



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs



Veteran Support and Services Guide

A guide to DVA support, services and
programs for veterans and families



Edition 1

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Veterans' Affairs acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia and their continuing spiritual and cultural connection to land, sea and community.

Acknowledgement of Service

We respect and give thanks to all who have served in the Australian Defence Force and their families.

We acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the sacrifice demanded of all who commit to defend our nation.

We undertake to preserve the memory and deeds of all who have served and promise to welcome, embrace and support all military veterans as respected and valued members of our community.

For what they have done, this we will do.

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Contact information

You can call us between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.
Telephone: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)
International callers: +61 2 6289 1133

Visit your local office

To find the address and contact details of your local Veteran Access Network or Services Australia service centre, visit www.dva.gov.au/location-finder

Open Arms

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling provides free and confidential, nation-wide counselling and support for veterans and their families. Call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 24-hours every day.

Enquiries regarding the licence and any use of this document are welcome at:

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You can find this product at dva.gov.au

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Secretary's foreword

Welcome to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)'s *Veteran Support and Services Guide*.

When someone puts on an Australian Defence Force (ADF) uniform they make a solemn vow. They are pledging to serve and defend our nation, to protect the values we hold dear. Military service is unique. It is an act of bravery and self-sacrifice. It carries considerable personal risk and burdens, which families also share.

Our ADF personnel and veterans make – or have made – a commitment to serve and defend Australia. It is the duty of all Australians to repay their commitment. DVA was established to fulfil the nation's duty to support our serving and ex-serving ADF members and families.

DVA has been supporting the veteran community in Australia since the end of the First World War, more than 100 years ago.

The Department's vision is to recognise veterans, and empower them and families to continue life after service, within a society that understands and values their military service and their ongoing contribution to the community.

To realise this vision, DVA works to enhance and support the wellbeing of our veterans across three important areas:

- We want to help veterans become self-sufficient in their post-service life. The Department provides income support and compensation, but also offers advice and information about entitlements concerning employment and education, housing, community connection, and justice and safety.
- We want our veterans to be healthy in both body and mind. The Department provides support for physical and mental wellbeing through health and other care services that include early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements.
- We want to acknowledge and commemorate all those who served Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice.



If you have served this country, we are here to help you.

Our aim is to support veterans to live and age well after their military career.

This *Veteran Support and Services Guide* provides a summary of the services and support DVA provides and how we can be of assistance to you and your family.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide delivered its Final Report on 9 September 2024. The Government responded to the Final Report on 2 December 2024, agreeing to the vast majority of recommendations. Implementation of recommendations will guide the work of the Department over the coming years. The Department will continue to review and update its service offer and this guide in line with Government commitments to ensure it accurately reflects the support and services we offer to the veteran community.

We are grateful for your service in the ADF and you and your families deserve the very best support. DVA is here to provide that support to you.

I hope you find the guide useful and if you have further questions, please remember we are only a phone call away on: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Frame".

Alison Frame
Secretary

Support Services

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling

1800 011 046 | www.OpenArms.gov.au

A national service that provides free mental health and wellbeing support to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families. Open Arms is available 24/7.

1800 VETERAN

1800 838 372 | www.dva.gov.au

DVA's primary contact number for veterans and their families.

Safe Zone Support

1800 142 072 | www.OpenArms.gov.au/safe-zone

A free and anonymous counselling line for all current and ex-serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families. Safe Zone is hosted by Open Arms but is a separate service, available 24/7.

Lifeline Australia

13 11 14 | www.lifeline.org.au

Provides free support services if you are in crisis and need to talk to someone.

1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732 | Text 0458 737 732

Provides 24-hour counselling services to help you cope with sexual assault or violence.

Head to Health

1800 595 212 | www.headtohealth.gov.au

Head to Health provides resources and links to a variety of websites and apps to support veteran mental health and wellbeing

Ex-service organisations

www.dva.gov.au/eso

Connect with an Ex-service organisation in your local area. These organisations may be able to provide you with support and resources.

Relationships Australia

1300 364 277 | www.relationships.org.au

Offers a broad range of services to individuals, families and communities across the country such as counselling, mediation, and family dispute resolution.



Introduction

DVA works every day to improve services and support for those who have served in the ADF. Federal, state and territory governments are working more closely to improve and coordinate support for veterans and families, in particular during their transition from a military to civilian life.

You may have left the ADF some time ago, or you may be in the process of leaving, or have no immediate plans to leave. Whatever your circumstances, it helps to know what services and support are available to you and your family through DVA.

This guide provides an introduction and overview of the assistance DVA can provide from the moment you join the ADF, during your transition into civilian life, and beyond.

It helps you to understand how DVA can assist you and your family to live well and age well. It also provides information about how to access DVA services and support or how to find out more information if you need to.

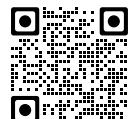
Whatever your circumstances, it's important that you understand how DVA can help.

Please note that the information in this guide was correct at time of publication, namely early 2025. We will update it regularly.

QR codes

We've used QR codes in this guide to expand on certain information – you'll find them at the end of each topic. QR codes can be used in 3 simple steps:

1. open the camera app on your phone or tablet
2. hold your device steady for 2–3 seconds towards the QR code you want to scan
3. click on the notification to open the content of the QR code.



Keep up to date with DVA

DVA website

The DVA website (www.dva.gov.au) is the best way of accessing in-depth information on the Department and the services we offer.

Latest News

Articles on services and supports are frequently published on the Latest News page (www.dva.gov.au/latest-news).

e-news

DVA e-news is a monthly round-up of news articles published on the Latest News page of the DVA website.

Vetaffairs

Vetaffairs is DVA's official newspaper for Australia's veteran community, published three times a year, in print and online.

Subscribe

To subscribe to e-news or the digital version of Vetaffairs, visit www.dva.gov.au/vetaffairs-and-e-news-subscriptions

Need to talk to someone

If you have a question about any of the services we offer you can always call the Department on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Social media



You can follow DVA on social media via Facebook, Instagram and X: DVAAus



Browse DVA on [YouTube.com/DVATVaus](https://www.youtube.com/DVATVaus)



You can also find us on LinkedIn by searching for 'Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs'.

Support for current members of the ADF

Submitting your claims early

During service, Defence is your health provider, though this ceases when you leave the ADF or full time military service. DVA funds your health care for Non-Liability Health Care and your accepted Defence-related injuries, wounds and illnesses. Therefore it is important that you submit injury and illness claims to DVA throughout your career so you have all your conditions accepted when you leave the ADF or full time military service.

If an injury, wound or illness occurs during service, lodge a claim with us so it is recognised as service-related, even if you are not currently financially disadvantaged and Defence is paying for treatment. Things may change in the future and it can speed up access to support when you do need it.

During service, you can access our support:

- Mental health treatment through Non-Liability Health Care (mental health) – remember your health provider while serving is Joint Health Command and you should always consider using this support service in the first instance.
- Incapacity payments – these are for loss of ADF pay-related allowances or salaries. If you suffer a service-related injury or illness that results in a loss of pay-related allowance/s or reduction in salary then you may be entitled to incapacity payments. Your first step is to submit the injury or illness claim on MyService under 'Initial Liability' and as part of the process you will be asked if you have been financially disadvantaged. This will trigger the incapacity payment process. Through the incapacity payment process, we will liaise with Defence to determine if you were eligible to receive these allowances. If Defence confirms you lost an allowance as the result of your condition, then we will pay you the allowances.
- Permanent Impairment – you can lodge a claim for permanent impairment in person at a DVA office, complete the general enquiries form on our website or call us on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). You cannot request a permanent impairment assessment on MyService.

- Household services – a request may come through from your ADF Rehabilitation Program (or Rehabilitation for Reservists Program) Regional Rehabilitation Manager, with an assessment report on your need for assistance. Alternatively, you may contact us directly for a needs assessment, or to submit your claim for household services. A home/activities of daily living assessment by an independent and suitably qualified Occupational Therapist will be arranged by us to identify the services that are reasonably required due to your accepted service injury or condition.
- Attendant care services – arrangements are as per Household Services.
- Veteran Support Officers – while you are currently serving in the ADF, our Veteran Support Officers are available to help you with your the transition journey. You can request an interview with a Veteran Support Officer at any stage in your career and there are no limits to how many interviews you can attend.

Our goal while you are serving is to provide you with the necessary assistance and knowledge that will empower you to self-manage your DVA business.

To make an appointment with your local VSO, visit the QR code below or www.dva.gov.au/vso



Support for reservists

ADF reservists can get compensation for medical conditions caused by their service. In some cases, reservists can also get treatment for mental health conditions without needing to link those conditions to service.

All ADF reserve service gives you access to DVA entitlements. This includes both part-time service and full-time service. Continuous full-time service (CFTS) is different to a full-time day of reserve training. To have rendered CFTS a member must enter into a formal agreement with Defence to render full-time service, or be called up for full-time duty by the Governor-General, which involves changes to the member's pay and conditions of service.

Reservists get the same range of benefits as permanent force members. Having said this, we do have to use a different formula to work out incapacity payments for reservists.

The incapacity payment replaces any income a person loses depending on how your medical condition affects how much you can work. Amounts are based on the difference between your normal earnings (before your injury) and your actual earnings (after you are injured).

If your reserve service includes a period of CFTS, we can pay for treatment of any mental health condition, whether or not it was caused by your service. If you don't have any CFTS, you can still get this mental health treatment if you have done reserve service days that included Disaster Relief Service such as Operation Vic Fire Assist, Border Protection Service such as Operation RESOLUTE, Disaster Relief Assistance such as Operation COVID-19 ASSIST, or were involved in a serious ADF training accident. This mental health treatment is also called Non-Liability Health Care (mental health) because we provide it even though the medical condition is not related to service.



Further details on the support provided to reservists is available at the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/information-reservists

Support for cadets

ADF Cadets, Officers of Cadets (OOCs) and Instructors of Cadets (IOCs) are covered for rehabilitation, treatment and compensation under MRCA and DRCA. We provide a range of benefits, depending on the cadet's particular circumstances and needs. Some of these benefits include:

- permanent impairment (lump sum) compensation
- incapacity benefits (due to an inability or reduced ability to work)
- rehabilitation (both vocational and non-vocational)
- medical treatment
- household and attendant care services.

A needs assessment will be conducted where compensation is payable to assess the cadet's requirements so that the full benefits to which they are entitled are provided.

More details on the claims process for cadets, OOCs and IOCs can be found by accessing the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/cadet-claims





Transitioning from the ADF

For many, leaving the ADF is not just about leaving a job, it is leaving a way of life. Life after service can involve finding fulfilling employment or a new sense of purpose and direction. It can also mean settling into new living arrangements, finding and paying for health care, and connecting with a new circle of friends. While the majority who leave the ADF do so successfully, these changes can sometimes be challenging for you, family members and friends.

Transitioning to civilian life can bring big changes for you and your family. Just like any changes in your military life, the more you prepare, the smoother things will go. We work with Defence to help you prepare. But you can start planning your civilian life while you are still serving.

While you are serving, and post separation, we are here to help you on your transition journey.

Beginning your transition journey

Before you separate from Defence, it is a good idea to begin planning your civilian life.

We also help you and your family with:

- maintaining health and wellbeing
- financial support if you are eligible, and
- recognition of your service.

A quick guide to the types of support we can provide is explained throughout this booklet, along with any eligibility requirements.

Registering with MyService

You can register with MyService as soon as you join the ADF and you can sign up for MyService post-separation through myGov if you haven't already done so.

MyService streamlines the claims process for many commonly claimed conditions.

MyService lets you do business with us online and makes it faster and easier for you to:

- submit claims and track their progress
- upload information to support your claim
- get support for a service-related wound, injury or condition
- apply for free mental health treatment
- view your Veteran Card online
- see your accepted conditions
- register for the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant
- book transport, if you're eligible
- update communication preferences.

If you have served even one day of full-time service, you can use MyService to apply for:

- Non-Liability Health Care mental health treatment
- a Veteran White Card
- compensation for service-related conditions.

If you have a MyService account, you will receive most of your correspondence from DVA via your myGov inbox, including notification of the outcome of a claim. If you do not wish to receive correspondence this way, you can change your preference on the settings page of myGov.

