

An annual **clothing allowance(s)** must be paid if the veteran has a service-connected disability or a disability compensable under 38 U.S.C. 1151 as if it were service connected that requires the veteran to wear or use a prosthetic or orthopedic device that wears out or tears clothes or for a service-connected skin condition in which medication prescribed by a physician causes irreparable damage to outer garments.

Effective December 16, 2011 amendment to 38 CFR Part 3 provides an annual clothing allowance for each qualifying appliance and/or medication that affects a single article of clothing or two annual clothing allowances if a qualifying appliance(s) and/or medication(s) cause a single article of clothing to wear out faster than if affected by a single appliance or medication.

**A veteran is entitled to one annual clothing allowance if:**

1. A VA examination or a hospital or examination report from a facility specified in § 3.326(b) establishes that the veteran, because of a service-connected disability or disabilities due to loss or loss of use of a hand or foot compensable at a rate specified in § 3.350(a), (b), (c), (d), or (f), wears or uses one qualifying prosthetic or orthopedic appliance (including, but not limited to, a wheelchair) which tends to wear or tear clothing; or
2. The Under Secretary for Health or a designee certifies that—
  - a. A veteran, because of a service-connected disability or disabilities, wears or uses one qualifying prosthetic or orthopedic appliance (including, but not limited to, a wheelchair) which tends to wear or tear clothing; or
  - b. A veteran uses medication prescribed by a physician for one skin condition, which is due to a service-connected disability that causes irreparable damage to the veteran's outer garments.

**More than one clothing allowance; multiple types of garments affected**

A veteran is entitled to an annual clothing allowance for each prosthetic or orthopedic appliance (including, but not limited to, a wheelchair) or medication used by the veteran if each appliance or medication:

1. Satisfies the requirements for entitlement to one clothing allowance that affects more than one type of article of clothing or outer garment.

**Two clothing allowances; single type of garment affected**

A veteran is entitled to two annual clothing allowances if a veteran uses more than one prosthetic or orthopedic appliance, (including, but not limited to, a wheelchair), medication for more than one skin condition, or an appliance and a medication, and the appliance(s) or medication(s):

1. Satisfies the requirement for entitlement to one clothing allowance and together tend to wear or tear a single type of article of clothing or irreparably damage a type of outer garment at an increased rate of damage to the clothing or outer garment due to a second appliance or medication.

Examples:

1. Rigid brace, spinal brace, orthotic and/or ankle and/or foot orthosis
2. Ileostomy and colostomy appliances
3. Certain prescription medications for the treatment of service-connected skin conditions

Criteria:

1. Veteran's Primary Care Manager must be at the San Francisco VA Medical Center or CBOC
2. Use of the device or skin medication is medically prescribed and issued by the VA
3. Veteran must actually use the device or medication with sufficient consistency to wear out, tear, or cause irreparable damage
4. VA Form 10-8678 "Application for Annual Clothing Allowance" must be filled out each year if non-static
5. Only applications received on or after December 16, 2011 will be eligible to receive multiple clothing allowances if applicable.

Static Eligibility (VA Form 10-8678 is not required on an annual basis)

1. Wheelchair dependent
2. Loss or loss of use of a hand or foot

Payment:

1. Annual lump sum are paid for established entitlement as of August 1 of current year
2. Current clothing allowance: \$741.00 per year (PL 112-53)

Take Note:

1. Clothing allowance can be approved for temporary conditions (use of crutches after surgery)

***NOTE: At this time, the Prosthetic Treatment Center can only process one clothing allowance payment per year until further notice. Multiple applications can be received but will not be processed until systems are updated to allow for multiple clothing allowance claims to be received.***

References:

Title 38 United States Code 1162 and 501(a)  
Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations 3.810(a)  
VHA Handbook 1173.15 Clothing Allowance Benefit

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To qualify for annual payment, eligibility must be established as of August 1 of the year for which the payment is claimed. If a veteran has not submitted a claim for disability compensation, VA Form 21-526 must be completed and sent to the VA Regional Office nearest their home or they can apply online at <http://www.vba.va.gov>.

### **The following is a list of qualifying appliances:**

- Artificial limb(s)
- Rigid extremity brace
- Rigid spinal or cervical brace
- Wheelchair - manual or electric
- Crutches (standard or forearm)
- Ointments and creams

### **The following medications are known to cause irreparable damage to clothing:**

- Anthralin
- Ammonium Lactate
- Benzoyl Peroxide
- Castellani paint
- Coal Tar/Sulfur
- Drysol
- Pedofilax (Condylox)
- Peroxide Micongzole cream
- Providone Iodine Solution
- Selenium Sulfide

### **Dates to remember:**

- Clothing allowance applications can be submitted until July 31st each year for determination of eligibility for the same year.
- Any applications received after July 31st will be held until the following July 31st deadline.
- After the claim is processed, payment can be anticipated by August 31st.
- The veteran will be notified via letter by the Prosthetic Treatment Center of the determination of eligibility by no later than August 31st.
- The veteran will also be notified via letter when payment has been made.
- If payment is not received by September 1, the veteran can contact Prosthetic Treatment Center.