three of the following:

- Served at least one day of active duty during a wartime period (WWII, Korean Conflict, Vietnam War, or Gulf War/present) with 90 total days of active duty
- Honorable or general discharge (not dishonorable)
- Needs help with at least two activities of daily living — bathing, dressing, feeding, toileting, or staying safe at home

Financial Limit: The 2026 net worth limit is \$163,699 (includes countable income and assets). Unreimbursed medical expenses — such as caregiver fees — can be deducted to reduce countable income, helping more families qualify.

Surviving Spouses: Surviving spouses of eligible veterans may also qualify — even after the veteran has passed — as long as they have not remarried and meet income and care needs requirements.

Step 2 — File an Intent to File (Optional but Smart)

Before submitting your full application, consider filing an Intent to File with the VA. This locks in your start date — so that once approved, retroactive payments go back to that date, not the date you submitted your full application. This can result in a significant lump sum back payment.

Step 3 — Gather Required Documents

Collect the following before starting your application:

- Military discharge papers (DD-214)
- Marriage certificate
- Documentation of all income and assets
- Receipts for unreimbursed medical expenses (including caregiver costs)
- Physician statement of injury or disability
- Surviving spouses: veteran's death certificate

Step 4 — Complete the Required Forms

Who	Form Number	Form Name
Veterans	VA Form 21P-527EZ	Application for Veterans Pension (available online at va.gov)
Surviving Spouses	VA Form 21P-534EZ	Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits
Both	VA Form 21-2680	Examination for Housebound Status or Permanent Need for Regular Aid & Attendance — must be completed and signed by a physician, PA, or APRN

Tip: VA Form 21-2680 must be completed by your doctor. Schedule this appointment early as it can take time to obtain.

Step 5 — Submit Your Application

Mail your completed packet via USPS Certified Mail with Return Receipt so you have proof of delivery. Keep photocopies of every document you send.

Mail to:

Department of Veterans Affairs Claims Intake Center
Attention: Philadelphia Pension Center
PO Box 4444, Janesville, WI 53547-4444

Step 6 — Wait for Processing

Processing typically takes four to six months. Applications submitted with professional assistance tend to process faster. Once approved, your benefit payments are retroactive to your original filing date.

2026 Maximum Monthly Benefit Amounts

Recipient	Max Monthly Benefit
Veteran with spouse (both needing care)	Up to \$2,874/month
Single veteran	Up to \$2,358/month
Surviving spouse	Up to \$1,478/month

Actual benefit amounts depend on your countable income. The VA subtracts your income from the maximum rate to determine your payment.

Local VA Resources in Okaloosa County

Office	Phone
Okaloosa County Veteran Services — 1250 N. Eglin Pkwy, Shalimar	(850) 651-7258
Shalimar Vet Center, 6 11 th Ave Suite G1, Shalimar FL	(850) 651-1000
Eglin VA Clinic, 100 Veteran's Way, Shalimar/Eglin FL	(866) 520-7359

We'll Help You Every Step of the Way — Free of Charge

*As a disabled veteran and local business owner, I know how confusing this process can be. At **Always Best Care Shalimar**, we help military families navigate VA benefits at no cost — and pair your loved one with a caregiver who respects their service and their independence.*

 **Contact Always Best Care Shalimar for your free, no-obligation consultation: [\(850\) 797-8710](tel:8507978710) or Shalimar@abc-seniors.com**