State of Maine Service Officers' Manual

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SERVICE OFFICERS’ MANUAL

INCLUDING

Practical explanations and instructions relative to procurement of monetary benefits payable to living World War veterans and hospitalization privileges to veterans of all wars, expeditions, and rebellions.

September 16, 1934.
NOTE:

I. VETERANS ELIGIBLE IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE.

(a) Hospital treatment for:

(1) Veterans who served during a period of war as designated in paragraphs (a) to (d) — VETERAN CLASSIFICATION — or in any war prior to the Spanish—American War, and were honorably discharged from their last period of war service

(2) Persons, who during the period of the World War, were provisionally accepted for enlistment or enrollment in the active military or naval forces and were directed or ordered to report to a place for final acceptance, or were drafted and reported pursuant to the call of a draft board, or who were called into the Federal service as a member of the National Guard.

NOTE: Those in (1) must be suffering with injuries or diseases incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military or naval service. Those in (2) must be suffering with injuries or diseases incurred in line of duty and must be receiving disability compensation for these injuries or diseases.

(3) Persons who served in the United States Army, Navy or Marine Corps as outlined in paragraph (e) — VETERAN CLASSIFICATION —.

(4) Persons who served in the United States Coast Guard as outlined in paragraph (e) - VETERAN CLASSIFICATION -.

NOTE: Those in (3) and (4) must have been honorably discharged for disabilities incurred in line of duty and be in need of hospital treatment for injuries or diseases incurred or aggravated in line of duty.

(b) Hospital or domiciliary care, including emergency or extensive hospital treatment, for:

(1) Same as (a) (1), who served for 90 days or more or who, having so served for less than 90 days, were discharged for disability incurred in line of duty.

(2) Same as (a) (3) and (a) (4).
NOTE: Those in (b) (1) and (b) (2) must have been honorably discharged, be suffering with a permanent disability or tuberculous or neuropsychiatric ailment or such other conditions requiring emergency or extensive hospital treatment, be incapacitated from earning a living and have no adequate means of support.

(3) Same as (a) (1), regardless of length of service, who were not dishonorably discharged from their last period of war service; who swear they are unable to defray the expenses of hospitalization or domiciliary care, including the expense of transportation. They must be suffering with a disability, disease or defect which is susceptible of cure or decided improvement by hospital care, or indicates need for domiciliary care because it is essentially chronic in type and not susceptible of cure or decided improvement by hospital care and is producing disablement of such degree and of such probable persistency as will incapacitate from earning a living for a prospective period.

(c) Hospital treatment for:

Retired officers and enlisted men of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard who served in a period of war as outlined in paragraphs (a) to (d) - VETERAN CLASSIFICATION, or in any war prior to the Spanish-American War, and who are suffering with a medically emergent disease or injury for which hospital treatment is needed.

NOTE: Prior authority for hospitalization of these persons must be obtained from the Medical Director, Veterans Administration. The medical emergency should be such as is endangering the life of the applicant, is requiring immediate treatment, and forbids extensive travel.

II TRANSPORTATION

Only in the instance where prior authority for travel has been granted will transportation expenses be supplied at Government expense for original admissions for hospital or domiciliary care. Transportation for readmissions for hospitalization within six months after regular discharge upon completion of treatment for a former episode of hospital treatment will not be supplied, except in medical emergencies, unless and until prior authority is obtained from the Medical Director, Veterans Administration. Transportation for readmissions for domiciliary care will not be supplied unless and until prior authority is obtained from the Director of National Homes, Veterans Administration.

III The Veterans' Administration Facility, Augusta, Maine, has the only hospital and Home in the State of Maine available for eligible veterans suffering from general medical, orthopedic and surgical conditions. Temporary hospitalization only, pending transfer, is available in instances of veterans suffering from tuberculous conditions. Although the hospitalization of tubercular and mental patients is carried out in Veterans' Administration hospitals and sanatoria in Massachusetts, all applications for domiciliary care should be forwarded to the Veterans' Administration Facility, Augusta, Maine, Form P-10 being used in either instance. Unless the veteran has on file at the Veterans' Administration Facility, Augusta, Maine, a claim against the Veterans' Administration, the Form P-10 should be accompanied by the veteran's original discharge from service or his certificate in lieu of lost or destroyed discharge certificate.

IV EMERGENCY HOSPITALIZATION: Emergency hospitalization for service connected disabilities can be carried out in a local hospital in the veteran's immediate area, contract hospitals to be used if available. Arrangements for this type of service must be carried out through the Chief of the Out-Patient Service, Veterans' Administration, Augusta, Maine.

