

VA Health System

Eligibility for Hearing Technology Assistance from the VA

Overview

This is an overview of who may qualify for a cochlear implant through the VA system. An evaluation by the VA will determine candidacy within the VA. We encourage Veterans who believe that they may be eligible for CI services to contact their local VA system for further information. Veterans must receive a hearing evaluation by a state-licensed audiologist to determine eligibility for hearing aids or cochlear implants and to establish medical justification for VA provision of these devices and related services.

Basic Eligibility

A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

Minimum Duty Requirements: Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. The minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans discharged for hardship, early out, or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Enrollment

One must be enrolled with the VA to receive any health benefits which can be accomplished online or via the phone. Representatives are available to answer questions via online chat or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387) Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 8 PM EST. An individual may also enroll at any VA health care facility or VA regional office.

Qualifying for Hearing Technology

The VA will provide other hearing technologies such as hearing aids and/or cochlear implants to qualifying Veterans including:

- Those with any compensable service-connected disability
- Those who are former Prisoners of War
- Those who were awarded a Purple Heart
- Those in receipt of benefits under Title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 1151
- Those in receipt of an increased pension based on being rated permanently housebound or in need of regular aid and attendance
- Those with hearing impairment resulting from diseases or the existence of another medical condition for which the veteran is receiving care or services from VHA, or which resulted from treatment of that medical condition (e.g., stroke, polytrauma, traumatic

brain injury, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, vascular disease, geriatric chronic illnesses, toxicity from drugs, and/or other surgeries performed on the eye, ear, or brain resulting in hearing impairment)

- Those with significant functional or cognitive impairment evidenced by deficiencies in the ability to perform activities of daily living
- Those with hearing impairment or combined visual and hearing impairments severe enough that it interferes with their ability to participate actively in their own medical treatment. The term “severe” is to be interpreted as a vision and/or hearing loss that interferes with or restricts access to, involvement in, or active participation in health care services (e.g., communication or reading medication labels). The term is not to be interpreted to mean that a severe hearing or vision loss must exist to be eligible for hearing aids or eyeglasses.

References

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility/>

https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap01.asp