

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 3.10

World War II who were honorably discharged from such service as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

Authority:

38 U.S.C 106(f).

CROSS REFERENCE: Office of Workers' Compensation Programs. See § 3.708.

[26 FR 1565, Feb. 24, 1961]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 3.7, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and on GPO Access.

§ 3.10 Dependency and indemnity compensation rate for a surviving spouse.

(a) *General determination of rate.* When VA grants a surviving spouse entitlement to DIC, VA will determine the rate of the benefit it will award. The rate of the benefit will be the total of the basic monthly rate specified in paragraph (b) or (d) of this section and any applicable increases specified in paragraph (c) or (e) of this section.

(b) *Basic monthly rate.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, the basic monthly rate of DIC for a surviving spouse will be the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(1).

(c) *Section 1311(a)(2) increase.* The basic monthly rate under paragraph (b) of this section shall be increased by the amount specified in 38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(2) if the veteran, at the time of death, was receiving, or was entitled to receive, compensation for service-connected disability that was rated by VA as totally disabling for a continuous period of at least eight years immediately preceding death. Determinations of entitlement to this increase shall be made in accordance with paragraph (f) of this section.

(d) *Alternative basic monthly rate for death occurring prior to January 1, 1993.* The basic monthly rate of DIC for a surviving spouse when the death of the veteran occurred prior to January 1, 1993, will be the amount specified in 38 U.S.C. 1311(a)(3) corresponding to the veteran's pay grade in service, but only if such rate is greater than the total of the basic monthly rate and the section 1311(a)(2) increase (if applicable) the surviving spouse is entitled to receive under paragraphs (b) and (c) of this sec-

tion. The Secretary of the concerned service department will certify the veteran's pay grade and the certification will be binding on VA. DIC paid pursuant to this paragraph may not be increased by the section 1311(a)(2) increase under paragraph (c) of this section.

(e) *Additional increases.* One or more of the following increases may be paid in addition to the basic monthly rate and the section 1311(a)(2) increase.

(1) *Increase for children.* If the surviving spouse has one or more children under the age of 18 of the deceased veteran (including a child not in the surviving spouse's actual or constructive custody, or a child who is in active military service), the monthly DIC rate will be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(b) for each child.

(2) *Increase for regular aid and attendance.* If the surviving spouse is determined to be in need of regular aid and attendance under the criteria in § 3.352 or is a patient in a nursing home, the monthly DIC rate will be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(c).

(3) *Increase for housebound status.* If the surviving spouse does not qualify for the regular aid and attendance allowance but is housebound under the criteria in § 3.351(f), the monthly DIC rate will be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(d).

(4) For a two-year period beginning on the date entitlement to dependency and indemnity compensation commenced, the dependency and indemnity compensation paid monthly to a surviving spouse with one or more children below the age of 18 shall be increased by the amount set forth in 38 U.S.C. 1311(e), regardless of the number of such children. The dependency and indemnity compensation payable under this paragraph is in addition to any other dependency and indemnity compensation payable. The increase in dependency and indemnity compensation of a surviving spouse under this paragraph shall cease beginning with the first month commencing after the month in which all children of the surviving spouse have attained the age of 18.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1311(e))

§3.11

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(f) *Criteria governing section 1311(a)(2) increase.* In determining whether a surviving spouse qualifies for the section 1311(a)(2) increase under paragraph (c) of this section, the following standards shall apply.

(1) *Marriage requirement.* The surviving spouse must have been married to the veteran for the entire eight-year period referenced in paragraph (c) of this section in order to qualify for the section 1311(a)(2) increase.

(2) *Determination of total disability.* As used in paragraph (c) of this section, the phrase “rated by VA as totally disabling” includes total disability ratings based on unemployability (§4.16 of this chapter).

(3) *Definition of “entitled to receive”.* As used in paragraph (c) of this section, the phrase “entitled to receive” means that the veteran filed a claim for disability compensation during his or her lifetime and one of the following circumstances is satisfied:

(i) The veteran would have received total disability compensation for the period specified in paragraph (c) of this section but for clear and unmistakable error committed by VA in a decision on a claim filed during the veteran’s lifetime; or

(ii) Additional evidence submitted to VA before or after the veteran’s death, consisting solely of service department records that existed at the time of a prior VA decision but were not previously considered by VA, provides a basis for reopening a claim finally decided during the veteran’s lifetime and for awarding a total service-connected disability rating retroactively in accordance with §§3.156(c) and 3.400(q)(2) of this part for the period specified in paragraph (c) of this section; or

(iii) At the time of death, the veteran had a service-connected disability that was continuously rated totally disabling by VA for the period specified in paragraph (c) of this section, but was not receiving compensation because:

(A) VA was paying the compensation to the veteran’s dependents;

(B) VA was withholding the compensation under the authority of 38 U.S.C. 5314 to offset an indebtedness of the veteran;

(C) The veteran had not waived retired or retirement pay in order to receive compensation;

(D) VA was withholding payments under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. 1174(h)(2);

(E) VA was withholding payments because the veteran’s whereabouts were unknown, but the veteran was otherwise entitled to continued payments based on a total service-connected disability rating; or

(F) VA was withholding payments under 38 U.S.C. 5308 but determines that benefits were payable under 38 U.S.C. 5309.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 1311, 1314, and 1321)

[70 FR 72220, Dec. 2, 2005, as amended at 71 FR 44918, Aug. 8, 2006]

§3.11 Homicide.

Any person who has intentionally and wrongfully caused the death of another person is not entitled to pension, compensation, or dependency and indemnity compensation or increased pension, compensation, or dependency and indemnity compensation by reason of such death. For the purpose of this section the term *dependency and indemnity compensation* includes benefits at dependency and indemnity compensation rates paid under 38 U.S.C. 1318.

[44 FR 22718, Apr. 17, 1979, as amended at 54 FR 31829, Aug. 2, 1989]

§3.12 Character of discharge.

(a) If the former service member did not die in service, pension, compensation, or dependency and indemnity compensation is not payable unless the period of service on which the claim is based was terminated by discharge or release under conditions other than dishonorable. (38 U.S.C. 101(2)). A discharge under honorable conditions is binding on the Department of Veterans Affairs as to character of discharge.

(b) A discharge or release from service under one of the conditions specified in this section is a bar to the payment of benefits unless it is found that the person was insane at the time of committing the offense causing such discharge or release or unless otherwise specifically provided (38 U.S.C. 5303(b)).