V Treatment or medication for service connected disabling conditions is available through the medium of the Designated Examiner employed by the Veterans Administration in the veteran's locality. Prior approval in all instances must be secured by the physician before treatment or medication is carried out.

MONETARY BENEFITS

The legislation of March 28, 1934, known as Public No. 141, as to persons classified as World War Veterans (Veteran Classification - Paragraph 1(a)) restored the principles of presumptive service connection set forth in Section 200 of the World War Veterans Act, except that all these presumptions are now rebuttable. The benefits of the Rating Schedule issued in accordance with the World War Veterans Act, known as the 1925 Rating Schedule, with all extensions promulgated prior to March 19, 1933, was also restored. It should be noted that where service connection is on a presumptive basis the veteran may receive only seventy-five per cent of the benefits payable for a direct service connection.

SERVICE CONNECTION

World War Veterans (Veteran Classification - Paragraph 1(a)) are entitled to direct service connection for disabilities shown to have arisen during their period of service by service records or by competent affidavit evidence, or shown to have been aggravated during service. This applies only to veterans accepted and enrolled in active service. Persons discharged from draft or members of the National Guard rejected from enrollment in the Federal Service are only entitled to service connection for disabilities actually incurred during their period of service. They are not entitled to service connection for aggravation.

World War Veterans are also entitled to direct service connection for a number of diseases, if such conditions were shown to have arisen to a ten per cent degree within one year subsequent to discharge from service. These diseases are as follows:
Acidosis
Anaemia primary
Arterio-sclerosis
Arthritis, chronic
Arthritis, deformans
Beri-beri
Carcinoma, sarcoma and other tumors.
(Tumors, malignant, or of the brain.)
Cardiovascular-renal diseases, including hypertension
Cholecystitis, chronic, proceeding to gall-stone formation
Diabetes insipidus
Diabetes mellitus
Encephalitis lethargica residuals
Endocarditis, chronic
Endocrinopathies
Epilepsias
Gout
Haemochromatosis
Hemoglobinuria (paroxysmal)
Hemophilia
Hodgkins disease
Leprosy
Leukemia (all types)
Myocarditis, chronic
Nephritis, chronic forms
Nephrolithiasis
Obesity
Ochronosis
Organic diseases of the nervous system
Pellagra
Polycythemia (Erythemia)
Psychoses
Purpura
Rickets
Scurvy
Tuberculosis
Valvulitis, chronic

Any Neuropsychiatric disease, Spinal Meningitis, Paralysis Agitans, or Amebic Dysentery, developing to a ten per cent degree within one year from date of discharge from service, is also held as directly service connected.

Presumptive Service Connection

World War Veterans who have a Neuropsychiatric disease, Spinal Meningitis, Paralysis Agitans, Encephalitis lethargica, Amebic Dysentery, or a Tubercular condition, and who cannot establish direct service connection under the conditions stated above, may be granted a presumptive service connection provided the condition arose to a ten per cent degree prior to January 1, 1925. A tubercular condition, to be so service connected, must be shown to have existed, in an active state, to a ten per cent degree prior to January 1, 1925. Veterans having disabilities service connected by presumption only, as stated above, may receive for such presumptive disabilities only seventy-five per cent of the compensation to which they would otherwise be entitled.

No benefits are payable for disabilities not connected with service, except as to World War Veterans (Veteran Classification – Paragraph 1 (a)) who, having served ninety days or more, if permanently and totally disabled by a condition not due to their own misconduct, may receive thirty dollars per month. Form P-2 is utilized in making application for benefits for non-service disabilities.

Evidence

Service connection may be established only upon competent evidence. There are two types of evidence available; namely, physicians' statements and statements from laymen (acquaintances, employers, relatives, etc.) All evidence, including physicians' statements even though appearing on their own letterheads, must now be properly sworn to before a notary public. Doctors should include dates of contact with the veteran and full descriptions of the findings upon which he made his diagnoses. In the second instance, dates of observation or contact must be given and a description of the veteran's disabling condition and its effect upon his employability. The Veterans' Administration will be very glad to assist veterans in the procurement of evidence tending to support their claims. In completing Form P-1, the application for disability compensation benefits, the veteran should very carefully indicate the history of his disability or disabilities and furnish the names and addresses of persons having knowledge of the history of his disability. The completed application acts as a guide to the Veterans' Administration in the procurement of evidence indicated as available. For further information relative to evidence to be submitted see pages 28, 29, 30 and 31 of Manual for Post Service Officers prepared by National Rehabilitation Committee, the American Legion, 600 Bond Building, Washington, D.C., dated 1931.

