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## VA Pension Benefit Available For Long Term Care Services

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is publicizing a little known pension benefit that could help eligible war-time veterans and their surviving spouses obtain financial aid for in-home care, assisted living, and skilled nursing.

Individuals who are already receiving long term care services may qualify for the special monthly benefit called Aid and Attendance.

Among the basic criteria is the inability to feed oneself, or to take care of one's bodily functions. People who are bedridden or need help adjusting special

prosthetics or orthopedic devices or have physical injuries or mental illness may also be eligible.

To qualify, the war-time veteran must have entered active duty on or after Sept. 8, 1980 (Oct. 16, 1981, for officers) and must have completed at least 24 continuous months of military service or the period they were ordered to active duty. The income threshold for a veteran without dependents is \$18,234 annually. The annual income threshold for a veteran with one dependent is \$21,615, and any additional dependent garners an

increase of \$1,866. The annual Aid and Attendance income threshold for a surviving spouse is \$11,715. If there is one dependent, then the threshold rises to \$13,976, and for each additional dependent another \$1,866 is added.

Applications may be submitted online at [www.vabenefits.vba.ba.gov/vonapp/main.asp](http://www.vabenefits.vba.ba.gov/vonapp/main.asp).

For more information and assistance in applying for the Aid and Attendance benefit call (800) 827-1000 or visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov), or contact any local veterans service organization.