



VA Comprehensive Caregiver Program Q&A

Question: What if a veteran served from late 1971 thru late 1978? When will the veteran be eligible to apply for the program?

Response: If the serious injury occurred on or before May 7, 1975, then the veteran is able to apply for the caregiver program now. If the veteran served during this period of time but later acquired a service-related disease such as ALS or MS, then VA will consider an application now since it is not possible to determine when the illness occurred. Although eligible to apply, there are seven eligibility criteria the veteran must meet to be included in the program.

Question: My injury or illness must be service-connected in order for me to be eligible for the program, correct?

Response: The veteran must have a serious injury, which is defined as a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or more, and meet additional eligibility requirements to participate in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. However, the injury for which the veteran needs assistance does not have to be service connected. The additional eligibility information can be found [here](#).

Question: I've been in the caregiver program since 2010. Do the program changes apply to me?

Response: If you and your family caregiver(s) were approved and designated by VA as eligible for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Caregivers before October 1, 2020, you are considered a "Legacy Participant." No immediate action is required if you want to stay in the program. VA will schedule an appointment to reassess your continued eligibility and care needs based on the new eligibility criteria that went into effect on October 1. You will maintain your automatic eligibility for one year – through September 30, 2021, no matter when your reassessment occurs.

Question: To be eligible for the program a veteran must have a primary care team. Does that mean the veteran must be enrolled for VA care?

Response: While a veteran is required to have a serious injury (including a serious illness), which is a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or more, and meet the additional eligibility requirements such as receiving care from a Primary Care Team, in accordance with [38 CFR 17.38\(a\)](#) veterans who are service connected at 50 percent or more are not required be enrolled.

Question: If a veteran's injury occurred during the time frame of phase II expansion (May 8, 1975, to September 10, 2001) should the veteran wait until after October 1, 2022, to apply?

Response: Yes, VA is not accepting joint applications from phase II veterans at this time. We will alert members when they do.

Question: I am currently an unpaid caregiver. The veteran served from 1971 to 1972 and has ALS, which VA rated at 100 percent as of March 2019. The veteran requires minimal care at this time. I administer transfusions 10 days out every 4 weeks. Would this be enough to apply for the minimal stipend and later

apply for the higher stipend as the diseases progresses?

Response: The PCAFC provides support to family caregivers of veterans with moderate and severe needs. There is no limitation to who can apply but there are several eligibility requirements. Veterans must either require assistance with at least one activity of daily living each time the task is performed or they must require supervision, protection, or instruction to maintain personal safety on a daily basis. This care must be needed for six continuous months. Assessments for PCAFC consider the veteran's current function at the time of the application and not their anticipated care needs upon disease progression. Additional information about program eligibility is available [here](#).

Question: If I collect Aid and Attendance, am I still able to apply for this program?

Response: Yes, collecting Aid and Attendance (A&A) is not a disqualification for the PCAFC. However, the veteran cannot use A&A to pay the caregiver for the same service for which the veteran and caregiver are applying to PCAFC for compensation. For example, if the veteran uses his A&A to pay his nephew to help him with bathing, then submits a joint caregiver application with his wife for her to provide that same assistance the application would likely be denied. VA cannot pay his wife under the PCAFC if that is the only activity of daily living for which the veteran needs care.

Question: Is the caregiver stipend taxable?

Response: The monthly stipend issued to a primary family caregiver is not considered taxable income.

Question: What is the difference between the PCAFC and the Fee Basis Bowel and Bladder program? Can you be enrolled in both simultaneously?

Response: These are two different programs with distinct eligibility criteria and benefits. It is possible to be enrolled in both programs so long as the appropriate eligibility criteria for both are met. For example, if a veteran's caregiver receives payment under the Bowel and Bladder program, then the caregiver will not be eligible for the PCAFC if the only activity of daily living for which the veteran needs care is related to bowel and bladder care. You can read more about the Bowel and Bladder program within VA's larger Spinal Cord Injuries and Disorders System of Care programs [here](#). You can read more about the PCAFC program [here](#).