Misconduct

No monetary benefits whatever may be paid for disability due to misconduct. This includes disabilities due to venereal diseases, or disabilities incurred by the gross negligence of the veteran himself.

Apportionment and "Excess" Compensation

"Excess" Compensation

Payments to veterans hospitalized or maintained in any institution by any branch of the Government is limited, as to the veteran himself, to $15.00 per month for connected disabilities, or $6.00 per month to veterans permanently and totally disabled by non-service disabilities. The difference between $6.00 or $15.00 per month and the total amount veteran would receive if not maintained by a branch of the Government may be paid to dependents of the veteran within certain specified classifications.

Apportionment

Where the wife of a veteran is separated from him by estrangement, or where children of the veteran are not in his care or custody, compensation for service connected disabilities may be apportioned in behalf of the dependents, in accordance with apportionments schedules established by regulations. Under the regulations, there is no apportionment provided for dependent of veterans receiving permanent and total benefits for non-service disabilities.
INCREASED COMPENSATION

Any increase in compensation may be granted only from the date of receipt of necessary evidence.

APPEALS

A veteran has the right of ONE appeal. Action by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals is final, and no new claim upon the same factual basis may thereafter be considered except upon receipt of new and material evidence in the form of service records from the War Department or the Navy Department. A veteran in presenting his appeal should try to explain exactly why he thinks he is entitled to a benefit that has not been granted. Having made an appeal, he should, in view of the finality of action by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, make an exhaustive effort to present all evidence. (Please note carefully pages five and six of your manual of instructions).

Under a recent regulation, where a veteran had entered an appeal from decisions rendered in accordance with the laws in effect prior to March 28, 1934, and has since been awarded any increase in benefits under the legislation of March 28, 1934 (Public No. 141), he must, if he wishes to continue the appeal from the previous action, notify the Administration to that effect within six months from the date of the letter advising him of the increased benefits granted him under Public No. 141.

PEACE TIME VETERANS

Peace time veterans (Veteran classification-Paragraph I (e)) are not entitled to any presumptions whatever relative to service connection as to disabilities shown by service records or competent evidence to have arisen in service or to have been aggravated during service, they are entitled to benefits only in accordance with the legislation of March 20, 1933 and the Rating Schedule promulgated in accordance with that legislation. The amount of benefit to which they are entitled is materially less than that paid to a World War veteran for the same degree of disability.

ADJUSTED COMPENSATION

A. ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATES.

Veterans or dependents of veterans who have not applied for the benefits of adjusted compensation (often called “bonus”) may do so on or before July 2, 1935. The original application for the benefits should be made on Form W. W. C. No. 1.

In the event of the death of a veteran to whom an adjusted service certificate has been issued, and it is found that the certificate is being held as security for a loan by the Veterans’ Administration, Form 582 should be completed by the person named as beneficiary of the proceeds of the certificate.

In the event of the death of a veteran, and it is found that no loan has been made on the certificate, Form 582 is not necessary but the Demand for Payment appearing upon the reverse side of the adjusted service certificate should be completed by the beneficiary.

The regional offices or field stations of the Veterans’ Administration do not have a record of the names of persons designated as beneficiaries of the proceeds of adjusted service certificates. If information as to the person designated as beneficiary is necessary, it can be obtained only from the Director of Insurance, Veterans’ Administration, Washington, D. C. When writing for this information care should be taken to furnish the certificate number, as well as the application number, if one or both are available.

A certified copy of the public record of death of the veteran, if not previously furnished, should accompany Form 582 or the adjusted service certificate when one or the other is forwarded to the Veterans’ Administration, Washington, D. C., as a request for the payment due on the certificate.

B. CHANGE OF BENEFICIARIES OF ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATES.

Experience has shown that many men neglect to change their beneficiaries when, as a matter of fact, they really intended to. It is suggested that from time to time the Service Officer do missionary work in his position by calling to the attention of members that it is possible to change the designation of the beneficiary of the adjusted service certificate at any time with the approval of the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs.

Any veteran desiring to change the designation of the beneficiary of his adjusted service certificate should complete Form 6912 and forward it to the Director of Insurance, Veterans’ Administration, Washington, D. C.

C. LOST ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATES.

In the event of the loss or destruction or non-receipt of an adjusted service certificate, Form 6920 should be completed by the veteran and forwarded to the Director of Insurance, Veterans’ Administration, Washington, D. C.