A series of guides are available on the DVA website to help you register and find your way around MyService. A Veteran Support Officer can also assist with registering for MyService.

Scan the QR code below to find them or visit
www.dva.gov.au/myservice



Transition advice and guidance

Veteran Support Officers (VSOs) on ADF bases provide DVA support to you and your family tailored to your personal circumstances. All medically separating ADF members will be contacted by a VSO offering support during their transition. All ADF members can access VSOs before leaving permanent military service.

The Client Support Program

The Client Support Program is a voluntary specialised case management program for veterans with complex and multiple needs, and is aimed at streamlining communication between clients, their families and DVA. It provides clients and their families with a single or primary point of contact for all our services and facilitates access to external support services. Case management within the Client Support Program aims to support clients to become more autonomous. Referrals to case managers can be made by DVA support staff (including VSOs), Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling and the ADF.

Health and wellbeing

Some of the health and wellbeing services and benefits that may be available to you include:

- Open Arms – counselling, workshops, peer support, resources
- Non-Liability Health Care (mental health) – fully funded mental health treatment without the need for the condition to be linked to your military service
- Non-Liability Health Care for cancer and pulmonary tuberculosis for eligible veterans
- Annual health checks – a fully funded comprehensive annual health check through a GP of your choice
- Support for vulnerable families – kids camps, education schemes
- Rehabilitation support – DVA's rehabilitation program assists veterans with accepted conditions to adjust to life after ADF service
- Home and transport support
- Medical treatment for accepted service-related conditions
- Aids, equipment and home modifications
- Assistance with connections to social supports, including links to volunteering opportunities.

Eligibility criteria applies to some supports or programs.

Financial support

You may be able to access the following financial support, including:

- compensation for injury and illness, including permanent impairment payment and incapacity payments
- income support – depending on your individual circumstances such as age, partner status and service, you and your partner could be eligible for a range of payments and benefits including regular pension payments, supplements and other allowances such as rent assistance
- crisis payment/one-off payment to financially assist DVA clients in severe financial hardship under a range of circumstances including family or domestic violence or release from lawful custody
- Veteran Payment – immediate financial support for veterans and partners while a claim for compensation for a mental health condition is being determined
- disaster assistance in the event of a natural disaster
- Defence-specific insurance for home building and contents, landlord and car insurance
- home loan assistance under the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme
- travel costs to obtain evidence for a Veteran Review Board (VRB) hearing, or to attend a VRB hearing
- payments to assist with the cost of medicines.
- Travel costs to attend medical approved or compensable treatment within Australia

Eligibility criteria apply to accessing financial support.

Recognising your service

The Australian Government recognises the service and sacrifice of our service men and women via:

- the Veteran Card, lapel pin and Covenant
- official commemorations.

ADF resources to help during transition

The ADF Member and Family Transition Guide, produced by the Department of Defence, outlines the wide range of services available to you both during and after service to help you with transition. It also includes checklists, tips and questions that can help you plan and adjust for this next stage of life. The guide includes information on support available from DVA, Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation and Services Australia.

Defence provides a broad range of programs to support members and families during the transition to civilian life. This includes specific support to develop and achieve your post-service career goals. Programs and supports can assist with employment, study, volunteering, retirement and other forms of meaningful engagement.

The Defence Force Transition Program is available to permanent members of the ADF and eligible reservists providing continuous full-time service.

In August 2023, the Veteran Transition Strategy was launched. The Strategy is a joint initiative between Defence, DVA and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation. It was developed through extensive consultation and engagement, including with current and former serving ADF members and families.

The ADF Transition and Civil Recognition project was established to provide an opportunity for ADF veterans to have their transferable military skills appropriately recognised in a civilian context, prior to moving to civilian employment. This project uses a process called recognition of prior learning, sometimes called recognition of current competency.

For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.defence.gov.au/transition



Veteran Support Officers (VSOs)

If you are thinking about, or are in the process of, separating from the ADF, it's a good idea to talk to a VSO. VSOs are available to help all members of the ADF and can provide tailored support to you and your family even if you are not leaving the ADF yet.

A VSO is an adviser who can help you work out what benefits you can access and guide you on your transition journey. They are available to offer you support and can show you how to submit a claim before you leave permanent military service.

A VSO can:

- tell you about the support we offer
- help you to apply for benefits and services
- offer advice about how DVA support can assist you transition into civilian life
- teach you to use MyService and other online services.

VSOs are employed by DVA. They work on Defence bases across the country providing support to ADF members in Australia or when posted overseas. They are available to help all members of the ADF, including Defence families and those members who are not yet leaving the military.

VSOs will tailor the support you require based on your individual circumstances. This will make it easier for you to access services and support once you have left the ADF.

You should contact a VSO if you have:

- been medically downgraded
- been deployed
- any questions about the services and support we offer to serving members and families.

We also suggest that you contact a VSO if you have been wounded or injured.

Contacting a VSO

Veteran Support Officers are usually located at either the Joint Health Command Facility or near the Transition Cell on your base. You can make an appointment by sending an email to VSO@dva.gov.au with:

- full name and your date of birth
- PMKeys number
- preferred telephone number
- name of base for an appointment
- state or territory.

You can also make an appointment to see a VSO by calling DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/vso



Support for transitioning members and families

Open Arms – Stepping Out program

This practical, strengths-focused workshop examines the emotional process of transitioning from Defence to civilian life.

Discover and begin to plan for key issues related to personal and social adjustment following separation or transfer from the permanent ADF. Receive knowledge, skills and resources to assist you and your family in planning your transition to civilian life. ADF members attending the program will be considered 'on duty at another location'.

Who can attend: ADF members and their partners who are planning to transition, or have already transitioned from the ADF to a predominantly civilian life.

Scan the QR code below to find out more or visit www.openarms.gov.au/group-programs





Managing your health and wellbeing

Leaving the ADF can have a significant impact on your physical and emotional health. While you are serving, and up to 12 months post separation, you can access the following services and support. Medical treatment while you are serving is provided by Defence except in certain specific circumstances.

Get your free health check

If you served at least one day of full-time service you can access a free Veterans' Health Check.

You can get a one-off free health check from your general practitioner (GP) if you left the ADF **before** 1 July 2019. You can get this any time after you leave.

If you left the forces **on or after** 1 July 2019, you can access one free health check each year for the first five years after you leave.

Further information on the Veterans' Health Check can be found on page 19 of this guide.

Access to free mental health support

Under Non-Liability Health Care (mental health), DVA may cover the cost of mental health treatment for veterans without the need to provide it is related to ADF service. We will pay for a mental health professional to treat you for any mental health condition, regardless of whether it relates to your service. This support is needs-based and uncapped.

You qualify if you have completed even a single day:

- of continuous full-time service (CFTS) in the permanent forces of the ADF
- as a reservist who has been formally designated to be on full-time service by Defence
- as a reservist who has been called out for full-time service by the Governor-General under the Defence Act.

Reservists without CFTS may still be eligible if they have either:

- disaster relief service
- border protection service
- involvement in a serious service-related training accident.

Further information on Non-Liability Health Care can be found on page 34 of this guide.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling provides mental health and wellbeing support to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families, and reservists who have rendered border protection or disaster relief service, or been involved in or witnessed a serious training accident, and their immediate families.

Further information on the services and support Open Arms provides can be found on page 31 of this guide.

Securing civilian employment

The pathway to civilian employment can look different for every veteran. Whether you are moving to a civilian career, or you have been working for some time and looking for a change, one thing that will set you up for success is making sure that you prepare for the next step in your career.

The Veteran Employment Program seeks to raise awareness and champion veteran employment by ensuring veterans' skills and experience are understood and valued by the wider community.

The Program provides services and support to veterans and employers. This includes providing funding to organisations to develop or enhance recognition of prior learning for veterans to make it easier for them to pursue further qualifications or a new career.

The Program does not advertise job vacancies. However, it does feature organisations from across Australia that have joined the Veteran Employment Commitment and have been recognised as a Veteran Employment Supporter, Veteran Friendly Employer or Veteran Employer of Choice. All such organisations are listed on our website and can be searched using various filters.

You and your family can use the information on the website to:

- translate your ADF skills for civilian employers
- learn about the culture of civilian workplaces
- find companies that support veteran employment
- download the Veteran Employment Toolkit for useful tips, practical advice and information on translating your ADF skills into language civilian employers understand
- link to self-employment (owning your own business) programs for veterans and partners
- link to programs to assist you with job seeking or a career change (e.g. Support For Employment)
- read about and see the winners and finalists of the Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards – the employers who are recognised as leaders in the field of veteran employment, and the veterans and partners who have excelled as employees and entrepreneurs.

To help you prepare for your move to civilian employment, or if you are considering a career change, visit veteranemployment.gov.au and subscribe to LinkedIn – Veteran Employment Program to stay up to date.



To view videos and access the Veteran Employment Toolkit, scan the QR code below or visit www.veteranemployment.gov.au/veterans



Veteran in focus story

The 2021 Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year was Chris de Bono of Meru Foods.

Chris joined the Navy straight out of high school and transitioned from the ADF in 2006, at the age of 26. He then undertook a number of reserve postings, including time at the Australian Defence Force Academy, while working out what his civilian life should look like.

Chris's enthusiastic drive, passion and personal interest in the craft of fermenting, brewing and distilling has ultimately turned a hobby into a thriving business. Meru Foods was founded in 2017, and Chris now supplies miso products to the Australian and international restaurant market.



To find out more about Chris's story scan the QR code below or visit youtube.com/dvatvaus and search for 'Chris de Bono'.

Submitting a claim

Depending on your age and service, you could be eligible for a range of payments and benefits, such as:

- regular income support payments
- regular compensation payments
- lump sum compensation payments
- extra allowances to supplement your income
- payment for health services
- support to help you in and around your home
- support for families.

Further information on the payments and supports available to you and your family can be found on page 43 of this guide.

Processing times

You can assist DVA to process your claim in the shortest time possible, by providing us with the following information when you lodge your claim:

- A fully complete claim form;
- Proof of Identity (POI);
- A medical diagnosis from a qualified medical practitioner;
- Any further supporting documentation you hold that is relevant to the particular diagnosis, such as:
 - clinical notes
 - specialists reports
 - scans, MRIs or X-ray reports
 - witness statement(s)
 - a Hazardous Material Exposure Report



For more information on current claims processing times, visit the QR code or www.dva.gov.au/claim-processing

How to submit a claim

You do not have to wait for us to approve your claim before you can get help. If your claim was for a mental health condition, you might qualify to receive the Veteran Payment as an interim payment until your claim is approved. Under the Provisional Access to Medical Treatment program, or PAMT, we will pay for your treatment for certain conditions before we have accepted liability for them.

Preparing a claim can be complex, so we strongly encourage you to seek assistance. Ask your ex-service organisation (ESO), as most have pensions officers or advocates who offer free services and can help you with the claim. They are not Defence or DVA staff members. You do not need to pay, or give up a portion of your entitlements, for advice from an advocate. Alternatively, you can contact DVA for assistance.

For assistance with submitting a claim while serving, contact your nearest Veteran Support Officer by emailing vso@dva.gov.au or calling us on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). ESOs and veteran advocates can also assist you to prepare your claim after your transition to civilian life.



To find the your nearest advocate or ESO, visit the QR code or www.dva.gov.au/civilian-life

If you have a health condition that you think may be caused by your service, you should submit a claim. If you would like DVA support for a mental health condition, even if not related to your service, you should submit a claim.

You can submit a claim online with MyService or at one of our offices. The first step in working out your eligibility for additional supports will be assessing whether your service is the cause of your condition.



For more information on submitting a claim, visit the QR code or youtube.com/dvatvaus and search for 'How to submit a claim'

Access to information

If you need to access your personal information, start with the MyService portal. In MyService, you can track the progress of your claim and access information such as documents to support your claim, monitor your accepted conditions or view a summary of your service.

For information about claims not submitted via MyService, contact the delegate assigned to your claim. Their contact details can be found on official correspondence.

