

A Veteran may be eligible for travel benefits if:

- They have a Service-Connected Disability (SC) rating of 30% or more.
- They are traveling for treatment of a Service-Connected Disability,
- They receive a VA Pension,
- Their income does not exceed the annual Maximum Pension Rate, or
- They are traveling for a scheduled Compensation & Pension (C&P) exam.

Other individuals that may be eligible for travel benefits include:

- Beneficiaries of other Federal agencies, when authorized by that agency,
- Allied beneficiaries when authorized by appropriate foreign government agency,
- Certain non-Veterans when related to care of a Beneficiary Travel (BT) eligible Veteran:
 - Caregivers under the National Caregivers Program,
 - Medically required attendants,
 - VA transplant care donor and support person,
 - Other claimants subject to the current regulatory guidelines.
- Expanded eligibility under Public Law 111-163, effective May 5, 2010 and designated under 38 United States Code (USC) 1720G.
- Expanded eligibility under Section 250 of Public Law 114-223, effective October 1, 2016:
 - Veterans with vision impairment,
 - A spinal cord injury or disorder (SCI/D), or
 - Double or multiple amputations.

When travel is in connection with care provided through a special disabilities' rehabilitation program of the VA (including programs provided by spinal cord injury centers, blind rehabilitation centers, and prosthetics rehabilitation centers) if such care is provided:

- On an inpatient basis, or
- During a period in which the VA Secretary provides the Veteran with temporary lodging at a facility of the Department to make such care more accessible.

Eligibility under 38 USC 1714(a) and (d) as implemented by 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 17.148-154 - Service Dog.

- Veteran traveling to obtain, train, and return with a service dog prescribed by a VA clinical team and approved under by VA.
- Includes travel if necessary, for retraining of the service dog or to obtain a replacement service dog for one currently receiving benefits for.

For VA Beneficiary Travel:

If the Veteran is:

Non-Count Clinic Eligibility

- Eligible for BT, and
- Travel is in connection with care of services for which the Veteran is eligible under the laws administered by VA (e.g. VA's medical benefit package), and
- The application was made in accordance with VA regulations (i.e. 38 CFR 70.20).

Beneficiary travel should be paid.

Special Mode of Transportation

To assist with questions about special mode of transportation (e.g. ambulance), refer to KM article - (VAMC BT) Special Mode of Transportation.

Emergency Travel

As outlined in the KM article - (VAMC BT) Emergency Travel, the VA can provide reimbursement under certain emergency situations.

Mileage Rate and Road Tolls

The following is the mileage rate that will be paid for travel:

General Patient Travel Description	Rate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheduled appointments qualify for round-trip mileage• Unscheduled visits are limited to return mileage only	\$0.415 (41.5 cents per mile)

The current regulatory language found in 38 CFR 70.32 (a)(2), 38 CFR 70.30(a)(2) requires VA to pay actual cost for road tolls when the travel expenses are actually incurred. Claimants must provide VA with receipts for such expenses.

Deductible Charge

In most cases, beneficiary eligible Veterans' travel benefits are subject to the following deductibles:

- \$3.00 for each one-way trip or
- \$6.00 for each round-trip

Deductible requirement is subject to a monthly cap of \$18.00 or 6 one-way (3 round) whichever occurs first. Upon reaching the cap travel payments made for the balance of that month will be free of deductible charges.

You may be exempt from the deductible if:

- Travel is related to a C&P examination, or
- Special Mode of Transportation is required.
- Certain Veterans serving as an Official Caregivers under the National Caregivers Program when related to care of a Beneficiary Travel (BT) eligible Veteran.

Waiver of Deductible

When it is determined that the deductible would cause severe financial hardship then you may qualify for a waiver.

The following is evidence of severe hardship if you are:

- In receipt of VA Pension,
- Non-Service-Connected Disability (NSC) and your income for previous year or projected income for the year of application is at or below VA pension threshold, or
- Service-Connected and your income for previous year or projected income for the current year is at or below the Means Test Threshold.

Notes:

- The waiver is good through end of calendar year or until your income changes to a point where you are no longer eligible for a waiver.
- Veterans are required to complete an annual financial assessment to determine their eligibility for Beneficiary Travel.

Reimbursement

Generally, to receive reimbursement, the Veteran must apply within 30 calendar days after their travel is completed.

