

Recognition Payment

This factsheet has been designed to provide information on application for the Recognition Payment. We have also included some frequently asked questions.

Information we need from you

We realise a lot of information is requested in the claim form. This information is being asked for at the outset to try to avoid sending you further requests.

Do not worry if you cannot answer some questions, if you do not know exact dates or if some documents have been lost or destroyed. Please just give us as much information as you can.

Why information is needed

Before we can make a Recognition Payment, we need evidence that you forfeited an attributable service pension. When many war widows gave up their pensions, we did not expect that we would need these records again. Some of the questions are to help us retrieve these records. Other questions are included as they will tell us where additional sources of information may be available should this become necessary. These sources include other MoD records, such as those held by the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) or service records, and information from other sources such as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

What you need to do

It is helpful if you can include certificates if you have them, these can be either originals or copies. We are also happy to receive any forms or letters you consider relevant.

If you send in originals or certified copies of certificates, we will photocopy them and send them back to you as soon as we can.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Why is the amount £87,500?

A: There is nothing we can do to bring a loved one back, and no amount of money will ever change that. This payment is not intended to put a value on the widow's loss. But this is a meaningful amount in recognition that remarriage or cohabiting with a new partner does not erase the bereavement.

Q: Is the payment subject to tax?

A: The Government has announced that these payments will be exempt from income tax and National Insurance contributions.

Q: When will the money be paid?

A: The payments will be made as soon as possible after eligibility has been confirmed (see Claim Journey on page 3). The scheme will be open for two years to allow time for applications.

Q: How many people will this affect?

A: We estimate that around 380 people will be eligible for this payment.

Q: What about widows who have already died?

A: Sadly not all those who were affected in this cohort are still with us today. The payment will not be paid to descendants of war widows who have already died. If an eligible widow dies after applying, we will make a payment to their estate.

Q: What are the eligibility criteria?

A: Payments will be made to those who forfeited their entitlement to a service attributable survivor's pension, and/or a pension in accordance with the rules of the War Pension Scheme prior to 2015, for the death of a member of the UK Armed Forces and have not had that pension restored because they are still in relationship. UK Armed Forces refers to regulars and reservists who served in the Army, Navy or Royal Air Force.

Q: Are people who have had their pensions reinstated through divorce or further bereavement eligible for this payment?

A: This payment is a form of recognition for those who are not eligible for pension reinstatement under the scheme rules. Therefore, those who have already had pensions reinstated are not eligible.

Q: If a person subsequently has their pension reinstated due to divorce or further bereavement, will this payment be taken into account or be removed?

A: This payment is not a form of pension reinstatement and therefore would not be considered under any future reinstatement under the scheme rules

Q: Why do people need to apply – don't MOD know who they are?

A: In line with legislation, once an individual is no longer in receipt of payments from MOD, the MOD will not update its records on an ongoing basis, and therefore information including address, bank details and surname may not be current. The information requested on the application will enable the MOD to cross-check with the records it holds to verify an applicant's eligibility.

Q: What impact will this have on other Government support (e.g. benefits)?

A: This payment will not be exempt from benefits means testing. It may affect related benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). **It is your responsibility to inform the relevant Benefit Office, local authority or Tax Credit Office if you receive this payment.**

Q: Has the Government considered the Armed Forces Covenant?

A: Yes. The Armed Forces Covenant calls for special consideration for the bereaved. It is precisely on this basis that the Government has considered this matter in detail, to honour the sacrifice they and their loved ones have made.

Q: Why can't you just reinstate the pensions for those who missed out when the rules were changed in 2015?

A: Successive Governments have had a policy against retrospective changes to schemes. The rules were not unique to War Widows and the wider public sector implications had to be a valid consideration for Government. That said, the payment addresses the inequitable situation for this cohort who, as the Armed Forces Covenant provides, should receive special consideration.

Q: If you can't make retrospective changes, how were retrospective changes made in Devolved Administrations for the Fire and Police Services?

