

## Minnesota Veterans: Do you need help with a claim for VA Benefits? Know your options!

### You have a choice (Authorized Help Only)

Only VA-accredited reps can assist with your claim or appeal at VA.

### Free help

Free help is available from VA-accredited individuals on claims and appeals:

- Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) – Call 612-970-5662
- County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs) – Visit [macvso.org/find-a-cvso](http://macvso.org/find-a-cvso)
- Federally chartered Veteran Service Organizations (American Legion, VFW, DAV)
- VA-accredited attorneys and claims agents

**No accredited rep can charge a fee for help on an initial claim.** Always verify accreditation here: [va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation](http://va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation).

### Who you *can* pay for help

After an initial claim is decided, you may hire a **VA-accredited attorney or claims agent** for a fee.

- They may also help with an initial claim at no cost to the Veteran.
- Fee agreements must be in writing and submitted to VA to ensure fairness.
- Attorneys or agents are often most helpful when appealing complex denials.
  - VA-accredited attorneys and agents are exempt from the Minn. Stat. § 197.6091 disclosure law.
  - VA-accreditation and fees are federally regulated under 38 U.S.C. §§ 5901-5905 and 38 C.F.R. §§ 14.626-637.

### Who you *should not* pay for help

- It is illegal for anyone who is not VA-accredited to charge you a fee for a VA initial claim or appeal help — even for filling out forms without your informed consent and acknowledgment.

### Legal advice

- In Minnesota, only a licensed attorney can give legal advice.
- For benefits appeals at the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC), you may be represented by an attorney or accredited claims agent admitted to that court (VA-accreditation is not required).
- For benefits appeals at the Federal Circuit or Supreme Court, you may be represented only by an attorney admitted to practice before that court (VA-accreditation is not required).

### Report a problem

If someone offers services for a fee, or charges you, but is not VA-accredited:

- Notify the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General Consumer Action Division:
  - 651-296-3353 (Twin Cities Calling Area) or 800-657-3787 (Outside the Twin Cities)
- Notify the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.
  - 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)
- **Remember, no one can charge you a fee for an initial claim.**

### Signature required.

I have read and understand this written disclosure statement.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### FREE HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE.

If you need help locating a Veteran Service Organization, county or state office, or have questions about obtaining Veterans benefits, please contact:

### Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Service Building  
20 West 12th St.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-2562 or 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)  
[MinnesotaVeteran.org](http://MinnesotaVeteran.org)