Travel may be requested by using one of the following:

If travel is requested...	Then...
In person	<p>A Veteran may apply orally for travel, with VA assistance in completion of required form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff will process the claim and have the Veteran sign the 70-3542d voucher for payment, or• The Veteran can provide VA Form 10-3542 application for payment. <p>Note: The Veteran will still be required to sign the completed form. If the Voucher does not print on one page, contact your local Information Technology (IT) to adjust printer settings.</p>
In writing	<p>Complete VA Form 10-3542, Veteran/Beneficiary Claim for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses.</p> <p>A copy of the form is at https://www.va.gov/find-forms/.</p> <p>Upon completion the form should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Placed in the identified drop-box,• Mailed to the VA health care facility where care was provided, or• Present it to the travel office in person.

If travel is requested...	Then...
Electronically using the Beneficiary Travel Self Service System (BTSSS)	<p>A Veteran may apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by completing the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to BTSSS at https://eauth.va.gov/accessva. 2. Select I am a Veteran. 3. Select Veteran Travel Claim Entry. 4. Sign in using one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DS Logon, ◦ VA PIV Card, ◦ ID.me, or ◦ My HealtheVet. 5. Once logged into the Veteran Portal, the Veteran can submit their own claims for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mileage expenses, ◦ Air travel, ◦ Meals, ◦ Lodging, and ◦ Other expenses, such as tolls, parking, etc. <p>Note: When the Veteran completes their travel claim on the Veteran Portal, a VA Form 10-3542 is not required as the Veteran must select a box identifying they incurred a cost on this trip. This electronic process takes the place of the 10-3542.</p>

Reimbursement is generally based upon travel to the closest VA or VA authorized facility that can provide the Veteran's needed care or services. However, travel may be provided to a more distant facility if:

- VA refers the Veteran to a specific place for care, or
- The Veteran's VA provider determines for clinical reasons (including an established provider/patient relationship) the Veteran should be followed at a different facility.

If the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) scheduled an exam with a contract provider (not at a VA), travel reimbursement will be paid in full to all eligible Veterans either on the spot, or by mail by the contract provider once the contract exam has been concluded and all required paperwork has been completed and signed by the examiner.

Eligible Veterans that have not received their travel reimbursement from the contract provider should contact the Contract Exam Inquiry Mailbox at: ContractExam.VBAVACO@va.gov.

Direct Deposit

The Department of Treasury established that Federal non-tax payments (VA compensation, pension, education payments, and beneficiary travel payments) are made, with few exceptions, electronically through the Direct Deposit-Electronic Funds Transfer.

Cash payments will remain a very limited option to Veterans who are not able to return home.

Beneficiary Travel Overpayment

A beneficiary travel overpayment could occur if it is determined:

- The Veteran was not eligible for reimbursement,
- An incorrect residence address was reported resulting in an inappropriate mileage calculation,
- An incorrect mileage reimbursement rate was used, or
- The Veteran did not attend or complete the appointment relating to travel.

Options for repayment include:

- Lump sum payment,
- Repayment plan,
- Waiver or Compromise, or
- Dispute.

If resolution of the overpayment is not made, then the debt may be referred for collection through the Treasury Offset Program (TOP Collections).

Travel for Ineligible Beneficiaries

Veterans who do not meet BT eligibility may qualify for other transportation resources to include:

- The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) transportation network,
- Veterans Transportation Service (VTS), or
- Other local, state, or Federal programs.

The VA will assist the Veteran in exploring available options.

Resources

KM Article - Community Care Program (Formerly Known as Non-VA Care/Fee Basis Care)
KM Article - Direct Deposit-Electronic Funds Transfer
KM Article - Means Test Threshold
KM Article - Non-Service-Connected Disability
KM Article - Service-Connected Disability
KM Article - TOP Collections
KM Article - (VAMC BT) Emergency Travel
KM Article - (VAMC BT) Special Mode of Transportation
KM Article - Vendor Bill
KM Article - Veterans Benefits Administration (VA Regional Office)
<https://vaww.va.gov/hec/bt/btfaq.asp>

References

38 CFR 70
VHA Directive 1601B.05, Beneficiary Travel, January 20, 2022
VA Financial Policies and Procedure, Volume XII – Chapter 6, February 18, 2021

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You can view this article at:

https://vaww.vrm.km.va.gov/system/templates/selfservice/va_kanew/help/agent/locale/en-US/portal/55440000001046/content/554400000105602/VAMC-BT-Beneficiary-Travel-Overview