




























STATUS OF VETERANS OMBUDSMAN RECOMMENDATIONS BY THEME

	Recommendation (Total = 63)	2018	2019
	Health Care and Support (10)		
1.	For the Minister of Veterans Affairs to put forward the necessary legislative and regulatory amendments to allow Veterans to be compensated retroactively [for treatment benefits] to date of application under the <i>Pension Act</i> and the <i>Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act</i>		
2.	Follow-up contact with Veterans Independence Program recipients should be made on at least an annual basis and more frequently for those at higher risk (with in-home assessments when necessary) to ensure timely and accurate identification of changing needs as Veterans age		
3.	Providing the same access to the Treasury Board Pensioner Dental Service Plan to Veterans and their families as that provided to them by Veterans Affairs Canada under the Public Service Health Care Plan		
4.	Eliminate the inconsistency in Veterans Independence Program eligibility for housekeeping and grounds maintenance for survivors and spouses so that they may all have access to the services they need, regardless of what the Veteran received or did not receive prior to their death or involuntary separation		
5.	Adjust the eligibility criteria of the Caregiver Recognition Benefit to provide easier access to compensation for caregivers when service-related conditions inhibit a Veteran's ability to perform Instrumental Activities of Daily Living and childcare		
6.	Introduce additional financial support that can be used to subsidize assisted living options for Veterans whose needs do not require Long Term Care, but who cannot stay in their own homes		
7.	Merge the Veterans Independence Program and Long Term Care program into one "Continuum of Care" program such that access is determined once, and criteria are transparent, understandable, and based on the physical and mental health needs of the Veteran		
8.	Reduce the complexity of 28 different eligibility groups, currently using service type, such that access to continuum of care support is based on the physical and mental health needs of Veterans		
9.	Develop and publicly communicate a strategy to ensure that the continuum of care needs of all Veterans are being met within the current context of the Canadian Health Care system		
10.	Provide mental health treatment benefits to family members in their own right		
	Veterans Experience (25)		
1.	That the administration of funeral and burial benefits be simplified by using a discretionary lump sum approach for reimbursable expenses rather than the present itemized approach		
2.	That Veterans Affairs Canada engage in a proactive multi-faceted communications campaign to raise awareness of the Funeral and Burial Program		







 Implemented
  Partially implemented
  Not implemented

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3.	That Veterans Affairs Canada be more flexible and allow for extraordinary circumstances to be considered when the established timeframe is exceeded		
4.	For Veterans Affairs Canada to improve the mechanisms by which disability benefit assessment letters are generated to make sure essential information is captured for inclusion in letters. This information should be presented in a form that is understandable and is in relation to the decision made. An explanation of how this information has been used to arrive at the decision is required. The Department should also ensure that a notice of the right to appeal is contained in every disability benefit decision letter		
5.	For reasons for decisions to be written in plain language. Any legal, medical, or administrative terms used should be explained. A separate brochure or other companion piece would serve this purpose and could be included with decision letters		
6.	For procedure manuals and training modules to be examined to ensure that adjudicators are aware of the minimum information to be provided in letters and what is needed to substantiate the reasons for their decisions		
7.	For quality assurance procedures to be put in place to ensure decision letters fully comply with standards for adequacy of reasons for decisions		
8.	That the Veterans Review and Appeal Board report to Parliament on its performance using the <i>percentage of Federal Court judgments that uphold Board decisions</i> as an indicator of fairness in the redress process, and on remedial measures to attain the 100 percent target		
9.	That the Veterans Review and Appeal Board provide reasons for its decisions that clearly demonstrate that its obligation to liberally construe the legislation has been met, as well as its obligations under Section 39 of the <i>Veterans Review and Appeal Board Act</i> to draw every reasonable inference in favour of applicants, to accept credible uncontradicted evidence, and to give applicants the benefit of evidentiary presumptions (benefit of the doubt)		
10.	That the Minister of Veterans Affairs ensure that the Veterans Review and Appeal Board is sufficiently resourced so that the Board may publish all of its decisions on its Web site and all Federal Court judgments pertaining to Board decisions		
11.	For the Veterans Review and Appeal Board and the Bureau of Pensions Advocates to review their processes and service standards for the priority treatment of cases returned by the Federal Courts for rehearing		
12.	That Veterans Affairs Canada clarify how service and health records required to process disability benefit applications will be obtained and by whom; and that this be included in a policy available to applicants		
13.	That Veterans Affairs Canada more clearly inform applicants of its intent to retrieve service and health records upon receipt of the application, and the types of records that will be retrieved, and notify applicants that, notwithstanding the actions deemed to be authorized by the consent form, applicants remain responsible for the accuracy of the information		
14.	Provide clients with a checklist of all required documents on the application form	-	
15.	Triage applications upon receipt based on health and financial need	-	
16.	Apply once for all benefits		
17.	Provide Members/Veterans/Families with a navigator throughout the transition process		
18.	Ensure that all VAC benefits are in place at time of release		

