

Prepared for
Veterans Affairs Canada

My VAC Book

VAC's services and benefits for current
or former members of the RCMP



The word "Canada" is written in a black serif font with a small red maple leaf icon above the letter 'a'.

Canada

Message from Veterans Affairs Canada

Thank you for your service. Your contribution on behalf of our nation is not only greatly appreciated, it will never be forgotten.

My VAC Book is a print on-demand technology that provides customized information to you about our services and benefits. We sincerely hope that its contents will be a valuable resource as you develop your relationship with Veterans Affairs Canada.

Should you have any questions, you will find contact information at the back of this book to help you get in touch with the right people in the Department. We are ready and honoured to serve you.

A small red maple leaf icon is positioned to the left of the main text block.A small photograph of a man in a red RCMP uniform, wearing a wide-brimmed hat, looking to the right.

As a current or former member of the RCMP, you may qualify for one or more of our services and benefits:

- Disability Pension
- Other Benefits for Disability Pensioners
- Treatment Benefits
- Mental Health Support
- Support for you and your family



Disability Pension

Helping you with an injury or illness arising from your service...

The Disability Pension is a tax-free monthly payment to compensate you for an injury or illness related to your service in the RCMP. The amount of the pension will depend on the degree to which your condition is related to your service (entitlement) and the extent of your disability (assessment).

Additional Pension Amounts for Dependants are increases to your disability pension to help boost your family's income when you are responsible for any qualified dependants (e.g. spouse and/or children).

How do I apply?

Visit veterans.gc.ca or call us (see "Contact Us" page) to request an application. If you prefer, you can choose to contact the Royal Canadian Legion or the War Amps of Canada, who also assist Veterans (including former or current members of the RCMP) with disability pension applications. They can help ensure you have all the supporting documents you need such as service records and medical documents. Their assistance is provided on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada, so it is free of charge.

Other benefits

Exceptional Incapacity Allowance is a tax-free monthly assistance provided when you have a disability pension of 98% or more and an "exceptional incapacity" that is a consequence of, or is caused in whole or in part by, your pensioned condition(s).

Attendance Allowance is a tax-free monthly assistance to help with daily living tasks. It is provided to those who are totally disabled and have a disability pension. The amount you receive will be based on an assessment of your day-to-day personal care needs.

Clothing Allowance is a tax-free monthly assistance provided to disability pensioners with a condition that causes wear and tear on clothing or requires custom-made clothing.





Health Care

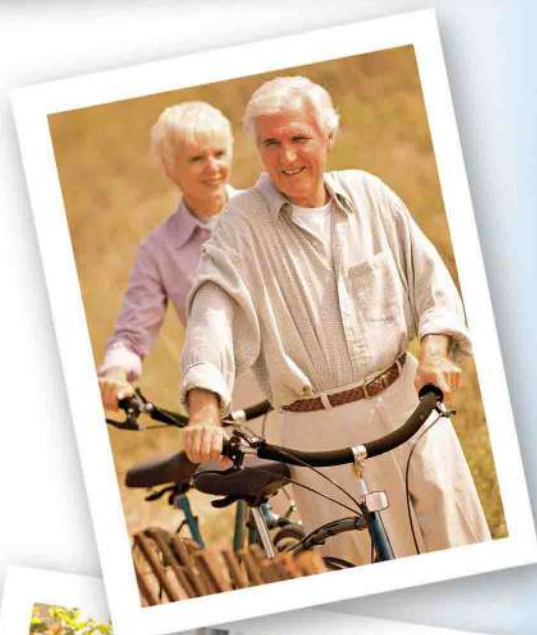
Treatment Benefits

If you qualify for a disability pension, you may also qualify for one or more of our treatment benefits. These medical benefits are divided into 14 categories:

1. Aids to daily living
2. Ambulance services
3. Audio (hearing) services
4. Dental services
5. Hospital services
6. Medical services
7. Medical supplies
8. Nursing services
9. Oxygen therapy
10. Prescription drugs
11. Prosthetics and orthotics
12. Health services
13. Special equipment
14. Vision care

Mental Health services and benefits are available to assist clients and families living with operational stress injuries.

A full range of clinical assessment and treatment services is available across the country in our operational stress injury clinics. Each clinic has a team of professionals who will work closely with you to help with the challenges you are facing and help improve your quality of life.





Support for you and your family

Survivor Benefits are available when a disability pensioner dies. If you were assessed at 5% or greater, your survivor will continue to receive your disability pension for one year. Any Attendance Allowance and/or Exceptional Incapacity Allowance you were receiving will also be provided to your survivor.

After this one year period, a **survivor's pension** will automatically be provided. The amount paid is based on the disability assessment you had received. If you were assessed at 48% or greater, your survivor will receive a full survivor's pension. If your assessment was between 5% and 47%, your survivor will receive one-half of the pension amount paid to you. Your survivor will receive this pension for the remainder of their lifetime.

