

VA Life Insurance Programs for Veterans and Servicemembers



**Department of Veterans Affairs
Regional Office and Insurance Center
Philadelphia, PA
January 2004**

**In support of our troops
currently serving in
Operation Iraqi Freedom
and
Operation Enduring Freedom.**



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Insurance Program Mission, Vision and Goals

I

Mission:

All Insurance Programs - To provide life insurance benefits to veterans and servicemembers that are not available from the commercial insurance industry due to lost or impaired insurability resulting from military service. Benefits and services will be provided in an accurate, timely and courteous manner and at the lowest achievable administrative cost. Insurance coverage will be provided in reasonable amounts at competitive premium rates. A competitive, secure rate of return will be ensured on investments held on behalf of the insureds.

Insurance Programs Closed to New Policies (WWI, WWII, Korea) - To provide the same or better life insurance benefits than were available to private citizens when these programs were established. These include the National Service Life Insurance (NSLI), United States Government Life Insurance (USGLI), Veterans' Special Life Insurance (VSLI) and Veterans' Reopened Insurance (VRI) programs.

Disabled Veterans Insurance Programs - To provide insurance coverage and services to veterans who have lost their ability to purchase commercial insurance at standard (healthy) rates because of their service-connected disabilities. These include the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) and the Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) programs.

Uniformed Services and Post-Vietnam Veterans - To provide insurance coverage and services to active duty and reserve members of the uniformed services that are commonly provided by large scale civilian employers. These include the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) programs.

Vision:

VBA's Insurance program will be an organization which:

- **provides insurance services that are equal or superior to those provided by the best commercial insurance companies;**
- **provides these services at substantially lower cost than commercial companies;**
- **provides fast, convenient access for our policyholders and beneficiaries; and**
- **provides customer communications which are fully explained, clear, timely and courteous.**

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Goals:

Fiscal Year 2003 Customer Service Goals and Results:

Customer Service Goals For Fiscal Year 2003	Fiscal Year 2003 Actual
Disbursements will be processed on average within 2.8 workdays.	2.4 workdays
Disbursements will be at least 99% accurate.	99.5% accurate
Toll-free telephone blockage (busy signals) will be no more than 3% of call attempts.	0.2% of calls were blocked on the first try
Callers will be put on hold waiting for an insurance specialist no more than 20 seconds.	17 seconds hold time
Receive high veterans' satisfaction ratings on at least 95% of services delivered.	95.4% of veterans surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied
Receive low veterans' satisfaction ratings on no more than 2% of veterans' ratings.	2.6% of veterans surveyed said they were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied

Fiscal Year 2004 Customer Service Goals:

Customer Service Goals For Fiscal Year 2004	
Disbursements will be processed on average within 2.7 workdays.	Fiscal Year 2004 actuals will be available at the end of 2004, and will be reported in the January 2005 edition of this booklet.
Disbursements will be at least 99% accurate.	
Toll-free telephone blockage (busy signals) will be no more than 2% of call attempts.	
Callers will be put on hold waiting for an insurance specialist no more than 20 seconds.	
Receive high veterans' satisfaction ratings on at least 95% of services delivered.	
Receive low veterans' satisfaction ratings on no more than 2% of veterans' ratings.	

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Program Information

II

History of VA Life Insurance Programs

War Risk Insurance Act (1914)

The United States Government first became involved in the insurance business when war broke out in Europe in 1914. Although President Wilson declared America neutral, commercial merchant ships supplied war materials to the allies in the war against Germany. Owners of these merchant ships could not get marine insurance from commercial companies. Congress passed the War Risk Insurance Act on September 2, 1914, providing marine insurance protection for merchant ships supplying the allies.

America entered the war against Germany in April 1917. Life insurance issued by commercial life insurers either excluded protection against the extra hazards of war, or if such protection was included, the premium rates were much higher than the normal rate. The War Risk Insurance Act was amended on June 12, 1917, to cover merchant marine personnel. The Act was again amended on October 6, 1917, authorizing, for the first time, issuance of government life insurance to members of the armed forces. Over 4 million policies were issued during World War I.

United States Government Life Insurance (1919-1940)

The United States Government Life Insurance program (USGLI) was established in 1919 and replaced War Risk policies. Individuals could keep this coverage after separation from service.

National Service Life Insurance (1940-1951)

The National Service Life Insurance program (NSLI) was established in 1940 to meet the insurance needs of World War II military personnel and veterans. Like USGLI coverage, insureds could keep their NSLI coverage after discharge from service.

Servicemen's Indemnity Insurance (1951-1956)

In 1951, NSLI was replaced by Servicemen's Indemnity Insurance, which automatically covered active duty servicemembers for \$10,000 at no cost to the individual. Servicemembers remained covered for 120 days after their discharge.

Veterans' Special Life Insurance (1951-1956)

Discharged servicemembers who had Servicemen's Indemnity Insurance could replace their coverage with Veterans' Special Life Insurance (VSLI). VSLI was established in 1951 to meet the insurance needs of veterans who served during the Korean Conflict, and the post Korean period through January 1, 1957.

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In the early 1950's, commercial life insurance companies began to view the government's life insurance programs for veterans as competition for their business and began lobbying Congress to remove the government from the life insurance business. As a result, the Veterans' Special Life Insurance program was closed to new issues at the end of 1956.

Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (1951-Present)

The only new insurance issued between 1957 and 1965 to either servicemembers or veterans was Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance. This insurance was (and still is) available to veterans with a service-connected disability.

Veterans' Reopened Insurance (1965-1966)

Veterans' Reopened Insurance (VRI) was opened in 1965 to provide coverage for certain classes of disabled veterans, mainly from World War II and the Korean Conflict. Members who had dropped their NSLI or USGLI coverage and who had a service connected disability, or a non-service connected disability that made them uninsurable, had a one year period to apply for \$10,000 of coverage.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (1965-Present)

To meet the insurance needs of Vietnam Era servicemembers, the government entered into a cooperative effort with the private insurance industry. In 1965, the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program was established. This program provides low-cost term insurance protection to servicemembers through a group policy issued by a commercial life insurance company. Under this policy, the government agrees to pay the claim costs resulting from the extra hazards of service. All other costs of the program are covered by the premiums deducted from the servicemember's pay.

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (1974-Present)

In 1974, the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) program became available to veterans, providing term insurance protection after separation from service.

Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (1971-Present)

This program was established to provide mortgage protection life insurance to severely disabled veterans who have received grants for the purchase of specially adapted housing.

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Program Administration

The Department Of Veterans Affairs Insurance Center

The Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office and Insurance Center in Philadelphia manages the government life insurance programs.

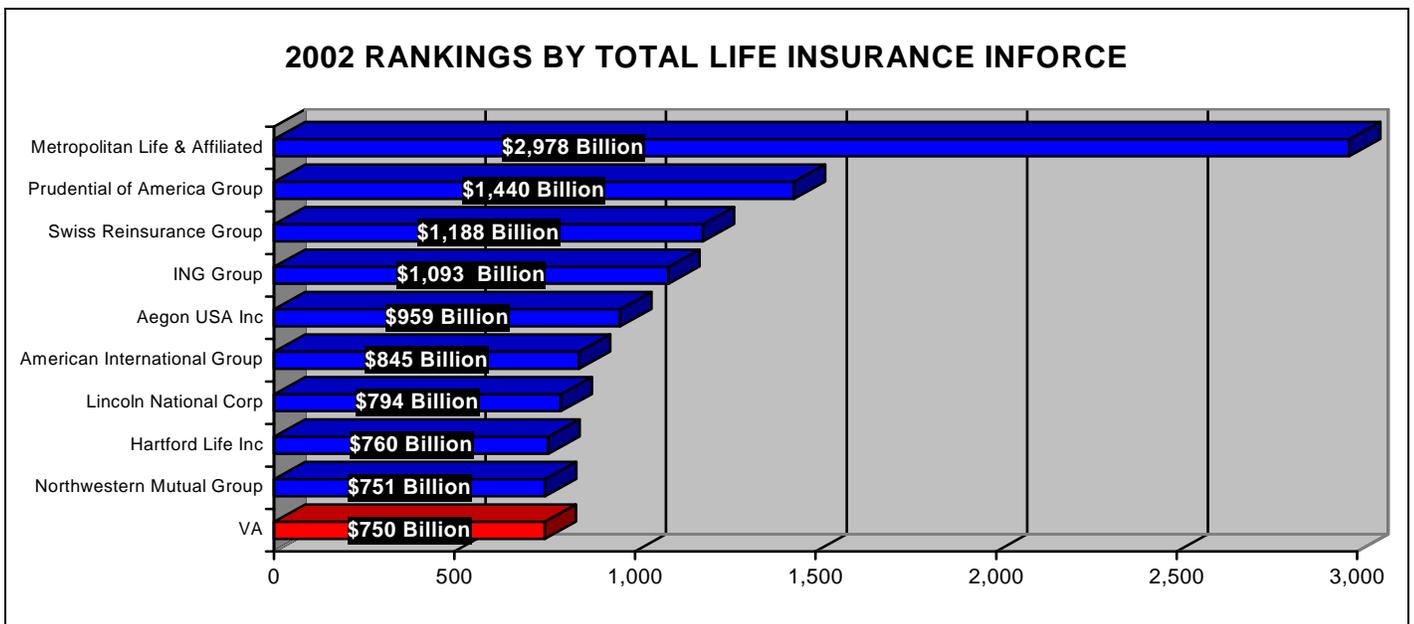
For the six insurance programs that are administered directly by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Insurance Center in Philadelphia is responsible for:

- collecting premiums
- processing policy actions (change of address, loans, cash surrenders, etc.)
- paying death and disability claims
- performing all actuarial functions
- formulating policy, plans and procedures
- evaluating performance of the Insurance program and
- designing, developing, installing and maintaining application software which supports the life insurance programs.

The Insurance Center also supervises the Servicemembers' and Veterans' Group Life Insurance (SGLI/VGLI) programs. The SGLI/VGLI group life insurance policy is issued by Prudential Insurance Company of America. SGLI and VGLI provide coverage for members of the uniformed services (including family members), reservists and post-Vietnam veterans. The Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI) in Livingston, New Jersey administers the day-to-day operations of SGLI and VGLI.

Size Of VA Insurance Programs

According to the most recent data available, in 2002, VA was the **10th largest insurer** in the country with 8.0 million individuals insured for \$750 billion.



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Program Descriptions

- **Administered Programs**

- United States Government Life Insurance
- National Service Life Insurance
- Veterans' Special Life Insurance
- Veterans' Reopened Life Insurance
- Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
- Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance

- **Supervised Programs**

- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance

INSURANCE HIGHLIGHTS (As of September 30, 2003)

	Policy Prefix	Open Era Issue Dates	Number of Policies In Force	Average Age	Deaths per 1,000	For More Information See Page
ADMINISTERED PROGRAMS:						
USGLI	K	January 1, 1919 to April 24, 1951	11,770	86.0	113.0	13
NSLI	V	October 8, 1940 to April 24, 1951	1,401,357	78.7	59.6	15
	H	August 1, 1946 to December 31, 1949	N/A	N/A	N/A	16
VSLI	RS, W	April 25, 1951 to December 31, 1956	220,719	71.6	24.6	17
VRI	J, JR, JS	May 1, 1965 to May 2, 1966	62,696	79.5	66.0	19
S-DVI	RH	April 25, 1951 to Present	154,537	57.3	31.9	21
VMLI	N/A	August 11, 1971 to Present	2,793	52.1	47.4	24
SUPERVISED PROGRAMS:						
SGLI						
Member	N/A	September 29, 1965	2,410,500	30.0	0.81	27
Spouse	N/A	November 1, 2001	990,000	33.4	N/A	31
Child	N/A	November 1, 2001	2,100,000	8.8	N/A	31
VGLI	N/A	August 1, 1974 to Present	400,845	43.2	3.54	35
TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICIES			7,755,217			
TOTAL FACE AMOUNT OF INSURANCE				\$745,453,203,387		

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United States Government Life Insurance

USGLI (Policies Prefixed by K)

History Of The USGLI Program

The United States Government Life Insurance program was the government's first venture into life insurance. During WWI, the U.S. provided Marine Insurance to protect the interests of ship owners and merchants who were providing supplies to the allies in Europe. USGLI was the natural outgrowth of this Marine Insurance. The program was established to meet the needs of World War I veterans, but remained open to servicemembers and veterans with service before October 8, 1940. The government became a self insurer since private insurance companies were unwilling to assume the unpredictable risks associated with a war. By establishing this program, Congress intended to avoid the financial burden imposed on the government by the pension programs that were established after previous wars. The government became the largest life insurer in the U.S. with the coverage provided by this program.

Premiums Are No Longer Paid

The USGLI program operates from a strong financial position.

- We currently have \$59.0 million in trust fund reserves set aside.
- These funds are invested in U.S. Treasury Securities and policy loans with an average rate of return of 6.3%.
- Because of the strong financial position of this program, all USGLI policies were declared paid-up as of January 1, 1983. *We no longer collect premiums from policyholders in this program.*

Dividends Paid To USGLI Policyholders

Dividends are paid on all but a few USGLI policies.

- Reserves set aside in the trust funds continue to earn interest each year in excess of what is needed to pay future claims, allowing us to pay dividends.
- In 2004, we will pay approximately \$1.8 million in dividends to USGLI policyholders. This is an average of \$161 per policyholder.

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Disability Provisions

USGLI policies (except Special Endowment at Age 96) contain a provision which matures the policy upon the insured's total permanent disability. Under this provision:

- Proceeds are payable in installments of \$5.75 monthly per \$1,000 of insurance, as long as the insured remains totally and permanently disabled, with 240 payments guaranteed.
- If the insured dies before all guaranteed installments have been paid, the balance is payable to his or her named beneficiary.
- No additional premium is charged.
- There is no limit as to the age at which a disability may occur.

