

VA Surviving Spouse Website

The Department of Veteran Affairs has created a new internet website for surviving spouses and dependents of military personnel who died on active duty and for survivors and dependents of veterans who died after leaving the service. The site is organized into two broad categories-death in service and death after service. It provides visitors with information and about a wide range of benefits for surviving spouse, dependent children, and dependent parents of diseased veterans and active duty personnel. The site also has information from, and links to, other federal agencies and organizations that offer benefits and services to survivors and dependents.

Several options also apply to surviving retirees participating in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), where the spouse is lost through death, divorce or annulment, and the retiree later remarries. Unless the former spouse coverage elected as part of the divorce, retirees who remarry have two choices. They can: Resume the prior level of coverage; Elect not to resume spouse SBP coverage, (this election is irrevocable), this election will not affect child coverage; or if the original election was for reduced coverage, the retiree may request the base amount be increased. There is also a link to frequently asked questions, and answer most questions. For more specific questions the site tells how to contact the VA directly.

The new website can be found at <http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors>.

Some of the topics found on this page include:

- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Parents' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Survivors Pension
- Home Loans
- Dependents' Educational Assistance Program
- Educational and Vocational Counseling
- Beneficiary Financial Counseling
- Civil Service Preference
- Commissary and Exchange Privileges
- Children of Vietnam Veterans with Certain Birth Defects
- Fiduciary Services