

Department of the Navy, DoD

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(and there is no other designated beneficiary) such amount shall be paid to the then living survivor or survivors listed first under paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) In case one of the beneficiaries (parents or brothers or sisters) designated by a member, pursuant to paragraph (a)(3) of this section, to receive death gratuity payment dies prior to the member's death, or after his death but prior to the time payment is made, the share which would have been paid to the deceased designee may be paid to the other person or persons designated.

[24 FR 7523, Sept. 18, 1959, as amended at 37 FR 6471, Mar. 30, 1972]

§716.5 Delegation of authority.

(a) Pursuant to the authority contained in title 10 U.S.C., section 1479, as to deaths described in section 1475 thereof, the Secretary of the Navy has delegated to commanding officers of naval commands, installations, or districts, with respect to naval personnel, and to Marine Corps commanding generals and officers in command of regiments, battalions or equivalent units and of separate or detached commands who have custody of service records, with respect to Marine Corps personnel, authority to certify for the payment of death gratuity the lawful spouse or designated beneficiary(ies) of the deceased service member who was residing with him at or near his place of duty at the time of his death, except in cases in which a doubt may exist as to the identity of the legal beneficiary. Disbursing officers are authorized to make payment of the death gratuity upon receipt of certification from the Commanding Officer.

(b) The Secretary of the Navy has delegated authority to the Chief of Naval Personnel as to naval personnel, and to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code MSPA-1) as to Marine Corps personnel, the authority to certify the beneficiary(ies) for receipt of payment of death gratuity in all appropriate cases of payment of death gratuity under the Servicemen's and Veterans' Survivor Benefits Act (now reenacted in 10 U.S.C. 1475-1480), including, but not limited to:

(1) Cases in which a doubt may exist as to the identity of the legal beneficiary; and

(2) Cases in which the widow or designated beneficiary(ies) of the deceased service member was not residing with him at or near his place of duty at the time of his death.

[24 FR 7523, Sept. 18, 1959, as amended at 44 FR 25647, May 2, 1979]

§716.6 Death occurring after active service.

(a) Under title 10 U.S.C., section 1476, the death gratuity will be paid in any case where a member or former member dies on or after January 1, 1957, during the 120-day period which begins on the day following the date of his discharge or release from active duty, active duty for training, on inactive duty training, if the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs determines that:

(1) The decedent was discharged or released, as the case may be, from the service under conditions other than dishonorable from the last period of the duty or training performed; and

(2) Death resulted from disease or injury incurred or aggravated while on such active duty or active duty for training; or while performing authorized travel to or from such duty; or

(3) Death resulted from injury incurred or aggravated while on such inactive-duty training or while traveling directly to or from such duty or training.

(b) For purposes of computing the amount of the death gratuity in such instances, the deceased person shall be deemed to be entitled on the date of his death to basic pay (plus any special, incentive and proficiency pay) at the rate to which he was entitled on the last day he performed such active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training. A kind of special pay included is a pay increase under 10 U.S.C. 5540; see §716.1.

(c) The Department of the Navy is precluded from making payment of the death gratuity pending receipt of the determinations described in paragraph (a) of this section. In view of this, commands should insure that the medical records and reports of investigations by fact-finding bodies be submitted to the Navy Department at the earliest

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possible date. The Veterans' Administration is promptly notified of all deaths of this category reported, and upon the request of that agency all pertinent data is forwarded.

§716.7 Payment of the death gratuity.

(a) *Claim certification and voucher for the death gratuity payment.* The Comptroller General of the United States has approved DD Form 397 as the form to be used hereafter for claim certification and voucher for the death gratuity payment.

(b) *Active duty deaths (Navy).* To effect immediate payment of death gratuity the following actions will be taken:

(1) The commanding officer will ascertain that the deceased member died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive-duty training, and will obtain the name, relationship, and address of the eligible survivor from the Service Record of the deceased. The Dependency Application/Record of Emergency Data (NAVPERS 1070/602) or Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93), will normally contain this information. In addition, in the case of enlisted personnel, the Application for Dependents Allowance (BAQ [Basic Allowance for Quarters]), NAVPERS Form 668, may serve as a source of corroboration. He will, with the cooperation of the disbursing officer, initiate preparation of a Claim Certification and Voucher for Death Gratuity Payment, DD Form 397, in original and five copies, completing blocks 5 through 14 inclusive, and the administrative statement in block 18. The administrative statement in block 18 will be signed by the commanding officer or acting commanding officer.

(2) The disbursing officer will, upon receipt of the DD Form 397, draw a check to the order of the eligible survivor named in block 5, complete blocks 2, 3, 4, and the check payment data portion of block 18.

(3) Under arrangements made by the commanding officer, the check and the original and one copy of the voucher, DD Form 397, will be delivered to the payee. The payee will be required to complete block 15, sign in block 17a, and have two witnesses complete block 17 on the original voucher at the time

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the check is delivered. Under no circumstances will the check be delivered to the payee until this action has been accomplished. The payee will retain the copy of the voucher, DD Form 397, and the signed original voucher will be returned by hand to the disbursing officer by the person designated to deliver the check.

[24 FR 7523, Sept. 18, 1959, as amended at 44 FR 25647, May 2, 1979]

§716.8 Payments excluded.

(a) No payment shall be made if the deceased member suffered death as a result of lawful punishment for a crime or for a military or naval offense, except when death was so inflicted by any hostile force with which the Armed Forces of the United States have engaged in armed conflict.

(b) No payment will be made to a survivor implicated in the homicide of the deceased in the absence of evidence clearly absolving such survivor of any felonious intent.

(c) Unless the laws of the place where a minor beneficiary resides provide that such a payment would grant a valid acquittance of the Government's obligation to make a payment of death gratuity to or for a minor, a death gratuity of more than \$1,000 may not be paid in whole or in part to a parent as natural guardian of a minor or to any other person who is not a legal guardian appointed by the civil court to manage the minor's financial affairs.

[24 FR 7523, Sept. 18, 1959, as amended at 37 FR 6471, Mar. 30, 1972; 44 FR 25647, May 2, 1979]

§716.9 Erroneous payment.

Where through administrative mistake of fact or law, payment of the death gratuity is made to a person clearly not entitled thereto, and it is equally clear that another person is entitled to the death gratuity, the Chief of Naval Personnel (Pers-732) or the Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code MSPA-1), as appropriate, will certify payment to the proper payee, irrespective of recovery of the erroneous payment. On the other hand, where a payment of the death gratuity has been made to an individual on the basis of representations of record made