As of September 30, 2003, 79 USGLI policyholders were receiving monthly payments under this provision.

USGLI Historical Information:

Opened _____	January 1, 1919
Closed (Non-WWI Veterans) _____	October 8, 1940
Closed (WWI Veterans) _____	April 24, 1951
Number of Policies Issued (<i>new issues and conversions from War Risk Insurance</i>) _____	1,153,000
Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$4,857,600,000
Average Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$4,213

USGLI Current Information:

Number of Policies in Force _____	11,770
Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$37,412,348
Average Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$3,179
Average Attained Age _____	86.0
Average Annual Death Rate _____	113.0 per 1,000
Total Investments of USGLI Fund _____	\$58,990,827
Average Rate of Return on Investments FY 2003 _____	6.3%
Total Disbursements FY 2003 _____	\$10,064,331
Dividend Distribution 2004 _____	\$1,800,000
Average Dividend 2004 _____	\$160.86

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National Service Life Insurance

NSLI (Policies Prefixed by V, H, N or AN)

History Of The NSLI Program

Most of the policyholders who have insurance under this program served during World War II. The program opened October 8, 1940, when it became clear that large scale military inductions were imminent. Over 22 million policies were issued under the NSLI program. The majority of policies VA administers directly are NSLI policies. This program remained open until April 25, 1951, when two new programs were established for Korean War servicemembers and veterans.

The NSLI program provides for:

- A maximum amount of \$10,000 insurance coverage;
- Individual policies issued to each policyholder;
- Certain contractual rights whereby a policyholder can bring a suit against VA in a U.S. District Court. Administrative decisions of the Board of Veterans Appeals can be appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Premium Rates “Capped” For Term Policies

NSLI “V” term policies can be renewed indefinitely. At the older ages, premium rates increase significantly to cover the higher death rates at those ages. Although we continually encouraged term policyholders to convert to a permanent plan of insurance (which has fixed premium rates), many policyholders retained their term coverage.

As term policyholders reached their sixties and seventies, they found it difficult to pay the high premium rates. This situation received much Congressional interest as policyholders petitioned their representatives for financial relief. In 1984, the Insurance Actuarial Staff developed a partial solution to the problem by “capping” premium rates at the age 70 rate. This means that a term policyholder’s premium will never increase over the age 70 premium rate.

Effective September 11, 2000, “capped” NSLI term policies receive a termination dividend if a policy lapses, or if the policyholder voluntarily cancels their policy. The termination dividend will be used to purchase paid-up additional whole life insurance.

Dividends Paid To NSLI Policyholders

After the reserve level requirements are determined by the Insurance Actuarial Staff, any surplus funds are returned to policyholders as a dividend.

- In 2004, a total of \$416.8 million in dividends will be distributed to NSLI policyholders. This is an average dividend of \$350 per policyholder.
- The 2004 average dividend is about 3.2% lower than that paid in 2003.

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Disability Provisions

All NSLI policies provide for

- A waiver of premiums at no extra cost if the insured becomes totally disabled for six months or longer prior to age 65.
- An optional Total Disability Income Provision covering disability before age 65, providing a monthly income of up to \$100 per month, as long as total disability continues.

"H" Insurance

"H" policies were issued between August 1, 1946, and December 31, 1949, to veterans with service-incurred disabilities.

On November 11, 1998, the President signed into law the 'Veterans Programs Enhancement Act of 1998' (Public Law 105-368), which contained provisions affecting VA benefits. Included in the legislation was the merger of "H" policies into the regular NSLI "V" policies. Under the new law:

- All "H" policies were converted to "V" policies effective January 1999.
- Converted policies now have the same premium rates and policy provisions as "V" policies.
- "H" policyholders now receive dividends.

NSLI Historical Information:

Opened _____	October 8, 1940
Closed _____	April 24, 1951
Number of Policies Issued _____	22,177,000
Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$173,765,000,000
Average Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$7,835

NSLI Current Information:

Number of 5-year Term Policies in Force _____	337,836
Number of Permanent Plan Policies in Force _____	1,063,521
Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$14,802,145,162
Average Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$10,563
Average Attained Age _____	78.7
Average Annual Death Rate _____	59.6 per 1,000
Total Investments of NSLI Fund _____	\$12,033,157,651
Average Rate of Return on Investments FY 2003 _____	6.8%
Total Disbursements FY 2003 _____	\$1,558,661,834
Dividend Distribution 2004 _____	\$416,800,000
Average Dividend 2004 _____	\$350.33

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Veterans' Special Life Insurance VSLI (Policies Prefixed by RS or W)

History Of The VSLI Program

This insurance program was established in 1951 to meet the insurance needs of veterans who served during the Korean Conflict, and the post Korean period through January 1, 1957. During this period, all servicemembers on active duty were covered for \$10,000, at no cost, under a program known as Servicemen's Indemnity. They remained covered for 120 days after their discharge. The VSLI program allowed these newly discharged servicemembers to apply for \$10,000 of contract term insurance. Application had to be made during the 120-day period during which they remained covered by Servicemen's Indemnity. It was during this period that representatives of the commercial insurance industry began a major lobbying effort to get the government out of the insurance business because the programs were viewed as competition. As a result, the VSLI program was closed to new issues at the end of 1956, and coverage for individuals in the services was terminated. Approximately 800,000 VSLI policies were issued between 1951 and 1957.

Features Of "RS" And "W" Policies

There are two types of VSLI policies:

"RS" - five-year level premium term policies:

- These were the original policies available in this program.
- "RS" policies can remain in force as 5 Year Level Premium Term beyond the age of 50.
- To provide financial relief from the high premium rates at advanced ages, "RS" term premiums were capped at the age 70 renewal rate effective May 1, 1989. This means that the annual premium for these policies will not exceed \$69.73 per \$1,000 of coverage.
- Effective September 11, 2000, "capped" VSLI term policies receive a termination dividend if a policy lapses, or if the policyholder voluntarily cancels their policy. The termination dividend will be used to purchase paid-up additional whole life insurance.

"W" - five-year level premium term policies:

- A 1959 legislative change permitted "RS" policyholders to convert to permanent plans or to exchange their policies for a special lower premium term policy. These newer policies are identified by the prefix "W."
- To avoid "W" term policyholders from keeping their policies into advanced ages (when premiums are very high), these policies had to be converted to permanent plans before age 50, or coverage ceased. There are no longer any "W" term policyholders eligible for this conversion.

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Dividends Paid To VSLI Policyholders

In 2004, a total of \$83.9 million in dividends will be distributed to VSLI policyholders.

- This is an average dividend of \$420 per policyholder.
- The 2004 average dividend is about 1.6% lower than that paid in 2003.

Disability Provisions

All VSLI policies provide for:

- A waiver of premiums at no extra cost based on the insured's total disability lasting six months or longer and starting before age 65.
- An optional Total Disability Income Provision covering disability before age 65, providing a monthly income of \$10 per \$1,000 of insurance, was available at an extra cost.

VSLI Historical Information:

Opened _____	April 25, 1951
Closed _____	December 31, 1956
Number of Policies Issued _____	803,111
Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$7,349,178,500
Average Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$9,151

VSLI Current Information:

Number of 5-year Term Policies in Force _____	17,442
Number of Permanent Plan Policies in Force _____	203,277
Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$2,565,786,502
Average Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$11,625
Average Attained Age _____	71.6
Average Annual Death Rate _____	24.6 per 1,000
Total Investments of VSLI Fund _____	\$1,998,951,229
Average Rate of Return on Investments FY 2003 _____	7.8%
Total Disbursements FY 2003 _____	\$175,770,266
Dividend Distribution 2004 _____	\$83,900,000
Average Dividend 2004 _____	\$419.51

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Veterans' Reopened Insurance VRI (Policies Prefixed by J, JR, or JS)

History Of The VRI Program

In 1964, Congress enacted legislation providing for a limited reopening of NSLI and VSLI. Beginning May 1, 1965, veterans who had been eligible to obtain insurance between October 8, 1940 and January 1, 1957, could once again apply for government life insurance. They had one year to apply for this “reopened” insurance which was available *only* to disabled veterans. Approximately 228,000 VRI policies were issued. No term insurance policies were issued in this program.

Premium Rates

Premium rates for this insurance depend on the nature and severity of the disability.

If the disability is:	the premium rate:
Service-connected	varies from standard to a maximum of some two to three times the standard
Non-service-connected but serious	varies from two to three times the standard to a maximum of \$50 per month plus the standard monthly premium rate per \$1,000 of insurance

Favorable claim rates and rising interest levels made possible the following premium changes and reductions:

Effective	
October 1970	Premium rates were reduced by an average of 18 percent for all policies with "J" prefixes (those policies issued at standard rates).
October 1976	Premium rates were reduced by an average of 22 percent for all "J" policies and 34 percent for all "JR" policies.
October 1977	All premium paying "JS" policies were declared fully paid-up.
May 1, 1989	The administrative cost premium was eliminated. Program costs are paid from the excess earnings of the program.

Dividends Paid To VRI Policyholders

The VRI program began paying dividends in 1980 in order to more equitably distribute the surplus earnings of the program. A total of \$14.7 million in dividends will be paid to VRI policyholders in 2004.

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Disability Provisions

VRI policies provide for:

- A waiver of premium at no extra cost based on the insured's total disability lasting six months or longer, and starting prior to age 65.
- An optional total disability income benefit covering disability occurring before age 65 for "J" policyholders. (This is *not* available on policies prefixed by "JR" or "JS".) Payments are made at the rate of \$10 monthly per \$1,000 of coverage, as long as the insured remains totally disabled.

VRI Historical Information:

Opened _____	May 1, 1965
Closed _____	May 2, 1966
Number of Policies Issued _____	227,882
Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$1,601,504,500
Average Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$7,028

VRI Current Information:

Number of Policies in Force _____	62,696
Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$556,259,251
Average Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$8,872
Average Attained Age _____	79.5
Average Annual Death Rate _____	66.0 per 1,000
Total Investments of VRI Fund _____	\$490,630,145
Average Rate of Return on Investments FY 2003 _____	6.9%
Total Disbursements FY 2003 _____	\$61,360,293
Dividend Distribution 2004 _____	\$14,700,000
Average Dividend 2004 _____	\$278.30

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Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance S-DVI (Policies Prefixed by RH or ARH)

History Of The S-DVI Program

In addition to Veterans' Special Life Insurance, which was provided to healthy veterans, the Insurance Act of 1951 also established the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (S-DVI) program for veterans with service-connected disabilities. S-DVI is open to veterans **separated from the service on or after April 25, 1951, who receive a service-connected disability rating of 0% or greater**. New policies are still being issued under this program. During fiscal year 2003, 10,515 new S-DVI policies were issued.

Eligibility Requirements For S-DVI Insurance (“RH”)

In order to be eligible to apply for S-DVI, a veteran must have:

1. received other than a dishonorable discharge.
2. been released from active duty after April 25, 1951.
3. **received a rating for a new service-connected disability within the last 2 years.**
 - ✓ The veteran does not need to have a 100% rating to be eligible. Veterans who receive a new rating of 0% are eligible for the coverage.
 - ✓ The veteran must apply for the insurance within two years from the date they are notified that service-connection has been established. (Public Law 102-86 extended the initial one-year limit for service-connection grants made on or after September 1, 1991.)

Eligibility Requirements For Supplemental S-DVI (“Supplemental RH”)

The Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992, provided for \$20,000 of supplemental coverage to S-DVI policyholders. ***Premiums may not be waived on this supplemental coverage.*** S-DVI policyholders are eligible for this supplemental coverage if:

1. they are eligible for a waiver of premiums due to total disability.
2. they apply for the coverage within one year from notice of the grant of waiver.

Between December 1992 and September 2003, VA has approved 18,145 applications for “supplemental RH”.

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Gratuitous S-DVI (“ARH”)

Congress enacted legislation in 1959 to protect veterans who become incompetent from a service-connected disability while eligible to apply for S-DVI, but who die before an application is filed. “ARH” insurance is:

1. Issued posthumously;
2. Payable to a preferred class of the veteran's relatives;
3. Payable in a lump sum only.

(Conditions for eligibility and payment of gratuitous S-DVI are discussed in greater detail on page 71.)

Premiums For S-DVI Insurance

To provide financial relief from the high premium rates at advanced ages, "RH" term premiums were “capped” at the age 70 renewal rate effective November 1, 2000. This means that the annual premium for these policies will not exceed \$69.73 per \$1,000 of coverage.

Premiums charged for S-DVI coverage are:

- Based on the rates a healthy individual would have been charged when the program began in 1951.
- Waived for totally disabled veterans (32% of S-DVI policies).
- Insufficient to pay all of the claims because the program insures many veterans with severe disabilities.
- Supplemented on an annual basis by Congressional appropriations.

There are no reserves or surplus funds in this program. Therefore, dividends are *not* paid.

Disability Provisions

S-DVI policies (except supplemental coverage) provide for the following disability benefits:

- A waiver of premiums at no extra cost based on the insured's total disability lasting six months or longer and starting before age 65;
- A total disability premium waiver in cases where the total disability commenced prior to the effective date of the policy, providing the total disability is service-connected.

The optional Total Disability Income Provision is not available under this program.

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

Application Forms

The forms listed below are to be used in the following situations:

<i>If the Veteran</i>	<i>The Veteran should file:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not have S-DVI coverage <i>and</i> • wants to apply for S-DVI 	VA Form 29-4364 (Application for Service-Disabled Insurance)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has been awarded S-DVI coverage • is totally disabled • is less than 65 years of age <i>and</i> • would like to apply for a Waiver of Premiums 	VA Form 29-357 (Claim for Disability Insurance Benefits)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has been awarded S-DVI coverage • is receiving a waiver of premiums <i>and</i> • would like an additional \$20,000 in coverage (“supplemental RH”) 	VA Form 29-0188 (Application for Supplemental Service Disabled (RH) Life Insurance)

To expedite the processing of their application, the veteran should include a copy of the latest rating decision if they received it from VA.

