



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking – Amendments to the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

VA has published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register that would expand access to the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. This proposed rule, AR96(P), *Amendments to the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers* is available at www.federalregister.gov. A link to this rulemaking is also available at www.caregiver.va.gov.

Please note that these changes are not yet in effect, and your feedback is important in shaping the final rule.

What are some of the key changes to PCAFC that VA is proposing?

If it becomes final, the new rule would:

- **Expanded eligibility:** This proposed rule would expand certain PCAFC [eligibility criteria](#) to include a more expansive definition of “serious injury.” This proposal would include Veterans who meet the criteria for “[individual unemployability](#)” as those suffering from a “serious injury,” thus expanding access to the program for certain Veterans.
- **Telehealth flexibility:** The proposed rule would allow VA to conduct home visits via telehealth during any emergency declared by a Federal, State, or local authority involving certain safety or public health risk.
- **Fewer reassessments:** Under the proposed rule, VA would reassess eligibility less frequently, lowering the burden for Veterans and their families. Specifically, eligible Veterans’ need for personal care services would be reassessed not more frequently than every two years, with certain exceptions, rather than the current one-year standard period between reassessments.
- **Delayed discharges:** The proposed rule would further delay discharges based on eligibility reassessments [for legacy participants, legacy applicants, and their family caregivers](#) for an additional 18 months after the effective date of a final rule. The delay in discharges is currently slated to expire in September 2025.
- **Clarified eligibility:** New criteria would expand and clarify the bases on which a Veteran may be determined in need of personal care services for six continuous months. It would also update criteria for determining primary family caregivers’ eligibility to receive the higher stipend level.

These are just some of the changes being proposed. More information about changes being proposed is available on the Caregiver Support Program website at www.caregiver.va.gov.

When will changes, VA is proposing to PCAFC take effect?

Because the rule can change based on public comments, the full timeline is not yet known.

There is a 60-day period during which time members of the public may submit comments about changes VA is proposing. VA will carefully consider all feedback received to determine if further changes are necessary before publishing a Final Rule. Prior to any changes becoming effective through this rulemaking, we will communicate such changes widely. We will provide robust outreach to explain the impact we expect such changes to have on individuals applying for or already participating in PCAFC.

Did Veterans or caregivers provide input about the changes being proposed? Can they make comments now?

The Caregiver Support Program strives for continuous program improvements and is always considering feedback received from Veterans, caregivers, VA staff, and others to identify ways we can improve the delivery of caregiver support – including improvements to PCAFC. VA used information received during its review of PCAFC, as well as various engagements with Veterans, caregivers, VA staff, and others to inform changes proposed.

We encourage Veterans, caregivers, and others to provide additional feedback on any changes VA is proposing by submitting a comment online during the 60-day public comment period. VA will consider all comments received prior to any changes becoming effective. Please visit www.caregiver.va.gov for information about the proposed rule, and for a link to the proposed rule where you can submit a comment during the public comment period.

How many Veterans and caregivers would be added to the program as a result of this proposed rule?

Because the rule can change based on public comments, it's too early to say. Changes being proposed would expand the eligibility criteria, so we do expect that it would add thousands of Veterans and caregivers to the program.

When will VA resume annual reassessments?

VA's suspension of annual reassessments for continued PCAFC eligibility remains in effect. Reassessments may be initiated however, for certain purposes, such as at the request of an eligible Veteran or Family Caregiver. Prior to resuming required annual reassessments, VA will communicate with PCAFC participants to ensure they are given notice of such reassessments and understand the criteria that will be used to evaluate for continued PCAFC eligibility.



How does the notice of proposed rulemaking impact legacy applicants, legacy participants and their Family Caregivers (referred to as the legacy cohort)? How many Family Caregivers in the legacy cohort would be removed from the program under these proposed eligibility criteria?

VA is proposing to delay discharges based on eligibility reassessments for legacy participants, legacy applicants, and their Family Caregivers for an additional 18 months after the effective date of a final rule. The delay in discharges is currently slated to expire in September 2025.

According to the law, VA can only have one set of eligibility criteria for program participants. But, because the rule may change, it is too early to say how many Family Caregivers in the legacy cohort would not meet the eligibility criteria.

What happens after the 60-day period of notice and public comment? What does VA do with the comments that are received?

VA will carefully consider all feedback received to determine whether the proposed changes will become final and effective or if further changes are necessary. Before any changes become effective, VA will publish a final rule in the Federal Register that explains the changes being made and an explanation of why we did or did not make changes based on comments received. This final rule will publish at least 60 days before any changes become effective. VA will communicate this information widely, including on the Caregiver Support Program website at www.caregiver.va.gov.

As a caregiver, if I'm not eligible for PCAFC, what other supports might be available to help me?

PCAFC is just one way VA supports caregivers. To learn more about the Caregiver Support Program and other ways VA supports caregivers, please visit www.caregiver.va.gov or call the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274.

