

How does this benefit help you and your caregiver?

The Caregiver Recognition Benefit provides your informal caregiver a direct monthly payment of \$1,000 tax free. It replaces the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit. The benefit recognizes the important role a caregiver delivers on a day-to-day basis with your daily activities.

It provides financial support directly to your informal caregiver if you were seriously injured in service.

Are you eligible?

You may qualify for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit if you have a disability award* and:

- you have an informal caregiver who helps you with your illness or injuries for which you received a disability award.
- your need for care is ongoing (expected to last at least 12 months).
- your informal caregiver is 18 years of age or older and is not paid for providing or coordinating your care.
- you are not a permanent resident of a nursing home or long-term care facility.

* This program is only available to recipients of a disability award. If you have a disability pension or POW compensation of 1% or more, you can apply for Attendance Allowance. Similar to the Caregiver Recognition Benefit, the Attendance Allowance is a significant benefit available when you need help with daily living tasks and are considered totally disabled. Still serving members are not eligible for the Caregiver Relief Benefit.

What should you do before you apply?

- Read through our common questions and answers to get a better understanding of how the program works.
 - You should also read [Activities of Daily Living](#) as this benefit is intended only for Veterans who require assistance with four of the seven activities of daily living.
 - Both you and your caregiver need to fill out the [application](#) as the benefit will be paid directly to your caregiver.
 - Gather your personal and service information to help you fill out your [application](#).
 - You will not have to submit information other than your application. We will reference your information we already have on file and if more information is needed to make a decision, we will contact you.
-

How to apply

- Please note: your application must be signed by both you and your caregiver. Because of this you will need to download the [application](#) and fill it out with your caregiver.

Apply online

If you are registered for My VAC Account, you can submit your application online. To do this, you will need to print the application for both you and your caregiver to sign. Once complete, you can scan and upload it for submission through My VAC Account. If you aren't registered you can [register now](#).

Mail or in person

Download the [application form](#). Then, drop it off – or get help filling it out – at a [VAC Area Office](#).

You can also mail your completed form directly to the address listed on the form.

You can also download the application form and then send it to us directly through the mail.

- Veterans Affairs Canada
PO Box 6000
Matane, QC G4W 0E4

What to expect after applying?

- Once you have submitted your application, you can expect a decision in eight weeks and your first payment within nine weeks .
- There may be a time when a review or assessment may be completed to ensure that you continue to meet program criteria and to ensure that your health and well-being are not at risk.
- If you need to change your informal caregiver, you will need to inform us of the change. You will then need to fill out a new application with your new informal caregiver.

Common questions and answers

Questions and answers

Q1. What is the Caregiver Recognition Benefit?

It is a new tax-free benefit of \$1,000 a month, paid directly to your informal caregiver.

Q2. Will eligibility for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit be the same as for the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit?

Yes. Eligibility criteria for the new benefit remain the same as those for the old benefit. The main difference is that the new benefit is a monthly, tax-free amount paid directly to caregivers.

Q3. If I currently receive the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit, will my caregiver receive the new benefit automatically or do I need to apply again?

Earlier this year, we sent all current FCRB recipients information in the mail on the new program and how the changes will impact you. Because the benefit has a new name, payment structure and is payable to your caregiver, you will need to apply for the benefit again. As the new benefit provides direct payment to your caregiver both you and your caregiver must fill-out and sign your application.

Q4. Will I continue to receive the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit up until I apply for the new benefit, or will payments stop as of April 1, 2018?

The FCRB was a yearly payment, therefore whenever you received your last payment prior to April 1, 2018, that will be your last annual payment. The new Caregiver Recognition Benefit has a monthly payment structure. You will need to reapply for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit to ensure that your caregiver begins to receive payments under the new benefit. The application process is expected to take eight weeks and you can expect payment within 9 weeks.

Q5. Who is eligible for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit?

You may qualify for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit if you have a Disability Award and

- as a result of the condition for which you have received the Disability Award you require ongoing care to the extent that:
 - you need a level of care and supervision that is consistent with admission to an institution or nursing home,
 - you need daily physical assistance of another person for at least four of your

- activities of daily living [See [Q8: What are activities of daily living?](#)],
- you need ongoing direction and supervision during the performance of at least four of your activities of daily living, or
 - you need daily supervision and are only considered safe when you are left alone for short periods of time
 - you have an informal (unpaid) caregiver who provides or co-ordinates your care;
 - your need for care is ongoing (expected to last at least 12 months)
 - your informal caregiver is 18 years of age or older and is not paid for providing or coordinating your care; and
 - you are not a permanent resident of a nursing home or long-term care facility.
-

Q6. I am covered under the Pension Act, am I eligible for CRB?

No. This program is available to recipients of a Disability Award. If you are covered under the Pension Act, you are not eligible for CRB. However, if you have a disability pension or prisoner-of-war compensation of one percent or more, you can apply for Attendance Allowance. Similar to the Caregiver Recognition Benefit, the [Attendance Allowance](#) is a benefit available when you need help with daily living tasks and are considered totally disabled.

Q7. Can serving Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members receive CRB?

No. Members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are serving are not eligible for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit.

Q8. What are activities of daily living?

Activities of daily living are a set of activities necessary for self-care. They include:

- Feeding – eating prepared foods and drinking (e.g., cutting-up food, buttering bread)
- Washing – washing face, trunk, extremities and hair
- Dressing – putting on and taking off all pieces of indoor and outdoor clothing
- Grooming/foot care/personal care – brushing hair and teeth; shaving and applying make-up; skin and nail care; cleansing and personal care associated with toileting
- Toileting – continence of bowel and bladder; using toilet facilities
- Taking medication – preparing and self-administering medication
- Mobility
 - Transfers – changing body position independently (e.g., positioning the body from lying to sitting, sitting to standing, lying on the back to lying on the side)
 - Ambulation – moving the body from one point in space to another (e.g., climbing stairs, walking)

Q9. Can a caregiver that is being paid to provide care receive a payment under the Caregiver Recognition Benefit?