S-DVI Historical Information:

Opened _____	April 25, 1951
Number of Policies Issued _____	398,888
Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$3,760,223,579
Average Face Value of Policies Issued _____	\$9,427

S-DVI Current Information:

Number of 5-year Term Policies in Force _____	60,379
Number of Permanent Plan Policies in Force _____	94,158
Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$1,483,930,229
Average Face Value of Policies in Force _____	\$9,602
Average Attained Age _____	57.3
Average Annual Death Rate _____	31.9 per 1,000
Total Disbursements FY 2003 _____	\$70,982,737
Percentage of Policies on Premium Waiver _____	32%

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Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance

VMLI

History Of The VMLI Program

The Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) program began in 1971, and is designed to provide financial protection to cover eligible veterans' home mortgages in the event of death. In the strict sense of the word, this is actually mortgage insurance. VMLI is issued to those severely disabled veterans who have received grants for Specially Adapted Housing from VA. These grants are issued to veterans whose movement is substantially impaired because of their disability.

The maximum amount of VMLI allowed an eligible veteran is \$90,000. The insurance is payable if the veteran dies before the mortgage is paid off. We will pay the amount of money still owed on the mortgage up to \$90,000. *The insurance is payable only to the mortgage lender.*

Eligibility For VMLI

The insurance is restricted to those veterans who receive grants for the purchase of Specially Adapted Housing under the authority of title 38, US Code, chapter 21. Grants are available to veterans who are entitled to compensation for service-connected, permanent and total disabilities for one or more of the following conditions:

- 1) Loss or loss of use of both legs.
- 2) Blindness in both eyes plus the loss or loss of use of one leg.
- 3) Loss or loss of use of one leg with residuals of organic disease or injury which affects balance or propulsion.
- 4) Loss or loss of use of one leg together with the loss or loss of use of one upper extremity which affects balance or propulsion.

On December 6, 2002, Congress passed legislation allowing veterans to retain their VMLI coverage past age 70. Previously VMLI coverage ceased when the insured reached age 70. *Note:* Coverage cannot be issued after age 69.

Coverage Amounts

VMLI coverage decreases as the insured's mortgage falls below \$90,000. This reduced coverage cannot be reinstated. For example, if the insured has a \$125,000 mortgage on his or her home, then:

- the maximum amount of VMLI insurance coverage is \$90,000.

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- coverage will remain at \$90,000 until the mortgage balance goes below \$90,000. Once the mortgage balance goes below \$90,000, the insurance coverage will decrease at the same rate as the mortgage amount.
- as the mortgage balance decreases below \$90,000, the difference between \$90,000 and the mortgage balance is “used up” cannot be reinstated for that particular home.

However, if the home is sold and a new home is purchased the veteran becomes eligible once again for the maximum amount of coverage.

Payment of VMLI proceeds

Certain conditions apply to the payment of VMLI benefits:

- The insurance is payable at the death of the veteran ***only to the mortgage holder***.
- If the title of the property is shared with anyone other than the veteran's spouse, the insurance coverage is only for the percentage of the title that is in the veteran's name.
- No insurance is payable if the mortgage is paid off before the death of the insured or if it was paid off by other mortgage insurance before the VMLI payment is made.
 - * This is important to consider if the veteran is thinking of purchasing mortgage insurance in addition to VMLI, or if he or she has obtained a mortgage through a state veterans program that requires them to enroll in the state’s insurance program (California and Oregon have such programs). Some mortgage insurance programs will pay the outstanding mortgage balance first and *then* pay any remaining money directly to a named beneficiary. Others, like VMLI, will only pay the outstanding mortgage balance to the mortgage company - no further payments are made. Therefore, if there is duplicate coverage, a veteran’s next of kin would be encouraged to contact VA **first** for the payment of VMLI benefits and *then* file a claim with other programs. However, there is no guarantee of an additional payment even if the VMLI insurance is paid first.

The insurance will be canceled for any of the following conditions:

- 1) The mortgage is paid in full.
- 2) Termination of the veteran's ownership of the property securing the loan.
- 3) The request of the veteran.
- 4) Failure of the veteran to submit required information.
- 5) The veteran stops paying the premiums.

Premiums

Premiums are determined by the insurance age of the veteran, the outstanding balance of the mortgage at the time of application, and the remaining length of time the mortgage has to run. Veterans who desire insurance will be advised of the correct premium when it is determined.

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Premiums *must* be paid by deduction from the veteran's monthly compensation or pension payments, if the veteran is receiving such payments. If such payments are not being received the veteran may make direct payments, on a monthly, quarterly, semiannual, or annual basis, to the VA Insurance Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

VMLI Program:

Opened _____	August 11, 1971
Number of Members Covered _____	2,793
Total Face Value in Force _____	\$175,479,895
Average Face Value per Member _____	\$62,828
Average Attained Age _____	52.1
Average Annual Death Rate _____	47.4 per 1,000

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Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance

SGLI

History Of The SGLI Program

The Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program was established in 1965, for Vietnam Era servicemembers. SGLI is supervised by the Department of Veterans Affairs and is administered by the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI) under terms of a group insurance contract. This program provides low-cost term insurance protection to servicemembers.

Eligibility For SGLI

Full-time coverage is available for:

- Commissioned, warrant and enlisted members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard
- Commissioned members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Public Health Service
- Cadets or midshipmen of the four United States Service Academies
- Ready Reservists scheduled to perform at least 12 periods of inactive training per year.
- Members of the Individual Ready Reserves who volunteer for assignment to a mobilization category.

Part-time coverage is available for eligible members of the Reserves and ROTC who do not qualify for full-time coverage.

The participation rate for fiscal year 2003 was 97.9% for active duty and 93.4% for Ready Reserve.

Coverage Amounts

Effective April 1, 2001, SGLI coverage was increased to **\$250,000**. This coverage is:

- Automatic at the time of entry into a period of active duty or reserve status.
- Available in \$10,000 increments up to the maximum of \$250,000 of insurance.

Members may decline coverage or may elect reduced coverage. If such a member later wishes to obtain or increase coverage, proof of good health will be required.

NOTE: *Reservists called to active duty, are **automatically** insured for \$250,000 regardless of whether or not they had previously declined coverage, or elected a lesser amount of coverage while on reserve duty.*

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SGLI Premiums Rates

Effective July 1, 2003, the basic SGLI premium rate was reduced from 8 cents per month per \$1,000, to 6.5 cents per month per \$1,000. The tables below show illustrative premium rates for both full-time and part-time Active Duty and Reservists:

Active Duty/Reservists Full-Time Coverage <u>Monthly Premium</u> (All Ages)	
Amount of Insurance	Effective July 1, 2003
\$250,000	\$16.25
200,000	13.00
150,000	9.75
100,000	6.50
50,000	3.25
10,000	0.65

Active Duty/Reservists Part-Time Coverage <u>Annual Premium</u> (All Ages)	
Amount of Insurance	Effective July 1, 2003
\$250,000	\$16.25
200,000	13.00
150,000	9.75
100,000	6.50
50,000	3.25
10,000	0.65

Coverage Periods

Full-time coverage is effective:

- throughout a member's period of active duty or qualifying reserve status.
- for a 120-day free period following separation or release from active duty or reserve status.
- for up to one year for members who are totally disabled at the time of separation. This is free coverage and must be applied for to the OSGLI after separation.

Part-time coverage is effective:

- only on the days of active duty or active duty for training and for periods of travel to and from such duty.
- for a free period of 120 days if a member under part-time coverage incurs a disability or aggravates a preexisting disability while performing a period of duty.

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Beneficiary Selection

Any **beneficiary** can be named. If none is selected, the insurance is distributed, by law, in the following order:

- 1) spouse, or
- 2) children, or
- 3) parents, or
- 4) executor of estate, or
- 5) other next of kin.

Options For Payment Of Policy Proceeds

SGLI proceeds can be paid in a lump sum *or* over a 36-month period.

If the proceeds are to be paid in a lump sum then beneficiaries of SGLI and VGLI will receive the payment of their insurance proceeds via an **“Alliance Account”**. Rather than the traditional single check for the full amount of insurance proceeds, the beneficiary now receives a checkbook for an interest bearing account from which the beneficiary can write a check for any amount of \$250 up to the full amount of the proceeds. The Alliance Account

- earns interest at a competitive rate
- is guaranteed by Prudential Insurance Company of America
- gives the beneficiary time to make important financial decisions while their funds are secure and earning interest
- gives them immediate access to their money at all times

On November 11, 1998, the President signed legislation authorizing the payment of **“Accelerated Benefits”** in the SGLI and VGLI programs subject to the following:

- Terminally ill insureds will have access of up to 50 percent of the face amount of their coverage during their lifetime.
- This money will be available in increments of \$5,000.
- An insured must have a medical prognosis of life expectancy of 9 months or less.

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Insurance Options After Separation From Service

When released from active duty or the Reserve, members with full-time SGLI coverage can convert their coverage to Veterans Group Life Insurance *or* to an individual commercial life insurance policy with any one of 71 participating commercial insurance companies.

<u>SGLI Program – Member Coverage:</u>	
Opened _____	September 29, 1965
Number of Members Covered _____	2,410,500
Total Face Value in Force _____	\$567,342,100,000
Average Face Value per Member _____	\$235,363
Average Attained Age _____	30.0
Average Annual Death Rate _____	0.81 per 1,000

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Servicemember's Group Life Insurance Family Coverage

The Veterans' Survivor Benefits Improvements Act of 2001 extended life insurance coverage to spouses and children of members insured under the SGLI program, effective **November 1, 2001**.

Eligibility For SGLI Family Coverage

Family coverage is available for the **spouses** and **dependent children** of:

- Active duty servicemembers and
- Members of the Ready Reserve of a uniformed service

Note: *Family coverage is available only for members insured under the SGLI program. Family coverage is not available for those insured under the VGLI program.*

Coverage Amounts

SGLI coverage for spouses and children is automatic. Coverage is issued based on the information in the servicemember's personnel record.

Group Covered	Coverage Amounts
Spouse	Up to \$100,000 coverage can be purchased for a spouse in increments of \$10,000. SGLI coverage for a spouse may not be greater than the amount of the servicemember's coverage. For example, if the servicemember has \$50,000 of SGLI coverage, the spouse can only be covered for up to \$50,000.
Children	Each dependent child of every active duty servicemember or reservist insured under SGLI is automatically insured for \$10,000. Note: <i>The maximum benefit under family coverage for any one child is \$10,000. This means that if both parents are active duty personnel and are both insured under SGLI, the maximum payment upon the death of the child is \$10,000.</i>

Members may decline coverage or may elect reduced coverage for their spouse by completing form SGLV-8286A, Family Coverage Election. If such a member later wishes to obtain or increase coverage for their spouse, proof of insurability (good health) will be required.

SGLI Family Coverage Premiums

Premiums for family SGLI are automatically deducted from a servicemember's pay and will continue to be deducted from pay until the servicemember's separation from service. Coverage will continue, at no extra cost, for 120 days following separation from service.

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Premiums are not withheld for children since coverage for children is free.

Effective July 1, 2003, premiums for SGLI spouse coverage were reduced. The table below shows the monthly premiums for a spouse based on age and amount of coverage.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance - Spouse Coverage Monthly Premium Rates - <i>Effective July 1, 2003</i>							
Amount of Insurance	Age of Spouse						
	34 & Below	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 & Over
\$100,000	\$6.00	\$7.50	\$10.00	\$19.00	\$28.00	\$42.00	\$54.00
90,000	5.40	6.75	9.00	17.10	25.20	37.80	48.60
80,000	4.80	6.00	8.00	15.20	22.40	33.60	43.20
70,000	4.20	5.25	7.00	13.30	19.60	29.40	37.80
60,000	3.60	4.50	6.00	11.40	16.80	25.20	32.40
50,000	3.00	3.75	5.00	9.50	14.00	21.00	27.00
40,000	2.40	3.00	4.00	7.60	11.20	16.80	21.60
30,000	1.80	2.25	3.00	5.70	8.40	12.60	16.20
20,000	1.20	1.50	2.00	3.80	5.60	8.40	10.80
10,000	0.60	0.75	1.00	1.90	2.80	4.20	5.40

Because premiums are automatically deducted from the member's pay for spouse coverage, and the existence of children for claim purposes is determined from military records, it is important that the information in the member's personnel and payroll files concerning their spouse and children is accurate and up to date.

Termination Of Family Coverage

Coverage for a **spouse** will end 120 days after any of the following events:

- The date the servicemember elects in writing to terminate their spouse's coverage
- The date the servicemember elects in writing to terminate their own coverage
- The date of the servicemember's death
- The date the servicemember separates from service
- The date of the servicemember's divorce from spouse

Note: A spouse can convert his or her coverage to a policy with a commercial company. See information under "Conversion" below.

Coverage for a **child** will end 120 days after any of the following events:

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- The date the servicemember elects in writing to terminate their own coverage
- The date the servicemember separates from service
- The date of the servicemember’s death
- The date the servicemember’s child is no longer their dependent

Conversion

A spouse may elect to convert his or her coverage to a commercial policy with a participating company within 120 days following one of the “termination of family coverage” events listed above.

There are no conversion options available to children.

Payment Of Policy Proceeds

Payment of proceeds is as follows:

For the death of:	Proceeds are paid to:
A spouse	The servicemember
A child of one SGLI participant	The servicemember
A child of two married SGLI participants	The servicemember who was eligible for SGLI coverage the longest
A child of two separated or divorced SGLI participants	The servicemember who has custody of the child

It is important to understand that family insurance coverage belongs to the SGLI insured member and not to the spouse.

