



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
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Rear Admiral W. Clyde Marsh, USN, (Ret.)
Commissioner

NEWS BRIEFS

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AWARDING PURPLE HEART TO POW'S KILLED IN CAPTIVITY

The Department of Defense has announced that U.S. service members who died in captivity as prisoners-of-war will be awarded the Purple Heart. The revised policy allows retroactive award of the Purple Heart to qualifying prisoners-of-war since Dec. 7, 1941.

The Department of Defense will present the award for eligible veterans to the service member's immediate next of kin or family representative.

Family members with questions may contact the service branches at the following numbers: Army: Military Awards Branch, (703) 325-8700; Navy: Navy Personnel Command, Retired Records Section, (314) 592-1150; Air Force: Air Force Personnel Center, (800) 616-3775; Marine Corps: Military Awards Branch, (703) 784-9340.

VA MANAGES THE RESTORED ENTITLEMENT PROGRAM FOR SURVIVING CHILDREN

Surviving children of deceased veterans who died on active duty before August 13, 1981, or who died of a service-connected condition incurred before August 13, 1981 may be eligible for benefits under the Restored Entitlement Program for Survivors, known as REPS program.

REPS benefits are payable to unmarried children between the ages of 18 and 22 who are full-time students at approved schools beyond the high school

level. Factors that could cause ineligibility include marriage, less than a full-time student's status, a high-earned income or entitlement to another Social Security benefit that is greater than your REPS entitlement.

For further information on this program, contact your County Veterans Service Office.

CRITERIA FOR VA MEDICAL CARE FOR VETERAN'S DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS

Certain eligible dependents and survivors of veterans rated by the VA as totally and permanently disabled due to service-connected medical conditions may be eligible for the VA Civilian Health and Medical Program known as CHAMPVA which shares the cost of their medical care.

For assistance in determining your eligibility, contact your nearest medical facility or County Veterans Service Office.

JOB FINDING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

State employment offices assist veterans in finding suitable employment by providing free job counseling, testing, referral and placement services. Veterans are given priority in the referral of job openings and training opportunities. Disabled veterans receive the highest priority in these referrals.

Employment offices also assist veterans by providing information about unemployment compensation, job marts, as well as, on-the-job and apprenticeship training opportunities. Veterans may inquire about this program at their nearest state employment office.

VA FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS HAVE UNIQUE ELIGIBILITY AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Individuals who receive Veterans Affairs pension or Dependency and Indemnity Compensation financial assistance benefits should notify the VA of any change affecting their entitlement such as income, net worth of their estate, marital status, school enrollment status of children 18 years or older and nursing home patient status, if applicable, among other criteria.

In order to avoid an overpayment and a resulting debt with the VA, please report all changes that affect your eligibility for VA financial assistance benefits.