

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) March 2021

**Q. Is the MISSION Act of 2018 and the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 (DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges) the same thing, and/or are they connected in any way?**

**A:** No. The MISSION Act of 2018 is directed and implemented by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 is directed and implemented by the Department of Defense. The VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers is a clinical program where eligibility is based on the Veteran's assessment by a healthcare provider for the need of a caregiver and the level of assistance needed. Veterans may apply for this program through their local facility or refer to <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>, for more information.

**Q. Who is eligible for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges?**

**A:** Veterans who meet other non-caregiver criteria are:

- Purple Heart recipients
- Former Prisoners of War (POW)
- Veterans with 0-90% Service-Connected disability ratings
- Medal of Honor recipients and Veterans with 100% Service-Connected disability ratings who are already eligible under existing DoD policy
- **Caregivers who meet the criteria are:**
  - Individuals currently approved and designated as the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran under the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers are eligible for these privileges.
  - For information about primary family caregivers, visit <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>.

**Q. Are DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges available to caregivers enrolled in the Program of General Caregiver Support Services?**

**A:** No. Only the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers may use this benefit. Veterans may meet eligibility for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges under other non-caregiver criteria.

**Q. Are DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges available to secondary caregivers in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers?**

**A:** No. An authorized caregiver must be the individual approved and designated as the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran under VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Veterans may meet eligibility for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges under other non-caregiver criteria.



**Q. What is the definition of a primary family caregiver, as mentioned above?**

**A:** The primary family caregiver is an individual designated as “primary provider of personal care services” for the eligible Veteran who has been approved for the VA’s Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

**Q. When should primary caregivers expect to receive their eligibility letters in the mail?**

**A:** Eligibility letters for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges are mailed every December to all current eligible primary caregivers enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. As new primary caregivers are enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers throughout the year, eligibility letters are mailed approximately one month after being approved for this program.

**Q. Is a Veteran from any era eligible to apply for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers?**

**A:** Although a Veteran may be eligible for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges, VA is currently only accepting applications for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) from Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury (including a serious illness) in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service on or before May 7, 1975, or on or after September 11, 2001. Note: PCAFC eligibility for all remaining eras will expand on October 1, 2022.

**Q. If a Veteran is eligible for commissary services already or due to the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 (DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges), but it is difficult for the Veteran to go to the commissary due to their disability, may the Veteran register their caregiver in the VA Caregiver Support Program so that their caregiver may go to the commissary on the Veteran's behalf?**

**A:** VA does not register Veteran caregivers for the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018. There’s an eligibility and application process for the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. These VA and DoD programs are unrelated. If a Veteran who requires a caregiver is interested in applying for services under the Caregiver Support Program, they may visit <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/> for more information.

**Q. Can a Veteran register their caregiver for the DoD Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 (DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges), through the VA Caregiver Support Program and/or VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers?**

**A:** No. The VA does not register caregivers for the DoD Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018. In addition, although a Veteran may be eligible for the DoD Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 (DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges), it does not automatically provide eligibility for Veteran caregivers for the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

**Q. What services does VA offer for all caregivers of enrolled Veterans?**

**A:** Caregivers are eligible for a host of VA services through the Program of General Caregiver Support Services. These services are available to caregivers of eligible Veterans of any era. The Program of General Caregiver Support Services includes training, education, respite care, a telephone support line, peer-support mentoring, self-care courses and other services. For information about the Program of General Caregiver Support Services visit <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>.

*\*\*Please see <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products#!/detail/780> for more information related to the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 or call 1-800-342-9647 (Toll-Free 24/7).*

