Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Process: Ensuring the next of kin (NOK) is aware of and, if eligible, receives DIC benefit

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Point of Contact
Division: Soldier Family Support and Services Division (ARNG-HRF)

Description
DIC is a monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of certain deceased Soldiers and Retirees. Eligible survivors include unmarried surviving spouses, unmarried children under 18 or 23 if enrolled in higher education, disabled children, and low-income parents. The DIC benefit amount varies depending on the survivor.

Regulations and Supporting Resources
AR 600-8-1, Army Casualty Program

Army Casualty Notification and Assistance Guide

Military Benefits - Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Website

U.S. Army Human Resources Command - Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Website

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - Dependents and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Website

Documents and Forms
A Survivor's Guide to Benefits: Taking Care of Our Own

CMAOC Training, Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO)

DD Form 1300, Report of Casualty

VA Form 21-534, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child

VA Form 21-534a, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by a Surviving Spouse of Child

VA Form 21-535, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s)

Related Processes

Casualty Assistance Process

Ensuring the next of kin (NOK) and beneficiaries receive support after a death occurs

Systems

N/A

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Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Process: Ensuring the next of kin (NOK) is aware of and, if eligible, receives DIC benefit
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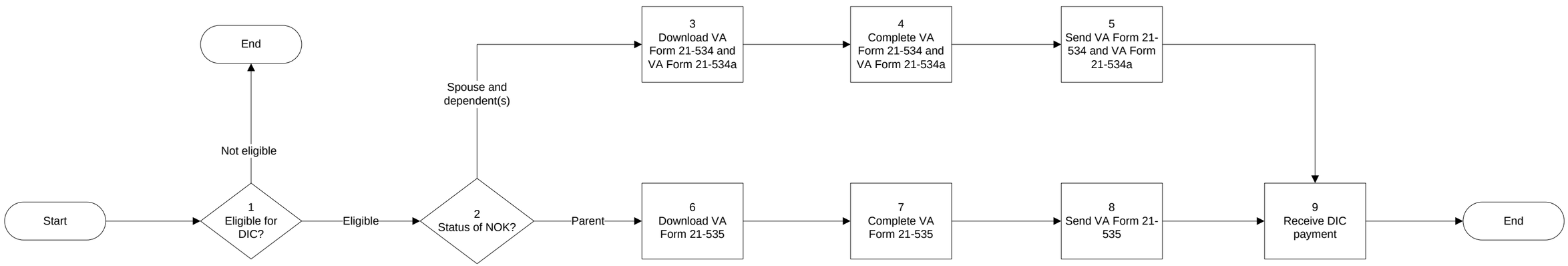
Manual Activity | Decision | Predefined Process | System Related Activity | Terminator | Off-Page Connector

Note: The numbers on this process map are for reference purposes only and do not denote the sequence of the process

NOK



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Process: Ensuring the next of kin (NOK) is aware of and, if eligible, receives DIC benefit

No.	Activity/Decision Point Name	Description	Regulations and Supporting Resources	Documents and Forms	Systems	Notes
1	Eligible for DIC?	DIC benefit may be received by unmarried surviving spouses, unmarried children under 18 or 23 if enrolled in higher education, disabled children, and low-income parents of Soldiers who die from: - A disease or injury incurred or aggravated while on active duty or active duty for training - An injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty while on inactive duty training - A disability compensable by the Veterans' Administration (VA) DIC benefit may be received by surviving spouses, unmarried children under 18 or 23 if enrolled in higher education, disabled children, and low-income parents of retirees who die from: - A disease or injury incurred or aggravated while on active duty or active duty for training - An injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty while on inactive duty training. - A disability otherwise compensable under laws administered by the VA	U.S. Army Human Resources Command - DIC Website			Refer to the U.S. Army Human Resources Command - DIC Website for a complete list of eligible people to receive the DIC payment.

No.	Activity/Decision Point Name	Description	Regulations and Supporting Resources	Documents and Forms	Systems	Notes
2	Status of NOK?	If the NOK is a surviving spouse, they are eligible if (s)he: - Validly married the Veteran before January 1, 1957 - Was married to a Soldier who died on active duty - Married the Veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service in which the disease/injury that caused the death began or was aggravated - Was married to the Veteran for at least one year - Had a child with the Veteran - Cohabited with the Veteran continuously until the death, or if separated, was not at fault for the separation - Is not currently married If the NOK is a surviving child(ren), they are eligible if (s)he is unmarried and under age 18 (or the ages 18-23 and attending school). If the parents of the casualty are in financial need, they also receive DIC payment. Parents may be biological, step, adopted, or in loco parentis.	Military Benefits - DIC Website U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website			

No.	Activity/Decision Point Name	Description	Regulations and Supporting Resources	Documents and Forms	Systems	Notes
3	Download VA Form 21-534 and VA Form 21-534a	If the NOK is a surviving spouse/dependent(s), the spouse/dependent(s) downloads VA Form 21-534 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child) and VA Form 21-534a (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by a Surviving Spouse of Child) from the VA website.	Military Benefits - DIC Website U.S. Army Human Resources Command - DIC Website U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-534 VA Form 21-534a		If the Soldier was on active duty at the time of the death, the Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) assists the spouse and/or dependent(s) in this step.
4	Complete VA Form 21-534 and VA Form 21-534a	Surviving spouse and/or dependent(s) completes VA Form 21-534 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child) and VA Form 21-534a (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by a Surviving Spouse of Child).	Military Benefits - DIC Website U.S. Army Human Resources Command - DIC Website U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-534 VA Form 21-534a		If the Soldier was on active duty at the time of the death, the CAO assists the spouse and/or dependent(s) in this step.

No.	Activity/Decision Point Name	Description	Regulations and Supporting Resources	Documents and Forms	Systems	Notes
5	Send VA Form 21-534 and VA Form 21-534a	Surviving spouse and/or dependent(s) sends VA Form 21-534 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child) and VA Form 21-534a (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by a Surviving Spouse of Child) via mail or fax to the Department of Veteran Affairs, Regional Officer and Insurance Center, located in Philadelphia, PA.	Military Benefits - DIC Website U.S. Army Human Resources Command - DIC Website U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-534 VA Form 21-534a		If the Soldier was on active duty at the time of the death, the CAO assists the spouse and/or dependent(s) in this step.
6	Download VA Form 21-535	If the NOK is a surviving parent, the parent downloads VA Form 21-535 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s)) from the VA website.	U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-535		
7	Complete VA Form 21-535	Surviving parent completes VA Form 21-535 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s)).	U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-535		
8	Send VA Form 21-535	Surviving parent sends VA Form 21-535 (Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s)) via mail to the local VA office.	U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs - DIC Website	VA Form 21-535		
9	Receive DIC payment	NOK receives a monthly DIC payment. The amount of payment differs based on the number of children and the need of aid.				An additional $250 is paid to the surviving spouse with minor children for the first two years or until the last minor child is removed from the DIC benefit should that happen before the two years of eligibility is over.