

Second vehicle adaption authorized for veterans impacted by natural disaster



Veterans who received a one-time payment from the VA for an adaptive automobile grant whose vehicle or equipment was adversely impacted by a natural disaster have the opportunity to receive a second allowance.

Adaptive vehicles can have a daunting price tag for veterans who rely on the technology to stay independent and mobile. Fortunately, veterans and service members with certain service-connected disabilities are eligible for a one-time payment toward the purchase of an adaptive automobile or equipment up to \$20,577.18.

If a vehicle or the equipment is damaged in a car accident, often times its replacement or repair is covered by insurance. But some insurance companies may not cover damage from a natural disaster, and this past year has seen a concerning number of floods, fires and hurricanes across the country and in U.S. territories.

DAV has provided a record-breaking more than \$1.1 million in support already this year through individual vouchers to help veterans and their families impacted by a natural disaster secure temporary lodging, food and other necessities. Service officers also want to ensure veterans are aware of this second payment.

“Millions of Americans have been impacted by the natural disasters that have swept our nation this past year—including thousands of veterans,” said DAV National Service Director and Marine Corps veteran Jim Marszalek. “After water, food and shelter, the ability to remain mobile is essential for veterans and we want them to know about this benefit.”

National Area Supervisor Jennifer Kellogg has helped more than 100 veterans in Texas recently impacted by Hurricane Harvey through the DAV disaster relief program.

“I have seen first-hand the aftermath of natural disasters, and how difficult it can be to start over. That’s why DAV is here to support our brothers and sisters in greatest need,” said Kellogg, an Air Force veteran. “Now that we have helped veterans with more immediate needs, we are standing by to assist with filing for the second automobile grant or any other benefit they may be eligible for.”

Like the initial authorization for a one-time grant, veterans must be eligible for the payment and have not been found at fault for the destruction. Additionally, the veteran cannot receive compensation for the loss from a property insurer.

Veterans who believe they are eligible for a second allowance due to natural disaster can submit a claim on a 21-4502, Application for Automobile or Other Conveyance and Adaptive Equipment and a separate VA Form 21-4138, Statement in Support of Claim. VA will work with veterans to determine insurance on the vehicle and confirm the disaster which resulted in the destruction or damage of the vehicle or equipment.

“VA wants to ensure that every veteran entitled to an automobile grant, especially those who have been impacted this year by a natural disaster, knows about this important new benefit,” said VBA’s Director of Compensation Service Beth Murphy. “VA has provided information on this benefit to employees who are assisting in the relief efforts and to those

in our call centers. VA encourages any veteran with questions to reach out to our VSO partners or to VA at 1-800-827-1000.”

To find a DAV national service office near you, visit www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office.