<u>SGLI Program – Family Coverage:</u>	
Opened _____	November 1, 2001
Number of Spouses Covered _____	990,000
Total Face Value of Spouse Coverage _____	\$96,215,000,000
Average Attained Age _____	33.4
Number of Children Covered _____	2,100,000
Total Face Value of Child Coverage _____	\$21,000,000,000
Average Attained Age _____	8.8

For more information on SGLI Family Coverage, please visit our website at:
<http://www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/FSGLI/sglifam.htm>

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

Veterans' Group Life Insurance

VGLI

History Of The VGLI Program

In 1974, the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) program became available. VGLI, like SGLI, is supervised by the Department of Veterans Affairs, but is administered by the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI). VGLI provides for the conversion of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance to a renewable term policy of insurance protection after a servicemember's separation from service.

Eligibility For VGLI

Full-time coverage is available for the following members:

- Full-time SGLI insureds who are released from active duty or the Reserves.
- Ready Reservists who have part-time SGLI coverage, and who, while performing active duty or inactive duty for training for a period of less than 31 days, incur a disability or aggravate a preexisting disability that makes them uninsurable at standard premium rates.
- Members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and Inactive National Guard (ING).

Coverage Amounts

Effective April 1, 2001, the maximum amount of VGLI was increased to **\$250,000**. VGLI is issued in multiples of \$10,000 up to the maximum **\$250,000** but not for more than the amount of SGLI coverage the member had in force at the time of separation from active duty or the reserves.

VGLI Renewal

Members may renew their VGLI coverage under the following conditions:

- Members who have separated from service may renew their VGLI coverage annually for life.
- Members of the IRR or ING may renew their VGLI for additional term periods, as long as they remain in the IRR or ING.
- Rather than renew, a member also has the right at any time to *convert* VGLI to an individual commercial life insurance policy with any one of 71 participating commercial insurance companies.

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How To Apply For VGLI

VGLI applications are mailed to eligible members, generally within 60 days after separation, just prior to 120 days after separation when the SGLI free coverage period ends, and again shortly before the end of the 16-month application period. Applications are mailed to the address shown on the member's DD Form 214 or equivalent separation orders. ***It is the member's responsibility, however, to apply within the time limits, even if they do not receive an application in the mail.*** Applications for VGLI coverage should be mailed to The Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, P.O. Box 5000, Millville, New Jersey 08332-9928. (General correspondence should be mailed to Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, 290 West Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Livingston, New Jersey 07039.)

Time Limits To Apply For VGLI

To be eligible, a member must apply for VGLI within the following time limits:

- Ordinarily, a member must submit an application to the OSGLI with the required premium within 120 days following separation from service.
- If a member is *totally disabled* at the time of separation from active duty *and* is granted extended free SGLI coverage, he or she may apply for VGLI anytime during the one year period of extension.
- Individuals who are assigned to the IRR and ING have 120 days after assignment to apply, without evidence of good health, and one year after that with evidence of good health.
- If an application or the initial premium has not been submitted within the time limits above, VGLI may still be granted if an application, the initial premium and ***evidence of insurability*** (good health) are submitted to OSGLI within 1 year and 120 days following separation from service. ***Applications will not be accepted after one year and 120 days.***
- An application for an incompetent member may be made by a guardian, committee, conservator or curator. In the absence of a court appointed representative, the application may be submitted by a family member or anyone acting on the member's behalf.

Payment Of Premiums

Once a VGLI application is approved, the OSGLI will send the insured a certificate of coverage and will begin billing the insured monthly.

There are several options available for the payment of premiums. For some of these options the insured may benefit from a discount of premiums.

Method of payment	Premium Discount Rate
Monthly	No Discount
Quarterly	2.50% Discount
Semiannually	3.75% Discount
Annually	5.00% Discount
By monthly allotment from military retirement pay	No Discount
By monthly deduction from VA compensation payments	No Discount

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VGLI Premiums Rates

VGLI premium rates are determined by age group and amount of insurance. To lessen the high cost of term insurance at the older ages, a Decreasing Term Option is available, starting at age group 60 to 64. Under this option an insured pays a level premium for life, while the insurance amount declines by 25% for three subsequent five year renewals. At that point, coverage remains level at 25% of the original insurance amount.

- **Effective October 1, 2002**, VGLI premiums rates were reduced for veterans ages 40-59. This was the third VGLI premium reduction in four years and benefits approximately 37 percent of the VGLI population.
- This premium decrease follows a July 9, 2001 reduction of VGLI premium rates for policyholders in the 30 to 59 age brackets that affected approximately 70 percent of VGLI policyholders.

As shown below, the amount of premium reduction varies by age group, ranging from 14% to 23%:

<i>Monthly Premium for \$100,000 Coverage</i>			
Age Group	Old Premium	Revised Premium	% Reduction
40 to 44	\$22	\$19	14%
45 to 49	\$32	\$25	22%
50 to 54	\$52	\$40	23%
55 to 59	\$84	\$70	17%

The premium reduction was done in conjunction with a change in the rate structure, both of which will be phased in over a five-year period as VGLI policies come up for renewal. Previously, when a veteran enrolled in VGLI, he or she would pay the same premium rate for five years, even if he/she reached the next age group during that five-year period. Now for all VGLI policies that became effective or renewed on or after October 1, 2002, the veteran's premium rate will increase as their actual age increases.

For example, under the old structure, if a veteran enrolled in VGLI at age 38, the veteran would pay the premium rate for age group 35-39 for five years until his/her policy renewed when the veteran was age 43. At renewal, the veteran would pay the premium rate for age group 40-44 for the next five years. Under the new structure, this same veteran will pay the premium rate for age group 35-39 until his/her 40th birthday, at which time he/she will begin paying the premium rate for age group 40-44.

The new rates, and the new rate structure, were designed to address the inconsistency between VGLI and the way most other term life insurance plans operate. The new rates will save veterans money. Additionally, the new rate structure will enable veterans to make more meaningful comparisons between VGLI and competing plans, and to choose the plan that makes the most sense to him or her.

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VGLI Monthly Premium Rates						
For Policies with Effective or Renewal Dates						
<i>On or After October 1, 2002</i>						
<u>Age</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$200,000</u>	<u>\$150,000</u>	<u>\$100,000</u>	<u>\$50,000</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
Thru 29	\$ 20.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 4.00	\$.80
30 thru 34	27.50	22.00	16.50	11.00	5.50	1.10
35 thru 39	35.00	28.00	21.00	14.00	7.00	1.40
40 thru 44	47.50	38.00	28.50	19.00	9.50	1.90
45 thru 49	62.50	50.00	37.50	25.00	12.50	2.50
50 thru 54	100.00	80.00	60.00	40.00	20.00	4.00
55 thru 59	175.00	140.00	105.00	70.00	35.00	7.00
60 thru 64	281.25	*225.00	168.75	112.50	56.25	11.25
65 thru 69	375.00	300.00	*225.00	150.00	75.00	15.00
70 thru 74	562.50	450.00	337.50	*225.00	112.50	22.50
75 & Over	1,125.00	900.00	675.00	450.00	*225.00	45.00

* **Level Premium for Decreasing Term Option**

Beneficiary Selection

Any **beneficiary** can be named. If none is selected, the insurance is distributed, by law, in the following order:

- 1) spouse, or
- 2) children, or
- 3) parents, or
- 4) executor of estate, or
- 5) other next of kin.

Options For Payment Of Policy Proceeds

VGLI proceeds can be paid in a lump sum *or* over a 36-month period.

If the proceeds are to be paid in a lump sum then beneficiaries will receive the payment of their insurance proceeds via an “**Alliance Account**”. Rather than the traditional single check for the full amount of insurance proceeds, the beneficiary now receives a checkbook for an interest bearing account from which the beneficiary can write a check for any amount of \$250 up to the full amount of the proceeds. The Alliance Account

- earns interest at a competitive rate
- is guaranteed by Prudential Insurance Company of America
- gives the beneficiary time to make important financial decisions while their funds are secure and earning interest

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- gives them immediate access to their money at all times

On November 11, 1998, the President signed legislation authorizing the payment of "**Accelerated Benefits**" in the SGLI and VGLI programs subject to the following:

- Terminally ill insureds will have access of up to 50 percent of the face amount of their coverage during their lifetime.
- This money will be available in increments of \$5,000.
- An insured must have a medical prognosis of life expectancy of 9 months or less.

Online Policy Access Is Now Available For VGLI Policyholders

VGLI policyholders can now access their policies online through the VA insurance website. First time users can enter their Social Security Number and last name. After submitting this information they are then given the opportunity to create their own User ID and Password. The policyholder will then have access to his/her Veteran's Group Life Insurance records and can view payment and billing information.



<u>VGLI Program:</u>	
Opened _____	August 1, 1974
Number of Members Covered _____	400,845
Total Face Value in Force _____	\$41,275,090,000
Average Face Value per Member _____	\$102,970
Average Attained Age _____	43.2
Average Annual Death Rate _____	3.54 per 1,000

FOR INFORMATION ON CONTACTING OSGLI, PLEASE SEE PAGE 75.

QUESTIONS? Call us Toll Free: 1-800-669-8477
Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA)

History Of The Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act



Congress and state legislatures have long recognized that military service can often place an economic and legal burden on servicemembers. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1918 was passed in order to protect the rights of service members while serving on active duty. Service members were protected from such things as repossession of property, bankruptcy, foreclosure or other such actions while serving in the military. This Act remained in effect until shortly after World War I when it expired. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 (SSCRA) was passed in order to protect the rights of the millions of service members activated for World War II. The SSCRA has remained in effect until the present day and has been amended many times since 1940 to keep pace with the changing military. In December 2003, Congress passed legislation renaming SSCRA as the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA). The SCRA updates and strengthens the civil protections enacted during World War II.

Eligibility For Protection of Life Insurance Coverage under SCRA

Under SCRA, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will protect, from default for nonpayment of premiums, up to **\$250,000** of life insurance for servicemembers called to active duty. This amount was previously \$10,000. The protection provided by this legislation applies during the insured's period of military service and for a period of two years thereafter. The following are conditions for eligibility for protection:

- The policy must be whole life, endowment, universal life or term insurance.
- The policy must have been in force on a premium-paying basis for at least six months at the time the servicemember applies for benefits.
- Benefits from the policy cannot be limited, reduced or excluded because of military service. Policies for which an additional amount of premium is charged due to military service are not eligible for protection under SCRA.

The servicemember must apply for protection of their life insurance by filing VA Form 29-380 "Application For Protection Of Commercial Life Insurance Policy" with his/her insurance company and forwarding a copy of the application to VA.

Benefits Of SCRA Life Insurance Protection

Once the servicemember has applied for protection of their life insurance policy and VA determines that the policy is eligible for protection under SCRA:

- The servicemember is still responsible for making premium payments. However, the policy will not lapse, terminate, or be forfeited because of the servicemember's failure to make

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premium payments or to pay any indebtedness or interest due during their period of military service or for a period of two years thereafter.

- The right of the servicemember to change their beneficiary designation or select an optional settlement for a beneficiary are not affected by the provisions of this Act.

Limitations Of SCRA Life Insurance Protection

Once the servicemember has applied for protection of their life insurance policy and VA determines that the policy is eligible for protection under SCRA:

- Premium payments are deferred only, not waived. **During this period, the government does not pay the premiums on the policy but simply guarantees that the premiums will be paid at the end of the servicemember's period of active duty.**
- A servicemember cannot receive dividends, take out a loan, or surrender the policy for cash without the approval of VA. (Dividends or other monetary benefits shall be added to the value of the policy and will be used as a credit when final settlement is made with the insurer.)
- If the policy matures as a result of the insured's death, or any other means, during the protected period, the insurance company will deduct any unpaid premiums and interest due from the settlement amount.

Termination Of Period Under SCRA

The servicemember has up to two years after their military service terminates to repay the unpaid premiums and interest to the insurer. If the amount owed is not paid before the end of the two years, then:

- the insurer treats the unpaid premiums as a loan against the policy.
- the government will pay the insurer the difference between the amount due and the cash surrender value (if the cash surrender value of the policy is less than the amount owed.)
- the amount the United States government pays to the insurance company under the SCRA Act, becomes a debt due the government by the insured.
- If the policy matures as a result of the insured's death, or any other means, during the protected period, the insurance company will deduct any unpaid premiums and interest due from the settlement amount.

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Administered Program Policy Provisions

**For policies directly administered by VA:
USGLI, NSLI, VSLI, VRI, S-DVI
(For information about the VMLI program,
please see pages 24-26.)**

**For information about policies supervised by
VA (SGLI and VGLI), please see pages 27-39
and page 75.**

PLANS OF INSURANCE

Some of the features of the different insurance plans are described below:

5-Year Level Premium Term

- Available on all programs except "J," "JR," "JS"
- Renewable every five years
- May be converted to a permanent plan
- Provides low cost protection at younger ages but premiums increase substantially at the older ages
- Provides protection only and has no cash or loan values*
- When premiums are not paid, the protection stops*

* Effective September 11, 2000, "capped" NSLI and VSLI term policies receive a termination dividend that protects against the lapse of the policy. For more information see page 15 for NSLI policies and page 17 for VSLI policies.

Modified Life At Age 65

- Available on all programs except "K"
- Can only be purchased before the insured attains insurance age 61
- Affords a permanent plan of insurance at a premium that is lower than the Ordinary Life Plan premium
- Provides an automatic reduction by ½ of the face amount of the insurance on the day before the insured's 65th birthday. (The premium remains the same. The decreased amount of insurance may, without medical examination, be replaced with an Ordinary Life policy at an additional premium by making application no later than the day before the insured's 65th birthday.)