If the information you need is not available through MyService or your delegate, you can submit an application to our Information Access Unit (IAU) for this information to be released administratively. The IAU is also responsible for processing applications made under the Freedom of Information Act.

Contact the IAU either via:

Email: Information.Access@dva.gov.au

Phone: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) and when prompted, say why you're calling.

Write to: The Information Access Unit, Department of Veterans' Affairs, GPO Box 9998, Brisbane QLD 4001.



To learn more about accessing information, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/accessing-information



Nominating a representative

If you have legal capacity to make decisions and manage your own affairs, you can choose to appoint another person, known as a Nominated Representative, to represent you in some or all of your dealings with us.

A Nominated Representative can represent you in various ways. You are in control of what kind of representation the person will provide, and how long the arrangement will last. You can choose to authorise your Nominated Representative to simply make enquiries, provide information to us like updating your details, or receive correspondence on your behalf. If you wish, you can also authorise a Nominated Representative to make claims or request services on your behalf. In some cases, you can request a Nominated Representative to receive your payments and manage them on your behalf.

You can appoint any person as your Nominated Representative. Representatives may be partners, children, trustees, agents, or legal representatives. They may also be a veteran advocate or another member of an ex-service organisation, who provides assistance to veterans in making claims and accessing benefits. In some cases, clients who live in residential care facilities, such as nursing homes, may request that payments are made to the residential care provider to manage on the client's behalf.

If you choose to appoint a Nominated Representative, we will need your written confirmation before we can deal with that representative. The best way to provide written confirmation is online using MyService, or using the forms on our website. You can cancel a representative arrangement or change your Nominated Representative at any time.

If you lose the legal capacity to manage your own affairs, for example because of serious illness or injury, we can recognise another person as your representative who will deal with us on your behalf. That person must provide us with proof of their legal authority to act on your behalf, such as an enduring power of attorney or an order of a court or tribunal.



For more information scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/nominate-a-representative

Healthcare, treatment and rehabilitation services

We fund access to services for your physical and mental health, and whole-of-person rehabilitation assistance. The services we fund are designed to assist you to manage your health needs.

Focusing on wellbeing, we aim to build individualised services to meet the changing needs of veterans and families. You will be empowered to manage your needs as we provide easy access to services and information when and where you need it.

We are partnering with organisations and individuals to help design, implement and deliver effective programs and benefits, which enhance the wellbeing of veterans and their families.

Veteran Cards

Since June 2024, Veteran Card holders are able to add a digital version of their Veteran White or Gold Card to the myGov wallet, in the myGov app. The myGov app gives people choice about how they use myGov on their mobile device. It includes a digital wallet that allows you to securely store some government cards, including Veteran Cards.

DVA Veteran Cards are issued to eligible veterans and some dependants. The cards allow health providers to recognise the cardholder as a DVA client and permit entitled DVA benefits to be paid.

We issue cards that give you access to certain benefits such as health care and support, transport assistance when travelling for approved treatment, and discounts on medicine and utilities bills. Your Veteran Card may also cover care for accepted conditions while you are overseas.

The Veteran Cards available are the:

- **Veteran White Card** – a treatment card that can provide you with medical treatment for accepted service-related medical conditions, all mental health conditions for veterans with continuous full-time service or certain reserve service, and Non-Liability Health Care for cancer (malignant neoplasm) and pulmonary tuberculosis for certain eligible veterans plus access to a range of services and support.
- **Veteran Gold Card** – a treatment card that allows you to get clinically required healthcare treatment for all conditions at our expense. You can also access a range of services and support such as counselling, home help, medical aids and equipment, and care services.

- **Veteran Orange Card** – a card that gives allied Second World War veterans access to prescription medicines, wound care items and nutritional supplements at a concession rate. This card cannot be used for medical or other healthcare treatment.

If you are a new client or an existing DVA client without a White, Gold or Orange card, you can request the Veteran Card through MyService.

For more information about the types of services available and eligibility for any of the cards provided through DVA, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/cards



State and territory governments, and some private businesses, offer concessions or discounts on services such as public transport or electricity. They may use a DVA card as an identifier for eligibility for their concessions. These are offered at the discretion of each business or state government given they bear the cost of the products and services they offer. Please check with those providers for your eligibility.

Looking after your health

Whether you live in Australia or overseas, we may cover the health care you need. In Australia, we may pay your care costs for clinically necessary health care provided through your Veteran Card, and may arrange and cover costs to transport you to the nearest health provider who can treat you. If you have a Veteran Gold Card, we will cover the cost of clinically necessary treatment for all health conditions. If you have a Veteran White Card, we will cover the cost of clinically necessary treatment for accepted conditions or Non-Liability Health Care.

For Veteran White Card holders, health care not covered by your Veteran Card may be covered by your Medicare Card (requested via Services Australia). You may be required to pay an out-of-pocket cost for services delivered under your Medicare Card.

Outside Australia, DVA can provide reimbursement for required treatment of conditions that have been accepted as being service-related.

Provisional Access to Medical Treatment program

The PAMT program enables eligible veterans who are waiting for their claims to be considered by DVA to receive medical and allied-health treatment on a provisional basis for one or more of the 20 most commonly accepted conditions for ex-serving members of the ADF.

Once you have submitted a claim with us, we will write to you about the program and send you a treatment confirmation form. You must present the form to your GP who will determine if your injury, wound or illness is one or more of the conditions covered.

If it is, your GP will complete the form and send a copy to us. You will be given the original form for your own records. You will then be able to access treatment under PAMT until we accept or decline your claim (make a determination), finalise your application for reconsideration or review, or the program ends.

If we accept your claim, you will move to normal DVA arrangements. There will be no disruption to your treatment. If we decline your claim, you will not have to pay back any payment received under PAMT.

For a full list of the conditions covered under the PAMT program scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/PAMT



Veterans' Health Checks

A Veterans' Health Check is a comprehensive health assessment with your GP to help you better understand and optimise your health and wellbeing. It provides an opportunity to access early intervention care and appropriate referrals when you need it.

It can help you manage and take charge of your own health, take action to stay well, address health concerns early and develop a relationship with a new GP post-separation.

Your health check will depend on your needs. Your GP may ask about your health and family history, prescribe treatment plans, refer you to other health professionals or for further testing, or suggest other DVA services and programs to support you.

For more information on how to book your Veterans' Health Check, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/veteranhealthcheck



General practitioner and medical specialist services

We may be able cover the costs of medical services from your general practitioner (GP) and medical specialists.

The GP or medical specialist will assess your clinical need and provide advice, treatment, a medication review, a prescription and/or a referral to another health care provider as appropriate. You can be referred by your GP to an allied-health provider if you have a clinical need for allied-health treatment.

Where clinically required, your GP can:

- provide necessary treatment, prescriptions and referrals
- conduct regular reviews of your medication and treatment
- coordinate all your health services through the Coordinated Veterans' Care program, one-off health check, or an annual check for the first five years post-separation. Each have different eligibility criteria.

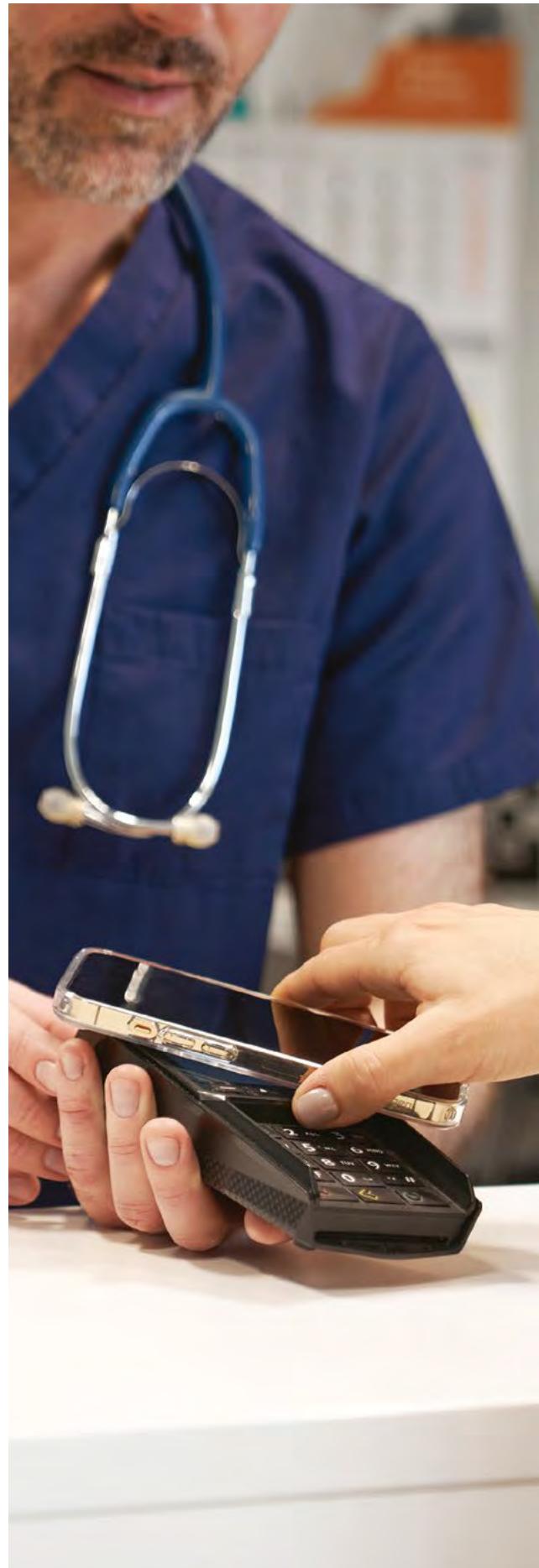
Allied-health services

On referral from your GP we may fund the following healthcare services for accepted conditions including:

- chiropractic services
- dietician support
- mental health services
- occupational therapy
- orthotic, podiatry and osteopathic services
- physiotherapy
- speech pathology.

Dental, hearing and optical services can be accessed without a referral.

For more information about medical and allied health services available to you, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/health-services



More affordable medicines

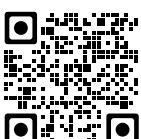
We offer financial aid and support services to help veterans with access to more affordable medicines. The Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) provides eligible people with access to a wide range of medicines and wound-care items, in addition to what is available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), all at the PBS concession rate. Your health provider can check if the RPBS covers the items you need by calling the Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC) on 1800 552 580.

If you have a Veteran Gold or Orange Card, you can access medicines under the RPBS to treat all health conditions. If you have a Veteran White Card, you can access medicines to treat your DVA-accepted conditions or Non-Liability Health Care conditions. Veteran White Card holders can access other medicines through the PBS using their Medicare card.

We may also reimburse the amount you spend on some medicines and pharmacy items when you use your Veteran Card. We call this the Veterans' Pharmaceutical Reimbursement Scheme (VPRS). Under this scheme, you may get back some of the money you have spent on prescriptions throughout the year.

Once eligible veterans and their dependants have spent up to a certain limit on their prescriptions in any given year, they may not have to pay any more for certain pharmaceuticals. The amount you spend on your prescriptions is called the concessional co-payment. The limit is called the safety net threshold.

We may also give you a pharmaceutical allowance to help you with the cost of your prescriptions. If you are eligible under the VPRS, we may reimburse you the difference between how much you spent on your prescriptions and the amount of pharmaceutical allowance you received.



Case studies demonstrating how the reimbursements work can be found at the QR Code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/medicine

Hearing support for veterans

The Australian Government provides hearing services to veterans through the Hearing Services Program (HSP), administered by the Department of Health and Aged Care, and through DVA. The HSP offers a wide range of high-quality hearing aids that are available to all eligible Australians, including veterans. These hearing aids meet the needs of the vast majority of DVA clients. Devices through the HSP are free.

If your hearing provider determines that your hearing needs are unable to be met through the HSP and or DVA covered ALD, you may be able to access further hearing device options to support your complex hearing needs through your provider submitting a request to DVA.

Assistive listening devices (ALDs) work in combination with hearing aids and are designed to help you hear better in specific situations, such as using the telephone, watching television or in social situations. You may also be able to access a combination of different ALDs if that is what's required to meet your hearing needs.

