

# Guide to the VA's Bowel and Bladder Program



## How to Get Qualified

### What are the requirements for the Bowel and Bladder program?

The Bowel and Bladder Program is one of many non-institutional long-term care services provided by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Veterans with spinal cord injuries or disorders (SCI/D), neurogenic bladder and bowel, and limited hand function qualify for bowel and bladder care and may receive that care through a home health agency, a family member, or an individually employed caregiver. The clinic of jurisdiction, or Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility, authorizes bowel and bladder care under the Office for Integrated Veteran Care (IVC) (formerly the Office of Community Care), to enrolled veterans with SCI/D who meet the qualifying criteria for bowel and bladder care while residing in the community.

### How can I become a caregiver in the Bowel and Bladder program?

Individuals must be recommended by a veteran with SCI/D to serve as a bowel and bladder caregiver and meet the educational and training requirements administered by VHA personnel. Documentation is needed for the authorization process.

### What are the training requirements to become a caregiver in the Bowel and Bladder program?

Training needs are unique to the veteran's neurogenic bowel and/or bladder needs. Caregivers need to coordinate with the SCI/D Spoke and/or SCI/D Center team to complete the training and necessary documentation. Specific training requirements are unique to each facility. For example, some SCI/D Centers provide multiple training sessions with a certified SCI Registered Nurse (RN). Training may include observation of bowel and bladder techniques consisting of hands-on care with assistance from an RN and unassisted hands-on care delivered by the caregiver while being monitored by an RN.



## How to Get Paid

Before receiving payment for providing care in the Bowel and Bladder program, I need to obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI). Why is this needed?

The NPI number is required to ensure that the bowel and bladder caregiver can be loaded into VA's payment and authorizations systems, and for a Veterans Care Agreement (VCA) to be issued. The VCA will act as your agreement for payment and services rendered to the veteran with the VA. It is required to ensure continued payment for services provided. Be advised, that in order for payments to continue, the VCA must be reviewed and signed once every three years. It is recommended that the renewal process of the VCA agreement start 90 days prior to the expiration date.

### How do I obtain an NPI?

The preferred method to get an NPI is through the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) online application process. You can visit the NPPES website to create an account and request an NPI number. There is no cost associated with obtaining an NPI. The process will walk you through different steps asking for specific information, such as name, tax identification (Social Security number), and address. The process will also ask other questions such as:

- Is the individual a sole proprietor? (Check "Yes")
- Taxonomy Code (Select "3747A0650X-Technician-Attendant Care Provider")

The online process should take less than 15 minutes. If you need assistance, please contact a PVA National Service Officer (NSO) serving your area. You can also contact the VA medical center's NPI liaison. Each medical center is required to have one.

While the online process is the preferred method to get an NPI, you may also submit a paper application. The paper application process may take several weeks and may result in delays in receiving an NPI number.

### How do I complete the VCA process?

Once you have received your NPI number, either electronically or through the mail, you should contact the VA medical center and advise the local IVC/Community Care staff that you are ready to sign a VCA. The local IVC/Community Care staff are the same staff that provide the authorization to deliver care.

The VCA will require your signature. Once signed, the VCA must be submitted back to the local IVC/Community Care staff. The local IVC/Community Care staff will finalize the agreement. A copy of the final agreement will be mailed back to you for your records. The VCA must be reviewed and signed once every three years. For questions regarding this process, please contact a PVA NSO. If you are a new caregiver and have never received payment for these services by the VA, you will also be required to complete the FMS Vendor File Form (VA 10091). This form requires the caregiver's name, Social Security number (SSN), home/email address, phone number, and banking information for direct deposit.

## How do I request payment for care provided through the Bowel and Bladder program?

You can request payment by completing a time sheet or VA Form 10-314, Request for Payment of Bowel and Bladder Services. However, VA will be transitioning away from the time sheet and require use of the VA Form 10-314 to receive payment in the future.

## What is the difference between a time sheet and VA Form 10-314?

A time sheet is a claim that can be filed on any form. The following information must be included in the claim and submitted within 180 days of service:

- Veteran's name and SSN
- Caregiver's name, address and SSN
- Number of units (1 Unit = 15 minutes) by date of service
- Caregiver's signature and date

VA Form 10-314 is the official form for requesting payment for services provided through the Bowel and Bladder program. It must be submitted within 180 days of service. You can complete the form by downloading it to your personal computer or print and complete a hardcopy of the form. If completing on your computer, the form will calculate and total the hours and minutes for the time being billed. You will need to print the form and submit either via fax or by mail.

The caregiver must provide the following information:

- Veteran's first and last name.
- Provider's name: This is the caregiver who is providing the care.
- Address: This is the caregiver's address.
- Veteran Full Internal Control Number (ICN): This information can be found on the Approved Referral for Medical Care, VA Form 10-7080. To request a copy of the referral form or the ICN number, please contact the VA medical center's IVC/Community Care staff.
- Month/Year invoiced.
- Provider phone number: This is the caregiver's phone number.
- Provider Tax Identification Number: A Taxpayer Identification Number is a nine-digit number, which is either an Employer Identification Number assigned by the Internal Revenue Service or the caregiver's SSN assigned by the Social Security Administration.



## Where do I submit the form for payment?

The form can be submitted by fax: 1-833-748-0256. Or mailed to:

**Regional Payment Center 10N20  
Bowel and Bladder Claims Processing  
1601 E 4th Plain Blvd  
Suite B428  
Vancouver, WA 98661**

## How can I check the status of my payment?

For questions regarding the status of a payment, please contact VA's customer call center at **877-881-7618**.

## How much will I be reimbursed for providing care through the Bowel and Bladder program?

The rate is set by each VA medical center, but the rate may not exceed the locality hourly rate of a VA GS 5, step 5 nursing assistant with locality pay calculated. Please note that interruptions to payments can occur if the veteran misses his/her annual SCI exam and/or if the veteran leaves Against Medical Advice (AMA) from any episode of inpatient care/treatment.

## Are Bowel and Bladder program payments taxable income for a caregiver?

Taxes are not withheld from your payments; however, the income you receive will be considered income and you may receive a 1099 if payment is \$600 or more in a tax year. VA advises caregivers in the Bowel and Bladder program to consult with a tax professional if there are questions regarding their specific tax situation.



## How to Get Help

### How can I appeal a decision from VA denying my ability to serve as a caregiver in the Bowel and Bladder program?

To appeal a bowel and bladder caregiver denial, please contact a PVA NSO that services your area. The NSO will assist you through the entire appeals process.

### Who should I contact to resolve any issues/concerns?

Please contact a PVA NSO serving your area.