No attempt should be made to furnish a bond or obtain bondsmen until the Form 6920 is completed and forwarded and reply is received containing information as to the procedure to be followed.

D. LOANS ON ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATES.

It is still possible for a veteran to obtain a loan on his adjusted service certificate up to fifty percent of the face value.

To obtain a loan the veteran should complete Form 1185 in accordance with the instructions contained on the form and forward it to the nearest Veterans’ Administration regional office or combined facility, together with his adjusted service certificate.

It should be remembered that when obtaining a loan it is not necessary to take the whole fifty percent, it being possible to borrow any amount up to fifty percent of the face value.

At the present time interest at the rate of 3½% per annum is being charged on loans made on adjusted service certificates.
E. DEPENDENTS.

It should be borne in mind that the dependents mentioned in sub-paragraph A include only wife, child, mother, or father, in the order named.

TERM INSURANCE

From time to time the question will be presented to you as to whom unpaid term insurance will be paid in the event of the death of the beneficiary named by the veteran prior to his death.

Ordinarily, the unpaid insurance reverts to the estate of the insured (the veteran) and it is necessary to have an administrator appointed to administer the estate of the veteran as of the time of his death. In the event an administrator is necessary, the appointment must be in the place where the veteran had a legal residence at the time of his death. No action should be taken, however, toward the appointment of an administrator until such time as advice is received from the Director of Insurance or other proper division of the Veterans' Administration, Washington, D. C.

If a case of this type comes to your attention it is proper to inform the interested person or persons to write directly to the Director of Insurance, Veterans' Administration, Washington, D. C., furnishing information as to the name of the veteran, the number of the insurance policy, if available, as well as the name of the beneficiary (the person receiving the payments). Further information should be furnished as to the date of death of the beneficiary and a certified copy of the public record of the death should be obtained and transmitted with the letter furnishing information of the death.

This action will call for a communication from the Central Office advising of the further procedure to follow in obtaining payment of the unpaid insurance.

CONVERTED INSURANCE

A. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CASE OF DEATH.

In the event of the death of a veteran who is the holder of a United States converted insurance policy, it is not deemed advisable for any Service Officer to complete any form until advised to do so by a communication received from the Director of Insurance, Veterans' Administration, Washington, D. C. It is only well to advise the Central Office of the Veterans' Administration of the death of the veteran, furnishing information as to the name and address of the person to whom a communication should be forwarded containing details as to procedure to follow in obtaining payment of the amount due on the converted insurance policy.

B. CHANGE OF BENEFICIARY.

If the holder of a converted insurance policy desires to change the designation of the beneficiary of his converted insurance, he should complete Veterans' Administration Form 724 and forward it, with his insurance policy, to the Director of Insurance, Veterans' Administration, Washington, D. C.

C. LOANS.

If a holder of a converted insurance policy desires to obtain a loan on his policy, he should complete Veterans' Administration Form 804. If there is no outstanding loan on the policy, it will be necessary for the policy to accompany the application for loan. If there is an outstanding loan, it will not be necessary to forward the policy with the subsequent request for a loan.

BURIAL EXPENSES

A. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN CASE OF DEATH.

Where an honorably discharged veteran of any war dies after discharge, the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs in his discretion and with due regard to the circumstances in each case shall pay for burial expenses and funeral expenses and transportation of the body (including preparation of the body) to the place of burial, a sum not to exceed $100 to cover such items and to be paid to such person or persons as may be prescribed by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs.

The allowance above mentioned will not be paid if the veteran's net assets at the time of his death, exclusive of debts, accrued pension, or compensation, or insurance, due at the time of death, equal or exceed the sum of $1,000.

In the event of the death of the veteran and the burial expenses are not paid by the person who authorizes the expenses incident to the funeral and burial, the undertaker rendering the service is the one entitled to assert claim for the Government allowance and should complete Veterans' Administration Form P-91.

In the event the undertaker's bill has been paid, the person making the payment is the proper one to make claim for the Government allowance. This claim is also made by the completion of Form P-91.

In either event, the claim for the Government allowance should be accompanied by a certified copy of the public record of the veteran's death, as well as an itemized bill of expenses. If the undertaker is the person making the claim for the Government allowance, the bill should not be receipted. If the person who paid the bill is the one making claim for the Government allowance, the undertaker's bill should be receipted, showing the date of payment, name of the person making payment, the firm name of the undertaker, and should indicate the name of the person receiving the payment for the undertaking firm, as well as the official capacity of the person receiving the payment for the undertaking firm, such as: part owner, clerk, bookkeeper, etc.