DVA also supports veterans with service-related hearing loss and tinnitus by funding:

- tests to evaluate hearing loss or tinnitus as part of a DVA claim
- ALDs
- replacement batteries and hearing aid maintenance
- treatment for tinnitus.

You can arrange an appointment with the hearing provider of your choice. Take your DVA Gold or White Card to the appointment and let your hearing provider know you have a DVA card.

For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/hearing or www.dva.gov.au/ALDs



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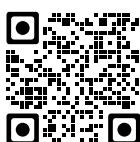
Medical Grade Footwear

Medical Grade Footwear (MGF) is footwear clinically prescribed to accommodate and/or correct abnormal foot and/or ankle structure or significant deformity.

MGF can be either of the following:

- ready-made extra depth and/or width MGF listed on DVA's MGF Register
- custom made MGF which meet DVA's technical specifications manufactured by a person or organisation contracted to DVA, and approved by DVA for supply

If you are a Veteran Gold Card holder, or a Veteran White Card holder (and your accepted condition relates to your need for MGF) then you may be eligible to obtain clinically prescribed footwear when you have an assessed clinical need and meet DVA criteria.



Scan the QR code for more information or visit www.dva.gov.au/MGF

Convalescent care

Convalescent care is short-term care which is medically necessary for recovery following a stay in hospital. It is provided in approved residential care facilities and public or private hospitals.

If you have a Veteran Gold Card, we will cover the cost of convalescent care for any condition. If you have a Veteran White Card, we will cover the cost of convalescent care if we paid for the original hospital admission.

To access convalescent care, talk to your hospital discharge planner, treating doctor, social worker or nurse. They will contact us if prior approval for the cost of care is required.

For more information, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/cc



Health services for the veteran community

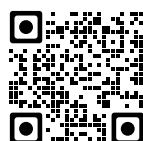
If you have a Veteran Gold Card, we can pay for medical services through Medicare-registered providers to meet your clinical needs whether they are service-related or not. If you have a Veteran White Card, we can pay for medical services provided through Medicare-registered health providers, if they are required because of an accepted war- or service-caused wound, injury or disease.

DVA will not pay for some health services including naturopathy, iridology, and homeopathy. If you are unsure as to whether DVA will pay for a particular service, you should contact us before agreeing to progress with the health service.

Through Non-Liability Health Care (mental health), fully-funded mental health care is available to anyone with even a single day of full-time service in the ADF, and some reservists, for any mental health condition, regardless of whether it relates to their service. This support is needs-based and uncapped. See page 34 for more information.

Under Non-Liability Health Care, we can provide free treatment for cancer (malignant neoplasm) and pulmonary tuberculosis. There is no need to establish that these conditions were caused by your ADF service. However, you need to meet certain service eligibility requirements

For more information about which health services are provided by DVA that may be available for you, scan the QR code below. You can also find out more information about each service type.
www.dva.gov.au/veteran-health-services



Travel for medical treatment

All clients with Gold or White Cards (and a support person if medically required) have access to transport assistance when travelling for approved or compensable treatment within Australia. Veteran Gold Card holders have access to treatment for all conditions, while Veteran White Card holders have access to treatment for an accepted service-related condition or for treatment of a specific condition covered under Non-Liability Health Care and conditions covered by PAMT.

Travel for clients with entitlements under the VEA must be to the "Closest Practical Treatment Location" and clients with entitlements under the MRCA/DRCA must be to a "Place Where Appropriate Treatment is Available". Despite the separate terms due to different legislation, the intent is the same. That is, you can access travel assistance to attend the approved provider (or approved treatment) that is the most practical (or appropriate) to deliver the care you require who is the closest in distance. For example, your local provider may have a six-month wait for an appointment, so you may need to travel out of your local area to attend a provider with availability. The non-local provider with availability would be considered your closest practical / appropriate treatment location for the calculation of your travel entitlement. Note that we may need additional information to support some transport assistance requests. If in doubt, please contact us before you travel to confirm your travel entitlement, and we will let you know if further documentation is required.

There are a number of transport assistance options available including reimbursement of travelling expenses (including taxi, community transport and public transport), travel allowances (including private vehicle per kilometre rate, meals and accommodation), DVA-arranged transport and ambulance services (emergency, and non-emergency when clinically required). The type of assistance you can access will vary depending on which Act your eligibility is under. When travelling away from home or if you are on holidays, you may wish to consider travel insurance as DVA cannot fund your return transport home if you have an accident or medical episode.



For more information about travel bookings or to claim transport costs, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/myservice

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Ambulance services

We accept financial responsibility for emergency ambulance for Veteran Gold Card holders and Veteran White Card holders when travelling to receive treatment for an accepted service-related condition or for treatment of a specific condition covered under Non-Liability Health Care or PAMT.

Non-emergency ambulance services are available to Veteran Gold and White Card holders when clinically required. Veteran White Card holders must be travelling to receive treatment for an accepted service-related condition or for treatment of a specific condition covered under Non-Liability Health Care or PAMT. Non-emergency ambulance transport must be organised by an approved health provider.

You can find further information on transport costs for medical treatment, including accepted conditions, by scanning the QR code or visiting www.dva.gov.au/travel-for-treatment



Hospital services

If you hold a Veteran Gold Card, a Veteran White Card or a written authorisation for treatment, you are eligible to receive hospital services under DVA's arrangements.

We will pay for all hospital services that are clinically necessary for Veteran Gold Card holders. We will pay Veteran White Card holders' hospital treatment costs required for an accepted war- or service-caused wound, injury or disease, malignant cancer (neoplasia), pulmonary tuberculosis, and any mental health condition, depending on eligibility under Non-Liability Health Care or Non-Liability Health Care (mental health).

Subject to the above criteria, you do not require our approval to be admitted to a:

- public hospital
- DVA-contracted private hospital
- DVA-contracted private hospital for mental health services
- DVA-contracted day procedure centre.

Under DVA's hospital arrangements, your doctor must seek our approval before admitting you to a:

- non-contracted private hospital
- non-contracted private hospital for mental health services
- non-contracted day procedure centre.

For more information including a list of contracted private hospitals and other services, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/your-hospital-stay



Coordinated Veterans' Care Program

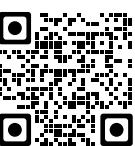
If you're a Veteran Gold Card holder with certain chronic conditions or a White Card holder with a DVA-accepted mental health condition and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be enrolled in the program by your GP. Speak with your GP to determine if the program is suitable for you.

The Coordinated Veterans' Care program uses a proactive approach to manage your chronic conditions, improve quality of life and reduce the risk of unplanned hospitalisations. Participation in the program will assist you to be actively involved in managing your health and wellbeing, through working closely with your GP, and nurse coordinator.

Once enrolled in the program, your GP will work with you to develop an individual Care Plan to:

- meet your health needs
- support you to achieve your health goals
- provide education and guide you to understand your health, and
- manage your ongoing care.

Your Care Plan will be individualised to support your unique goals, and can include other health professionals such as pharmacists, physiotherapists, mental health specialists, ESOs, family and friends.



To find out more about the program, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/cvc

Diabetes support services

Our support services for veterans with diabetes can help you better understand and maintain your health. We may cover your costs for your GP to develop a personalised care plan or pay for you to visit a diabetes educator who advises on how to manage diabetes.

DVA provides a range of programs, information and online support services to assist you manage your condition, which are available through the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/diabetes



Help for alcohol and drug problems

There is help available if you or someone you love has drug or alcohol issues.

You may be eligible for healthcare services to help you with your drug or alcohol problem. The services include:

- general medical
- psychiatry and psychology
- relationship support
- hospital care for detox support
- occupational therapy
- support through Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling
- drug and alcohol residential programs.

For more information about which health services are provided by DVA that may be available for you, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/alcohol-other-substance-treatment. You can also find out more information about each service type.



Essential Medical Equipment Payment

This is an annual payment to help with energy costs to run essential medical equipment or medically required heating or cooling.

You also need to be contributing to the energy costs at an Australian residence.

Eligible essential medical equipment items include:

- positive airways pressure device (PAP)
- home ventilator
- home respirator
- home enteral or parenteral feeding device
- oxygen concentrator
- electric wheelchair
- airbed vibrator.

For more information about eligibility and the services DVA can provide through this payment, including a comprehensive list of medical equipment, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/EMEP



SCAM ALERT – False or misleading representations

Australian Government departments including DVA are often subject to false or misleading representation by companies wanting to get funding via the department's clients.

Veterans should be cautious of any advertisements and representations made by third-party organisations claiming to be made on behalf of DVA. DVA will never directly send you unsolicited goods, such as retail vouchers/gifts, or offer you or your family health-related services without your consent.

If you are unsure if it is DVA contacting you, or suspect a third party may be misrepresenting DVA, hang up and call us back on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or you can fill out a request for a call-back on MyService or at www.dva.gov.au/contact-us.

In other cases, health providers may attempt to claim services against your veteran number that they did not provide to you, or try to claim for higher amounts. If you suspect a health provider to be fraudulent or is claiming inappropriately, you can contact FRAUD.TIPOFF@dva.gov.au.

DVA's rehabilitation services

To complement primary and allied-health treatment, a DVA whole-of-person rehabilitation plan may include services to assist veterans with accepted conditions with medical management, social support and vocational rehabilitation.

A rehabilitation plan provides support to help you:

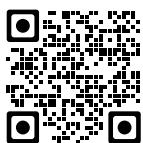
- find health providers and understand and access the civilian health system
- enhance your social connections through community engagement and strengthening connections with family and friends
- to become job ready through a range of vocational supports, if you are able to medically.

If you have an accepted service-related medical condition, we can refer you to a qualified rehabilitation consultant in your region. Your rehabilitation consultant will work with you to design a rehabilitation plan focused on giving you the tools to manage your own health needs and get your independence back.

We recognise that your physical and social health plays a key part in your overall wellbeing. Your rehabilitation consultant will monitor your progress as you participate in your rehabilitation activities.

Your rehabilitation plan can include three types of services and support to help you become job ready: medical management, social support and vocational rehabilitation.

If you are still serving and are undertaking rehabilitation through Defence, you can receive rehabilitation through us after you separate. Your ADF rehabilitation case manager will refer you to us so you can be connected with a DVA rehabilitation consultant.



To learn more about the services available through DVA, eligibility requirements and the service providers who can provide assistance, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/veteran-rehabilitation

Aids and appliances

Assistance with modifications to vehicles, and aids and appliances may also be provided if they are relevant to your service medical condition, and/or the requirements of your rehabilitation program.



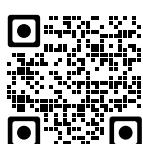
Veteran in focus story

Meet Ray Chadburn, an Army veteran who served in Singapore, Malaya, Thailand, Vietnam and New Guinea. He still experiences pain from his service trauma dating back to 1966. Ray uses DVA's Rehabilitation Appliance Program to access equipment and mobility aids to help at home.

Ten years ago, Ray reached out to the program to help improve his quality of life. That one move changed his life for the better.

Ray's advice to other veterans who might be experiencing mobility issues as a result of their service is, 'not to be too proud to ask DVA for help'.

Check out Ray's story, and how DVA's RAP program helps support veterans to improve their quality of life by scanning the QR code or visiting youtube.com/dvatvaus and search 'Ray Chadburn'



Medical Expenses Privately Incurred (MEPI)

There are two situations where we may consider reimbursing your out-of-pocket medical expenses. These two situations are defined as 'in-time' (an expense incurred between the date of eligibility and the date you were notified of your entitlement) and 'out-of-time' (an expense incurred after you were granted entitlement).

If you hold a Veteran Gold Card or Veteran White Card, please check with your health provider prior to your consultation or treatment that they accept DVA Veteran Card arrangements.



Information on how to apply for reimbursement is available at the following QR Code or visit www.dva.gov.au/MEPI



Help if you were in contact with substances

If military service exposed you to dangerous substances, you can have a health test and may be able to claim the costs associated with having a health check. Any veteran concerned about workplace exposures during their military service can discuss this with their health provider as part of their veteran health check (see page 19).

- **Asbestos and chemical exposure health check** – some work with the ADF can mean that you may have been exposed to asbestos or other hazardous chemicals. If this happened to you, Defence may pay for you to get a special health test.
- **F-111 workers and their families** – the Study of Health Outcomes in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel (SHOAMP) Health Care Scheme provides treatment and counselling for eligible personnel who were involved in F-111 deseal/reseal and fuel tank maintenance work. The Scheme also provides counselling for family members of Group 1 participants, and other personnel employed at RAAF Base Amberley at the time of the F-111 deseal/reseal programs.
- **Firefighters who served at Point Cook between 1957 and 1986** – are eligible for some medical screening and simpler access to compensation and treatment of a range of conditions. For further information, see the DVA website (www.dva.gov.au/adf-firefighters-scheme).

Eligibility for the health tests for conditions associated with these substances can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting www.dva.gov.au/contact-with-substances





Veteran in focus story

Watch as Chris Thompson-Lang shares his story about transitioning from the ADF, finding balance and a new direction after his service.

From the age of 15 Chris was 'dead keen' on joining the military. He later served as a combat engineer, deploying to East Timor and was promoted to Corporal. Chris graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, where he then served as a Lieutenant and was promoted to Captain.

He was medically separated and suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder after returning home. DVA has provided him support and a 'safety net' during his transition out of the ADF.

Chris's advice for veterans and serving personnel is to get started early, don't wait to seek support. If you've been impacted by your military service, get in touch with DVA straight away.

Chris now runs Frontline Yoga Inc., where he helps to support other veterans who are transitioning to civilian life.

'Taking responsibility for our own health and our own recovery, with the support of the department, is going to lead to a much more fulfilling life,' he says.

Watch Chris's story on DVA TV by scanning the QR code or visit youtube.com/dvatvaus and search for 'Chris Thompson-Lang'



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Mental health support

Mental health is everyone's business – families, friends, employers, community organisations and ex-service organisations all have an important role to play in supporting veterans and families. The families of current and former ADF personnel often fulfil carers' duties when it comes to supporting the mental health of veterans.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling is Australia's leading provider of high quality mental health, counselling and support services for veterans and families. Designed by veterans for veterans, Open Arms focuses on meeting client needs through a combination of proven clinical practices and new and emerging evidence-based approaches.

Along with programs and services provided by DVA and support from the ex-service community, Open Arms delivers world-class counselling, support and innovative services to serving ADF members, veterans and veteran families.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling has been providing our veterans with mental health support since 1982. Open Arms was founded by Vietnam Veterans and is a nationally accredited mental health service that provides 24-hour free and confidential mental health support. Any ADF member with even one day continuous full-time service can get support through Open Arms, as can their partners and children. Reservists who have rendered border protection or disaster relief service, or been involved in or witnessed a serious training accident, and their immediate families are also eligible. Where there has been a death of a service person, immediate family can also access the service.

Open Arms services include: counselling for individuals, couples and families; case management for clients with more complex needs; group programs to develop skills and enhance support; lived experience peer support; after-hours counselling; mental health literacy information, education and self-help resources.

Accessing Open Arms services

There are just four steps to access Open Arms services and support.

1. Call 1800 011 046.
2. Answer some questions about your situation. This can be a brief conversation or might include a longer interview to help identify the most appropriate services and support for you.
3. Open Arms will refer you to the most suitable services, for example, an Open Arms counsellor, specialist service, peer worker, or treatment program to suit your needs.
4. Attend counselling, a group program or training course, meet with a peer worker or use other services.

For more information scan the QR code or visit www.openarms.gov.au/get-support



SafeZone Support

Safe Zone Support is a free and anonymous counselling line for current serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families. This service can be reached on 1800 142 072 and is available 24/7. It provides access to specialised counsellors with an understanding of military culture and experience. The service offers support without the need for individuals to identify themselves or be concerned that their call will be recorded. When you call Safe Zone Support, it is up to you how much or how little personal information you share.

For more information scan the QR code or visit www.openarms.gov.au/safe-zone



Counselling

Open Arms counsellors and staff have an understanding of veteran and military culture that assists them to deliver specialised support and care to members of this community. Open Arms counsellors take a tailored approach to work with you to enhance your mental health and wellbeing.

Common concerns include:

- relationship and family issues
- transitioning to civilian life
- anxiety
- depression
- anger
- sleep difficulties
- PTSD
- alcohol and other drug misuse.

If you, or someone you know, is feeling or behaving differently for an extended period of time, it's time to talk.



For more information on what to expect at your counselling session, visit the QR code or visit www.openarms.gov.au/counselling

Group programs

Open Arms offers a range of free group programs to assist the serving and ex-serving community, as well as families, live their best life.

These activities include group treatment programs and online groups focused on topics including mindfulness, pain management, anger and relationships.

A list of upcoming session dates is available through the QR code below or by visiting www.openarms.gov.au/group-programs



Community and Peer program

Community and Peer Advisors complement our counselling and group program services to provide holistic care to veterans and families.

Peers draw on their own lived experiences from the military and mental health service system when working with clients. Peers are able to provide insight and support to veterans with complex care needs. Peers can provide intensive case management as well as referrals for difficult post-service issues such as:

- finances
- relationships
- employment
- physical health
- mental health
- thoughts of suicide.

The Open Arms' Community and Peer Program is available nationally. To learn more about how the Community and Peer Program could help you, visit the QR code or visit www.openarms.gov.au/community-and-peer-program





Crisis accommodation

Open Arms Crisis Accommodation Support (CAS) aims to provide crisis accommodation to eligible Open Arms clients who require access to alternative, short-term (up to three nights) accommodation in addition to mental health support.

Clients seeking CAS will need to be engaged in Care Coordination through Open Arms. Care Coordination aims to work with the client to address issues that contributed to the crisis. Where required and appropriate, the client will be referred to external services for specific supports.

Visit the Open Arms website for more information:
www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/crisis-accommodation



Living well and self-help tools

The Open Arms website provides a range of resources and information including guidance to support veterans and families, wellbeing case studies, webinars and fact sheets. The service has also developed digital apps and tools, and resources for health professionals.

A full range of self-help tools are available by visiting the QR code or www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/self-help-tools, providing support for relaxation techniques, combating negative self-talk, managing challenging emotions and promoting positive behaviours and interactions.



Recognition	Care at home & Residential aged care	Staying connected	Financial support	Mental health support	Healthcare, treatment & rehabilitation services	Submitting a claim	Transitioning from the ADF	Support for current members of the ADF
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Free mental health services

Non-Liability Health Care (mental health)

DVA can provide fully-funded mental health care treatment for any mental health condition through Non-Liability Health Care (mental health). This support is needs-based and uncapped. You do not need to prove that your ADF service caused these conditions.

DVA funds a comprehensive range of mental health support services provided by a:

- GP
- psychologist
- psychiatrist
- occupational therapist (mental health)
- social worker (mental health)
- hospital
- trauma recovery – posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) program
- counselling services through Open Arms
- DVA-approved alcohol or other drug community-based program.

You qualify if you have completed even a single day:

- of continuous full-time service (CFTS) in the permanent forces of the ADF
- as a reservist who has been formally designated to be on full-time service by Defence
- as a reservist who has been called out for full-time service by the Governor-General under the Defence Act.

Reservists without CFTS may still be eligible if they have either:

- disaster relief service
- border protection service
- involvement in a serious service-related training accident.

To access free treatment, you need to have a Veteran White Card or a Veteran Gold Card. More details on when you can start treatment and other information can be found at the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/mental-health-care



Trauma Recovery Programs

Your GP can help you with symptoms being experienced following trauma. There are many treatment options available that DVA is able to fund including a variety of mental health support options, medications, Open Arms and trauma recovery programs.

DVA funds veterans with a DVA card to attend tailored hospital-based Trauma Recovery Programs. These are designed to help veterans living with trauma related symptoms by supporting psychological growth and recovery.

Eligible participants must be either a veteran who is a DVA client or a current serving ADF member. The hospital will assess the eligibility and, where appropriate, allocate clients to a treatment group.

To learn more about the program, please contact a hospital in your state or territory and speak to the coordinators directly. A list of these contacts can be found by following the QR code or by visiting www.openarms.gov.au/PTSD-recovery



Veteran Payment

The Veteran Payment is an interim payment that you may receive while we assess your claim for a mental health condition. See page 38 for more information.



Psychiatric assistance dogs

The Psychiatric Assistance Dog Program provides eligible veterans with a trained assistance dog to help support their clinical recovery from PTSD. This includes detecting signs of distress and performing tasks to help alleviate the symptoms.

It could be such things as:

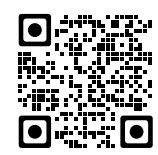
- waking you if you are having a night terror
- nuzzling you to distract you from emotionally disabling symptoms
- moving you out of stressful situations.

We work with assistance dog suppliers to support veterans nationally. Our suppliers source, train and provide dogs to work closely with their veteran handlers.

There can be a wait time for a referral to a supplier due to the high demand and limited availability of these incredible dogs. In addition, the assessment and training process can sometimes take up to 2 years before accreditation for safely accessing public spaces is achieved, and they begin living together in the veteran's home.

If you feel you may be eligible, you should talk with your mental health professional to review the requirements.

Please note: The program is unable to fund the training of existing pet dogs, or provide companion animals.



For more information about the mental health services available through DVA, including eligibility requirements, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/psychiatric-assistance-dogs

Client Support Program

The Client Support Program offers a case management service to help vulnerable clients navigate DVA services and connect them to supports to meet their wellbeing needs.

The Program is time-limited and is aimed at streamlining communication between clients, their families and DVA – providing clients and their families with a single or primary point of contact for all services within DVA. The program focus is on identifying appropriate supports, following holistic assessment, and consists of a range of services and programs tailored to support the specific service needs of the client and their families, from initial intake to successful case closure.

For more information scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au and search for 'client support'





Financial and other support

The Australian Government is working to ensure veterans and families have the services they deserve, supporting more than 340,000 veterans and family members.

DVA aims to empower veterans to engage fully in society after service and offers programs to support the success of veterans and families in civilian life. These services can help to enhance the quality of life of veterans and families by improving their financial wellbeing and self-sufficiency.

We are committed to delivering a package of practical support measures that will improve the welfare of veterans and families, now and into the future.

Getting to know your entitlements

When and where an individual served dictates which Act or Acts they fall under, and therefore what support and benefits they can receive from us.

The *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) covers service in wars and certain operational deployments until 30 June 2004. The VEA also covers certain peacetime service between 7 December 1972 and 30 June 2004.

The *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) covers all forms of service for all members of the permanent and reserve forces from 1 July 2004 to the present day.

The *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-Related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA) provides support for wounds, injuries and diseases suffered as a result of peacetime and peacekeeping service from 3 January 1949 up to 30 June 2004, and operational service between 7 April 1994 and 30 June 2004.

A Veteran Gold Card is only available under the VEA and MRCA.

DVA is simplifying and harmonising legislation that governs compensation and rehabilitation, so veterans and families can more easily get the support they are entitled to.

Further information can be found by scanning the QR code or by visiting the DVA website (www.dva.gov.au/legislationreform).



Support for veterans

Veteran Payment

The Veteran Payment is an interim payment that you may receive while we assess your claim (under MRCA or DRCA) for a mental health condition. If we approve your claim for a mental health condition, we will move you from the Veteran Payment to the appropriate benefit or payment, and continue to pay your Veteran Payment for up to 42 days while this is taking place. You must participate in a DVA rehabilitation program if you are able to. Your rehabilitation coordinator will arrange this for you.

If we do not approve your claim for a mental health condition, we will help you to apply for an appropriate Services Australia support payment. We will continue to pay your Veteran Payment for up to 42 days during this time and, in some cases, you may receive the Veteran Payment until you have other means of financial support, even if it takes more than 42 days.

Your partner may receive their own Veteran Payment and in this situation, you and your partner would each receive the Veteran Payment at the couples rate. Your partner can be your legal spouse or your de facto partner. If you are a member of a couple and your partner is not receiving a Veteran Payment, you will be paid at the couples rate.

Once your Veteran Payment has been granted, you may also be eligible for other benefits such as the pension supplement, rent assistance and remote area allowance. When you receive the Veteran Payment, you cannot get the Pensioner Concession Card or the Energy Supplement.

Information on the eligibility criteria, current payment rates and what you need to tell us can be found at the QR code or at www.dva.gov.au/veteran-payment



Service pension

The service pension provides a regular income to veterans and their partners. It is an income support payment, so your income and assets affect how much you can receive.

We recognise that the impacts of service can reduce the length of time you are able to keep working. For that reason, you can get the service pension earlier than the social security age pension.

You may qualify for a service pension based on your age, invalidity or partner status. Depending on the way you qualify, your payment may be known as:

- Age Service Pension
- Invalidity Service Pension
- Partner Service Pension.

Each type of service pension has different rules to determine who is eligible. You can work out your rate of service pension and find out about the service pension for partners from the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/service-pension





Permanent impairment (PI) payments

You may be eligible for tax-free compensation payments if you have sustained physical or psychological impairment related to your Defence service. These payments are in respect of the permanent impairment caused by the injury or disease and do not reflect any loss of current and future earnings.

The type of PI payment, either periodic payment or lump-sum, and the amount payable depends on the period of service when your injury or disease was sustained.

You may be entitled to receive compensation from DVA if:

- you have a resulting impairment; and
- the impairment is likely to continue indefinitely; and
- your injury or disease has stabilised.

PI compensation is paid in respect of any permanent physical and/or mental impairment in combination with any lifestyle restrictions resulting from your accepted conditions.

The amount of PI compensation you may be entitled to is calculated from the level of physical and/or mental impairment resulting from your accepted conditions and the effect that this impairment has on your lifestyle.

In general, the higher the degree of impairment caused by your accepted conditions and the more that they affect your lifestyle, then the greater the amount of PI compensation you will be entitled to receive.

Further information can be found by scanning the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/compensation-claims



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Disability Compensation Payments

Disability Compensation Payments are paid to compensate veterans for injuries or diseases caused or aggravated by war service or certain defence service rendered on behalf of Australia before 1 July 2004. It is a non-taxable pension.

The amount of Disability Compensation Payment paid depends on the level of incapacity suffered as a result of war-caused or defence-caused injuries and diseases. Generally, the more incapacitated the veteran is, the higher the amount of pension they will receive.

Further information can be found by scanning the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/disability-pensions-and-allowances



Support when you cannot work

We may pay you if a service-related injury, wound or illness impacts your ability to work. We may require medical evidence or need to ask about your income and assets.

There are a number of payments and allowances you can receive if your work ability is impacted, such as:

- Incapacity payments – compensation for economic loss due to the inability (or reduced ability) to work because of an injury, wound or disease that has been accepted as service related. To receive incapacity payments, you will need to provide current medical certificates when requested.
- Loss of earnings allowance – this allowance helps to replace lost pay if you need to take time off work to get treatment for a service-related injury, wound or condition. We can also pay it to someone who takes time off work to help you get treatment or claim Disability Compensation Payment.
- Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) – an alternative form of periodic compensation (instead of incapacity payments) for people whose capacity for work has been severely restricted because of conditions due to military service on or after 1 July 2004. SRDP is not automatically granted. If you are assessed as being eligible for SRDP, you will

be offered the choice between starting SRDP or continuing to receive incapacity payments.

- Invalidity Service Pension – a regular income support pension for people with limited means, paid to people of any age with qualifying service who are permanently incapacitated for work. It is subject to an income and assets test.
- Age pension – a regular income for people with limited means, paid to a person who has reached pension age, and is subject to an income and assets test.
- Above General Rate disability compensation payments – Higher, Above General Rates (AGR) of Disability Compensation Payments, such as Special and Intermediate Rates are payable if you are severely incapacitated and unable to have a normal working life because of the effects of your accepted condition/s.



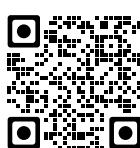
Further details and information on these payments, including eligibility criteria and current payment rates can be found by scanning the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/support-when-you-cannot-work

Allowances

You may be eligible for regular payments to help with daily activities or as a reward for your valour. You can get these with your usual pension or payment and we will pay as many allowances as you are able to receive.

Allowances can assist with the costs of travelling, hiring attendants to assist with daily living, wear and tear of your clothing and assistance to help with the higher costs of living in remote parts of Australia.

We also provide allowances for veterans who have been awarded certain decorations as part of their service in addition to the Disability Compensation Payment, and an annual allowance payment for Victoria Cross recipients.



Further details on these allowances can be found via the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/allowances



Home Equity Access Scheme

The Home Equity Access Scheme is a voluntary scheme for older Australians. You or your partner can use this scheme to supplement your retirement income through a loan from DVA. You can apply for non-taxable loan payments from us by using your property as security.

You choose how long you want to receive loan payments. It could be for a short time for particular expenses, or indefinitely. You can repay the loan in full or part at any time. When you apply for the loan, DVA will arrange for the property to be valued and if the loan goes ahead we will arrange for ongoing annual valuations of the property.

The maximum loan amount you can receive depends on the value of the property you offer as security, your nominated loan amount (i.e. the equity you want to keep in the property) and your age.

Eligibility and loan requirements can be found at the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/home-equity-access-scheme



Veteran home loan

The Westpac Flexi First Veteran Loan, previously known as the Defence Service Homes loan, offers a reduced interest rate. The maximum loan available is \$25,000 over a maximum term of 25 years.

Your loan can be used to:

- buy or build a house or unit
- complete, enlarge, modify and/or repair your house or unit
- buy the right of entry into a retirement village
- refinance an existing mortgage
- build, complete, modify or repair your retirement village accommodation if the retirement village you choose meets Westpac's acceptable security requirements
- obtain granny flat accommodation on another person's property.

Application eligibility and important information on loan conditions is available via the QR code below or by visiting www.dsh.gov.au



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Rent assistance

If you receive a service pension, income support supplement or Veteran Payment, you may be eligible for rent assistance for your accommodation.

Rent assistance is also available for students granted an education allowance. If you pay rent to a state or territory government housing authority you are not eligible for rent assistance. Your rent is already subsidised by the government.

You generally cannot receive rent assistance if you:

- pay rent to a government housing authority
- own or are paying off the home you live in
- have a long-term accommodation arrangement such as life interest from a deceased estate
- live overseas either permanently or temporarily for long periods of time
- live in a government-funded aged-care home
- paid an entry contribution more than the Extra Allowable Amount
- receive an incentive allowance from Centrelink
- pay rent less than the minimum threshold
- have, or your partner has, a dependent child under 16.

There may be exceptions to the above criteria. Please read the conditions and further information via the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/rent-assistance



Help with your vehicle costs

If you have an accepted service-related injury or illness that limits your mobility, we may help with the cost of modifying a vehicle to suit your needs.

The Motor Vehicle Compensation Scheme is available for eligible veterans who are: impaired because of an injury, wound or condition accepted under the MRCA; clinically assessed as unable to drive or be driven safely or comfortably in an unmodified vehicle; and would benefit from using the vehicle at least twice a week.

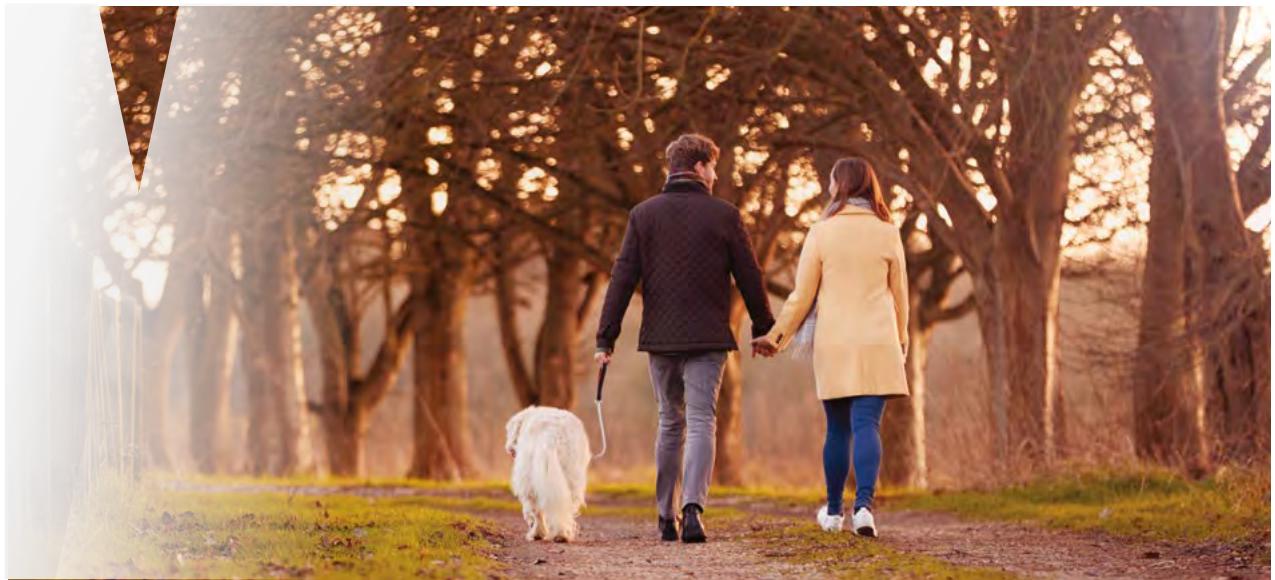
If you're eligible, we may be able to pay part, or the total cost, of modifications to an existing vehicle; or provide a modified vehicle to suit your needs, if you have complex conditions which significantly impact your ability to drive safely and in reasonable comfort. We may also partly or entirely pay for: repairs and maintenance for vehicle modifications; any extra insurance cost related to the modifications; and a replacement vehicle once your current one is 5 years old, or has driven 100,000km, and your current vehicle is no longer safe or suitable.

The Vehicle Assistance Scheme helps with car and car costs if a service-related wound or injury accepted under the VEA has severely reduced your mobility. The help can be financial assistance towards the purchase or replacement of a car; and vehicle modifications, driving devices and running and maintenance costs for the vehicle provided under the scheme.

You may be able to receive help under the Vehicle Assistance Scheme if your accepted service-related injury, wound or disease meets required conditions and we are able to establish that you will benefit directly from use of the vehicle; and can be transported regularly in safety and reasonable comfort. You don't have to be the driver of the vehicle.

More information on both these schemes is available from the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/vehicle-costs





Support for families

Compensation available to dependants

Under the VEA, the pension for orphans and war widow(er)'s is paid to compensate widowed partners and dependants of those veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible Defence service.

The war widow(er)'s pension and orphan's pension are not affected by other income, apart from other compensation payments.

The following people can claim this pension:

- a widow or widower – a person who was legally married to, or was in a de facto relationship with, a veteran immediately before the veteran's death and has not since remarried, married or entered into a de facto relationship with another person
- a dependent child – the natural or adopted child of a veteran, or a child who was wholly or substantially dependent on the veteran. The child must be under 16 years, or under 25 years and still undertaking full-time studies.

DVA currently provides compensation to dependants of veterans under the three Acts for which it is responsible. This is detailed on the DVA website: www.dva.gov.au/comparison-benefits-dependants

Under the DRCA, a single tax-free lump sum amount is shared among all dependants. Dependant spouses and children may also receive an additional lump sum amount each under the Defence Act.

Under the MRCA, wholly dependent partners of deceased members can elect to receive either tax-free periodic payments for life (equivalent to the rate of the war widow(er)'s pension under the VEA) or convert 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% of those periodic payments to a lump sum based on the age of the dependant. Any portion of the periodic payment not converted to a lump sum will remain a periodic payment.

Where the member's death has been accepted as having been related to ADF service, an additional tax-free, age-based compensation payment may be payable.

Dependent children of a deceased member receive a tax-free lump sum and weekly periodic payments.

Further information can be found by scanning the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/compensation-dependants-under-mrca

To claim for compensation following the death of a veteran, you will need to complete a DVA form D2663 and return it to us. You can get the form from your nearest DVA office, or from our website.

For more information on how to submit a claim, see page 16.

Income support supplement

Income support supplement (ISS) provides a regular income in addition to the war widows or widowers pension or the wholly dependent partner's payment for Australian war widows and widowers with limited means.

ISS is paid fortnightly, based on daily entitlements. The rate of ISS is indexed twice-yearly in March and September, in line with movements in the cost of living and/or average wages.

The rate of ISS we pay you depends on the amount of income you receive and the assets you have. Even though you may satisfy the other criteria for ISS, if you have a high income or a large amount of assets you may not be entitled to receive any payment.

For more information on the ISS, including what documentation is required for claiming, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/income-supplements



Service pension for partners

The service pension provides a regular income to veterans and their partners. When paid to a veteran's partner, it is called a partner service pension. You may be able to qualify as a current or former partner, or as a widow or widower.

For more information, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/service-pension-partners



Veteran Payment for partners

The Veteran Payment is an interim payment that you may receive while we assess your claim (under MRCA or DRCA) for a mental health condition. The Veteran Payment may also be payable to eligible partners. It is paid fortnightly and subject to the income and assets test.

For more information see page 38, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/veteran-payment



Acute Support Package

The Defence, Veterans' and Families' Acute Support Package (ASP) provides short-term, intensive and flexible support to eligible veterans and families who are experiencing new and challenging life circumstances that may result in the family being at risk of, or experiencing, crisis. The circumstances are about more than an event; they are about the impact on a family's ability to function.

There is flexibility for a range of services to be provided under the ASP to support and build the functioning of the family during the challenging period. DVA will work with you to develop a support plan based on your assessed needs.

The services available can include:

- respite childcare (including home-based care, centre-based care, family day care, occasional care and outside school hours care)
- counselling for adults and children (including clinical, financial and other life-skills counselling where required)
- household assistance (including meal delivery and preparation, cleaning, and household and garden maintenance)
- services to build capacity (including financial literacy, relationship skills, cooking lessons and mental health first aid)
- wellbeing, academic and extra-curricular support for children (including tutoring, music lessons and sporting activities)
- equipment and other goods in relation to services
- transport to attend services provided through the program
- any other type of service or support that may help adjust to new and challenging circumstances by building capacity and/or improving the functioning of the family.

Further details on eligibility and what you need to tell us can be found at the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/acute-support



Bereavement payments and funeral costs

A bereavement payment is a one-off, non-taxable payment designed to help with the costs that may follow the death of a veteran who was receiving, or was eligible to receive, a compensation payment. The bereavement payment will assist the partner to adjust their finances following the cessation of the pensioner's payments.

The amount of bereavement payment depends on the compensation that the pensioner was receiving prior to their death and whether they were single or a member of a couple.

You do not generally have to apply for a bereavement payment if the deceased person was a member of a couple. Payment will occur automatically when we are notified of the veteran's death.

We also cover certain costs of holding a funeral following the death of a former member of the ADF.

Certain funeral expenses can be paid directly to the person who made the claim (including the deceased's dependant or legal personal representative). If the funeral expenses have not been paid, funeral expenses up to the maximum amount payable can be awarded to the person or company which is conducting, or which conducted, the funeral.

For more information, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/bereavement-payment



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Education schemes

DVA's Education Schemes provide financial assistance and other support services to eligible children and dependants of current and former ADF personnel who have either died or been severely wounded or injured as a result of their service.

Under the Education Schemes, an education allowance provides financial assistance to support eligible students undertaking full-time study. Full-time study includes primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as apprenticeships and traineeships, generally up until the age of 25. The rate of education allowance paid is dependent on the student's circumstances, including shared parental custody arrangements.

As well as an Education Allowance, a student may be eligible for the following benefits provided under the Education Schemes:

- special assistance
- fares allowance
- rent assistance
- additional tuition
- guidance
- counselling
- tertiary student start-up and relocation scholarships
- energy supplement
- income support bonus.

A student who is eligible for the Education Schemes but is instead receiving another Commonwealth payment, may still receive some of the other benefits listed above.

For information on how to claim under the Education Schemes, eligibility and payment rates, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/education-schemes



Income Support Bonus

The Income Support Bonus is paid every six months to assist eligible students with cost of living pressures. If you currently claim an education allowance under the Veterans' Children Education Scheme or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme and meet the following criteria, you may be able to claim the Income Support Bonus. You must be:

- either 16 years old or over, or under 16 years old and receiving the education allowance rate of double orphan, homeless or living away from home
- in receipt of an education allowance on 20 March or 20 September.

Students who receive an education allowance and who are eligible for the Income Support Bonus will automatically be paid. If you were not paid and think you are eligible, contact us.

For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/income-support-bonus





Long Tan Bursary

The Long Tan Bursary helps eligible children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans pay for their tertiary education. Each year, 37 bursaries are awarded to successful applicants across Australia and each bursary is worth up to \$12,000 over three years of continuous full-time study.

The Long Tan Bursary scheme is named after the Battle of Long Tan, the best-known battle fought by Australians during the Vietnam War.

You can only receive this bursary once. The Long Tan Bursary is not available to students undertaking professional training, such as the College of Law.

For more information including eligibility requirements, visit the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/long-tan-bursary



Student start-up scholarship and relocation scholarship

The student start-up scholarship is intended to assist students to cover up-front higher education costs including textbook and equipment costs. The relocation scholarship is intended to assist students with the costs of establishing accommodation in their new place of study.

Students studying an approved scholarship course who receive allowances under the Veterans' Children Education Scheme or Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme may be eligible to receive one or both of these scholarships.

Students do not need to apply for the scholarships as eligibility for the scholarships will be determined automatically by us.

For more information scan the below QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/student-scholarships



Support for the whole veteran community

Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant serves to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the contribution of veterans and families.

The Covenant is supported by the Veteran Card, lapel pin and oath, which make it easier for people to identify veterans in their community and show their support and recognise their service..



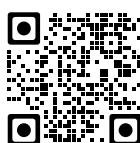
Veterans can apply for their card, oath and lapel pin via MyService. Further information on the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant can be found at the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/covenant

Defence Service Homes Insurance

The Defence Service Homes (DSH) Insurance Scheme provides home building insurance to all current and former members of the ADF with at least one day of service regardless of their type of service, including reservists and widow(er)s of those ADF members.

DSH Insurance's home building insurance is comprehensive and insures building and structural improvements. Insurance cover also includes loss or damage to your home caused by flood at no additional cost, accidental damage (up to \$5,000) and no excess on claims (other than for earthquake and some accidental damage claims). This helps the veteran to get their home back to pre-damage condition with little to no financial outlay at claim time.

Eligibility criteria applies to DSH Insurance's home building insurance. DSH Insurance also provides insurance options for home contents, landlord and vehicles, underwritten by QBE Insurance.



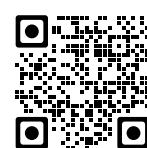
Information on insurance conditions, coverage and other personal insurances now available through QBE Insurance can be accessed from the QR code or visit www.dsh.gov.au

Supplements

Supplements are extra payments to help with your daily expenses. We may pay these every two weeks along with your regular pension.

There are a number of different supplements you may be entitled to. For example some help with the costs of looking after your home, if you were wounded or injured in service before 1 July 2004, and payments to help with the cost of electricity bills.

The Veterans Supplement is a regular payment to help with the cost of medicines for those who do not get an income support payment from us. We also provide supplements to widowed and wholly dependent partners to assist with their living costs.



Further information on the range of supplements provided by us is available through the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/income-supplements

Homelessness support services

There is support available for you and your family if you are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

While homelessness services are the primary remit of states and territories, we provide a range of support to address the risk factors relating to homelessness.

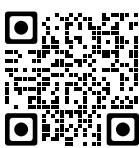
This includes:

- free, lifetime mental health care for anyone with even a single day of continuous full-time ADF service
- immediate financial support for those submitting mental health compensation claims

We can refer you to support services in your local area, connect you with our support services, provide you with information on any support payments available and connect you to a network of organisations that can assist you.

We can also provide you with information about Services Australia (Centrelink) payments and services and refer you to Services Australia for support.

For assistance and to get the support you need, you can contact us on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372), call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or visit one of our Veteran Access Network offices to talk to someone about your situation.



Further information on our support and referral network can be found at the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/homelessness

Crisis Payment

A Crisis Payment is a non-taxable, one-off payment to financially assist eligible people following a range of defined circumstances. The payment is designed to help the person establish themselves in a new residence or, for a victim of domestic or family violence, to re-establish their current residence after the perpetrator of the violence has left or been removed from the home.

To qualify for a Crisis Payment, you must be in severe financial hardship on the day on which you make the claim for Crisis Payment. That is, your liquid assets must be less than the fortnightly amount of the 'maximum payment rate' of DVA income support pension payable to you if you are not a member of a couple, and twice the amount if you are a member of a couple.



A list of qualifying circumstances for the payment is available through the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/crisis-payment

Lump sum advances

If you are receiving a pension from DVA and require additional funds for any purpose, you might be able to get some of your pension paid in advance.

A lump sum advance may be spent for any purpose. For example, it could help you with unplanned expenses such as car repairs, household maintenance or emergency replacement of your refrigerator or washing machine. Depending on personal circumstances, such as your pension rate and previous advances not yet repaid, you can get up to three weeks of the maximum rate of service pension paid in advance to help you meet these sorts of expenses.

The advance payment is paid as a single lump sum, to be repaid over the following 13 fortnights with no interest.



The amount of your pension that you can be paid in advance depends on a number of circumstances, which are explained at the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/lump-sum-advance

Staying connected

Social health programs

We give you practical support to improve your health, work and social life. This may include help to plan and manage your care, or to find, train for, or stay in a job. We can also guide you in how to make social contacts in your community.

Men's Health Peer Education Program

Across the country, each state and territory runs the Men's Health Peer Education (MHPE) Program. The MHPE Program raises awareness about men's health issues in the veteran community. The program supports and educates members of the veteran and ex-service community and encourages men to share responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

MHPE volunteers, who are ex-serving personnel, share information in a number of ways, including giving talks on health issues at ex-service organisation meetings, working with men's sheds and organisations, running stands at community expos, field days or health conferences, chatting about health issues to mates at social events, and encouraging and supporting veterans to take part in any relevant health and wellbeing initiatives. MHPE volunteers can assist in providing local area information and community supports.

For more information about this program and what is available in your state or territory scan the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/mhpe



Wellbeing and Support Program

The Wellbeing and Support Program is a free, voluntary program that can help you adjust to life after service. It helps you access health care and can connect you and your family with local services. You will also learn more about DVA support services and how to apply for them.

A DVA case manager and a community case worker will be assigned to support you and your family. They will work together to help you develop wellbeing goals and work towards them.

You can take part in the program for up to 12 months. By the end of the program, we aim for you to be connected with local services in your community. If you need further assistance, we can arrange this.

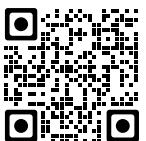
For more information scan the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/life-after-service



Veterans' Health Week

Veterans' Health Week is an annual health promotion initiative where we partner with ex-service and community organisations to hold events aimed at increasing healthy lifestyle awareness for veterans and families. We provide financial support for each event. The events are well supported and attended, with increasing participation amongst the veteran community each year. It is free to attend a Veterans' Health Week event, and you can attend as many as you like.

More information about Veterans' Health Week, including the updated application pages, guidelines and exciting new resources to support events are available by following the QR code below or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/vhw



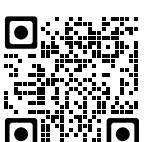
Heart Health Program

Keeping your heart healthy is important for your wellbeing. The Heart Health Program can help you to keep fit and improve your wellbeing.

The Heart Health Program is a free, year-long program. It can help you improve your physical health through:

- practical exercise
- nutritional education
- lifestyle management.

The goal of the program is to help get you started with a daily routine of exercise and balanced nutrition. The program is conducted individually or in small groups over a 12-month period. Both programs include access to a team of health and fitness experts to support you, custom food diary reviews by a nutritionist, and a participant manual.



For more information, including eligibility and how to access this service, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/heart-health



Work and social life programs

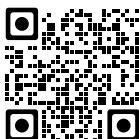
Help with finding a job

We can help you if you want to find a job, learn how to get your skills recognised and access courses that make it easier for you to find work. We also have programs and financial support to help you move into the civilian workforce.

DVA rehabilitation can help you adjust to life after service. If you're medically able to take part and you would benefit from rehabilitation, we may be able to help. A DVA rehabilitation plan may include services to assist you with social support and to find suitable and sustainable employment.

Further information on DVA rehabilitation can be found on page 27. Further information about the Veteran Employment Program can be found on page 15.

The Education Entry Payment is a payment designed to assist eligible persons receiving certain payments under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). It is intended to help with the costs of enrolling in a course of study to develop their skills, obtain a qualification, or to improve their employment prospects.



For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/help-with-jobs

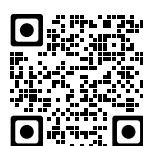
Veterans' and Families' Hubs

Veterans' and Families' Hubs provide a central access point to local veteran and family services, such as wellbeing support, physical and mental health services, advocacy, employment and housing advice, and social connection. Hubs either directly provide or facilitate access to these services, in partnership with ex-service organisations, community and other organisations, and state and territory governments.

Hubs are owned and operated by independent organisations, and the services and supports they offer are tailored to address local needs.

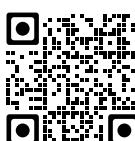
Hubs are open to all current and former serving ADF members, including reservists, and their families, and have a key role in assisting ADF members and families as they transition from military to civilian life.

For more information on Veterans' and Families' Hubs, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/vfhubs



Social assistance

Social assistance is generally a 12-week program designed to help veterans participating in the Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) program and who are at risk of becoming socially isolated to re-connect with their community. Veterans participating in the CVC program can access social assistance by asking their usual GP who is responsible for their CVC plan to refer them to the Veterans' Home Care (VHC) Assessment Agency. The CVC program may include: activities; courses and/or assistance with making social contacts.



To find out more about social assistance, use the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/cvc

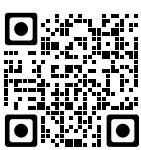
Ex-service organisations

An ex-service organisation (ESO) is an independent organisation that works to support current and former ADF members and families. ESOs can provide you with a large range of supports and are a critical part of providing a stable support system for veterans and families.

Some of the supports ESOs can provide you include:

- help accessing payments and other benefits by advocating for you
- visitation services at home, hospital or an aged care home
- help seeking financial support, employment or vocational studies
- a variety of social activities to help you make friendships and to improve general health and wellbeing.

Many ESOs have advocacy services that can provide you with information about community and government services available to veterans and families. ESOs also support you by lobbying governments for better services and payments for the veteran community.

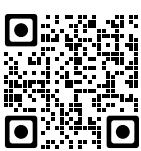


We work with ESOs all around Australia, providing training and resources so they can support you. To find an ESO in your local area scan this QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/eso

Discounts and concessions

Around the country, many local and state governments and providers offer concessions, discounts and free services for those in the veteran community. Some common discounts include utilities, public transport, health, vehicle registrations and recreational licences.

Each state offers different levels of concessions with varying eligibility requirements.



To access to a state by state list of concessions and discounts, visit the QR code or www.dva.gov.au/discounts. Please check with the state government or private business for eligibility.

Accessing other support services

There are a number of programs and support services offered by federal and state government departments to benefit the veteran community. Programs such as social support, housing, legal aid, grants programs and community services can be accessed by any veteran or family member.



A list of services and support can be accessed by scanning the QR code or from the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au/support-services



Veteran in focus story

Watch the Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Keogh visit the Oasis Townsville Veterans' and Families' Hub – a community centre that allows veterans, serving personnel and families to reconnect and seek referrals to civilian health and employment services.



To watch, scan this QR code or visit youtube.com/dvatvaus and search for 'veterans hubs'

Care at home

We offer a range of care programs that can help you stay in your home or support your return home after a hospital stay. Our services can also help your carer, or guide your move into residential aged care.

Veterans' Home Care Program

Veterans' Home Care (VHC) provides practical help at home to assist eligible persons to continue living independently. It is not designed to meet complex or high level needs. Services include:

- Domestic assistance – house cleaning, clothes and linen washing, bed making, internal window cleaning, unaccompanied shopping/bill paying, meal preparation
- Personal care – eating, bathing/showering, toileting, dressing and grooming, getting in and out of bed/moving around the house and assistance with medication
- Respite care – in-home respite, residential respite and emergency short-term home relief
- Home and garden maintenance – minor maintenance or repair work that can be carried out by a handyperson, where an environmental health or safety hazard exists, and regular lawn mowing services.

To access support through the VHC program you can call the VHC Assessment Agency on 1300 550 450.

Community Nursing Program

The Community Nursing Program assists clients to remain independent at home, avoiding early entry to residential aged care or hospital by providing clinically required nursing and personal care services in the client's home. Community Nursing services are based on an assessed clinical need and can include:

- help with medication
- wound care
- personal care, including bathing / showering, continence care, and dressing

To access community nursing services, your GP or hospital can refer you directly to a DVA approved provider.



For more information including eligibility, costs and how to access these services, scan the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/help-at-home

Rehabilitation Appliances Program

The Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) provides aids, equipment and modifications to help clients live safely and independently. The RAP National Schedule of Equipment lists these items, which aim to:

- help clients with an assessed clinical health care need
- minimise the impact of disabilities or dysfunction
- improve quality of life
- enable clients to live safely and with independence
- facilitate participation in the community
- be an adjunct to their health treatment or a rehabilitation plan.

The RAP Schedule outlines which health providers can prescribe each item, including GPs, medical specialists and allied-health professionals.

For more information about the RAP, scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/rap



Household services

Extra support can be provided if you need help at home because of a service-related injury or condition.

Short-term help can be provided to assist while you are recovering from surgery or on an ongoing basis if you have complex health issues.

Common services may include help with:

- cleaning
- shopping
- childcare (in limited circumstances)
- laundry
- ironing
- lawn mowing
- gardening
- meal preparation.

You may be eligible if you are unable to manage household tasks because of your accepted service-related injury or condition (accepted under MRCA or DRCA); and are assessed as having a reasonable requirement for household services.

Further information on requirements for selecting a service provider and the level of support you can access is available through the QR code or by visiting www.dva.gov.au/household-services



Attendant care

The Attendant Care program provides assistance with personal care needs, such as bathing, toileting, grooming, dressing and feeding. Care may be short-term while you recover after surgery or long-term for chronic health conditions.

Your clinical needs determine how much care you can receive. A health provider, usually an occupational therapist, will conduct an assessment of your personal care support needs due to your accepted conditions.

You may be eligible if you need this service due to a condition that has been accepted as service-related under DRCA or MRCA and have an assessed need for this service.



Scan the QR code for further information or visit www.dva.gov.au/attendant-care

Support for current members of the ADF

Transitioning from the ADF

Submitting a claim

Healthcare, treatment & rehabilitation services

Mental health support

Financial support

Staying connected

Care at home & Residential aged care

Recognition



Residential aged care

Moving into residential aged care

If you are moving into residential aged care, there are services available before, during and after your move.

My Aged Care is the Australian Government's starting point for your aged-care journey. You can find and access the government-funded services you need via My Aged Care by visiting www.myagedcare.gov.au.

The cost of your aged care depends on the level of care you need. Before you go into residential aged care, your needs must be assessed by the Aged Care Assessment Team, or the Aged Care Assessment Service if you are in Victoria. To organise an assessment for care in an aged-care home you can contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

To find out more about how we can help you with the means test assessment process visit the QR code below. DVA has also prepared a guide to assist veterans moving into residential aged care, which provides practical advice on how to access DVA-funded travel to medical appointments, staying connected with the community, mental health support and getting your affairs in order.

For more information scan the QR code below or visit www.dva.gov.au/residential-aged-care



Planning ahead

Many veterans may be considering the impact their death will have on their loved ones. In particular, they may be thinking about what they can do now to assist their loved ones manage such an event when it happens.

The *Planning Ahead* booklet has been designed to provide information to help veterans and families prepare for bereavement. The purpose of this guide is to help you get your personal affairs in order and to provide information on the services available for family and friends after your death. This guide has been written for members of the veteran and Defence communities and their families. It contains information that will be useful to their carers and the people who act on their behalf or who help and advise them.

Losing a family member is one of the most distressing events that can happen to anyone. By ensuring that your personal affairs are in order, you can make it easier for your loved ones to manage at this difficult time.

The *Planning Ahead* booklet can be downloaded from the QR code, www.dva.gov.au/planning-ahead, or ordered through your local Veteran Access Network storefront.



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Image courtesy of Dept of Defence

Recognition

DVA acknowledges and commemorates the service and sacrifice of all those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, the preservation of Australia's wartime heritage and official commemorations.

We honour the service of Australian men and women through official commemorations such as the delivery of international Anzac Day services in France and Türkiye and supporting Anzac Day services on DVA managed sites in Thailand, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. We also recognise national days of commemoration such as Remembrance Day and Vietnam Veterans' Day. This includes recognising significant commemorative milestones, such as 25th, 50th, 75th and 100th anniversaries through commemorative services delivered by the Australian Government.

We provide information and support for researchers, teachers and students wanting to know more about Australia's military history, and administer a commemorative grants program that provides assistance to ex-service organisations and community groups sharing the message of remembrance.

DVA is also responsible for building and maintaining official Australian memorials overseas on sites of military and historical significance. Currently, we are responsible for 33 sites in 13 countries, including three interpretive visitor centres in France, Malaysia and Thailand.

Through the Office of Australian War Graves, we:

- maintain war cemeteries and individual war graves (in Australia and the region) for members of Commonwealth forces who died during the First and Second World Wars
- commemorate eligible veterans who died post-war and whose deaths were caused by their war service
- build and maintain official Australian memorials overseas, and Gardens of Remembrance within Australia.

When a veteran's war service has caused or contributed to their death, the Australian Government recognises them with official commemoration. They provide a final and lasting memorial at the chosen interment site or within an Australian Government Garden of Remembrance.



For more information on how DVA acknowledges the service of all Australians, visit the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/recognition

Certificates of appreciation

If you're a veteran or a family member of a veteran, you may be able to apply for a Certificate of Appreciation. These are issued as a national gesture of thanks for military service for those who served overseas in wars, conflicts and peace operations or on the home front in the Second World War.

Guidelines for applying for a certificate are available through the following QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/certificate-appreciation



Records and military history

We preserve the stories of those who served our nation to make sure their service is not forgotten.

The Anzac Portal website contains an extensive range of personal stories, historical information and educational resources that have been brought together as a community resource.

By teaching the Australian public about military history and the positive and negative impacts of service, we can help them to empathise with the service experience. The website has sections dedicated to significant wars, conflicts and peace operations, as well as targeted resources for amateur historians, teachers and students.

Visit the Anzac Portal by scanning the following QR code or visit anzacportal.dva.gov.au



Together with resources provided through the Australian War Memorial and National Archives of Australia, retracing the footsteps of your family military history is easier than you think.

To find out more about your family's military history, visit the QR code or visit www.dva.gov.au/records-and-military-history

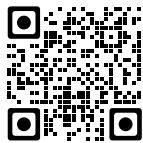


Nominal Rolls

A Nominal Roll is a list of the names of veterans who have served in a particular conflict in which Australia has participated. A Nominal Roll can also provide a 'snapshot' of each individual veteran's military service by displaying a range of information that has been gathered from documents in his or her military service record.

We publish online Nominal Rolls for World War Two, Korean War, Vietnam War and the First Gulf War. Each Nominal Roll is compiled by extracting data from original Department of Defence service records. However, other archival material from the period held by Defence or other institutions (such as the National Archives of Australia or the Australian War Memorial) is used where relevant information is not available from service records.

If you are concerned about appearing on a Nominal Roll, or need to correct information on a Roll, please visit the QR code below for more information or visit www.dva.gov.au/search-nominal-rolls



Veteran in focus story

Watch Alison Lee, who served in East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan with the Australian Army, share her most memorable Anzac Day story while deployed to Iraq.

To view the video scan the QR code below or visit youtube.com/dvatvaus and search 'Alison Lee'



We support those who serve or
have served in defence of our nation,
and their families.



