



# VETERAN VOICE.INFO

Feature: VAC Pension for Life

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**PERIODICAL Special Edition - Dec 2017**

**Issue No: 201788 SE**

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[www.VeteranVoice.info](http://www.VeteranVoice.info)

## **VeteranVoice.info**

VVi is for you, all veterans, regardless of whether you belong to a veteran organization or not. VVi is a distribution centre, a conduit for making sure that the information you need as a veteran is there for you in a timely fashion. Our aim is to provide a forum for *all* Canadian veterans, serving members and their families to have access to information pertaining to veteran rights.

VVi is an independent site, not associated with any governmental department, agency or veteran organization. VeteranVoice.info is maintained by independent contributions.



## **VAC Pension for Life**

Announced this morning of 20 Dec 2017, VAC's Pension for Life lacks a great many details. If anything, the ambiguous announcement has left many veterans understandably confused and frustrated not knowing what it all means. A sampling of few veteran comments illustrate the sad, but expected outcome of this announcement.

WS: A big part of the problem is that politicians and bureaucrats craft their announcements to make it seem like they are really solving the problem. You need to drill down into the details,

which most people won't spend the time to do, to understand that the politicians/bureaucrats are falling short of doing anything meaningful.

KG: The way I read it that it won't be included until the fiscal year 19/20. They said they have to find the money. Delay delay.\

DKK: So my question is what happens to us who took the lump sum or had it forced on us?

CC: So the cheques roll out just in time for the election hoping everyone ignores the dragged their heels for 4 years and still never achieved what the(y) promised for 90% of veterans; an actual return to lifelong pensions at pre-2006 levels.

BG: The new income replacement (ELB) supposedly will carry on for life if at 65 it's determined you are still disabled. Looks like another hoop to jump through and if VA holds true to form many will again be denied and forced to appeal and appeal.

SC: (T)he president of Military Minds speaking to the pension announcement and the Mental Health concerns. He also pointed out that the pension inception date is going to be on April Fools Day 2019. Should we trust this?....

JS: So we had a shitty pile of crap VAC pension model and now they have taken that same pile of crap and just remolded it. Regardless of how they present it, it's still shit!!

Nevertheless, many veteran advocates, including VVi are onto to this announcement, monitoring all and any mentions of the Pension for Life and exactly what the fine print will be.

Below, find links that refer to the announcement itself, the newly posted policy on VAC's website, the VAG Policy and pertinent web sites:

The announcement url:

<http://www.cpac.ca/en/direct/cpac2/146781/government-releases-details-lifetime-pensions-veterans/>

VAC Internet Pension for Life url:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/pension-for-life>

Veteran Advisory Group - Policy url:

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/stakeholder-engagement/policy>

Veteran Guerrilla Radio:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/853095038155250/>

Equitas Society:

<http://www.equitassociety.ca/>

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**Initial News Articles of VAC Pension for Life Announcement 20 Dec 2017**



**Liberals confirm return of lifelong pensions for veterans**

By Beatrice Britneff.  
Published on Dec 20, 2017 10:13am

VVi 20 Dec 2017 pd



Minister of Veterans Affairs Seamus O'Regan holds a press conference on the government's pension-for-life plan Wednesday, December 19, 2017, in Ottawa. iPolitics/Matthew Usherwood

A long-awaited compensation plan announced by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs today is reintroducing lifelong pensions as an option for former soldiers who retired from the Canadian Forces after 2006 because of illness or injury – but, despite hopes, most veterans will not see any new money under the plan, unless they are severely disabled.

The lifetime pension option for injured veterans was stripped away in 2006 when the House of Commons unanimously passed the contentious New Veterans Charter, which replaced monthly pensions for life with a lump-sum payment.

Even though the charter introduced a suite of programs to help veterans transition to life after military service, veterans have claimed that in the long term, it provides them with less financial assistance than the old Pension Act. Critics have spent years calling on Ottawa to re-instate monthly pensions and return veterans' compensation to pre-2006 levels.

While government officials provided a few hypothetical scenarios in which veterans deemed to be 100 per cent disabled might get more money over their lifetime under the new plan than under the Pension Act, Veterans Affairs Minister Seamus O'Regan said he cannot guarantee that the average veteran will see the same effect.

O'Regan said the government wanted to target retired soldiers who are "catastrophically injured" and "most in need" with its redesign – titled the "Pension for Life" plan – and acknowledged this won't sit well with all veterans.

"We will not make everyone happy with this," O'Regan said at a press conference Wednesday morning in Ottawa. "This isn't some mission accomplished moment. This, in many ways, is just the beginning."

The changes announced today won't come into effect until April 1, 2019 – nearly four years after the Liberals first pledged to re-establish lifelong pensions on the campaign trail in 2015. The government said it has to allow time for legislation to pass and for the Department of Veterans Affairs to prepare for the overhaul.

When asked why the government took two years to announce changes that had been promised, O'Regan said the department "wanted to make the most" of the new program.

The "Pension for Life" plan is consolidating six existing income support benefits into one, in an effort to simplify what many veterans see as terribly confusing system. Sean Bruyea, a former Canadian Air Force officer turned veterans advocate, said the application process for benefits may become simpler as a result, but he believes the criteria for eligibility aren't any easier to understand.

"This is going to create a nightmare of anxiety for veterans for their family members," Bruyea told reporters. "This is an extremely complex system."

