



VA HEALTH CARE

Fact Sheet 164-3

July 2008

Outpatient Dental Treatment

Outpatient dental benefits are provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs according to law. In some instances, VA may provide extensive dental care, while in other cases treatment may be limited. This Fact Sheet describes the outpatient dental eligibility criteria and contains information veterans should know in order to understand eligibility for VA dental care.

Eligibility

Veterans are eligible for outpatient dental treatment if they are determined by VA to meet one of the following criteria:

- Those having a VA service-connected compensable dental disability or condition are eligible for any needed dental care.
- Those who were prisoners of war (POWs) and those whose service-connected disabilities have been rated at 100 percent or who are receiving the 100 percent rate by reason of individual unemployability are eligible for any needed dental care.
- Those who are participating in a VA vocational rehabilitation program under 38 U.S.C. chapter 31 are eligible for dental care necessary to: enter into a rehabilitation program, achieve the goals of the veteran's vocational rehabilitation program; or prevent interruption of a rehabilitation program; or hasten the return to a rehabilitation program of a veteran in interrupted or leave status; or hasten the return to a rehabilitation program of a veteran placed in discontinued status because of illness, injury or a dental condition; or secure and adjust to employment during the period of employment assistance; or to achieve maximum independence in daily living.
- **Effective January 28, 2008**, recently discharged veterans with a service-connected noncompensable dental condition or disability who served on active duty 90 days or more and who apply for VA dental care **within 180 days** of separation from active duty, may receive one time treatment for dental conditions if the dental condition is shown to have existed at the time of discharge or release and the veteran's certificate of discharge does not indicate that the veteran received necessary dental care within a 90-day period prior to discharge or release. This includes veterans who reentered active military, naval, or air service within 90 days after the date of a prior discharge and; veterans whose disqualifying discharge or release has been corrected by competent authority.

- Those having a service-connected noncompensable dental condition or disability resulting from combat wounds or service trauma are eligible for repeat care for the service-connected condition(s).
- Those having a dental condition clinically determined by VA to be currently aggravating a service-connected medical condition are eligible for dental care to resolve the problem.
- Those with nonservice-connected dental conditions or disabilities for which treatment was begun while the veteran was in an inpatient status in a VA medical center, when it is clinically determined to be necessary to complete such dental treatment on an outpatient basis.
- Those receiving outpatient care or scheduled for inpatient care may receive dental care if the dental condition is clinically determined to be complicating a medical condition currently under treatment.
- Certain veterans enrolled in a VA Homeless Program for 60 consecutive days or more may receive certain medically necessary outpatient dental services.

For more information about eligibility for VA medical and dental benefits, contact the Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-8387 or www.va.gov/healtheligibility.

Note: Veterans awarded a **temporary total disability** rating by the Veterans Benefits Administration are not eligible for comprehensive outpatient dental services.

Disabilities rated at 100% by scheduler evaluation with no future exams scheduled are considered permanent and veterans would be eligible for comprehensive outpatient dental services.