



National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society

## Are You Eligible for VA Benefits?

If you are a veteran diagnosed with MS within seven years of your separation from the military, the Veterans Health Administration could classify your illness as related to your military service and award you a “service-connected” disability.

If you separated more than seven years ago, you might still be eligible. You must have an MS diagnosis by a healthcare provider, preferably a neurologist, who directly links the symptoms you had during those seven years to your current diagnosis.

## Applying for VA Benefits

If you have MS (or symptoms of MS) and think you could be eligible for VA benefits, do not hesitate in collecting important information and exploring the application process.

### Follow these steps to begin:

- Keep a complete and ongoing journal of all your symptoms, noting dates, duration, severity, names of medical providers, and any witnesses who can attest to the limitations imposed by your MS. Keep questions for your healthcare providers in the same notebook and take it with you to all medical appointments.
- Keep a complete and ongoing file of all your medical records. A crucial part of the application process is having a copy of your **DD Form 214** and documentation of all your medical information to date. Be sure to include all non-military medical records as well. This information could help support a case for future rating increases.
- Call your local [Paralyzed Veterans of America](#) service office at 1-800-424-8200 or another accredited veterans service organization to ensure you receive all your entitled VA benefits. [Visit the VA director of veterans service organization](#). You'll need several documents. A PVA service officer will let you know exactly what you need and will help you file your claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs.



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- You can and should enroll in your local [VA Medical Center](#). For this you will need a copy of your military discharge (DD Form 214 or equivalent) and VA Form 10-10EZ. Ask for an appointment with the neurology clinic's social worker or the rehab clinic's social worker. This person will provide you with essential information, coordinate the details of your care, and can be an ally for you.
- If you are filing a claim with the VA, we recommend doing it as soon as possible. If you are still collecting the information to prove your claim, be sure to obtain an extension from the VA. If your claim is found compensable, you usually will be paid from the date of filing, not from the date of diagnosis.
- At any time, you can contact your local VA county or state veterans service representative for assistance and any questions regarding the filing process. [Look up local information here.](#)

Many avenues of assistance and benefits are available for you as a veteran with service-connected MS. We encourage you to contact the PVA. Call 800-424-8200 or visit [www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org) for more information.

If you have questions about MS therapies or MS services in your community, contact the National MS Society at 1-800 FIGHT MS (1-800-344-4867).