These claims for the Government allowance toward the funeral expenses and burial expenses are not acted upon in the regional offices or combined facilities and should be forwarded directly to the Veterans' Administration, Washington, D. C.

The cemetery at the Veterans' Administration Facility, at Augusta, Maine, is available for the burial of any veteran honorably discharged from service. Arrangements may be carried out through the Domiciliary Officer, Veterans' Administration, Augusta.
B. FLAGS.

American flags for the purpose of draping the casket and afterwards to be given to the next of kin of deceased honorably discharged veterans of any war who died after discharge from active service are issued by the United States Veterans' Administration. They are procured by contact with the regional offices or combined facilities, or the county seat post offices. In no instance will flags be issued to undertakers, organizations, or individuals, to replace flags donated by them. No reimbursement can be allowed for burial flags provided or purchased by relatives, friends, or other parties.

Flags can only be issued in the case of a veteran of a war "honorably discharged" and cannot be issued, as heretofore, to veterans of any war "not dishonorably discharged".

When writing or otherwise contacting the postmasters of a county seat post office on the subject of procurement of an American flag, the Service Officer should be prepared to furnish the rank, organization, and dates of enlistment and discharge of the deceased veteran.

C. HEADSTONES

A headstone will be furnished by the Government free of cost for the unmarked grave of any individual whose last service in the military or naval forces of the United States or of the Confederate States Army was honorable. It will be shipped free prepaid to the nearest railroad station or steamboat landing to the cemetery in which the veteran is buried. All expenses as to the hauling of the stone from the station to the cemetery and its erection at the grave must be paid for from private funds. Unless arrangements can be made to remove the headstone from the station at private expense, application for headstone should not be submitted.

Any person may make an application for a headstone. Officers or committees of patriotic or welfare organizations and other persons having charge of securing headstones for soldiers buried in their vicinity should ascertain before hand whether the relatives or friends of veterans desire a Government headstone or intend to erect private monuments.

The application for headstone should be made on War Department O.Q.M.G. Form 623, approved August 12, 1913, and revised May 18, 1931. Two forms should be made, that is: original and duplicate. The application for headstone should forwarded to the War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General, Washington, D. C.

DEATH COMPENSATION

Existing laws permit the payment of death compensation to the widow of a World War veteran in the event the veteran died of a disability which has been held to have been incurred in or aggravated by his World War service, and, in some instances, permit the payment of death compensation even tho the veteran did not die of a disease or disability which was rated service incurred.

If the Service Officer is sure that the veteran died of a disability which was held as having been incurred in or aggravated by service, Form P-4 should be completed by the widow in applying for death compensation.

If at the time of his death the veteran was rated as having a disability incurred in or aggravated by service, but died as a result of some other disease or injury, Form P-5 should be completed by the widow.

Generally speaking, death compensation can be paid to the widow of a World War veteran when her husband has died of a disability not incurred in or aggravated by service only in the event that at the time of his death the veteran was receiving or entitled to receive compensation or retirement pay for disability of 30 percent or more. The existence of the directly service incurred disease or injury must have been established to the satisfaction of the Veterans' Administration prior to the date of the veteran's death, but the determination of 30% disability resulting from such disability may be based upon evidence filed subsequent to the death, and proof of 30% or more disability must be filed within three years of the date of the veteran's death, or from June 28, 1934, whichever is the later date.

It is further provided that the disease or injury or aggravation thereof will be considered as having been established to the satisfaction of the Veterans' Administration where the evidence of record in the Veterans' Administration or in the War or Navy Departments prior to the veteran's death shows existence of such disease or injury as having been directly incurred in or aggravated by service. No benefits under this act shall be payable by invoking any statutory or regulatory presumption. In the event of any doubt as to entitlement in this type of case, it is believed the proper procedure would be to file Form P-4 or P-5 and forward it directly to the Director of Widows and Dependents Claims Service, Veterans' Administration, Washington D. C., for consideration.

It is interesting to note the difference in rates of compensation payable to widows and children under the title of death compensation. Where it is held that a veteran died of disability incurred in or aggravated by service the widow is entitled to $30.00 per month; widow and 1 child, $40.00 per month; with $6.00 for each additional child. In the event of a veteran dying of disabilities not held as incurred in or aggravated by service, but entitlement of the widow to death compensation is found to exist, payments can be made at the rate of $22.00 per month to the widow; widow and one child, $30.00 per month; widow and 2 children, $34.00 per month; and $4.00 per month additional for each child, the total amount payable not to exceed $58.00 per month.