No. Paid caregivers do not qualify to receive the Caregiver Recognition Benefit.

Q10. Is there a time limit to apply for this benefit?

No. Veterans can apply for this benefit at any time.

Q11. How do I apply for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit?

All applications must be signed by both you and your caregiver. Because of this you will need to download the [application](#) and fill it out with your caregiver.

If you are registered for My VAC Account, you can access the application for Caregiver Recognition Benefit online. If you aren't registered you can [register now](#).

You can drop it off – or get help filling it out – at a VAC Area Office.

You can also download the application form and then send it to us directly through the mail.

Veterans Affairs Canada
PO Box 6000
Matane, QC G4W 0E4

Q12. If the benefit is paid to my caregiver, why can't my caregiver apply?

Since it is your health needs that require the services of a caregiver, you must apply for the benefit. If you have granted power of attorney to someone, that person may apply on your behalf. However, your caregiver is required to complete and sign a section of the application.

Q13. Is the Caregiver Recognition Benefit intended to provide employment income in lieu of the caregiver having other employment?

No. The Caregiver Recognition Benefit is not intended as income for work. A Veteran's caregiver may be employed and still receive this benefit if they provide or co-ordinate the Veteran's care in the home. The benefit is meant to recognize caregivers for the daily support they provide to ill and/or injured Veterans.

Q14. Why did you make this change?

Veterans Affairs Canada made this change to better recognize the contribution that informal caregivers make to the health and well-being of Veterans. Veterans and their representatives also made requests for this type of recognition.

Q15. Will access to this benefit be easier, compared to the existing Family Caregiver Relief Benefit?

Yes. For the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit, you had to complete an initial application and then a renewal form each year after that.

With the Caregiver Recognition Benefit, you will need to make an initial application only. While there is no need for you to complete a renewal form, Veterans Affairs Canada will carry out reviews and assessments to make sure you continue to meet program criteria and your health and well-being is not at risk. Where possible, Veterans Affairs Canada will verify information collected from assessments conducted for other benefits and services to determine your continued eligibility for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit.

Q16. Who is considered a caregiver?

A caregiver is a person 18 years of age or older who plays an essential role in the provision or coordination of ongoing care to you in your home for which the caregiver receives no payment.

The informal caregiver is not required to live with you. At the time of application, the caregiver will attest to the fact that he or she is:

- 18 years of age or older,
 - Plays an essential role in providing or coordinating your ongoing care in your home, and
 - Is not paid for providing or coordinating this care.
-
-

Q17. Why does someone have to be 18 years of age to be considered a caregiver?

Canadian law requires that Veterans' informal caregivers must be 18 years of age or older. The age of 18 years was determined to be appropriate given the nature and degree of the Veteran's care needs as well as the degree and intensity of the required caregiving/care coordination responsibilities.

Q18. Can a caregiver receive the benefit on behalf of multiple Veterans?

Yes. It is possible for more than one Veteran to designate the same caregiver. The caregiver must be fulfilling their role of providing support to be entitled to receive multiple payments.

Q19. Can I change my caregiver?

Yes. If you want to change your caregiver, please call us to let us know as soon as possible. You will need to submit a new application if you are changing caregivers, so to ensure payments to your new caregiver are processed as quickly as possible, contact us as soon as you know you will be changing caregivers. Please keep in mind that application processing takes eight weeks and you can expect payment within 9 weeks.

Q20. Can the benefit be paid to my caregiver if we live outside Canada?

Yes. The benefit can be paid to your caregiver if you both live outside Canada.

Q21. What if my Disability Award is for a mental health condition and not a physical condition? Can I still apply for the new benefit?

Yes. If you have a mental health condition, you may still be approved for the benefit, as long as you meet the criteria of needing assistance with the activities of daily living, or if you require ongoing care or daily supervision.

Q22. If my application is denied, can I appeal the decision?

You can request a review of a decision by contacting Veterans Affairs Canada in writing within 60 days of the date you receive the decision. You are not required to provide additional information for a review, but you may do so if you believe it may help explain why you feel the decision was incorrect.

Q23. For Veterans who currently collect the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit, how will the transition to the new Caregiver Recognition Benefit occur? Will current recipients be notified of the new benefit?

Current recipients of the FCRB will need to apply for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit as

there are some changes to the information that is collected, including the requirement for the caregiver to provide their information and sign the application. The Veteran will not be required to provide any supporting documentation at the time of application. VAC will verify information that is already on file and will contact the Veteran if any additional information is needed.

All existing FCRB clients were sent a bulletin in February 2018 with information notifying them of the new benefit and how this will impact them. During the first week of April, a copy of the new application will be mailed out to all existing FCRB clients to complete and send back to VAC.

Q24. Are payments to the caregiver retroactive to the date of application if there is a delay in processing?

The Caregiver Recognition Benefit is payable from the 1st day of the month in which the completed application is received. There are no pro-rated payments. VAC's goal is to make a decision and have the first payment for caregivers of eligible clients sent out within nine weeks.

[View all questions and answers](#) related to the Caregiver Recognition Benefit.

Will eligibility for the Caregiver Recognition Benefit be the same as for the Family Caregiver Relief Benefit?

Yes. Eligibility criteria for the new benefit remain the same as those for the old benefit. The main difference is that the new benefit is a monthly, tax-free amount paid directly to caregivers.

Is there a time limit to apply for this benefit?

No. Veterans can apply for this benefit at any time.