

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) for Certain Combat-Disabled Uniformed Services Retirees

The Program: The CRSC program pays a special compensation to qualifying members who have military retired pay offset because of receipt of VA compensation that is determined to be for combat-related disabilities. The program became effective May 31, 2003. The qualifying criteria for eligible members was expanded effective January 1, 2004, and again, effective January 1, 2008. Payments are retroactive for members who meet previously existing qualifying criteria.

Eligible Members: To be eligible during any time period, a member must have disabilities that are determined by the parent Military Service to be the direct result of armed conflict, especially hazardous military duty, training exercises that simulate war, or caused by an instrumentality of war. Such disabilities must be compensated by the Department of Veterans Affairs and result in an offset to military retired pay.

- Effective January 1, 2008, eligible members are those entitled to military retired pay for any reason (other than those reserve component members retired with physical disabilities not incurred in line of duty), without regard to their years of service and who receive VA compensation for combat-related disabilities that result in offset to military retired pay.
- Effective January 1, 2004, eligible members were those retirees who had at least 20 years of service for retired pay computation or had at least 20 years of service creditable for reserve retirement and had reached age 60, and had VA compensation for combat-related disabilities that resulted in offset to military retired pay.
- Effective June 1, 2003, eligible members were those retirees who had at least 20 years of service for retired pay computation (i.e. 20 years of active duty or 7,200 reserve points) and who had VA compensation for combat-related disabilities rated at least 60% or for which they had been awarded the Purple Heart that resulted in offset to military retired pay.

Payment Amount: The CRSC benefit is equal to the amount of VA compensation that is determined to be attributable to combat-related disabilities. However, the CRSC benefit amount may not exceed the total amount that is offset from military retired pay due to receipt of VA disability compensation, regardless of combat-relatedness.

Special Rules for Chapter 61 Disability Retirees: According to law, members retired for disability under Chapter 61 of title 10 United States Code must have the CRSC entitlement reduced by the amount their military disability retired pay exceeds the retired pay they would otherwise be entitled to for retirement with at least 20 years of service. Disability retirees with less than 20 years of service must have the CRSC entitlement reduced by the amount their military disability retired pay exceeds the amount calculated as for a regular retirement (i.e. $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent \times years of service \times pay base). Note: this may result in a significant reduction or elimination of CRSC for members with few years of service.

Tax Exempt: CRSC payments are tax exempt.

Application Required: Members must apply to their own branch of service using DD form 2860, Claim for Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC). The form is available at:
<http://www.dod.gov/prhome/mppcrsc.html>.

Service Determinations: Each Branch of Service must review the applications of their own retirees to determine which disabilities, if any, are combat-related. The Department of the Navy reviews applications for both the Navy and Marine Corps. Payments will be made retroactive to the date of initial qualification, for all approved applications no matter when received, to the extent otherwise allowed in law, providing the applicant is qualified for the period of entitlement.

Service Presumptions: The Services will presume that disabilities awarded VA disability compensation based on service-connected exposure to hazards, which are clearly combat-related, are combat-related for the purpose of CRSC. These include Agent Orange, Gulf War illnesses, Radiation Exposure, Mustard Gas and Lewisite. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) will require combat-related documentation.

Retiree Notification: Retirees will be notified by their Branch of Service regarding the outcome of their claim, including, when applicable, the reason for denial. Retirees may reapply, if they are able to produce additional documentation showing they meet the program criteria. Retirees may appeal a decision in accordance with Service regulations, if they believe their disabilities were combat-related, but were denied compensation by their CRSC Board.

Points of Contact:

Army -

U.S. Army Human Resources Command
Attn: AHRC-DZB-CRSC
200 Stovall Street
Alexandria, VA 22332-0470
Phone: 1-866-281-3254
Web site: <http://www.crsc.army.mil/>

Navy and Marine Corps -

Secretary of the Navy
Council of Review Boards
Attn: CRSC Branch
720 Kennon Street SC, Suite 309
Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5023
Phone: 1-877-366-2772
Web site: <http://www.hq.navy.mil/ncpb/CRSCB/combatrelated.htm>

Air Force -

United States Air Force
Disability Division (CRSC)
HQ AFPC/DPPDC
550 C Street West, Suite 6
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4708
Phone: 1-800-616-3775
Web site: <http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/crsc/>