



Caregivers Update

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CRITICAL POLICY GOAL

DAV urges Congress / VA to:

- Improve the program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)

VA MUST

- Replace the current eligibility regulations for PCAFC and create new standards that are clear, consistent, and equitable.
- Provide detailed explanations on how standards will be measured and applied in each PCAFC decision notification that is sent to veterans and caregivers.

CONGRESS MUST

Hold VA accountable to fully and faithfully implement the improvements and expansion of PCAFC mandated by the MISSION Act to all severely injured veterans without more unnecessary delays.

VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The **Caregiver Support Program (CSP)** is comprised of **2 separate programs**;

- **Program of General Caregiver Support Services(PGCSS)**
 - Core of VA's CSP. The program provides peer support mentoring, skills training, coaching, telephone support, online programs, and referrals to available resources to caregivers of Veterans.
- **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers(PCAFc)**
 - Enhanced clinical support and services for caregivers of eligible Veterans who have a serious injury (or illness) and require in-person personal care services among other requirements.



VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Type of Support	PGCSS	PCAFC
Caregiver Support Team	√	√
Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers Health (REACH) VA	√	√
Caregiver Support Line (CSL)	√	√
Caregiver Health & Wellbeing Coaching	√	√
Building Better Caregivers	√	√
Supportive Services	√	√
Caregivers FIRST Skills Training	√	√
Peer Support Mentoring	√	√
Respite Care	√	√
Annie Caregiver Text	√	√

Type of Support	PGCSS	PCAFC
Self-care/Resilience courses	√	√
Connection to VA/Community Resources	√	√
Caregiver & Family Resource Fairs	√	√
VA S.A.V.E. Training	√	√
Mental Health Counseling (as applicable)	√	√
CHAMPVA (if uninsured)		√
Monthly Stipend		√
Beneficiary Travel (as applicable)		√



IMPROVE THE PROGRAM OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS (PCAFC)

- MISSION Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-182) expanded access to PCAFC to family caregivers of veterans severely injured before September 11, 2001.
- 2020 VA adopted new eligibility regulations, which were adverse to veterans and caregivers of all eras.
- March 2021, VA announced not to drop program participants from the department's caregiver support program.
- VA had issued preliminary decisions to nearly 13,000 legacy applicants and legacy participants that they were found not eligible under criteria in place at the time of their reassessment.



PCAFC, WHAT HAPPENED

While these nearly 13,000 determinations have not been effectuated/put into force, information gathered during the reassessments demonstrate that a high number of the legacy cohort would not meet PCAFC criteria in place today, due to one or more of the following:

- Improved functioning
- Minimal needs
- Inconsistency in previous determinations

PCAFC, WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

- February 27, 2024, The Veterans Court ruled claimants have the right to appeal to the Board.
- VA has conducted a comprehensive review of PCAFC which has involved examination of certain PCAFC eligibility criteria.
 - This review analyzed, previously conducted eligibility reassessments of the legacy cohort - found individuals within the legacy cohort may have different degrees of need with respect to personal care services than those of the non-legacy cohort due to improvements or other factors.



VA KEY TAKEAWAYS

- VA is working towards publication of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) which will propose amendments to PCAFC eligibility criteria, among other changes.
- VA's suspension of annual reassessments for continued PCAFC eligibility remains in effect.
- Interim Final Rule (IFR), Extension of Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Eligibility for Legacy Participants and Legacy Applicants remains in effect.



VA IMPORTANT UPDATES

- **Enhanced Respite Services:** CSP is expanding the availability of resources provided to caregivers by funding respite liaisons at each of the Veteran Integrated Service Networks (VISNs) to assist with offering enhanced respite and increase respite access which is utilized by our caregivers.
- **Caregiver Clinical Resource Hub Updates:** CSP collaborated with the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and Clinical Resource Hubs to implement tele-mental health teams that offer virtual psychotherapy for caregivers across the nation.
- The VPPC is currently operational in fourteen Veterans Integrated Services, with plans to open in all VISNs within the next few months.
- **Financial and Legal Services (FLS):** Legal and Financial Planning Services are available to Primary Family Caregivers enrolled in PCAFC nationwide.



INTRODUCED BILLS

- H.R.542 / S.141 - Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act of 2023
 - **9,747 / 17,963** DAV CAN Actions taken
- H.R.4518 / S.1792 - CARE Act of 2023
- H.R.3581 - COPE Act
- H.R.2526 - S.O.S. Veterans Caregivers Act
- H.R.104 -TEAM Veteran Caregivers Act
- S.3885 - Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act
- S.1436 - CHARGE Act of 2023
- S.216 - RESPECT Act of 2023



DAV CAREGIVERS SUPPORT

- DAV believes the caregivers of our country's veterans deserve their own support.
- DAV Caregivers Support – provides tailored support and resources to friends, family members and loved ones
<https://www.dav.org/get-help-now/dav-caregivers-support/>
- In partnership with TCARE, DAV Caregivers Support provides tailored support and resources to the family members and loved ones who provide care to those who served – at no cost.

<https://together.mytcare.ai/dav>



SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

Through DAV Caregivers Support, caregivers can access:

- Online resources and risk screening to better understand their role as a caregiver.
- Digital tools to support their caregiving responsibilities.
- Personalized care plans - one-on-one support from a trained caregiver specialist with experience supporting veterans and their loved ones.



SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

By providing them with a proven support program, caregivers and the veterans they love benefit from:

- Reduced caregiver stress, depression and other negative health outcomes.
- Improved relationships between veterans and their caregivers.
- Increased resilience and ability to navigate complex caregiving responsibilities, including navigating health care systems and financial planning.





Thank You!

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