



Denton County was established by the Texas legislature on April 11, 1846

County Judge Mary Horn, Commissioner Cynthia White, Precinct 1;
Commissioner Ron Marchant, Precinct 2; Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell, Precinct 3;
Commissioner Andy Eads, Precinct 4

Serving the Veterans of Denton County



What is VA Pension for veterans?

Pension is a benefit paid to [wartime veterans](#) who have [limited or no income](#), and who are age 65 or older, or, if under 65, who are permanently and totally disabled. Veterans who are more seriously disabled may qualify for [Aid and Attendance or Housebound](#) benefits. These are benefits that are paid in addition to the basic pension rate.

Who is eligible?

Generally, you may be eligible if:

- you were discharged from service under conditions other than dishonorable, AND
- you served at least 90 days of active military service 1 day of which was during a [war time period](#). If you entered active duty on or after September 7, 1980, generally you must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty (There are exceptions to this rule), AND
- your [countable](#) family income is below a yearly limit set by law (The yearly [limit on income](#) is set by Congress), AND
- you are age 65 or older, OR, you are permanently and totally disabled, not due to your own willful misconduct.

As you can see, there are a number of criteria that may affect your eligibility to pension benefits. If you are unsure if you meet all criteria, we encourage you to go ahead and file an application, particularly if your [countable income](#) appears to be near the maximum. VA will determine if you are eligible and notify you. If you do not initially qualify, you may reapply if you have un-reimbursed medical expenses during the twelve month period after VA receives your claim that bring your countable income below the yearly income limit. (These are expense you have paid for medical services or products for which you will not be reimbursed by Medicare or private medical insurance.) What is countable income for veterans pension eligibility purposes?

This includes income received by the veteran and his or her dependents, if any, from most sources. It includes earnings, disability and retire-

ment payments, interest and dividends, and net income from farming or business.

There is a presumption that all of a child's income is available to or for the veteran. VA may grant an exception in hardship cases.

What about net worth?

Net worth means the net value of the assets of the veteran and his or her dependents. It includes such assets as bank accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds and any property other than the veteran's residence and a reasonable lot area. There is no set limit on how much net worth a veteran and his dependents can have, but net worth cannot be excessive. The decision as to whether a claimant's net worth is excessive depends on the facts of each individual case. All net worth should be reported and VA will determine if a claimant's assets are sufficiently large that the claimant could live off these assets for a reasonable period of time. VA's needs-based programs are not intended to protect substantial assets or build up an estate for the benefit of heirs.

Are there any exclusions to income or deductions that may be made to reduce countable income?

Yes, there are exclusions. The following are examples of what may be excluded:

Public assistance such as Supplemental Security Income is not considered income.

Many other specific sources of income are not considered income, however, all income should be reported. VA will exclude any income that the law allows.

A portion of unreimbursed medical expenses paid by the claimant after VA receives the claimant's pension claim may be deducted. (These are expense you have paid for medical services or products for which you will not be reimbursed by Medicare or private medical insurance.)

Certain other expenses, such as a veteran's education expenses, and in some cases, a portion of the educational expenses of a child over 18 are deductible. (continued on page 5)



The Beginning

<http://www.buffalosoldiermuseum.com/index.html>

African Americans have served proudly in every great American war. In 1866, through an act of Congress, legislation was adopted to create six all African American Army units. The units were identified as the 9th and 10th cavalry and the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st infantry regiments. The four infantry regiments were later reorganized to form the 24th and 25th infantry regiments.

These fighting men represented the first Black professional soldiers in a peacetime army. The recruits came from varied backgrounds including former slaves and veterans from service in the Civil War.

The Nickname

The nickname buffalo soldiers began with the Cheyenne warriors in 1867. The actual Cheyenne translation was Wild Buffalo. The nickname was given out of respect and the fierce fighting ability of the 10th cavalry. Overtime, Buffalo Soldiers became a generic term for all African American soldiers.

Military Assignments

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to the harshest and most desolate posts. Specific duties included subduing Mexican revolutionaries, outlaws, comercheros, rustlers and hostile Native Americans. Additional administrative duties included exploring and mapping the Southwest, and establishing frontier outposts for future towns.

The Buffalo Soldiers fought in the Indians Wars of the American West, Spanish American War of 1898, WWI and WWII.

Military History

1775-1783 - Revolutionary War - Approximately 5,000 Blacks fought in the War of Independence. By mid-1778, each brigade in General George Washington's army averaged 43 Black soldiers.

1812-1815 - War of 1812 - Though blacks were barred from service for the first two years, at the war's latter stages they comprised 10% of naval crews.

1846-1848 - Mexican War - No Blacks fought in this war. It was fought by regulars and volunteers primarily from the rural South and Midwest.

1861-1865 - Civil War - Blacks made up 12% (178,895 men) of the Union Army and 25% (30,000) of the Union Navy. Thousands more served in service units as laborers and the like. Some 2,751 blacks were killed in battle; another 65,427 died primarily from disease.

1866-1891 - Indian Wars - The 5,000 blacks who served in the all-black 9th and 10th Cavalry and 24th and 25th Infantry Regiments constituted about 10% of the total troops who guarded the Western Frontier for a quarter century.