Modified Life At Age 70

- Available on all programs except "K"
- Has the same provisions as the Modified Life at Age 65 plan, except that reduction happens on the day before the insured's 70th birthday
- Conversion to this plan can be made through insurance age 69

Ordinary Life ("Whole Life")

- Available on all programs
- Premiums remain constant
- Premiums are payable for the lifetime of the insured

30-Payment Life

- Available on all programs
- Slightly higher premiums than on Ordinary Life
- Premiums are payable for 30 years from the effective date of the policy

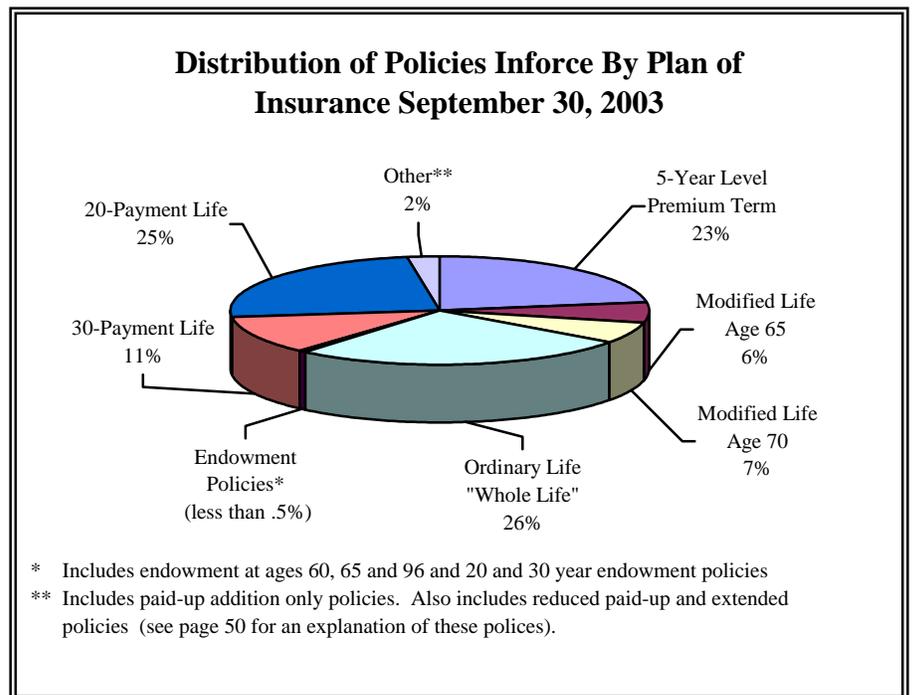
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20-Payment Life

- Available on all programs
- Higher premiums than on 30-Payment Life
- Premiums are payable for 20 years

30-Year Endowment

- Available on the "K" program only
- Premiums payable for 30 years from the effective date of the policy
- Provides for payment of the face amount of the policy (less any indebtedness) to the policyholder at the end of the 30 years
- Policy proceeds paid in lump sum or on an installment basis



20-Year Endowment

- Available on all programs
- Same as 30-Year Endowment except premiums are payable for 20 years

Endowment At Age 60

- Available on all programs except "K"
- Provides for the payment of the face amount (less any indebtedness) on the anniversary date nearest the insured's 60th birthday

Endowment At Age 65

Same as Endowment at Age 60 except proceeds payable on the anniversary date nearest the insured's 65th birthday

Endowment At Age 96

- Available to "K" policyholders, age 65 or older, who were still carrying insurance under the term plan
- Regular endowment plan maturing at age 96 with a level premium from the date of issue
- Does not provide permanent and total disability benefits, or waiver of premium
- Provides a waiver of premiums provision to be purchased for an additional premium at the time the insurance was exchanged

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NSLI Term Insurance

High Cost of Insurance for Older Veterans

The high cost of term insurance for older veterans has long been a concern of the Insurance Program. Many World War II veterans chose to retain the NSLI term coverage they obtained while in service, but unfortunately failed to convert it to a permanent plan of insurance. Term insurance becomes very expensive at older ages. As of September 2003, there are approximately 338,000 NSLI term policies in force.

The “Capping” of VA Term Policies

In 1984, a VA regulation was approved which “capped” premiums on NSLI term policies at the age 70 rate.

- When the insured veteran renews at age 70 or older, the capped rate of \$61.80 per month for \$10,000 of insurance goes into effect.
- This rate will remain level for the remaining lifetime of the policy.

Long-term Cost of Term Policies

These NSLI term policies have been in effect for more than 50 years.

- The total amount of premiums paid, or net premiums paid (premiums minus dividends), very often exceeds the face amount of insurance which is not unusual for term insurance.
- However, in return for their premiums, those insureds received many years of insurance protection.

The Importance of “Net” Payment Cost of Insurance

When looking at the cost of a term policy, the following should be kept in mind:

1. the premiums paid on the policy
2. the dividends received on the policy

The “net” payment on the policy is the premiums paid on the policy minus the dividends received on the policy.

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Consider the following NSLI term policy:

Veteran's Age	Amount of Insurance	Number of Years Policy is in Effect	Total Premiums Paid on Policy	Total Dividends Received on Policy	"Net" Payments on Policy
75	\$10,000	53 years	\$13,000	\$8,000	\$5,000

The resulting "net" payment on this policy (premiums minus dividends) is \$5,000. This policyholder received 53 years of insurance protection for a net cost of \$5,000.

Excess Revenues Returned as Dividends

VA does not make any profit on NSLI.

- The law specifies that NSLI be operated as a Trust Fund. Its revenues are used exclusively for the benefit of its policyholders and may not be used for any other government program.
- Any excess revenues resulting from favorable experience are returned to NSLI policyholders in the form of dividends.

The Cost of Declaring All NSLI Term Policies "Paid-up"

The VA Insurance Service has examined the option of declaring all NSLI term policies "paid-up". In other words, policyholders would no longer have to pay premiums. However:

- the federal outlay which would be required to accomplish this is approximately **\$1.2 billion**. There are currently about **338,000** NSLI term policies in force.
- since the NSLI program is, by law, self-supporting, it appears unlikely that these policies will be declared paid-up, in light of the large cost involved.

VA Regulation Provides Paid-Up Insurance on VA Term Policies

In 2000, the Department of Veterans Affairs put into effect a regulation to provide paid-up insurance on term policies. Prior to this regulation, term policies did not have paid-up insurance.

- Under the regulation, veterans age 71 or older, who have NSLI term insurance are given a reduced amount of paid-up insurance if they decide to stop paying premiums on their policies.
- This paid-up insurance insures the veteran for life and no premium payments are required. The amount of insurance remains level.
- The amount of paid-up insurance depends on the age of the veteran at the time he stops paying his term premiums. A veteran age 80 with \$10,000 of insurance would receive about \$4,500 of paid-up life insurance. (See table below.)
- This paid-up insurance has cash values which increase each month.
- The insured can cash surrender these paid-up additions at any time.

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An insured over the age of 71 who has a \$10,000 term NSLI policy and decides he or she no longer wants to pay premiums can do so. The policy automatically has a termination dividend on that date and that termination dividend will be used to purchase a limited amount of paid-up insurance (PUA). The following table illustrates the termination dividend and amount of PUA that the termination dividend can purchase at various attained ages for such an insured.

Insured's attained age at policy lapse	Basic insurance amount at policy lapse	Termination dividend at date of lapse*	Amount of PUA insurance that would be purchased*
72	\$10,000	\$367	\$602
75	10,000	1,494	2,284
80	10,000	3,212	4,452
85	10,000	4,786	6,109
90	10,000	6,249	7,421
95	10,000	8,887	9,331

**All figures are rounded to whole dollars.*

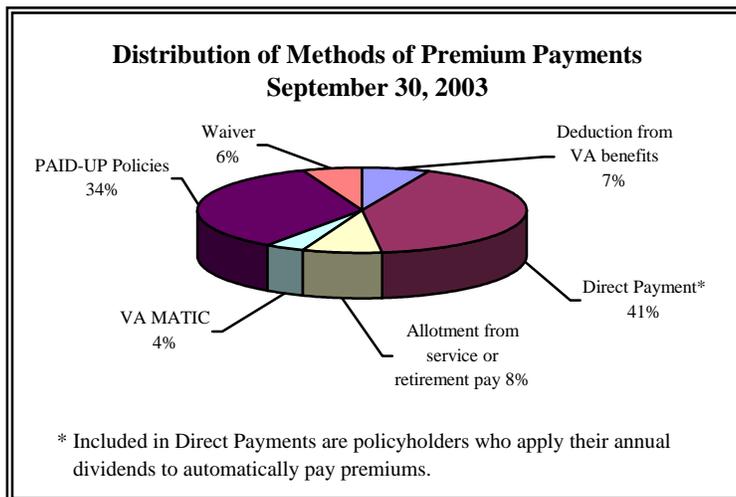
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PAYMENT OF PREMIUMS

Methods Of Payment

An insured has several options for paying premiums:

- Direct payment (a check or money order payable to the Department of Veterans Affairs)
- Allotment from service or retirement pay (if they are receiving military pay)
- Deduction from VA benefits (if they are receiving VA pension or compensation)
- Deduction from the insured's checking account (VA MATIC)



- * Paying premiums by allotment, deduction or VA MATIC protects against lapse. These options also save premium payment costs such as checks or money orders and postage.
- Applying annual dividends to automatically pay premiums.
- * Insureds who apply their dividends to pay premiums also receive the same lapse protection and payment savings, provided their dividend is sufficient to pay the full annual premium. If it is not, the insured is billed for the difference.

Other Payment Options Available

An insured may provide for advance premium payments to be made quarterly, semiannually, annually, or as far in advance as the insured wishes. Insureds who pay premiums in advance benefit from:

- a premium discount
- a reduction of the insured's risk of lapse due to non-payment of premiums, and
- a savings in premium payment costs.

Premium Due Dates

Premiums are due the same day of the month as the day the policy became effective as shown on the insurance policy (called the "anniversary date"). If the policy was effective on the first day of the month, premiums are due on the first day of the month. For any month not having a date corresponding to the effective date of a policy (i.e., 29th, 30th, or 31st), the due date is always the last day of the month.

Grace Period

Insureds are allowed 31 days after the due date to pay any premium except the first one. If the insurance becomes a claim (insured dies) during the grace period, the unpaid premium will be deducted from the amount payable to the beneficiary.

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WAIVER OF PREMIUMS

Waiver Of Premiums

A 'waiver of premiums' provision is included, at no extra cost, on the following policies:

- NSLI
- USGLI (except endowment at age 96)
- VSLI
- VRI
- S-DVI policies (except supplemental S-DVI coverage)

Currently, there are 106,443 accounts on which premiums are being waived (5.9 percent of all accounts.)

Eligibility For Waiver Of Premiums

To qualify for a waiver of premiums:

- The insured must be totally disabled; meaning they have a mental or physical disability which prevents them from performing substantially gainful employment.
- The total disability must begin **before** the insured's 65th birthday, and must continue for at least six consecutive months.
- The total disability may not begin prior to the effective date of the policy. (Exception: waiver may be granted if total disability commenced prior to the effective date only on S-DVI policies, **provided** the total disability is due to a service-connected disability.)

Application For Waiver Of Premiums

To apply for a waiver of premiums an insured should:

- File VA Form 29-357, *Claim for Disability Insurance Benefits*. (However, any communication which shows intent to apply for the benefit, either expressed or implied, will be accepted as an informal claim.)
- File promptly because, in most cases, premiums can only be waived up to one year prior to receipt of a claim. The only instance when premiums can be waived beyond one year is if the evidence shows circumstances beyond the insured's control prevented the filing of a timely claim. This usually means a mental disability.

Once waiver is granted, it is subject to review at regular intervals. The waiver can be terminated at any time if the insured returns to gainful employment, recovers from his or her disability, or fails to cooperate in the review procedure.

For more detailed information, see VA pamphlet 29-14 (revised January 1979), *Information About Waiver Of Premiums And Total Disability Income Provision*.

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DIVIDEND OPTIONS

Dividends are paid on the following programs:

- United States Government Life Insurance (“K”)
- National Service Life Insurance (“V”)
- Veterans’ Special Life Insurance (“RS” and “W”)
- Veterans’ Reopened Insurance (“J,” “JR” and “JS”)



Dividend Options Available

A policyholder may choose from several dividend options which are available:

- **Cash:** Paid to policyholder by U.S. Treasury check
- **Credit:** Held in an account for the insured with interest
 - Automatic unless the insured selects another option
 - Can be used to prevent policy lapse
 - Will be refunded upon the insured’s request
 - Will be included in the award to the beneficiary(ies) at the time of the insured’s death
- **Deposit:** Held in an account for insured with interest
 - Available only on permanent plan policies
 - Can be used, with the net cash value, to purchase reduced paid-up insurance, or extended insurance if the policy lapses - *except* for "K" or "JS" policies (see page 56 for more information about reduced paid-up and extended insurance)
 - Will be refunded upon the insured’s request
 - Will be included in the award to the beneficiary(ies) at the time of the insured’s death
- **Premium:** Applied to pay premiums in advance