Pastoral Outreach can help you and your family if you are dealing with end-of-life issues or just need spiritual support. To access the service, call **1-800-504-4156**.



Mental Health



Working with Health Providers

We work with and contract the services of mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers who provide and specialize in the assessment and treatment of operational stress injuries, in communities across Canada.

Support for You and Your Family

There are many services and benefits available to you and your family. Visit veterans.gc.ca to learn more about the services we have to assist you, and discover useful tips to help you get well and stay healthy.

Just Need to Talk to Someone?

If you or someone you know is having problems, we may be able to help. Just call our Assistance Service at any time, day or night, at **1-800-268-7708**. This confidential service is there to help Veterans and their family members who have personal concerns that affect their well-being. If, while speaking with you, the counsellor determines that long-term help or a specialized service is needed, a referral to an appropriate professional resource can be made.

If your child or teen wants to talk to someone who understands, they can also call the **Kids Help Phone** at **1-800-668-6868**.

Peer Support is available through the Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) program. If you would like to speak to someone who has been through similar experiences, understands, and will respect your need for privacy, contact OSISS toll free at **1-800-883-6094**. You can also locate the peer counsellor closest to you by visiting www.osiss.ca (select the "Contact Us" link and choose the "Peer Support Network" or the "Family Support Network" map).

Operational stress injury (OSI) clinics are outpatient facilities where you can receive assessment and treatment of your condition. The OSI clinics are staffed by teams of mental health professionals who can provide you and your family with personal and specialized care and support. To receive services at an OSI clinic, you must be referred by a Veterans Affairs Canada case manager. If you are suffering from an OSI, but do not presently have a case manager, please contact us.

You can read more about VAC's mental health services and supports at veterans.gc.ca (keyword: "Mental Health").



Veterans Research

Knowledge acquired from research is vital to help inform our decisions and policies. This information guides our program planners and informs our health managers, clinicians and various other stakeholders. Our Research Directorate works closely with its counterparts at the Department of National Defense and the Canadian Forces as well as with a network of Canadian universities to increase the quality and quantity of military and Veteran health research in Canada.

As military and Veteran health issues continue to become increasingly international in scope, we also share and collaborate on research with Veterans' administrations in countries around the world—particularly in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Veterans Affairs Canada has three main pillars of active research:

1. The **Research Directorate** at Veterans Affairs Canada conducts or participates in military and Veteran health research projects and general population health research to support and improve our health care services and other programs. In addition, our operational research helps to guide VAC's internal planning and decision making.
2. The research teams at **Ste. Anne's Hospital** conduct health research in areas such as dementia; pain management; brain trauma; and nutrition and aging.
3. Our **Mental Health** research guides our policies on the enhancement or introduction of services for Veterans with operational stress injuries and other mental health conditions.

You can read more about VAC's research at veterans.gc.ca (see A to Z list: "Research").





My VAC Account

An online service that allows you to interact with the Department in a secure environment, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. One of the key features of **My VAC Account** is the ability to track the status of your disability benefits application, from the time we receive it until a decision is made. **My VAC Account** also allows you to update your address, telephone number and e-mail address and to communicate with the Department through a secure messaging system within your account. Veterans Affairs Canada continues to introduce more features to **My VAC Account** to improve convenience and access to its programs and services.

The Government of Canada is committed to providing Canadians with secure access to online information and services. In order to ensure your online security through **My VAC Account**, you will need an Access Key account. Your Access Key account will be used for any online service provided by the Government of Canada.

You can register with Access Key from veterans.gc.ca (search term: "My VAC Account"), by following the link called "**Manage my Access Key.**" Once you have registered with Access Key, you simply need to follow the step-by-step process to register. Start by following the link for "**new users.**"





Your Rights Are Important

The Veterans Bill of Rights is a comprehensive declaration of rights for all Veterans and their families, including members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and serving members of the Canadian Forces (Regular and Reserve).

The Veterans Ombudsman helps ensure that services, benefits and support are provided in a fair, straightforward and timely manner by the Department. In addition, the Ombudsman plays a vital role in raising awareness of the needs and concerns of Veterans and their families.

The Bureau of Pensions Advocates is a nationwide group of lawyers within Veterans Affairs Canada. The Bureau can provide you with free legal assistance if you are unsatisfied with the Department's decision regarding your disability benefit claim and wish to appeal that decision.

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board was created by Parliament in 1995 to provide Veterans with an independent avenue of appeal for disability benefit decisions made by the Department.

A Departmental Review can be requested by you if you have new evidence that would likely alter a benefit decision made by the Department. For assistance with this type of review, please call us or contact the Bureau of Pensions Advocates or a service officer with the Royal Canadian Legion.