1898 - Spanish-American War - The four regular regiments fought in Cuba, making up about 12% of the forces on the Island. Another 2,000- 7.6% of all sailors-served in the Navy.

BUFFALO SOLDIER MILITARY HISTORY (continue from page 3)

1899-1902 - Philippines War - In addition to the four Black regular regiments, two volunteer regiments composed of Blacks help wage this colonial campaign.

1916 - Mexican Punitive Expedition - The all-black 10th Cavalry comprised 12% of the forces sent in pursuit of Poncho Villa. The regiment suffered over half (10men killed) of the casualties sustained.

1917-1918 - World War I - Over 200,000 Black soldiers made it to France, equaling 9.2% of the American Expeditionary Force. Most were in support units. But the all-black 92nd and 93rd Infantry Divisions lost 773 killed in action (1.4% of U.S. total) and 4,408 wounded in action.

1941-1945 - World War II - Some 500,000 Blacks were stationed overseas, amounting to 4% of the 11 million Americans who served on foreign shores. About 10% of blacks were in combat units. The all-black 92nd Infantry was in Italy, and had 616 killed in action and 2,187 wounded. The 93rd Division was stationed in the South Pacific, losing 17 KIA and 121 WIA. There was also the black 366th Infantry (Separates).

During the Battle of the Bulge, 2,500 blacks were formed into all black Infantry platoons and attached to larger units. The famed 761st Tank Battalion spent 183 continuous days in combat in the European Theater, earning a Presidential Unit Citation. The 333rd Field Artillery bravely supported ground operations in France.

Three all-black air units flew overseas: 332nd Fighter Group, 477th Bombardment Group and the 99th Fighter Squadron. Sixty-six Black pilots were killed in action. A total of 140,000 blacks served in the Army Air Forces. Nearly 150,000 Blacks served in the Navy. Of the 12,000 Black Marines, 9 were killed in action.



1950-1953 - Korean War - About 195,000 Blacks were in Korea; comprising 13% of U.S. troops there. Some 3,223, or 9% of the total, were killed in action. Korea saw the end of segregated units in all armed forces.

1961-1973 - Vietnam War - Black Americans who served in Vietnam numbered 275,000 (10.6% of all forces). Hostile deaths were 5,711 (12.1% of the total) and non-hostile deaths came to 1,530.

1958-1989 - Expeditionary Campaigns - Blacks have served in all the armed forces deployments, under hostile conditions, for the past three decades. This includes the Dominican Republic (1965-1966), the Korea DMZ, Lebanon (1982-1984), Grenada (1983) and Panama (1989).

1991 - Persian Gulf War - Approximately 104,000 (24.5%) of the total troops deployed who served in Saudi Arabia were Black. Some 27 died during Operation Desert Storm, equaling 15% of the total U.S. deaths

For Local Help	940-349-2950
Denton County Veterans Service Office	Fax: 940-349-2951
1505 E. McKinney St. #183	Monday through Friday
Denton, TX 76209	8:00 AM to Noon
	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM



How Does VA calculate your pension? (continued from page 2)

Your annual pension is calculated by first totaling all your countable income. Then any deductions are subtracted from that total. The remaining countable income is deducted from the appropriate [annual pension](#) limit which is determined by the number of your dependents, if any, and whether or not you are entitled to housebound or aid and attendance benefits. This amount is then divided by 12 and rounded down to the nearest dollar. This gives you the amount of your monthly payment. Click [here](#) to see an example of the pension calculation.

What are Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits?

Aid and Attendance is a benefit paid in addition to monthly pension when:

- The veteran requires the aid of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting himself/herself from the hazards of his/her daily environment, OR,
 - The veteran is bedridden, in that his/her disability or disabilities requires that he/she remain in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment, OR,
 - The veteran is a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity, OR,
- The veteran is blind, or so nearly blind as to have corrected visual acuity of 5/200 or less, in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field to 5 degrees or less.

Housebound is paid in addition to monthly pension when:

- The veteran has a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling AND, due to such disability, he/she is permanently and substantially confined to his/her immediate premises, OR,
- The veteran has a single permanent disability evaluated as 100-percent disabling AND, another disability, or disabilities, evaluated as 60 percent or more disabling.

A veteran cannot receive both Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits at the same time.

If I am already receiving monthly payments or a service-connected disability can I get a VA pension too?

You cannot receive a VA non-service connected pension and service-connected compensation at the same time. However, if you apply for pension and are awarded payments, VA will pay you whichever benefit will pay you the greater amount.

How do I apply for veterans non-service connected pension?

You can apply on line at the following VA web site: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>.

You may download and fill out [VA Form 21-526, Veteran's Application for Compensation and/or Pension](#). Make sure you download all parts of the application as well as the instructions for filling out the forms. If available, attach copies of dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates).

You must send the completed application and any copies of other documents to the VA regional office that serves your area of residence. Please click [here](#) to find the office of jurisdiction.

You may also contact a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) from a veterans service organization. Please call the toll free number, 1-800-827-1000, for the location of the nearest VSO nearest you. You may also look to the VA web site for a [list](#) of the nationally recognized Veterans Service Organizations. You can also find a County VSO by going to www.tvc.state.tx.us.