

VA San Diego Healthcare System

Beneficiary Travel Direct Deposit Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the VA making this change?

We are making this change to better serve our Veterans. Please read this information to learn more and please contact our Beneficiary Travel staff at 858-552-7464 with any questions you may have.

When will this change take place?

The VA San Diego Healthcare System will begin the direct deposit process for Beneficiary Travel reimbursement on January 1, 2013.

Have the eligibility rules for Beneficiary Travel changed as well?

No. The eligibility criteria for Beneficiary Travel benefits remain unchanged.

This is new to me. How do I know if I am eligible to receive Beneficiary Travel reimbursement?

Check with, or call the Beneficiary Travel office at the VA Medical Center in La Jolla at 858-552-7464 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

How does this work? How will I receive reimbursement?

The funds will be deposited directly into your bank account.

What do I need to do?

Veterans who are already receiving disability pay each month **do not** need to fill out an enrollment form to have travel reimbursements sent to their bank accounts. They are already registered. Enrollment forms are being mailed to Veterans who do not receive disability pay. If you do not receive a form, you may pick one up from the Beneficiary Travel office at the VA Medical Center. Follow the instructions in the packet and fill out the attached forms. Give the completed form back to the Beneficiary Travel Office or mail it to the address listed in the instructions.

Can I fax my completed forms in?

No. Faxing can result in smeared bank account numbers which will result in errors in deposits.

What happens to the form after I fill it out and turn it in?

The information you provide is processed electronically the VA. The information is used solely for the purposes of Beneficiary Travel direct deposit.

Do I need to fill out a claim form each time I want to be reimbursed?

Yes. There is a common misconception that by filling out the form one time that all future appointments are tracked and automatically reimbursed. That is false information. You must fill out and submit a claim form each time you want to be reimbursed. Claim forms are available at the Beneficiary Travel office on the first floor of the VA Medical Center in La Jolla as well as at each one of the VA community based outpatient clinics in Oceanside, Escondido, Mission Valley, Chula Vista and El Centro. However, the Beneficiary Travel office at the VAMC La Jolla is the only reimbursement processing location.

How long does it take from the time I submit my claim until the funds are in my bank account?

Up to twelve business days.

What do I do if I don't see the funds deposited into my bank account after that time?

Contact the Beneficiary Travel office at the VA Medical Center by calling (858) 552-7464 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Will I still be able to get cash reimbursement after January 1, 2013?

Yes. However, there are limitations that you'll need to be aware of. If you are requesting reimbursement for more than one visit, you may receive cash reimbursement for only one of the visits. You can be given cash for only one visit each day you come to the Beneficiary Travel window for a reimbursement claim. All other claims will be processed to be deposited electronically into your bank account.

What if I don't have a bank account?

You can be reimbursed by U.S. Treasury check mailed to you. U.S. Treasury checks take approximately four to six weeks to arrive. However, as the Department of Veterans Affairs seeks to stop sending out paper checks in the future, we strongly recommend you establish a bank account as soon as possible.

Do I still need a mileage card?

Yes. The process for obtaining a mileage card remains unchanged as well. Mileage cards are issued by the Beneficiary Travel office after proof of residential address has been submitted by the Veteran.

I don't receive mail at my residential address. I use a post office box. How does that affect my claim?

Mileage calculation is based upon the distance from the Veteran's actual residential address to the location of care within the VA Healthcare System. Therefore, proof of residential address must be provided so that the distance traveled can be accurately determined.

What does the VA accept as proof of residential address and how often do I have to show it?

Proof of address is required before a mileage card can be made or replaced, as in the cases of lost or missing cards. Proof of address is required once every six months. We accept any one of the following documents as proof of your residential address: 1) Current residential rental or lease agreement listing the Veteran's name, street address, city, state and zip code. 2) Current mortgage document listing the Veteran's name, street address, city, state and zip code. 3) Current utility bill (gas, electric, water, sewage, cable or phone) listing the Veteran's name, street address, city, state and zip code. We cannot accept driver's license, vehicle registration, insurance documents, bank account statements, or any other documents as proof of address other than those listed in 1-3 above. Please note: Proof of address is inspected by Beneficiary Travel staff before a mileage card can be made, but copies of the proof of address are not retained on file.

We greatly appreciate the assistance, patience and understanding of all Veterans as we move forward in this important process that will allow us to serve you better. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. The Beneficiary Travel office is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and can be reached at (858) 552-7464.