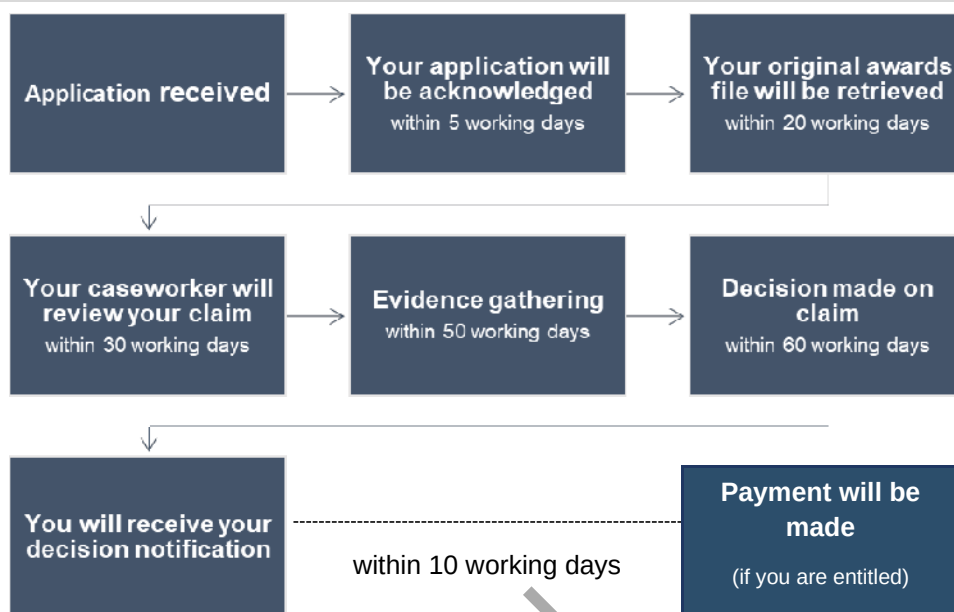
A: As well as being a devolved matter, these pensions schemes are contributory, unlike Armed Forces Pensions, and so the cost of these changes fell to current scheme members as well as taxpayers.

Internal review process

If you are unhappy with the decision following your application please contact us at **Veterans UK**, Ministry of Defence, Norcross, Thornton Cleveleys FY5 3WP detailing why, in writing. An application for a review must be received within 3 months of the original decision. Veterans UK will then relook at the decision considering your request and reasons. The decision maker who undertakes the review will be a different member of the team who made the initial decision. You will be notified of the outcome of your review.

Claim Journey

We will aim to deal with your claim within the time limits. The evidence gathering will be the largest part of the process as this will require information being collected from a variety of sources, including historical records. We may also need to contact you again for further information in support of your application.



Help, guidance and support

We are here to support you and to offer any help or guidance you may need. Our experienced Helpline and Veterans Welfare Service teams can be contacted by using the contact details provided on the next page.

Veterans UK Helpline

The Veterans UK Helpline is open:
Monday-Friday 08:00-16:00

Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18
Telephone (overseas): +44 1253 866 043

You can also email us at
Veterans-UK@mod.gov.uk

(Please do not use email to tell us about changes in personal details)

Alternatively, you can write to us at:

Veterans UK
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thornton Cleveleys
Lancashire
FY5 3WP

Please remember to have your National Insurance Number handy.

Veterans Welfare Service

The Veterans Welfare Service is run by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and provides free one-to-one support to veterans or anyone supporting a veteran, their families and dependants, with a national network of welfare managers across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Information is available online at:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk

You can contact your local VWS support office by using the contact information at the bottom of the page.

Please be assured we are here to help you. If anything is unclear or if you need any further information, please contact us.

If you need to discuss any concerns, please contact the Veterans UK Helpline and ask for **Veterans Welfare Service**.

Help, guidance and support

You can contact your local VWS support office by using the contact information below.

Centre	Tel:	Email:
Centurion (London, SE and SW England)	0808 1914 2 18	veterans-uk-vws-south@mod.gov.uk
Kidderminster (South and Central Wales, Midlands and East England)	0808 1914 2 18	veterans-uk-vws-wales-mid@mod.gov.uk
Norcross (NW England, Yorkshire and Humber, North Wales and IOM)	0808 1914 2 18	veterans-uk-vws-north@mod.gov.uk
Glasgow (Scotland, NE England, NI and ROI)	0808 1914 2 18	veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.gov.uk
Northern Ireland	0808 1914 2 18	veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.gov.uk

Associations who can provide advice and support



**The War Widows' Association
of Great Britain**

The War Widows' Association

199 Borough High Street
London
SE1 1AA

Telephone: 0845 2412 189

Website: <http://www.warwidows.org.uk/>

Email: info@warwidows.org.uk



Royal Navy Royal Marines

Widows' Association

c/o 6 Tower Street
Crickhowell
NP8 1BL

Telephone: 07462376850

Website: www.rnrmwidows.org

Email: chairmanrnrmwa@aol.com



The Army Widows' Association

C/O AIASC—PS4
HQLF/IDL 428 Ramillies Bldg
Marlborough Lines
Monxton Road
Andover
SP11 8HJ

Telephone: 0300 666 013

Website: <http://www.armywidows.org.uk>

Email: info@armywidows.org.uk



Royal Air Force Widows' Association

c/o RAF Benevolent Fund
67 Portland Place
W1B 1AR

Telephone: 0870 5143 901

Website: <https://www.rafbf.org/raf-widows>

Email: info@rafwidowsassociation.org.uk