

Warren County Veterans Service Officer's Report for April 2018

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

During a medical emergency, Veterans should immediately seek care at the nearest medical facility. A medical emergency is an injury or illness so severe that without immediate treatment, you believe your life or health is in danger. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department (ED) right away.

Veterans do not need to check with VA before calling for an ambulance or going to an ED. During a medical emergency, VA encourages all Veterans to seek immediate medical attention without delay. A claim for emergency care will never be denied based solely on VA receiving notification, or approving the care in advance. It is, however, important to promptly notify VA after receiving emergency care at a community ED. When possible, notification should be made within 72-hours of admission to a community medical facility. This allows VA to assist the Veteran in coordinating necessary care or transfer, and helps to ensure that the administrative requirements for VA to pay for the care are met.

VA Payments for Emergency Medical Care

VA can pay for emergency medical care at a community ED, including hospital charges, professional fees, and emergency transportation (such as ambulances). How much VA will pay for emergency medical care largely depends on whether or not:

The treatment was for a service-connection condition; VA was reasonably available to provide care; or The Veteran was stabilized for transfer to an available VA facility (payment can only be made up to the point where a Veteran could be safely transferred to an available VA facility, unless no VA facility is available upon notification and request by the community provider).

For treatment of both service-connected and non-service connected conditions, there are different requirements.

Service-Connected Emergency Care

In general, VA can pay for emergency medical care at a local ED for a Veteran's service-connected condition, or if the care is *related* to a Veteran's service-connected condition. Specifically, emergency medical care for a Veteran's service-connected or related (adjunct) condition(s) is eligible for VA payment.

Generally, VA payment for emergency care is limited to treatment of service-connected (or adjunct) conditions, but there are exceptions. In accordance with the following situations and requirements, VA can pay emergency care costs for:

1. A Veteran who receives emergency treatment of a service-connected, or adjunct condition* in a community emergency department; OR
2. A Veteran who is Permanently and Totally disabled (P&T) as the result of a service-connected condition is eligible for emergency treatment of ANY condition; OR
3. A Veteran who is participating in a VA Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and who requires emergency treatment to expedite their return to the program, is eligible for emergency treatment for any condition; AND (scenarios 1-3 must all meet #4)
4. The emergency was of such a nature that the Veteran (or other prudent layperson without medical training) would reasonably believe that any delay in seeking immediate medical attention would cause their life or health to be placed in jeopardy.

*A service-connected condition is one that has been adjudicated by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and a disability rating has been granted. An adjunct condition is one that, while not directly service-connected, is medically considered to be aggravating a service-connected condition.

Non-Service Connected Emergency Care

VA can also pay for emergency medical care at a community ED for a Veteran's non-service connected condition. However, there are several requirements and factors that affect the amount and types of costs VA can pay. Specifically, emergency medical care for a Veteran's non-service connected condition(s) is eligible for VA payment when all of the five following elements are true:

1. Care was provided in a hospital emergency department (or similar public facility held to provide emergency treatment to the public); AND
2. The emergency was of such a nature that the Veteran (or other prudent layperson without medical training) would reasonably believe that any delay in seeking immediate medical attention would cause their life or health to be placed in jeopardy; AND
3. A VA medical facility or another Federal facility was not reasonably available to provide the care; AND
4. The Veteran had received care within a VA facility during the 24-months before the emergency care; AND
5. The Veteran is financially liable to the provider of emergency treatment.

There are specific requirements when a Veteran has other health insurance (OHI). VA can pay certain costs for which the Veteran is personally liable, if the OHI payment does not fully eliminate the Veteran's bill. By law, VA cannot pay for certain costs assigned to the Veteran in an OHI policy. The following charges cannot be paid by VA

- . Copayments
- . Coinsurance
- . Deductibles
- . Similar payments a Veteran may owe to the provider as required by their OHI

Additional information can be found at the following link:

https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet_20-02.pdf