

HOW TO REPORT THE DEATH OF A MILITARY RETIREE

Surviving family members of retired Air Force personnel residing in the United States may report the death of a member, and receive personal assistance in applying for eligible benefits on their behalf by contacting:

The Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) at the nearest Air Force Base Military Personnel Flight, Customer Service Headquarters, Air Force Personnel Center toll-free at 1-877-353-6807. This system will connect your phone call directly to the CAR that will assist you. Voice mail is available after duty hours. Family members leaving a message will be called back the next duty day.

You may also contact DFAS-Cleveland using their toll-free number 1-800-269-5170

Please have the following information available when making notification:
Retiree's full name, grade, Social Security Number,
date of retirement
Date and place (city and state) of death
Cause (layman's terms) of death
Name, relationship, phone number, and address of the NOK
Date and place of funeral, if known (General officers only)

Basic Information for SURVIVOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES:

The loss of your loved one does not mean an end to certain military benefits and privileges you now receive. You may continue to receive medical care at medical facilities of the Uniformed Services, in select former public health hospitals designated by the Department of Defense as uniformed services treatment facilities, and civilian inpatient and outpatient care, subject to limitations as determined by local medical authorities. You may use the commissary, base exchange, and morale, welfare and recreation activities, which includes theaters at bases when these facilities are available. Although every effort is made to provide these benefits and privileges, at some installations the facilities may be adequate only for the assigned military personnel and their eligible family members. In such cases, the commander of the installation has the right to deny you the use of those facilities. In some overseas areas, the use of service benefits and privileges may not be extended to families of deceased members due to agreements entered into between the United States and the host country. If you plan to travel or live abroad, let your Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) help you determine the benefits and privileges available in the country where you plan to live. To determine if you are eligible for any of the service benefits and privileges mentioned, read the brief discussion of each below.

Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (ID Card):

The ID card is used as a means of identification to determine eligibility for the following benefits and privileges: health benefits in Uniformed Services facilities and from civilian sources, commissary and base exchange privileges, and admission to morale, welfare, and recreation activities, which includes military theaters. Each card shows the benefits and privileges authorized for the holder and allows them the use of these benefits and privileges at Uniformed Services installations where adequate services and facilities are available. This is the same type card you may now have. On the death of a retired member, the ID card held by their dependents must be canceled and a new ID card issued. Your CAR will assist you in completing a DD Form 1172, Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card DEERS Enrollment, to obtain your new ID Card. The card is issued to all eligible surviving family members 10 years of age or over who are eligible for one or more of the Service benefits and privileges mentioned in this pamphlet. Children under 10 years of age may be identified by the card issued to the surviving spouse. If the surviving spouse is deceased or not entitled, the child under age 10 may be issued a separate card.

Medical Benefits:

Subject to the installation commander's determination of availability, eligible family members may receive inpatient and outpatient care, including pharmacy services at Uniformed Services medical treatment facilities where adequate services and facilities are available. If you remarry someone outside the uniformed services, you are no longer covered. If the marriage is annulled, you may be eligible for reinstatement after the annulment.

TRICARE is the Department of Defense managed health care program designed to improve beneficiary access to care, assure affordable and high quality care, provide choice, and contain costs to beneficiaries and the Department of Defense. TRICARE offers eligible family members a choice of three health care options, prime, extra, and standard for seeking care under the TRICARE program. Each option has different cost-sharing features and degrees of freedom for using civilian providers. TRICARE service centers are established at or near each military installation to assist family members in obtaining care and services as necessary. TRICARE does not cover dependent parents and parents-in-law; however, they are eligible for care in the military medical treatment facilities on a space available basis. For more detailed information on TRICARE visit their world wide web site at <http://www.tricare.mil> or contact the health benefits advisor at your nearest medical treatment facility.

Commissary Privileges:

The unremarried or unmarried surviving spouse is eligible for commissary privileges. He or she may, on approval of the local installation commander, let an agent make purchases under certain circumstances. Purchases may be used by all members of the family living in the house.

Base Exchange:

The base exchange offers various services and facilities, depending on the base's population and what's available from the local civilian sector, such as theaters, barber shops, service stations, clothing stores, dry cleaning, optical shops, package stores, and other sales stores. The unremarried or unmarried surviving spouse is eligible for base exchange services or, on approval of the installation commander, an agent may be allowed to make purchases under certain circumstances.

Theater:

Eligible family members can attend motion picture theaters on military installations. Family members must have current ID cards.

Transient Quarters:

Eligible family members of deceased retirees may occupy transient quarters on a space-available basis when approved by the installation commander. Contact the billeting office to determine the commander's policy and to request accommodations. Family members must have current ID cards.

Recreation Services:

As an unremarried or unmarried surviving spouse, you are entitled to membership in the Officer's or Enlisted Open Mess. The same applies to you and your children in the use of other recreational activities on a military installation such as the golf course, fitness center, bowling alley, and hobby shops.

There are other federal and state rights and benefits here to which eligible family members may be entitled. Please read the brief description of each right or benefit. If you think you may qualify for a benefit and are interested, ask your Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) or nearest Veterans Affairs (VA) office for more information.

Commercial Insurance:

For commercial insurance, you should contact the nearest representative or the home office of the company for settlement. Your CAR can advise you of any insurance allotments that were being deducted from the member's pay.

