

# Avery Veterans' Corner

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## **Free Passports**

Passports are available to family members free of charge for the purpose of visiting their loved one's grave or memorialization site at the American military cemeteries on foreign soil.

## **Other Compensations**

If a veteran has a service-connected rating of 60 to 90 percent — 90 percent that causes unemployability, the veteran may be eligible for compensation at 100 percent.

If a veteran is hospitalized for 21 days or more, or in convalescent care for one month or more for service-connected disabilities, the veteran will be compensated at 100 percent during the time period.

Any veteran rated 10 percent or more for a service-connected disability is eligible to receive training from Vocational Rehabilitation Training program.

Any veteran rated 10 percent or more for service-connected disabilities may have the Home Loan fee waived.

## **In-State Tuition Rules**

Currently Post-9/11 benefits cover all in-state tuition and fees at public colleges and universities. But an estimated 3,800 veterans annually face substantial out-of-pocket costs because they elect to attend

state-run colleges as non-residents. That has changed with a new law that took effect in the fall semester of 2015 which requires schools to charge veterans using the GI Bill to receive in-state tuition rates.

## **The National Veterans Legal Services Program**

The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) has launched a new program through its Lawyers Serving Warriors project to provide free representation to veterans applying for a new federal disability benefit CombatRelated Special Compensation (CRSC). CRSC is available to veterans who are medically retired for disability (either because they are on permanent disability retirement or the Temporary Disability Retirement List (TDRL)). CRSC can provide a veteran with hundreds of dollars per month in additional tax-free compensation, in addition to whatever compensation the veteran is receiving from the VA or the military department.

## **Protected Disability Rating**

A rating percentage is considered “protected” once it is in place for 20 years. There would be no danger of a decreased disability rating after the 20-year mark. Veterans whose ratings have been in place for less than 20 years may be somewhat assured that there has been no improvement in the disability before requesting a new evaluation or they could risk having their disability rating reduced.

For Internet assistance, go to your local county library.

For questions concerning veteran’s benefits and to obtain needed forms call Georgia Henry, Avery County Veterans Service Office, at (828) 733-8211.

Comments and suggestions on the Veterans' Corner or Disabled American Veterans can be emailed to Jim Sramek at *[averycountyveterans@gmail.com](mailto:averycountyveterans@gmail.com)*.