

FRANKLIN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

113 South Main Street ▪ Courthouse Annex, Room 103 ▪ Louisburg, NC 27549 ▪ 919-496-1939

www.co.franklin.nc.us

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HOW YOU GET CREDIT FOR SPECIAL EXTRA EARNINGS

The information that follows applies **only** to active duty military service earnings from 1940 through 2001. Here is how the special extra earnings are credited:

Service In 1978 through 2001

For every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and did not complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

Service in 1957 Through 1977

You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

Service In 1940 Through 1956

If you were in the military during this period, including attendance at a service academy, you did not pay Social Security taxes. However, your Social Security record may be credited with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from September 16, 1940, through December 31, 1956, under the following circumstances:

- You were honorably discharged after 90 or more days of service, or you were released because of a disability or injury received in the line of duty; or
- You are still on active duty; or
- You are applying for survivors benefits and the veteran died while on active duty.

You cannot receive credit for these special extra earnings if you are already receiving a federal benefit based on the same years of service. There is one exception: If you were on active duty after 1956, you can still get the special earnings for 1951 through 1956, even if you are receiving a military retirement based on service during that period.

SMALL BUSINESS CONTRACTS

Like other federal agencies, VA is required to place a portion of its contracts and purchases with small and disadvantaged businesses. VA has a special office to help small and disadvantaged businesses get information on VA acquisition opportunities. For more information, write the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (OOSB), 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20420-0001, call toll-free 1-800-949-8387 or visit: <http://www.va.gov/osdbu>

VA MEDICAL CARE

CHAMPVA, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA, provides reimbursement for most medical expenses – inpatient, outpatient, mental health, prescription medication, skilled nursing care and durable medical equipment.

Eligibility: To be eligible for CHAMPVA, an individual cannot be eligible for TRICARE (the medical program for civilian dependents provided by Department of Defense) and must be one of the following:

1. The spouse or child of a veteran who VA has rated permanently and totally disabled for a service-connected disability.
2. The surviving spouse or child of a veteran, who died from a VA-rated service-connected disability, or who, at the time of death, was rated permanently and totally disabled.
3. The surviving spouse or child of a military member who died in the line of duty, not due to misconduct. However, in most of these cases, these family members are eligible for TRICARE, not CHAMPVA.

A surviving spouse under age 55 who remarries loses CHAMPVA eligibility on midnight of the date of remarriage. However, they may re-establish eligibility if the remarriage ends by death, divorce or annulment effective the first day of the month following the termination of the remarriage or December 1, 1999, whichever is later. A surviving spouse who is 55 or older does not lose eligibility upon remarriage.

Those with Medicare entitlement may also have CHAMPVA eligibility secondary to Medicare. Eligibility limitations apply. For information, contact the VA Health Administration Center, P.O. Box 65023, Denver, CO 80206, call 1-800-733-8387 or visit: <http://www.va.gov/hac/>

LOANS FOR FARMS AND HOMES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides loans and guarantees to buy, improve or operate farms. Loans and guarantees are available for housing in towns generally up to 20,000 in population. Applications from veterans have preference. For further information contact Farm Service Agency or Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or apply at local Department of Agriculture offices. The N.C. Cooperative Extension Franklin County Center is located at 103 S. Bickett Blvd., Louisburg, 27549, telephone 919-496-3344.

APPEALS OF VA CLAIMS DECISIONS

Veterans and other claimants for VA benefits have the right to appeal decision made by a VA regional office or medical center. Typical issues appealed are disability compensation, pension, education benefits, recovery of overpayments, and reimbursement for unauthorized medical services.

A claimant has one year from the date of the notification of a VA decision to file an appeal. The first step in the appeal process is for a claimant to file a written notice of disagreement with the VA regional office or medical center that made the decision.

Following receipt of the written notice, VA will furnish the claimant a "Statement of the Case" describing what facts, laws and regulations were used in deciding the case. To complete the request for appeal, the claimant must file a "Substantive Appeal" within 60 days of the mailing of the Statement of the Case, or within one year from the date VA mailed its decision, whichever period ends later.

DEATH PENSION

VA provides pensions to low-income surviving spouses and unmarried children of deceased veterans with wartime service.

Eligibility: To be eligible, spouses must not have remarried and children must be under age 18, or under age 23 if attending a VA-approved school, or have become permanently incapable of self-support because of disability before age 18.

The veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and must have had 90 days or more of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war, or a service-connected disability justifying discharge. Longer periods of service may be required for veterans who entered active duty on or after September 8, 1990, or October 16, 1981, if an officer. If the veteran died in service but not in the line of duty, death pension may be payable if the veteran had completed at least two years of honorable service. Children who become incapable of self-support because of a disability before age 18 may be eligible for death pension as long as the condition exists, unless the child marries or the child's income exceeds the applicable limit.

A surviving spouse may be entitled to a higher income if living in a nursing home, in need of the aid and attendance of another person or is permanently housebound.

Payment: Death pension provides a monthly payment to bring an eligible person's income to a level established by law. The payment is reduced by the annual income from other sources such as Social Security. The payment may be increased if the recipient has unreimbursed medical expenses that can be deducted from countable income. The following chart list the 2007 maximum annual rate:

Recipient	Annual Rate	Annual Rate with Dependent Child
Surviving spouse	\$7,329	\$9,594
Permanently housebound	\$8,957	\$11,219
In need of regular aid & attendance	\$11,715	\$13,976
For each additional dependent child	\$1,866	
Pension for each surviving child	\$1,866	

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED