



TULARE COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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VETERANS CORNER

My last column covered Service Connected (SC) compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); another benefit available is Non Service Connected (NSC) Pension. NSC Pension provides financial support to wartime veterans with limited income. The amount depends upon the income the veteran and their family members receive from other sources.

Currently, the maximum VA pays for NSC benefits is \$1,072 per month. This amount can change depending on other factors, including family size, disability status, etc. The VA includes monthly income from Social Security when calculating how much in NSC benefits, so if a veteran gets \$800 per month from Social Security, the most that the VA will pay is \$272 dollars, bringing the total income to the baseline level of \$1,072 per month. (The VA counts some things as household incomes, but not others; due to its complexity, this topic is better addressed individually. Please contact our office regarding questions about your countable income.)

Requirements of qualification for NSC Pension benefits include the veterans' discharge conditions and wartime service; requirements for veterans that enlisted after September 7, 1980 usually include at least 24 months of service, or the full period for which they were called to active duty, which may include Reservists or National Guard members activated to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan. (Wartime period dates are available in our office; contact us for specifics.) The veteran must also be permanently and totally disabled or over the age of 65. Countable household income and net worth must be less than the VA's established levels.

When a veteran is eligible to receive benefits for both service-connected disabilities and the NSC Pension, the VA is only authorized to pay one benefit; the VA pays the higher benefit.

Please contact our office if you have questions about the NSC Pension or any other benefits. We can help determine your eligibility and submit your application.

Ken Cruickshank, the Veterans Services Officer for Tulare County, is a retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer. The Veterans Services Office is located at 205 North L Street in Tulare.