



Veterans' Home Care

About Veterans' Home Care

Overview

This Factsheet provides you with information about services available under the Veterans' Home Care program and eligibility for assessment for services.

What is Veterans' Home Care?

Veterans' Home Care is a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) program designed to assist those veterans and war widows or widowers who wish to continue living at home, but who need a small amount of practical help. Veterans' Home Care is part of a broader Australian Government strategy to ensure veterans and war widows or widowers maintain optimal health, well-being and independence. Veterans' Home Care services include domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, and safety-related home and garden maintenance.

Veterans' Home Care is similar to the Home and Community Care (HACC) program.

You are encouraged to keep active around the house and garden as far as possible, and to maintain social support networks with your family, neighbours, friends and the ex-service community. It is not the Australian Government's intention to interfere with existing arrangements with family, friends and community-based groups or to substitute for other private service provision. Veterans' Home Care will provide additional care services for you if you need them.

What services are available under the program?

Veterans' Home Care provides a range of home care services designed to meet your needs including:

- **domestic assistance:** assistance with domestic tasks such as household cleaning, dishwashing, clothes washing and ironing, shopping for the veteran and bill paying.
- **personal care:** includes assistance with daily self-care tasks, such as eating, bathing, toileting, dressing, grooming, getting in and out of bed and moving about the house.

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What services are available under the program? *continued*

- **safety-related home and garden maintenance:** may include tasks such as replacing light bulbs and tap washers or other tasks that you and the service provider agree upon. The focus of home and garden maintenance services is to assist in keeping the home safe and habitable by minimising environmental health and safety hazards that may impact on you in and around your home.

Home and garden maintenance does not include major home repairs such as gutter replacement, landscaping and garden tasks such as branch lopping, tree felling or tree removal. Nor does it include routine, cosmetic or ornamental gardening services such as maintenance of flowerbeds and pruning of roses, unless there is a safety hazard.

You will be responsible for the cost of materials required and any additional costs associated with providing the service, such as hire of special equipment or removal of large quantities of rubbish. Where additional costs are involved, payment arrangements should be agreed between yourself and the service provider before work commences.

- **respite care:** temporary relief provided to your carer *or* to you if you are a carer.

Other services

Meals on Wheels (delivered meals), community transport and other social support services are provided through arrangements with State and Territory governments.

Assessment for services

Access to services is *not* automatic. If you are eligible, you must be assessed as needing home care assistance before receiving these services.

Personal circumstances may be considered when your need for a service is being assessed.

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Who is eligible to be assessed to receive services?

To be assessed for Veterans' Home Care services you must be:

- a veteran of the Australian defence forces, *or*
- a war widow or widower of a veteran of the Australian defence forces, *and have:*
- a Repatriation Health Card—for All Conditions (Gold Card) *or*
- a Repatriation Health Card—for Specific Conditions (White Card).

Services for veterans of Commonwealth and Allied forces

If you are a Commonwealth or Allied veteran and you have a White Card you are eligible to be assessed for respite care. You are not eligible for other Veterans' Home Care services through DVA, but you may receive similar services under the HACC program.

Services for Australian participants in the British nuclear tests program

If you were accepted as an Australian participant in the British nuclear tests program and you have a White Card, you are eligible to be assessed for respite care in an Australian Government-funded residential aged care facility, where it only relates to the testing and treatment of malignant cancer (neoplasia). You are not eligible for any other Veterans' Home Care services through DVA, but you may receive similar services under the HACC program.

Services for partners and carers

If you are an eligible person, your partner or carer can receive respite care if they care for you. They are not eligible for Veterans' Home Care services unless they have their own Gold or White Card. However the needs of the household are considered as part of the assessment process. Services may have a flow-on benefit to partners and carers to assist them in their caring role. Partners and carers may be eligible for HACC services.

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Veterans who transferred from HACC

If you transferred from the HACC program **before 1 November 2002** you are able to continue to receive the same services and pay no more for those services. This applies while you remain in similar housing circumstances, or unless you agree to a change with your assessment agency. If your housing circumstance change, your assessment agency may negotiate new service levels with you.

Veterans' Home Care assessment, service and copayment arrangements apply to all veterans who enter the program from 1 November 2002.

VHC services and copayments

You will be asked to pay a small fee to service providers for home care services, other than respite care.

There is no change to payment arrangements for any other health services that you may receive from DVA as part of your health treatment entitlement.

- **Personal care:** \$5 per hour to a maximum of \$10 per week
- **Domestic assistance:** \$5 per hour to a maximum of \$5 per week
- **Home and garden maintenance:** \$5 per hour for each hour of service
- **Respite care:** no copayment applies

Services such as Meals on Wheels (delivered meals), community transport and social support are provided under arrangements with State and Territory governments and are subjected to separate copayment arrangements.

Access to services

To arrange an assessment for services, call the regional Veterans' Home Care Agency on **1300 550 450[^]**. *Please only call this number for assessment information.*

*Calls from mobile phones cannot be connected to the correct/nearest office. Callers are advised to ring from a standard landline phone.

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Other Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

- *Index — Health Services for Veterans: DVA 13*
- *Aged Care – Respite Care: HSV 06*
- *Aged Care – Home and Community Care: HSV 04*
- *Domestic Assistance: HCS 06*
- *Home and Garden Maintenance: HCS 07*
- *Personal Care: HCS 08*
- *Waiver of Copayments for Veterans' Home Care Services: HCS 05*
- *Your Rights and Responsibilities: HCS 04*
- *Eligibility for Assessment for Veterans' Home Care Services — Information for Providers: HIP 120*
- *Information for Health Professionals and Health Service Providers: HCS 09*

More information

All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au.

You can phone DVA for the cost of a local call on:
133 254, or 1800 555 254, if you are outside a major city

Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.

You can send an email to DVA at: generalenquiries@dva.gov.au

You can get more help from any DVA office.

To arrange an assessment for Veterans' Home Care services, contact the Veterans' Home Care assessment agency on **1300 550 450[^]**.

[^]Calls from mobile phones cannot be connected to the correct/nearest office. Callers are advised to ring from a standard landline phone.