Dividend Credit and Deposit Interest Rates

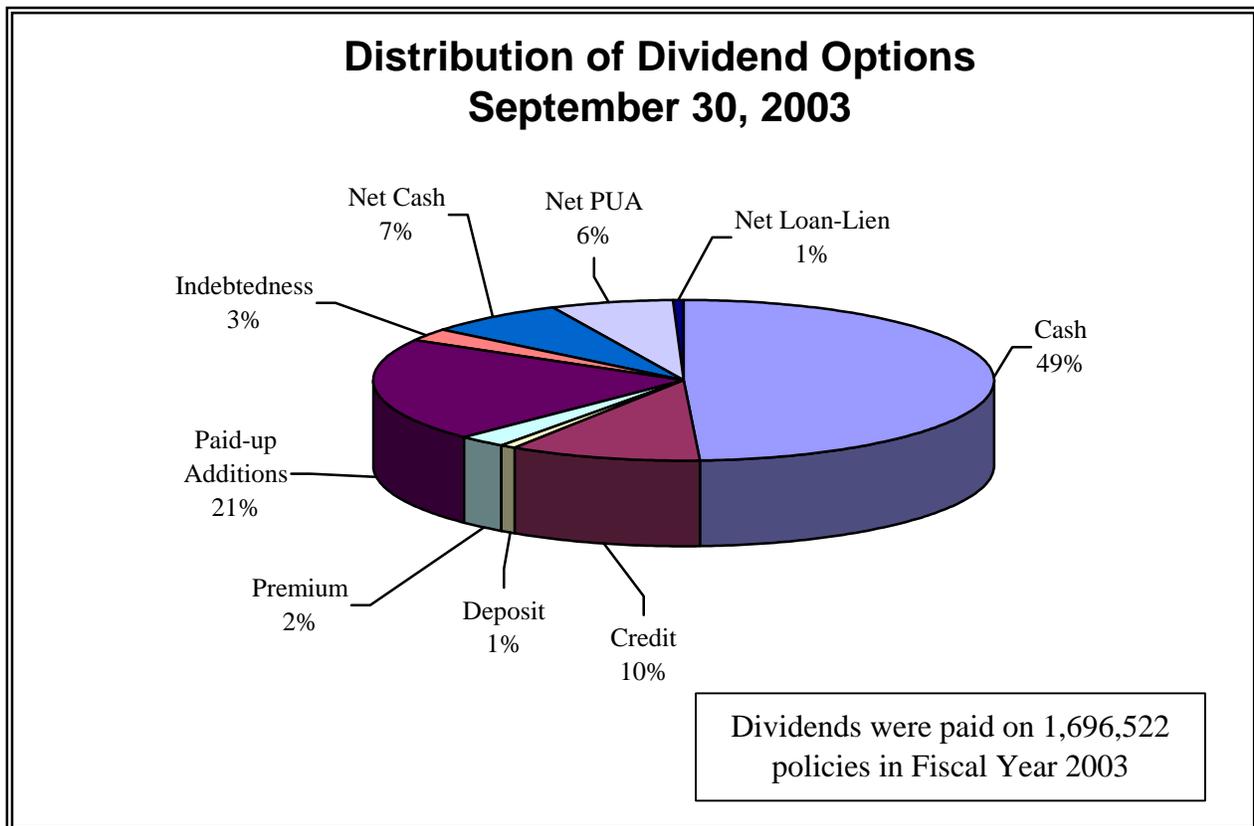
<u>Program</u>	<u>2004</u>
USGLI (K)	6.00%
NSLI (V)	6.50%
VSLI (RS & W)	7.50%
VRI (J, JR, JS)	6.75%

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- **Paid-up Additions (PUA'S):** Used as a net single premium to purchase additional paid-up insurance
 - Available only on “V,” “RS,” “W,” “J,” “JR” and “JS” policies
 - Will be whole life if the basic insurance is a term or whole life policy
 - Will be endowment if the basic insurance is an endowment policy

As of September 30, 2003, 555,898 policies have paid-up additions totaling \$7,945,267,965.

- **Indebtedness:** Applied toward a loan or lien on a policy
- **Net Cash:** Used to pay an annual premium with any remainder paid to the policyholder under the cash option
- **Net PUA:** Used to pay an annual premium with any remainder used to purchase paid-up additional insurance
- **Net Loan-Lien:** Used to pay an annual premium with any remainder used to reduce an outstanding loan or lien



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ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF 2004 DIVIDENDS BY STATE OF RESIDENCE

	USGLI		NSLI		VSLI		VRI		TOTAL	
	NO. OF INSURED S	AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS *	NO. OF INSURED S	AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS *	NO. OF INSURED S	AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS*	NO. OF INSURED S	AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS *	NO. OF INSURED S	AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS *
Alabama	151	\$24	15,070	\$5,490	2,056	\$868	581	\$158	17,858	\$6,540
Alaska	10	1	1,320	509	188	89	39	10	1,557	609
Arizona	323	54	27,464	9,793	3,798	1,566	996	285	32,581	11,698
Arkansas	131	19	9,794	3,465	1,325	534	396	111	11,646	4,129
California	2,467	405	125,034	46,004	18,213	7,799	3,894	1,089	149,608	55,297
Colorado	209	42	18,965	6,847	2,753	1,184	612	178	22,539	8,251
Connecticut	113	17	20,409	6,767	3,679	1,594	1,148	320	25,349	8,698
Delaware	32	3	3,982	1,305	663	251	144	39	4,821	1,598
D. of Columbia	24	8	2,088	825	325	148	72	16	2,509	997
Florida	1,127	191	110,441	39,933	15,829	6,626	5,475	1,498	132,872	48,248
Georgia	210	36	24,609	8,859	3,846	1,594	896	253	29,561	10,742
Hawaii	48	11	7,683	3,605	1,933	944	341	86	10,005	4,646
Idaho	59	9	5,391	1,821	727	312	221	63	6,398	2,205
Illinois	249	29	48,580	16,855	11,229	4,939	1,416	426	61,474	22,249
Indiana	119	14	18,052	6,115	3,435	1,418	547	158	22,153	7,705
Iowa	143	17	14,223	5,162	2,475	1,147	474	149	17,315	6,475
Kansas	93	12	11,964	4,216	1,811	802	357	107	14,225	5,137
Kentucky	100	13	11,195	3,935	1,801	747	505	138	13,601	4,833
Louisiana	110	16	12,976	4,677	2,197	975	562	158	15,845	5,826
Maine	30	6	6,229	2,045	1,050	410	300	81	7,609	2,542
Maryland	235	43	24,640	9,312	3,745	1,604	919	250	29,539	11,209
Massachusetts	185	28	35,152	10,795	6,832	2,760	2,965	792	45,134	14,375
Michigan	180	20	35,413	11,065	6,991	2,765	1,401	387	43,985	14,237
Minnesota	142	19	26,443	8,455	4,241	1,714	1,246	321	32,072	10,509
Mississippi	69	12	8,026	2,963	1,039	435	288	87	9,422	3,497
Missouri	194	23	23,512	7,937	4,173	1,727	816	241	28,695	9,928
Montana	32	6	4,817	1,690	686	301	155	46	5,690	2,043
Nebraska	75	8	8,513	2,990	1,363	624	425	139	10,376	3,761
Nevada	119	20	8,284	2,806	1,416	567	343	94	10,162	3,487
New Hampshire	29	5	6,487	2,163	1,212	473	258	63	7,986	2,704
New Jersey	165	24	40,649	13,751	9,737	4,098	3,071	872	53,622	18,745
New Mexico	87	18	7,860	2,943	1,105	459	280	77	9,332	3,497
New York	254	33	77,195	26,562	17,171	7,299	5,952	1,652	100,572	35,546
North Carolina	254	39	26,305	9,675	4,433	1,942	985	283	31,977	11,939
North Dakota	21	3	3,071	1,021	541	226	176	48	3,809	1,298
Ohio	212	24	47,231	15,714	7,785	3,161	2,262	620	57,490	19,519
Oklahoma	101	16	12,588	4,413	1,518	638	478	133	14,685	5,200
Oregon	277	41	15,898	5,549	2,084	855	497	136	18,756	6,581
Pennsylvania	269	36	67,320	21,474	12,362	4,860	3,702	1,001	83,653	27,371
Rhode Island	44	7	5,686	1,721	937	365	415	105	7,082	2,198
South Carolina	173	27	15,155	5,496	2,516	1,052	491	143	18,335	6,718
South Dakota	32	4	3,755	1,259	701	311	179	51	4,667	1,625
Tennessee	170	21	16,510	5,897	2,791	1,168	679	194	20,150	7,280
Texas	694	145	63,974	23,510	8,791	3,706	1,928	547	75,387	27,908
Utah	91	15	7,946	2,625	1,173	463	309	85	9,519	3,188
Vermont	10	3	2,776	982	519	214	90	24	3,395	1,223
Virginia	590	120	32,392	12,673	4,350	1,848	918	254	38,250	14,895
Washington	517	85	27,294	9,592	3,297	1,329	827	229	31,935	11,235
West Virginia	45	7	5,891	2,029	1,200	483	322	95	7,458	2,614
Wisconsin	142	14	26,656	8,882	4,874	2,025	1,105	313	32,777	11,234
Wyoming	12	2	2,179	778	330	152	74	22	2,595	954
U.S. Possess.	6	1	1,828	677	276	116	225	58	2,335	852
Canada	5	1	770	307	122	51	18	4	915	363
Philippines	0	0	161	49	11	5	3	1	175	55
Foreign	11	3	1,886	817	338	157	43	10	2,278	987
TOTAL	11,190	\$1,800	1,189,732	\$416,800	199,993	\$83,900	52,821	\$14,700	1,453,736	\$517,200

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** AMOUNT OF DIVIDENDS is in thousands of dollars*

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Dividend Hoax --- Don't Believe It

False dividend announcements which declare that Congress has recently passed a bill which entitles veterans and servicepersons to a dividend based upon their prior years of service, are part of a recurring problem of misinformation that dates back to 1965. Unfortunately, this misinformation unnecessarily raises the expectations of veterans and service personnel and detracts from our ability to serve our veterans.

The dividend "hoax", as we refer to it, had its origins in a special dividend that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), then known as the Veterans Administration, did pay to World War II veterans who had National Service Life Insurance policies. Approximately \$2.7 billion was paid in 1950 to over 16 million of these veterans under the "1948 special dividend."

Some time in 1965, the special dividend news announcements of 15 years earlier resurfaced and were mistakenly published by several newspapers. The special dividend had already been paid out to virtually all eligible government life insurance policyholders and there was no new special dividend. VA moved quickly to educate the news media, but some well-meaning individuals and organizations began to publish the announcements in smaller publications, newsletters and flyers. The actual scope of the original dividend became fictionalized and some publications declared the dividend available to all veterans (not just World War II) and even to those who never carried government life insurance while in the service. The latest rumor is that active servicepersons, reservists and persons separated within the last few years are eligible.

The 1948 special dividend program required veterans to apply for the payment. Over the years the dividend story has prompted hundreds of thousands of veterans and current servicemembers to write and "apply" for this benefit. Although the number of letters has fluctuated, we have received as many as 15,000-20,000 inquiries per week about this dividend in the past. Because of the volume of these requests for a nonexistent benefit, Congress passed a law in 1970 that prohibited payment of any special dividend declared prior to 1952 unless the application was received before 1954. There has been no recent legislation authorizing any "special" dividends.

Dividends are *not* payable to current servicemembers insured under Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) or Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI). SGLI and VGLI are group term policies and do not pay dividends.

For your information, VA continues to pay routine dividends on several policy series, but *only* to veterans who have kept their policies in force. These veterans receive their dividends *automatically* on the anniversary date of their individual policy. They do *not* have to apply.

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The following is an example of a typical application for this special dividend:

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X

GOVERNMENT OWES VETERANS MONEY

A bill passed in Congress gives Veterans a dividend of 55 cents to \$1,000 of their G. I. Insurance for each month of service. This is regardless of whether or not you still carry this insurance. You will not receive this dividend unless you ask for it. The Veterans Administration urges you to apply regardless of whether you had insurance or not. They will check for you.

Years of Service	2 years	\$264
	3 years	\$316
	4 years	\$528

Veterans Center
P.O. Box 8075
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Include Your:

Name _____
Address _____
GI Insurance No. _____ (if known) Birthdate _____
Branch of Service _____ Service Number _____
Enlistment Date _____ Discharge Date _____

*******IF YOU KNOW OF ANY VETS - PASS THE WORD*******

I would like to take advantage of the G.I. Insurance Dividend now being offered to Veterans. Please send any monies that I qualify for to the address below:

Respectfully:

Name _____
Address _____
Date _____

*******IF YOU KNOW OF ANY VETS - PASS THE WORD*******

H
O
A
X

This is the response that VA sends to a veteran who submits such an application for this “special dividend”:

A false and misleading rumor sweeping the nation is plaguing us at the Department of Veterans Affairs and leading thousands of veterans such as you to write us requesting dividends on insurance that you may have had in force while on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Congress did not pass any new law giving veterans a dividend based on the amount of months their insurance was in force while on active duty. The information you received regarding such a dividend is a hoax.

Also false is the rumor that individuals who are currently serving or who served in the military after 1965 and are or were insured under the SGLI (Servicemen’s Group Life Insurance) program are entitled to a refund. There have never been any dividends, rebates or refunds due to surplus funds in the SGLI program.

You can help us to eliminate these rumors by passing this information along to any of your friends or to any veterans’ group to which you belong.

Thank you.

Department of Veterans Affairs SGL 300
Ed 2/93

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GUARANTEED VALUES

An important feature of permanent plan policies is that the premiums the policyholder pays build up a reserve (cash) value. This provides the policyholder with extra protection and more financial flexibility. Permanent plan policies have the following guaranteed values:



- **Cash Value**

The cash value is the reserve plus any dividends held on deposit less any indebtedness. Policyholders should *first* consider the alternative of taking a policy loan, since policies which are surrendered for cash *cannot* be reinstated.

After premiums have been paid or waived for at least one year, the policyholder may apply for the cash value by submitting a completed VA Form 29-1546, *Application for Cash Surrender Value or Policy Loan*, or a written request stating the insured's wish to surrender the policy for the cash value.

- **Loan Value**

Policy loans may be granted up to 94 percent of the reserve value, less any indebtedness. We suggest applying for a policy loan rather than the cash surrender value if a policyholder needs cash and the policy is not lapsed. After premiums have been paid or waived for at least one year, the policyholder may apply for a loan by submitting VA Form 29-1546, *Application for Cash Surrender Value or Policy Loan*, or a written request for a policy loan clearly specifying the amount desired. (See page 58 for loan rates and additional information.)

- **Extended Insurance**

A permanent plan policy that lapses after being in force for at least three months will automatically be extended as term insurance. Under this insurance the policyholder will be protected for a limited period of time as determined by the amount of the net cash value of the policy. The amount of the extended insurance will be the face amount of the policy less any indebtedness.