The new benefit scheme replaces the lump-sum disability award with "Pain and Suffering Compensation." Under the renamed, non-taxable award, eligible veterans can receive a maximum of \$1,150 per month, for life – which remains unchanged from the New Veterans Charter disability award – or opt for a lump-sum payment.

Veterans Affairs is also introducing a three-tier "Additional Pain and Suffering Compensation" for veterans with "severe and permanent impairment" related to their military service. Depending on the severity of their injury, eligible veterans might receive an additional, monthly payment of \$500, \$1,000 or \$1,500 – which is also tax-free.

Under the pre-2006 system, disabled veterans could receive a tax-free, monthly pension of up to \$2,733 for the rest of their lives. The maximum a critically injured veteran could receive from both pain and suffering awards under the new plan would be \$2,650 per month.

Senior department officials told reporters in a technical briefing they estimate 12 per cent of Veterans Affairs' clients are injured seriously enough to make them eligible for the maximum amount.

Veterans advocates on Wednesday said they were disappointed to see that only a small group of veterans will see an increase in their compensation under the "Pension for Life" plan, arguing it creates a "class system" of veterans.

"I think it's bittersweet frankly," Michael Blais, president of Canadian Veterans Advocacy, told iPolitics. "It's like they're dividing our community [between] those who have and those who have not, instead of acknowledging sacrifice equally."

Bruyea expressed a similar opinion, saying he believe the new plan will provoke "a lot of dissent (and) a lot of discord in the veterans community."

"I think overall this is not good for their well-being," he said.

The new plan also consolidates four existing benefits into a taxable "Income Replacement Benefit," designed for veterans who "have barriers to re-establishment due to physical or mental health problem(s) resulting primarily from service" and are participating in Veterans Affairs' Rehabilitation Program.

The government said that benefit will amount to 90 per cent of a veteran's salary at the time they were released from the military. A veteran in receipt of income replacement can earn up to \$20,000 from employment before any deductions are made.

The government says the initiatives announced under the "Pension for Life" plan represent an additional investment of \$3.6 billion.

The government said veterans already receiving disability benefits under the New Veterans Charter will have their awards automatically adjusted – they will not need to reapply under the new system – and that the "Pension for Life" plan will also apply retroactively.

"If you have received a lump-sum payment under the New Veterans Charter, we will calculate how much you would've received at the point you received that lump-sum payment," O'Regan said. "We will apply that all the way back. That difference will be applied monthly for the rest of your life."

O'Regan also confirmed no injured veteran currently receiving benefits under the New Veterans Charter will see a decrease in their net compensation as a result of the updated plan.

Both the Conservatives and the NDP criticized the Liberals for making veterans wait an additional 14 months for "Pension for Life" to be implemented. Earlier the day, O'Regan admitted that he wishes veterans could see change "today."

“I don’t think it’s fair to ask veterans to wait any more time, to be honest with you,” the minister said. “All I can do is look them in the eye and say we’re doing our best.”

“I want them to have it today.”

See more...<https://ipolitics.ca/2017/12/20/liberals-confirm-return-lifelong-pensions-veterans/>

### **More News Articles**

CBC News See...<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/veterans-pension-disability-1.4457755>

CBC News See more...<http://www.cbc.ca/beta/news/politics/there-s-chaos-in-the-veteran-community-today-1.4459405>

CTV News See...<https://www.ctvnews.ca/mobile/politics/liberals-pension-plan-for-disabled-veterans-won-t-take-effect-until-2019-1.3729370>

CTV Power Play See...<https://www.ctvnews.ca/mobile/politics/liberals-pension-plan-for-disabled-veterans-won-t-take-effect-until-2019-1.3729370>



## You Can Help!

All veterans are encouraged to pass information, opinions, links to self-help sites onto VVi. VeteranVoice.info is a distribution centre and we are dependant on others to pass information. This is your site. Tell other veterans about your site.

Email: [info@VeteranVoice.info](mailto:info@VeteranVoice.info)

Facebook Messenger: <https://www.facebook.com/VeteranVoice.info>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VetVoiceinfo>

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	 <b>VVi Database</b>	<a href="http://www.veteranvoice.info/db/all_records.asp">http://www.veteranvoice.info/db/all_records.asp</a>
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**Veteran's Aide  
Memoire**

[http://veteranvoice.info/archive/aide\\_memoire/Vet\\_Aide\\_Memoire.pdf](http://veteranvoice.info/archive/aide_memoire/Vet_Aide_Memoire.pdf)



Marijuana For Trauma Inc.  
VETERANS HELPING VETERANS

**MARIJUANA For Trauma  
(MFT)**

<https://mftgroup.ca/>

**National (US) Gulf War  
Resources Center, Inc.**

<http://www.ngwrc.org/>



**PPCLI**

**Association  
Volunteer Patricia  
Program (VPP)**

<http://vpp.ppcliassoc.ca>



**Sean Bruyea**

<http://seanbruyea.com>



<https://www.cfpsa.com/Splashpages/SoldierOn/>



**Veteran Guerrilla Radio**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/853095038155250/>



**Veterans Affairs  
Canada**

**Anciens Cor  
Canada**

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/>

<b>V.E.T.S</b> <b>Veterans Emergency</b> <b>Transition Services</b>	<a href="http://www.vetscanada.org/">http://www.vetscanada.org/</a>
 <b>Veterans Ombudsman</b> <b>Ombudsman des vétérans</b>	<a href="http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/">http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/</a>
 <b>Veterans of Canada</b> A Community for Canadian Her...	<a href="http://veteransofcanada.ca/">http://veteransofcanada.ca/</a>
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