Emergency Financial Assistance:

The Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) offers qualifying family members financial assistance in the form of interest-free loans or grants during personal and family emergencies. Aid may be given for such purposes as food, rent, utilities, essential car repair, and certain medical and dental care. The assistance is temporary and based on immediate needs. The assistance is available through the AFAS section located in the Family Support Center (FSC) at most Air Force installations. If there is no AFAS office near you, the AFAS has cross-servicing assistance agreements with the American Red Cross, Army Emergency Relief, and the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society. Ask your CAR for additional details, or contact the base FSC.

Legal Assistance:

Consultation and advice on all civil legal matters are provided to the retiree's survivors on a space-available basis. Eligible family members may need legal advice and assistance settling the estate of the deceased member, making a new will for the surviving spouse, taxation questions, and other related legal matters. Your CAR, may put you in contact with a legal assistance officer. The legal assistance officer can help in preparing the initial income tax return but can only give preliminary advice on probate and settlement of the estate, court appearances, or preparation of inheritance tax returns. Since these matters are outside the scope of the Legal Assistance Program, it may be necessary for survivors to obtain civilian counsel. The legal assistance officer can refer you to civilian counsel through the local bar association. Government agencies, like VA, Social Security, and the Defense Finance Center will help you in processing your claims for benefits and entitlements. These matters are expeditiously handled without resort to civilian counsel or personal expense. In case of factual disputes or conflicting claims, it might be wise to have civilian counsel.

Civil Service Job Preference:

A surviving spouse may be eligible to receive a ten point veterans service preference for federal service employment if the deceased retiree served in wartime or in a peacetime campaign or expedition for which the retiree received a campaign badge or service medal. You can obtain information about this point preference and available Federal employment from a Federal Civil Service Personnel Office.

State Benefits:

Many states have passed laws providing certain rights, benefits, and privileges to the surviving spouse and children of the deceased Service member. These benefits can include bonuses, educational assistance, employment opportunities, tax relief, and others. Seek further information on the laws pertaining to a particular state from local government officials, the nearest VA office, or from local veterans' organizations, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans.

Income Tax Benefits:

You may wish to contact the nearest office of the Internal Revenue Service for information and guidance regarding your federal tax status. Excluded from gross income for income tax purposes are: Social Security benefits; \$3,000 of the death gratuity; burial benefits; VA pension and compensation payments; property, including cash money received as a gift under will provisions; and face amount of all life insurance policies.

AF Village Foundation:

The Air Force Villages I and II, in San Antonio, Texas, provide financial support and homes to widows and widowers of Air Force active and retired officers who would otherwise have no other place to live. Widows and widowers without financial means have priority for admission, and no one has ever been turned away for inability to pay. The widow or widower must be age 62 or over to become a permanent resident. The villages also offer

a furnished apartment to a surviving spouse and children for up to a year to gather their lives following the death of an officer. For additional information on Air Force Villages I and II, write to the Air Force Village Foundation, 5100 John D. Ryan Blvd., San Antonio, Texas 78245-3502, or call them toll free at 1-800-762-1122.

AF Village West:

The Air Force Village West in California is a military-oriented continuing care retirement community serving officers of all branches of the service. It is a full service village designed for a wonderful lifestyle, comfortable housing and long-term health care. Any retired officer, spouse or widow holding an ID card Form 2, is a candidate for residency at the village. The minimum residency age for the qualifying individual is 60 years. For additional information on Air Force Village West, write to the Air Force Village West, 17050 Arnold Drive, Riverside, California 92518, call them toll free at 1-800-729-2999.

The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation:

It can be confusing, frightening and heartbreaking to lose a spouse and find little, if any, financial resources and not know where to turn. The LeMay Foundation can be there to ease the burdens of everyday life. The Foundation can help with monthly supplemental grants to assist with food, rent, utilities and for some, health care. For additional information write to The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation, 17050 Arnold Drive, Riverside, California 92518 or call them at (909) 697-2099.

Air Force Enlisted Men's Widows and Dependents Home Foundation Inc:

Widowed spouses over age 55 of Air Force enlisted members are eligible for residency. Residents pay for housing and services, although a primary purpose of the Foundation is to provide care for needy, eligible persons. For information, write to the Air Force Enlisted Men's Widows and Dependents Home Foundation, 92 Sunset Lane, Shalimar, Florida 32579-1000, or call them at (904) 651-3766.

Educational Benefits:

Dependents Educational Assistance provides educational opportunities for the member's spouse, children between the ages of 18 and 26, and children under 18, under certain conditions, of a retiree who dies from a service-related injury or illness. Eligible persons may receive up to 45 months of schooling (or the equivalent if enrolled part-time). Schooling must be in VA-approved schools and colleges. In addition to the Dependents Educational Assistance program, various programs are available to help children reach their education goals.

Scholarship Information:

Many states, universities, and other groups sponsor scholarship programs for the children of deceased service members, particularly those with wartime service. Contact your high school guidance counselor and local library for further information.

VA Home Loan:

An unremarried spouse of a retiree who died from a service-connected injury or illness may be eligible for a government-insured home loan benefit. To determine your eligibility, apply to the nearest VA office.

Credit Union, Bank, Charge Accounts:

Contact all financial institutions concerning transfer of accounts to the survivor's name. Also, ask about any insurance associated with the accounts.