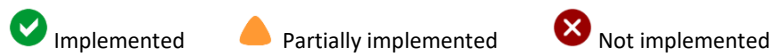
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19.	Standardize Service Standard Start Dates to improve transparency and equity and facilitate accurate performance reporting	-	
20.	Upon receipt, immediately return applications if required documents are missing	-	
21.	That the Minister of Veterans Affairs, by 1 April 2019, consolidate financial benefits to reduce complexity and better address the financial needs of Veterans and survivors		
22.	For the Minister of Veterans Affairs to mandate the Bureau of Pensions Advocates to represent applicants on judicial review of decisions of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board in the Federal Court		
23.	Provide equitable access to timely decisions regardless of factors such as the applicant's gender and language	-	
24.	When a Veteran dies with a disability benefit application in progress, continue to process the application and permit payment to the estate if the decision is favourable	-	
25.	Provide each applicant with an individualized, expected turnaround time for their application, and inform them if the decision will be delayed and why	-	
	Financially Secure (19)		
1.	Providing additional financial support after age 65 to eligible totally and permanently incapacitated Veterans to ensure that their monthly benefits are no less than 70 percent of their indexed pre-release salary		
2.	Increasing the Earnings Loss Benefit to 90 percent of pre-release salary		
3.	Providing the same Earnings Loss Benefit to former part-time Reserve Force members whose injury or illness is related to service		
4.	Calculating the annual cost of living adjustment to the Earnings Loss Benefit based on actual annual increases in the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index		
5.	increasing the maximum amount of the Disability Award to the maximum judicial cap for non-pecuniary damages awarded by Canadian courts		
6.	Conducting a comprehensive review, including consultations with Veterans' stakeholders, to determine what the appropriate maximum amount should be to fairly compensate Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans for pain and suffering resulting from an injury or illness in service to Canada		
7.	Reviewing the adequacy of the \$500 provided for financial counselling		
8.	That the Minister of Veterans Affairs amends section 40 of the <i>Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Regulations</i> to include, "other permanent and severe injury or illness that affect employment and career progression opportunities" in the definition of a permanent and severe impairment		

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9.	That the Minister and the Department of Veterans Affairs amend relevant Permanent Impairment Allowance regulations and policy to include specific loss of earning capacity criteria to ensure alignment between the determination of the extent of impairment and the objective of the allowance		
10.	That the Minister and the Department of Veterans Affairs amend the Permanent Impairment Allowance policy and the relevant regulations so that the assignment of grade levels is based on specific criteria (including the number of working years affected) that characterize the impact of a permanent and severe impairment on loss of employment and career progression opportunities		
11.	That the Minister of Veterans Affairs provide compensation to Veterans and their survivors under the NVC to recognize for the non-economic effects of exceptional incapacity		
12.	That Veterans Affairs Canada develop new eligibility criteria for the non-economic benefit that compensates for exceptional incapacity (i.e. criteria that are not based on a specific minimum disability percentage)		
13.	Reduce CFSA first pension payment delay		
14.	That the ceiling for Veterans funeral and burial expenses be raised to reflect industry standards and that an indexing formula be introduced to ensure that the rates keep up with the economic increases		
15.	That Veterans Affairs Canada extend the Funeral and Burial Program to all Veterans		
16.	That eligibility related to the Funeral and Burial Program be extended to include Veterans who suffer from multiple pensioned conditions where the total aggregate suffering and weakening of their body may contribute to the cause of death		
17.	That the estate exemption (surviving spouse) for the means test be increased and aligned with current income and cost levels		
18.	Developing a caregiver recognition program to compensate the spouse or family member who acts as the primary caregiver to a seriously disabled Veteran		
19.	That the Minister of Veterans Affairs amend the <i>Veterans Well-being Act</i> and <i>Regulations</i> to permit a single CAF member with no dependent children to designate a family member to apply for and receive the Death Benefit		
	Life Skills and Preparedness (4)		
1.	It is recommended that the Minister of Veterans Affairs amend the <i>Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Regulations</i> to ensure that all costs associated with post-secondary education are paid		
2.	It is recommended that the Department of Veterans Affairs Canada amend its policies relating to vocational rehabilitation and assistance to ensure that the <i>Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Regulations</i> are liberally interpreted with regard to the cost and duration of an Individual Vocational Rehabilitation Plan		



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3.	It is recommended that the Department of Veterans Affairs Canada amend its policies relating to vocational rehabilitation and assistance to ensure that the <i>Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Regulations</i> are liberally interpreted to allow more flexibility for Veterans to acquire new skills and higher education while also taking into consideration the Veteran's aptitude and motivation in the development of an Individual Vocational Rehabilitation Plan		
4.	Eliminating the time limit for surviving spouses to apply for vocational rehabilitation and assistance services		
Purpose (1)			
1.	Increasing partnership opportunities to better help Veterans obtain good paying civilian jobs, in collaboration with the Minister of National Defence		
Social Integration (4)			
1.	Providing proper counselling, information, communications and outreach to families		
2.	Extending access by families to Military Family Resource Centre programs after the medical release of the Canadian Forces member, in collaboration with the Minister of National Defence		
3.	That Veterans Affairs Canada broadly publicize and make prominent on its Web site and in appropriate publications the definition of a <i>veteran</i> for commemorative purposes		
4.	That Veterans Affairs Canada, in consultation with the Canadian Forces and the RCMP, pursue a strategy for the issuance of a <i>National Veterans Identification Card</i> to Veterans and releasing members of the Canadian Forces and the RCMP	