

TWO THINGS CERTAIN®

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Veterans Benefits

By: Stacey-Rae Simcox

Many Veterans and their widowed spouses are unaware that they may be able to qualify for this important veterans benefit. The Aid & Attendance benefit offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs is a pension program available to eligible Veterans or their widowed spouses. It pays up to \$2,019 for the Veteran and more than \$1,094 to the spouse to assist with long-term care costs and other medical expenses. The Aid & Attendance benefit can be used to pay anyone for home care, including the child of the eligible Veteran or widowed spouse. In addition, it can be used to pay for professional care in the home, nursing home care, assisted living, prescription drugs, insurance premiums and more.

There are no specific asset or income limits set by the Department of Veterans Affairs for eligibility, although net worth and income are taken into consideration. Through proper planning and the creation of trusts, we can help you to meet the qualifications to obtain this benefit and prepare for the future.

Eligibility requirements for the Aid & Attendance benefit include:

- The Veteran must have served 90 days or more of active duty, with at least one day having been served during wartime
- The Veteran must have received a discharge other than dishonorable
- The Veteran or the Veteran's spouse must have health care needs or medical expenses
- Applicants are required to pass an income and asset test before receiving benefits

Our firm is committed to helping Veterans and their families obtain the benefits they have earned. Veterans face their own unique challenges in long term care and estate planning and many areas of veteran's law are confusing and hard to follow, causing frustration and disappointment. Fortunately, we have attorneys who understand these challenges.

Attorney Stacey-Rae Simcox has joined JGB! She focuses her practice on helping seniors and their families ease the stress of planning for long-term care, with a special focus of aiding Veterans and their families. Stacey-Rae is a veteran of the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG), where she served eight years on active duty and in the Reserves, reaching the rank of Major.

In 2008, seeing the number of Veterans in need of specialized help to navigate the bureaucracy of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Stacey-Rae and her husband Mark Matthews founded the Lewis B. Puller, Jr. Veterans Benefits Clinic at their alma mater, the William & Mary School of Law. The Puller Clinic is the first of its kind in the nation, bringing together law students and clinical psychology students to address the unique concerns presented by Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. Stacey-Rae travels across the country to speak on veteran's benefits issues, regularly presents to Veterans groups, and trains local attorneys on veteran's issues. She has also written materials for the American Bar Association on estate planning for active-duty military and Veterans and for Lexis Nexis on veteran's benefits and representing Veterans.



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