- **Reduced Paid-Up Insurance**

A policyholder may use the net cash value (cash value minus any indebtedness) to buy a reduced amount of paid-up insurance if the policy is not lapsed. This insurance will remain in force for the life of the policyholder, or to the end of the endowment period. No further premium payments are required. The cash value continues to increase, dividends continue to be earned, and the policyholder may cash surrender the paid-up insurance or obtain a loan on it at any time.

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CONVERSIONS

Advantages Of Converting To A Permanent Plan

Term insurance is attractive at young ages because it gives low-cost financial protection. However, at the older ages it becomes very expensive making the premiums difficult to pay. Policyholders who want permanent insurance protection at the older ages, should consider converting to a permanent plan of insurance at as young an age as possible. Although the premium rates are initially higher than for term policies issued at the same ages, permanent plan premiums stay the same throughout the life of the policy.

Policyholders who are considering converting to a permanent plan should consider the following:

- Their present and future needs for life insurance
- Their ability to pay present or future premiums
- The earlier they convert to a permanent plan, the lower the premium will be (Permanent plans that are available for conversion from a term plan are discussed on pages 44 and 45.)

The conversion of a term policy to a permanent plan policy is an important feature for policyholders, especially for those policyholders who have health problems. A policyholder can convert from a term policy to a permanent plan policy without providing evidence of good health.

Application For Conversion

A policyholder can apply for conversion by submitting VA Form 29-0152, *Application for Conversion*, or a written request for conversion specifying the plan desired and the amount of insurance to be converted.

If the term policy is lapsed but eligible for reinstatement, the policyholder must apply for reinstatement and meet health requirements. The applications for reinstatement and conversion should be submitted at the same time.

Term insurance may be converted to permanent plan insurance in multiples of \$500 but not less than \$1,000. A policyholder can convert either a portion of their term coverage or the total amount.

Payment Of Premiums

If the policyholder pays by **check**, at least one monthly premium for the new plan should accompany the conversion application.

If premiums are paid by **deduction** from VA benefits, **allotment** from service or retired pay, or by **deduction** from the insured's checking account (VA MATIC), VA will take care of any change in deduction or allotment that is needed. If the new premium exceeds the amount available by deduction or allotment, future premiums must be paid by check or other remittance.

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POLICY LOANS

Policy loans are available on permanent plans of insurance.

- The policyholder can take **up to 94%** of the reserve value of their policy less any indebtedness.
- The policy cannot be lapsed, and premiums must be paid or waived at least one year before a policy has loan value.



Loan Interest Rates

- As of November 2, 1987, all new policy loans have a variable interest rate with a **minimum** rate of 5% and a **maximum** rate of 12%.
- Rate changes are tied to the “ten year constant maturities”, U.S. Treasury securities index.
- If required, because of a change in the index, the rates would be adjusted effective October 1.

The current loan interest rate for adjustable rate loans is 5% (at least until **September 30, 2004**).

Interest Rates on NSLI Policy Loans*	
Prior to Jan. 11, 1971	4%
Jan. 11, 1971 - Jul. 28, 1981	5%
Jul. 29, 1981 - Nov. 1, 1987	11%
Nov. 2, 1987 - Sept. 30, 1992	8%
Oct. 1, 1992 - Sept. 30, 1993	7%
Oct. 1, 1993 - Sept. 30, 1995	5%
Oct. 1, 1995 - Sept. 30, 1998	6%
Oct. 1, 1998 - Sept. 30, 2000	5%
Oct. 1, 2000 - Sept. 30, 2001	6%
Oct. 1, 2001 - Sept. 30, 2004	5%

*Interest on USGLI ("K" prefix) loans is fixed, by law, at 5%.

Applying For a Policy Loan

A policyholder can apply for a loan by filing VA Form 29-1546, *Application for Policy Loan*. This application can either be **faxed toll-free** to 1-888-748-5828 or **mailed** to:

Department of Veterans Affairs
 Regional Office and Insurance Center
 P.O. Box 7327
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

PAID-UP ADDITIONAL INSURANCE

Availability Of Paid-Up Additional Insurance (Paid-Up Additions)

Since July 1, 1972, policyholders with participating policies can apply their annual dividends to purchase paid-up additional insurance (PUA). Paid-up additions are available on the following programs:

- National Service Life Insurance (“V”)
- Veterans’ Special Life Insurance (“RS” and “W”)
- Veterans’ Reopened Insurance (“J,” “JR” and “JS”)

Annual Insurance Policy Statements are mailed to policyholders each year on the anniversary date of their policy. In addition to policy information, the annual statement reflects any new paid-up additions credited to the policyholder's account. (See page 61 for more information on the Annual Insurance Policy Statement.)

Paid-Up Additional Insurance: A Way Of Increasing Coverage

Purchasing paid-up additions is the only way policyholders can increase their coverage (except for supplemental RH). It is therefore, a very popular dividend option. Approximately 556,000 policies have paid-up additions, representing \$7.9 billion of extra coverage.

Paid-up additions have cash and loan values, and earn dividends that automatically purchase more paid-up coverage.

How PUA Works

If an insured chooses this option, his or her annual dividend is automatically applied as a single premium to purchase an amount of paid-up insurance. The amount of paid-up insurance is determined by:

- the age of the policyholder, *and*
- the plan of basic insurance in force, *and*
- the amount of the dividend.

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The following table illustrates the amount of paid-up additional insurance that can be purchased using the same dividend amount but at different attained ages:

Attained Age	Dividend Amount	Amount of Whole Life PUA Purchased	
		“V”, “RS”, “W”, “J”	“JR”, JS”
60	\$300	\$695	\$607
65	\$300	\$594	\$533
70	\$300	\$517	\$477

The paid-up additional coverage purchased is of the same type as the basic coverage:

If the basic coverage is:	the PUA coverage purchased is:
endowment	paid-up endowment insurance which matures at the same time as the basic contract
all other plans (including term)	paid-up whole life insurance

The PUA dividend option is especially desirable for:

- **Disabled policyholders** who often cannot obtain commercial life insurance, or must pay high premiums for coverage. In many cases, this is the only means by which they can obtain additional life insurance.
- **Policyholders who do not need extra coverage but want to lower their premiums** by periodically reducing their basic insurance as new paid-up additions are purchased. (They keep the same amount of coverage but pay premiums on a smaller portion of that coverage.)
- **Term policyholders** whose premiums continue to rise as they become older.

Since the PUA dividend option first became available in July 1972, an NSLI policyholder (age 82) with a \$10,000 Ordinary Life policy issued in 1945 could have purchased \$50,399 of extra coverage.

Changes In PUA Amounts And Cost

Because reserves on paid-up additions had earned higher interest rates, the following changes were made at no cost to the policyholders:

- In 1987, the cost of purchasing paid-up additions with annual dividends was lowered by approximately 25 percent.
- Also, existing paid-up additions were automatically increased by approximately 25 percent overall. The increase for individual policies depended on the policyholder’s age and plan of insurance.

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ANNUAL INSURANCE POLICY STATEMENT

The Annual Insurance Policy Statement provides an insured with information about their VA insurance including:

- The type of policy and effective date of the policy
- Amount of insurance (Basic and Paid-Up Additions)
- Cash and loan values
- Outstanding indebtedness
- Premium information
- Dividend information
- Date of the latest beneficiary designation

An Annual Statement is mailed to the insured on the policy anniversary date of each policy.

THIS IS NOT A BILL			
 Department of Veterans Affairs		ANNUAL INSURANCE POLICY STATEMENT	
POLICYHOLDER	FILE NUMBER	POLICY NUMBER	MAILING DATE
JOHN Q VETERAN	F V 0000 00 00	V 0000 00 00	01/17/04
2004 POLICY INFORMATION			
PLAN	ORDINARY LIFE Basic \$10,000 Paid-Up Additions - Whole Life - \$39,836	Effective Date 1/21/59 TOTAL COVERAGE \$ 49,836	
CASH/LOAN VALUES	Values As Of 02-20-04 Basic Policy \$ 6,806.37 Paid Up Additions \$ 24,903.48 TOTAL NET CASH VALUE \$ 31,709.85 TOTAL NET LOAN VALUE \$ 29,807.26	The current estimated amount to be paid to survivors is shown below: Survivor Benefit \$ 49,836.00	
PREMIUMS	Basic Premium \$124.20	Mode Annual	How Paid Direct
OTHER DATA			
A. LOANS/ LIENS	Type Loan	Interest Rate 5%	Principal \$ 3,596.99 TOTAL PRINCIPAL \$ 3,596.99
B. DIVIDEND OPTION	Current option: NET PUA Your 2004 dividend of \$1,374.84 paid 1/17/04 was applied under the Net PUA option. A letter regarding payment of this dividend was sent under separate cover. INSURANCE DIVIDENDS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO FEDERAL INCOME TAX		
C.	You can now access your policy information online at our website, www.insurance.va.gov . Click on the link, " Online Policy Access ". You will need a Personal Identification Number (PIN), which you can request at this web site. Once you receive your PIN in the mail, you will have access to information about your policy plan, values, premium status, dividends, loans, and your beneficiary designation.		
D.	The current interest rate for new loans, and existing variable rate loans is 5%. This rate will remain in effect until October 1st, when it is subject to change. To apply for a loan, send a request over your signature to: P.O. Box 7327, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7327.		
E.	Would you like to pay premiums by monthly deductions from your checking account? Call us to find out about VA MATIC.		
BENEFICIARY INFORMATION			
Your last beneficiary designation of record was made in 2003.			
If you have any questions, call 1-800-669-8477 or visit us at www.insurance.va.gov			
VA FORM 29-0258 JAN 1994			

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

BENEFICIARY AND OPTION DESIGNATIONS

Beneficiary Selection

An insured may select *any* person, firm, corporation or other legal entity (including his or her estate) as beneficiary, either individually or as trustee. If no beneficiary survives the insured, payment is made to the insured's estate in one sum. The insured also has the right to select how the insurance proceeds will be paid to his or her beneficiary(ies).

The Insured Has The Right To Name And Change A Beneficiary

The insured is the sole owner of his or her policy. This ownership means:

- The insured can at any time change his or her beneficiary(ies), without the knowledge or consent of the current beneficiary(ies).
- A state court order, property settlement, or divorce decree cannot compel an insured to name or change his or her beneficiary(ies).
- Ownership of the policy may not be transferred to any other person or entity, including a trust. *However, a trust may be designated as beneficiary.*
- A beneficiary change **cannot** be made by Last Will and Testament.
- A beneficiary designation should not contain language that restricts the insured's right to change the beneficiary, or remove the insured as owner of the insurance policy.

Settlement Options Available For Payment Of Policy Proceeds

The insured has the right to select how the insurance proceeds will be paid to his or her beneficiaries. An option change **can** be made by Last Will and Testament. Most VA Forms contain a preprinted "1" (lump sum) in the option block because most insureds choose this option. If the insured wants the beneficiary to receive monthly installments rather than a lump sum, the "1" must be crossed off and replaced by the desired option (2, 3 or 4). The settlement options available for payment of policy benefits are:

Option 1:	Lump sum payment for the face amount of the policy less any indebtedness.
Option 2:	Equal monthly installments with interest over 36 to 240 months. (The insured selects the number of monthly installments in multiples of 12, such as 36, 48, 60, 72, etc.)
Option 3:	A monthly life income with 120 payments guaranteed (240 for USGLI policies).
Option 4:	Equal monthly installments are made until the face amount of the policy less any indebtedness is paid. If the principle beneficiary lives beyond this period, payments continue throughout their lifetime.

It should be noted that although payments under Option 3 may be higher than those under Option 4, if payments are being made under Option 3 and the principal beneficiary dies soon after the

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guaranteed payments are made, no further payments will be made to a contingent beneficiary, *even if* the full face amount of the policy less any indebtedness has not been paid. However, under option 4 payments would continue to the contingent beneficiary until the face amount of the policy has been paid.

If A Beneficiary Dies Before Receiving The Insurance Proceeds

General information:

If a beneficiary survives the insured but dies before he or she receives some or all of the proceeds, the following rules apply:

- If the proceeds were payable under an installment option, and the beneficiary dies before all of the guaranteed installments are paid, the present value of the unpaid installments is payable in one sum to the insured’s estate (NSLI policies) or to the estate of the last surviving beneficiary (USGLI policies).
- If the proceeds are payable in a lump sum payment, the proceeds are paid to the beneficiary’s estate. To allow the proceeds go to the contingent beneficiaries in a “common disaster” situation, rather than to the principal beneficiary’s estate, the phrase “provided the principal beneficiary survives me for ___ days” may be added. Any number of days up to a maximum of 30 may be shown.

Special circumstances involving children of a beneficiary:

If the insured designated more than one principal beneficiary or designated both principal and contingent beneficiaries, the share of a beneficiary who predeceases the insured will be paid to the surviving beneficiaries according to the pre-printed phrase on the application “or to the survivor(s)”. ***If this automatic distribution is not desired, the insured can cross it out or designate that the share of a deceased beneficiary go to that beneficiary’s “issue” (children). This is referred to as a “per stirpes” distribution.*** These situations are illustrated below:

4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH (Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")	E. OPTION FOR EACH (1, 2, 3 OR 4)
PRINCIPAL				
<i>Ann Jones 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000</i>	000-00-0000	<i>Daughter</i>	1/2	1
<i>Bill Smith 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000</i>	000-00-0000	<i>Son</i>	1/2	1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
CONTINGENT <small>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</small>				
<i>None</i>				
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
5. REMARKS (Include any additional information which will clarify your intent regarding the payment of your insurance. Also, list the policy number of any other policy on which the beneficiary is not to be changed)				
<i>In the event my children predecease me I would like their share to go to their children</i>				

An insured designates his children, Ann and Bill as his beneficiaries, each getting 1/2 of the insurance benefits. Ann has one child and Bill has two children. If Ann dies *before* the insured and *before* Bill then

IF the insured crossed out the phrase “or to the survivor(s)” and wrote “the share of a deceased beneficiary go to his or her children”, then

- Ann’s child will get half of the insurance benefits
 - Bill will get half of the insurance benefits
- (this is the “*per stirpes*” distribution)

IF the insured ***DID NOT*** cross out the phrase “or to the survivor(s)” nor did he write “the share of a deceased beneficiary go to his or her children”, then

- Bill will get all of the insurance benefits

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Designation Of Beneficiary And Optional Settlement (Completing the Form)

It is important that the insured submit a properly completed and updated beneficiary and settlement option selection. If the insured is uncertain about his or her beneficiary and option designation, he or she can obtain the information from the Insurance Center in Philadelphia. The submission of a new designation, reflecting the insured's current intentions, will replace any prior designation for the same policy.