Commemoration



The Commemoration Division's programs help to keep alive the achievements and sacrifices made by all those who have served Canada in times of war, conflict and peace.

Cenotaph/Monument Restoration

provides assistance to communities and organizations to build and restore cenotaphs or monuments that promote and preserve the memory of all those who have served Canada.

Cemetery Maintenance is provided to maintain Canadian war graves and cemeteries in Canada and also throughout the world—mainly through our partnerships with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in South Korea.

Ceremonies and Events – We lead and assist in ceremonies and events in Canada and around the world that recognize and honour Canada's war dead and our Veterans, highlighted each year by the important events during Veterans' Week (November 5 to 11).

Honours and Awards – We issue or replace most medals associated with Canadian service during the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. Medal entitlement is determined by reviewing postings, dates and theatres of service.

Memorials – In Europe, we ensure the preservation of 13 First World War memorials. In Canada, we share responsibility for the National War Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial (virtualmemorial.gc.ca) is an online registry of the more than 117,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who served and gave their lives for Canada.

Partnerships – Through shared partnerships, we help to engage Canadians in remembrance activities and events at both the national and regional level. These partnerships are typically started through the Community Engagement Partnership Fund.

Web and Learning Initiatives – We offer a wealth of remembrance and historical resources for educators, students and the general public who want to learn more about Veterans and their sacrifices. Our range of free, bilingual materials includes such things as Veterans' Week products, learning kits, the "Heroes Remember" video interviews and interactive Web features.





Contact Us

For more information about our services and benefits, visit veterans.gc.ca

General Inquiries

If you have any questions about our services and benefits, please call us, toll free, at **1-866-522-2122** or e-mail us at information@vac-acc.gc.ca (for security reasons, please do not send confidential information via e-mail).

Living outside of Canada or planning an extended stay outside of Canada?

If you want to receive your benefits or wish to apply for benefits while you are outside Canada, please contact us from:

- Canada at: **1-866-522-2122** (toll free)
- The United States at: **1-888-996-2242** (toll free)
- The United Kingdom, Germany, France, or Belgium at: **00-800-996-22421** (toll free)
- None of the above?
Phone: **0-613-996-2242** (call collect)

Visit us at an Integrated Personnel Support Centre (IPSC)

Veterans Affairs Canada and the Department of National Defence work together through these

offices on or near most CAF bases to help ensure CAF personnel, Veterans and their families are getting all the assistance they qualify to receive.

In **New Brunswick**, there are IPSCs in Gagetown and Moncton. Visit our Web site (keyword: "IPSC") or call us to find an address.

There is an **operational stress injury (OSI) clinic** in Fredericton. To learn more, visit our Web site (keyword: "OSI Clinics") or speak with your VAC case manager.

Just need to talk to someone? If you or someone you know is in crisis, we can help. Call our **Assistance Service** at **1-800-268-7708** or visit our Web site for more information (keyword: "Assistance Service").

Other Inquiries:

- **Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP)**
Veterans Affairs Canada – ATIP office
PO Box 7700
Charlottetown PE C1A 8M9
Phone: **1-877-566-8609** (toll free)
- **Bureau of Pensions Advocates (BPA)**
BPA Head Office and Appeals Unit
PO Box 7700
Charlottetown PE C1A 8M9
Phone: **1-877-228-2250** (toll free)
- **Commemoration Public Information and Learning Resources**
Phone: **1-877-604-8469** (toll free)





Improving Services and Benefits for Veterans

There have been several news stories about the Department's future and how this future will impact our services. In light of this, we know it is important to make clear that the mandate of Veterans Affairs Canada hasn't changed and remains very important to the Government of Canada. We are committed to providing the same high standard of service to all Veterans.

Today, Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans represent our single largest group in receipt of disability benefits, overtaking all other Veterans combined. This means less emphasis on long-term care and related services and more emphasis on services such as rehabilitation and income support.

We are committed to supporting Canadian Armed Forces Veterans with the services they need now, while continuing to provide high quality programs and services for Veterans from the Second World War and the Korean War.

In order to do this effectively, some of our offices will have to expand, and we will need to hire new employees while in other areas with less demand, we will need smaller offices. Our overall focus in all of our decisions is to ensure that our employees are located where they are most needed.

Our mission over the next five years is to identify every opportunity to improve our services to Veterans and implement these changes. By simplifying our policies and practices and strengthening our partnerships with the Department of National Defence, we know we can make many small changes that will make a big difference in the lives of Canada's Veterans.

Canada is very grateful to all of those who have chosen to serve their country, as well as those who supported them and those who stand behind them to this day. We will always be there to serve those who have served Canada.

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veterans.gc.ca

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