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CV Training

The **VA Fiduciary Program** is a program managed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) that appoints a *fiduciary* to help manage VA benefit payments for veterans or beneficiaries who are determined to be **unable to manage their financial affairs due to injury, illness, age, or disability**.

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☑ **Purpose of the Program**

The program is designed to **protect veterans and dependents** who receive VA benefits but **lack the capacity** to safely manage their own funds. This may be due to conditions like traumatic brain injury, severe PTSD, dementia, cognitive impairment, or mental illness.

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☑ **When is a Fiduciary Appointed?**

A fiduciary may be assigned if:

- A VA examiner reports that a beneficiary is not competent to manage funds;
- A court declares a veteran legally incompetent; **or**
- Medical records or credible evidence indicate financial vulnerability or exploitation risk.

Before appointing a fiduciary, the VA reviews evidence and gives the veteran a chance to respond or submit additional information.

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☑ **Who Can Be a Fiduciary?**

The VA prefers someone who knows the veteran personally and has their trust. This can include:

- A **spouse, family member, or close friend**
- A **court-appointed guardian or conservator**
- A **professional fiduciary or institution** (such as a trust company)
- A **Representative Payee** approved by the VA

All fiduciaries must pass a **background check** and often a **credit check**, and they must agree to follow VA rules.

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☑ **Fiduciary Responsibilities**

A VA-appointed fiduciary must:

- Safely **manage VA benefit payments** for the veteran's needs
- **Pay bills** like housing, medical care, food, and other living expenses
- **Avoid conflicts of interest**
- **Keep accurate financial records**
- **Submit annual accountings** to the VA if required
- **Protect the beneficiary's funds from misuse**

Fiduciaries are **legally accountable** to the VA and can be removed or prosecuted if they misuse funds.

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☑ **Oversight and Protection**

The VA conducts:

- **Home visits** (initial and periodic) to check on the well-being of the veteran
- **Annual financial accounting reviews**
- **Compliance checks** to ensure fiduciaries follow guidelines

The VA also has a **misuse protection process**—if a fiduciary steals funds, the VA may **reissue benefits** to the veteran and refer the case for investigation.

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☑ **Rights of the Veteran**

Veterans retain important rights, including:

- The right to **appeal** the VA's decision that they are incompetent
- The right to **request a different fiduciary**

LISA MALPASS

## ☑ Step-by-Step: How to Become a VA Fiduciary

Step	Description
1. VA proposes fiduciary appointment	A veteran must be found "incompetent" by VA or by a court. VA contacts potential fiduciaries.
2. Interview with VA Field Examiner	VA schedules an in-home or virtual interview to assess suitability.
3. Submit VA forms	VA will ask you to complete fiduciary forms and disclosures.
4. Background & credit check	VA verifies trustworthiness and financial responsibility.
5. Decision by VA	If approved, VA issues a formal appointment letter.
6. Training and Compliance	Fiduciary receives instructions and must follow VA accounting rules.

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## ☑ Forms and Documents Typically Required

Form	Purpose
VA Form 21-4703	Fiduciary Agreement
VA Form 21-22a (if attorney/rep)	Appointment of Individual as Claimant's Representative
VA Form 21P-4706b	Annual Accounting Form
VA Form 21-555	Appointment of a Fiduciary
VA Form 21-4138	Statement in Support of Claim (used for explanations if needed)

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## ☑ Responsibilities Once Appointed

- Use VA funds **only for the beneficiary**
- Pay housing, medical bills, care expenses first
- Maintain separate accounts for VA funds
- File accountings if required by VA
- Report changes like hospitalization, relocation, or death
- Cooperate with VA oversight visits

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## ☑ Tips to Speed Up Approval

- ☑ Keep credit history clean (no collections, bankruptcies if possible)
- ☑ Provide **letters of recommendation** from professionals or family
- ☑ Be responsive to VA calls and paperwork
- ☑ Prepare a **budget plan** for the beneficiary
- ☑ Show **stable employment or income**

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## 📞 How to Start

You don't apply online like a job — you are **nominated** by the beneficiary, their family, or the VA. Start by contacting the **VA Fiduciary Hub** that covers your state:

- Call **VA Fiduciary Program: 1-888-407-0144**
- Or write to your **regional fiduciary hub office**