

Mental Health Benefits

Issue

Veterans Affairs Canada is committed to ensuring eligible Veterans have access to the mental health support they need, when they need it.

Context

Since April 1, 2022, CAF Veterans who apply for a disability benefit for certain mental health conditions – as well as those who had already applied and were awaiting a decision – are automatically qualified for the Mental Health Benefits coverage.

This coverage starts immediately following their application for a disability entitlement as long as the application indicates they are experiencing a mental health problem, they have CAF Service and they have signed attesting to the truth of the information provided. Coverage under the Mental Health Benefits could last up to two years; or until their disability entitlement decision is granted.

Mental Health Benefits provide coverage for prescription drugs as well as treatments and examinations provided by psychologists, counsellors, social workers, or other mental health professionals approved by the Minister.

Since implementation, 20,579 Veterans were made eligible for Mental Health Benefits. Of those, 7,616 have made at least one claim to Medavie Blue Cross.

- For the 2022-23 fiscal year, 8,494 clients received Mental Health Benefits.
- In the 2023-24 fiscal year, 7,734 clients received Mental Health Benefits.
- Since April 1, 2024, 4,351 clients received Mental Health Benefits.

Key Updates

In March 2024, we approached the end of the two-year Mental Health Benefits eligibility period for those who were made eligible in April 2022. As the Mental Health Benefits eligibility period begins on the day the Department receives a disability benefits application for an eligible mental health condition, Mental Health Benefits coverage will end after two years for those who do not receive a favorable disability benefit decision.

To assist Veterans in preparing, representatives from the Department proactively reach out to Veterans providing important information on next steps and/or finding other available resources. The National Contact Centre Network (NCCN) questions and answers has been updated to address questions.