



## Magellan Federal New Legislation Updates

The Fiscal Year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), a United States federal law that is enacted each year to specify the budget and expenditures of the United States Department of Defense, was signed by President Donald Trump. See below for a list of FY26 NDAA highlights.

### 3.8% Cost of Living (COLA) increase for Active Duty Servicemembers

**2.8 % Cost of Living (COLA) increase for Military Retired Pay.**  
The increase will also be paid out to individuals in the following categories:

- ▶ Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Survivor Benefit Plan Annuitants
- ▶ Social Security
- ▶ Dept of Veterans Affairs, disability compensation, pension and survivor benefits
- ▶ Federal civilian retirees

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**James Thornbrugh,**  
President  
Magellan Federal

## A Message From Magellan Federal's President

"My background in mental health and leadership has given me a profound understanding and passion to provide professional support to our nation's Federal workforce and military service members and families. It's an honor to empower others to live productive and healthy lives.

We provide surviving spouses access to a team of qualified Military Benefit Specialists and Veteran Service Officers who aid members in obtaining those benefits they sacrificed so much to earn. Thank you for your continuing membership and the opportunity to serve you when it is most needed."

— James Thornbrugh, President, Magellan Federal

## Social Security

The Social Security Fairness Act, HR 82, concerning the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset, was signed into law on January 5, 2025. Upon implementation, the Social Security Fairness Act eliminates the reduction of Social Security benefits while entitled to public pensions from work not covered by Social Security.

### If you previously filed for Social Security benefits and they are partially or completely offset.

At this time, you do not need to take any action except to verify that we have your current mailing address and direct deposit information if it has recently changed. Most people can do this online with their personal my Social Security account without calling or visiting Social Security. Visit [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount) to sign in or create your account.

### If you have not previously filed for Social Security benefits.

If you are receiving a public pension and are interested in filing for benefits, you may file online at [ssa.gov/apply](http://ssa.gov/apply) or schedule an appointment.

## RAPIDS Appointment Scheduler for Military IDs

RAPIDS, which stands for "Real-time Automated Personnel Identification System," is a program within the Department of Defense that is managed by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). RAPIDS is responsible for managing the issuance of identification cards to military personnel, their dependents, retirees, and other eligible individuals.

The Defense Manpower Data Center has a website to help you locate and find information about where you can renew or obtain new military IDs. The [RAPIDS Appointment scheduling website](#) has a robust search function, allowing you to search by state, zip code, place name, or country.

Once you find a location, the RAPIDS site gives you hours of operation and contact information, plus useful information such as what documents you will need, how to add family members, policies for disabled veterans, etc. You can even schedule an appointment through the website. Once you're set for your appointment, you can use the RAPIDS website to confirm or cancel an appointment, if necessary.

## Tricare for Life fees

You do not pay any enrollment fees, but you must pay Medicare Part B monthly premiums. Your Part B premium is based on your income

- ▶ Services covered by both Medicare and Tricare you will pay nothing out of pocket.
- ▶ Medical procedures covered by Medicare only (e.g., chiropractic services) you will be responsible for Medicare deductibles and cost shares
- ▶ Medical procedures covered by Tricare only you are responsible for any TFL deductibles and cost shares
- ▶ Medical procedures not covered by Tricare or Medicare (e.g., cosmetic surgery) you are responsible for the entire amount.
- ▶ Get more information on your TRICARE 2026 costs and options at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil)



## Pre-need eligibility for burial in a VA cemetery

### *Not applicable for Arlington National Cemetery*

You can apply to find out in advance if you're eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery. This is called a pre-need determination of eligibility—and it can help make the burial planning process easier for your family members in their time of need. Learn how to apply for a pre-need determination of eligibility.

How to prepare before starting your application

Gather the information you'll need to apply:

- ▶ Your personal information, including Social Security number and date of birth
- ▶ Your military history or the military history of the Veteran or service member you're connected to
- ▶ The name of your preferred VA national cemetery
- ▶ Find a VA national cemetery, <https://www.cem.va.gov/find-cemetery/>

**Note:** The VA Cemetery Administration can't guarantee that you'll be buried in your preferred cemetery. If your preferred cemetery isn't available at your time of need, the VA Cemetery Administration helps your family select another cemetery with available space.

### Gather supporting documents

To help the VA process your application faster, you can provide a copy of your DD214 or other separation documents (or the DD214 of the Veteran or service member you're connected to). If you don't provide a DD214, the VA will try to find the records we need to determine eligibility.

You'll need additional supporting documents in certain cases. If you don't have these documents now, you can submit them after you apply. But the VA can't process your application until we have all of these supporting documents.

### How to apply

You can apply for pre-need eligibility determination online, by mail, or by fax.

#### Option 1: Online

You can apply online right now. <https://www.va.gov/burials-and-memorials/pre-need/form-10007-apply-for-eligibility/introduction>

- ▶ [Apply for pre-need eligibility determination online](#)

#### Option 2: By mail or fax

Fill out an Application for Pre-need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery (VA Form 40-10007).

- ▶ [Get VA Form 40-10007 to download](#)
- ▶ Mail the application and copies of any supporting documents to this address:
  - NCA Evidence Intake Center
  - PO Box 5237
  - Janesville, WI 53547
- ▶ Or fax the application and copies of any supporting documents to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 855-840-8299.



Photo by: Christopher Smith



## Arlington National Cemetery

Upon the death of the veteran or veteran's spouse, the primary next of kin (PNOK) or person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) should contact a local funeral home to arrange for any desired services in the hometown. The PNOK, PADD or the funeral director should telephone Arlington National Cemetery's customer service center at 800-535-1117 to arrange for the interment/inurnment service.

### Required documents:

1. Last DD214 (or service equivalent) with an honorable character of service to establish [eligibility](#) for the eligible service member.
2. Death certificate.
3. Cremation certificate, if applicable. Families will be required to validate that an urn contains 100 percent of the decedent's remains received from the crematorium or funeral home before Arlington National Cemetery conducts the service.

For additional questions regarding your benefits. Please feel free to contact us: Member Services department, 888 237-2872.

**NEXT UPDATE JANUARY 2027**

## Veterans Affairs (VA)

### VA Burial allowance:

#### Service-connected Death

VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 11, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased

#### Non-Service-connected Death

VA will pay up to \$978 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2024, and a \$978 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a national cemetery).

### The PACT Act and your VA benefits:

The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. VA health care is expanding to millions of Veterans—years earlier than called for by the PACT Act.

### Hours of Operation

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. EST  
(Monday – Friday, excluding holidays)  
[Info@MagellanFederal.com](mailto:Info@MagellanFederal.com)  
[www.MagellanFederal.com](http://www.MagellanFederal.com)

### Contact Us

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**Local:** 703-379-9311  
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