IMPORTANT - SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE Department of Veterans Affairs DESIGNATION OF BENEFICIARY GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE			OMB Approved No. 2900-0020 Respondent Burden: 10 minutes	
DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW - FOR VA USE				
ENTERED BY VA	DATE RECORDED	SIGNATURE OF VA INSURANCE OFFICIAL		
1A. NAME OF INSURED AND MAILING ADDRESS FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES (Type or print) Mr. John Smith <i>(First, middle, last name)</i> 123 Any Street <i>(Number and street or rural route)</i> AnyWhere, U.S.A 00000 <i>(City or P.O., State and ZIP Code)</i>			2A. INSURANCE FILE NUMBER F V 0000 00 00	
			2B. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 000 00 0000	
			3. DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER <i>(Include Area Code)</i> (000) 000-0000	
1B. IS THIS A CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR YOUR INSURANCE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				
4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH <i>(Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")</i>	E. OPTION FOR EACH <i>(1, 2, 3 OR 4)</i>
PRINCIPAL				
Sally P. Smith 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Wife	ALL	1
				1
				1
				1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				
CONTINGENT <i>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</i>				
Ann Jones 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Daughter	1/2	1
Bill Smith 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Son	1/2	1
				1
				1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				
5. REMARKS <i>(Include any additional information which will clarify your intent regarding the payment of your insurance. Also, list the policy number of any other policy on which the beneficiary is not to be changed)</i>				
I understand that this change cancels all prior beneficiary and option selections; and unless indicated in Item 5, Remarks, this change applies to all Government Life Insurance policies under the above file number.				
6. SIGNATURE OF INSURED <i>(Do not print)</i> Mr. John Smith			7. DATE 1/1/04	
8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF WITNESS <i>(Type or print)</i> Sally P. Smith, 123 Any Street, Anywhere, USA 00000				
If you have any questions concerning designating a beneficiary, call us toll free at 1-800-669-8477.				
VA FORM 29-336 JAN 1999		SUPERSEDES VA FORM 29-336, OCT 1998, WHICH WILL NOT BE USED.		

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

The following factors should be kept in mind when completing a beneficiary and option selection form:

- One beneficiary designation applies to all policies unless otherwise specified. VA Form 29-336, *Designation of Beneficiary and Optional Settlement* (dated June 1982 or later) does not contain a separate block to list the insured’s policy numbers. Unless otherwise specified in the remarks block on these forms, a designation applies to all policies.
- Most VA Forms 29-336 contain a preprinted “1” (lump sum) as the option. If the insured wants the beneficiary to receive monthly installments rather than a lump sum, the “1” must be crossed off and replaced by the desired option (2, 3 or 4). If option 2 is selected, the number of monthly installments should be shown. Payments under this option are 36 to 240, in multiples of 12.
- A beneficiary change *cannot* be made by Last Will and Testament. (VA regulations do permit an **option selection** for all government life insurance policies to be made by Will.)
- Principal and contingent beneficiaries should be clearly differentiated on the form. Where the insured lists multiple principal or contingent beneficiaries, their shares should be clearly shown and should always add up to “1” (for example, 1/2+1/2).

Typical INCORRECT Beneficiary Designations

The following are examples of beneficiary designations that may *delay* payment of the insurance proceeds because the designations are *unclear*:

- How did the insured intend for his children to share the proceeds in the following designation?

4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH (Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")	E. OPTION FOR EACH (1, 2, 3 OR 4)
PRINCIPAL				
<i>Ann Jones 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000</i>	<i>000-00-0000</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>ALL</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Bill Smith 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000</i>	<i>000-00-0000</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>ALL</i>	<i>1</i>
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
CONTINGENT <small>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</small>				
<i>Sally P. Smith 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000</i>	<i>000-00-0000</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>ALL</i>	
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1

- If the insured wanted his children to share equally he should have written “1/2” for each child in the SHARE TO EACH block.
- If the insured wanted Ann to be the principal beneficiary and Bill to be the contingent, then Bill’s information should have been written in the contingent portion of the application.

- Who did insured intend as the principal beneficiary to receive the insurance proceeds?

4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH (Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")	E. OPTION FOR EACH (1, 2, 3 OR 4)
PRINCIPAL				
Sam Jones, Administrator for my estate 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Friend	ALL	1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
CONTINGENT <small>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</small>				
NONE				
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1

Did the insured intend the benefits go to his estate (with Sam Jones as the administrator for the estate) or to Sam Jones his friend (who just happens to be the administrator for the insured's estate)?

- If the proceeds were to go to his friend "Sam Jones" the insured should have written "Sam Jones" as the principal beneficiary.
- If the proceeds were to go to the insured's estate the insured should have written "My estate" as the principal beneficiary.

- VA cannot make a beneficiary use the benefits for any specific purpose designated by the insured.

4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH (Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")	E. OPTION FOR EACH (1, 2, 3 OR 4)
PRINCIPAL				
James Jackson who will pay my funeral expenses 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Friend	ALL	1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
CONTINGENT <small>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</small>				
NONE				
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1

VA cannot make James Jackson pay the insured's funeral expenses. If the intent of the insured is to pay his own funeral expenses a better designation would be:

- "Funeral Director" as one principal beneficiary with the share "funeral bill only" and
- "James Jackson" as a second principal beneficiary with the share "remainder".

- According to the following beneficiary designation, did the insured intend for the proceeds to go to his friend, Ann Smith, or does the insured want Ann Smith to hold the proceeds for his minor aged children until they are of age?

4. BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION				
A. SHOW FULL NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH BENEFICIARY ENTERED IN THE PRINCIPAL AND CONTINGENT BENEFICIARY AREAS BELOW	B. BENEFICIARY'S SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (If known. See instruction No. 5 on reverse)	C. RELATIONSHIP TO INSURED	D. SHARE TO EACH (Use fractions, such as 1/2, 2/3, or "all")	E. OPTION FOR EACH (1, 2, 3 OR 4)
PRINCIPAL				
Ann Smith, Guardian for my children 123 Any Street Anywhere, USA 00000	000-00-0000	Friend	ALL	1
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1
CONTINGENT <small>(Person(s) who get proceeds if all of the Principal Beneficiaries die before the insured. If none, write "none")</small>				
NONE				
OR TO SURVIVOR(S)				1

If the insured intended for the proceeds to go to his children (including minors) a more clear designation would show:

- "My children" as the principal with "equal shares" written in the shares section.
- or
- Ann Smith, in trust for my children as the principal with "equal shares" written in the shares section.

Both these designations will ensure the proceeds are shared equally among ALL of the insured's existing children

Alternate Beneficiary Legislation



On December 12, 2003, the President signed a law that authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to pay National Service Life Insurance (NSLI) and United States Government Life Insurance (USGLI) to a contingent beneficiary or beneficiaries, when the principal beneficiary does not claim the insurance within two years of the date of the insured's death.

This means that:

- If the principal beneficiary, who has been named by the insured, does not claim the insurance within two years of the insured's death, then payment may be made as if that principle beneficiary had predeceased the insured.
- If there is a contingent beneficiary, or beneficiaries, who have been designated by the insured, the insurance may then be paid to the contingent beneficiary or beneficiaries.
- If neither the principal nor contingent beneficiary file a claim for the insurance within four years of the insured's death, VA is authorized to pay the insurance to another other person who, in the judgment of the Secretary, is equitably entitled.
- Once payment is made in this manner no individual can try to claim the proceeds.
- Payment cannot be made if it would cause the insurance to escheat to a State (this happens where there are no heirs to pay so the assets of the estate default to the State).

Insured's State Of Mind

The following rules apply when completing a beneficiary and option designation:

- **If it appears that the insured does not fully understand their actions or is not acting completely freely**, a statement from the witness or another party who is present will help VA to determine whether the designation is valid. The statement should be submitted to VA with the designation, and should list all pertinent details, including the insured's reason for making the beneficiary designation, if known. Mental illness, drugs or alcohol intoxication can cause lack of full understanding. Other factors such as duress or undue influence can result in the insured not acting freely in making the designation.
- **If an insured is incompetent**, his or her legal representative (guardian, conservator, etc.) may make a beneficiary designation on the insured's behalf with the authorization of a court order. If the designation can be made while the insured is lucid it should be done in the presence of a physician who should verify in writing that the insured had the capacity to understand the consequences of the action.

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- **An insured or claimant can sign by a mark (“X”) if:**
 - the insured is unable to sign due to physical disability,
 - the insured is of sound mind, AND
 - the “X” is witnessed by two people not named on the designation.

!!! Important Facts !!!

- ☑ **One Beneficiary Designation applies to all of your policies unless you specify otherwise.**
- ☑ **Make sure the distribution of shares equals 1 (e.g. $\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{2}$).**
- ☑ **A beneficiary change cannot be made by Last Will and Testament, but a settlement option change can.**
- ☑ **NOBODY can order the insured to change their beneficiary, including State Courts or Divorce Orders.**

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION, SEE VA PAMPHLET 29-77-3 (REVISED MAY 1990),
FACTS ABOUT BENEFICIARY AND OPTION DESIGNATIONS.

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FILING DEATH CLAIMS

All death claims, (except SGLI and VGLI), should be mailed *or* faxed to the Insurance Center in Philadelphia:

Mailing Address:
Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office and Insurance Center P.O. Box 7208 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101

OR

Toll-free fax number:
1-888-748-5822

How To File A Claim

If the beneficiary is:	He or she must file:
a principal beneficiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • photocopy of death certificate showing date and cause of death of insured • Claim Form, VA Form 29-4125, <i>Claim for One Sum Payment</i>¹
a contingent beneficiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • death certificates for the insured and principal beneficiary(ies) • Claim Form, VA Form 29-4125, <i>Claim for One Sum Payment</i>¹
a representative of the estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • death certificate(s) • copies of letters testamentary, letters of administration, or a court order of distribution along with claims from the entitled parties² • claim form signed by the executor or administrator of the estate
a minor or incompetent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • death certificate(s) • a claim from the next of kin, personal representative (guardian, custodian, etc.) or logical person to receive payment for the minor or incompetent • letters of guardianship, conservatorship, etc. (if any) • address of minor or incompetent
filing for VMLI benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insured's death certificate • a payoff statement from the veteran's mortgage lender showing the outstanding mortgage balance owed as of the veteran's death

¹If the beneficiary wants monthly payments, he or she should use Claim Form, VA Form 29-4125k for USGLI policies OR VA Form 29-4125a for NSLI policies, *Claim for Monthly Payments* instead of the claim forms mentioned above. If a lifetime income option (3 or 4) is selected the beneficiary's birth certificate (or other official proof of age) must be submitted.

²If these are not available, a statement that there will be no administration of the estate, and VA Form 29-541, *Certificate Showing Residence and Heirs of Deceased Veteran*, must be filed.

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NOTE:

- * **Photocopies** of death certificates are acceptable.
- * A letter claiming the proceeds and showing a mailing address for the check may be used instead of a VA claim form (29-4125, etc.). The claimant should be sure to show the insurance file number and to sign the letter.

The following factors should be kept in mind when filing a death claim:

- Most death awards are authorized by the Insurance Center within 10 days of receipt of the documents needed for payment.
- An insured's Will can be used as evidence that he or she intended a lump sum payment, regardless of when it was executed. The Will does not have to specifically mention USGLI or NSLI, nor must it be probated.
- If the award check is to be mailed to the claimant's bank account, the account number and type of account (checking or savings) must be shown on the claim in addition to the name and address of the bank.
- Award checks can be directly deposited into a claimant's account. The claimant must provide their checking or savings deposit account number. Claimants must also provide the name, address, phone number, and the routing transit number for their financial institution.
- A beneficiary may assign all or a portion of his or her share of the insurance to a restricted class of the insured's relatives.
- Any additional questions on filing a death claim please call **1-800-669-8477**.

GRATUITOUS S-DVI

(Policies Prefixed by "ARH")

Eligibility Requirements For Gratuitous S-DVI

Gratuitous Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI) is granted posthumously to veterans who:

- Met the basic eligibility requirements for S-DVI (prefixed "RH"); and
- Did not apply for S-DVI because of a continued mental incompetence due to a service-connected disability; and
- Died before the appointment of a guardian or within two years of such appointment.

Application For Gratuitous S-DVI Benefits

VA must receive an application for payment of Gratuitous S-DVI within two years from the date of the veteran's death. However, if the person making the claim is mentally or legally incompetent at the time the right to apply for Gratuitous S-DVI expires, they may apply within one year after their incompetency ends.

Payment Of Gratuitous S-DVI

Gratuitous S-DVI is granted in an amount that, together with any other United States Government Life Insurance (USGLI) or National Service Life Insurance (NSLI) in force, totals \$10,000. As of August 14, 1991, gratuitous S-DVI is payable to the beneficiary only as a lump sum payment.

Payment of Gratuitous S-DVI is made to the following beneficiaries in the order named:

- 1) To the widow or widower of the insured, if living. If not,
- 2) To the child or children of the insured, if living, in equal shares. If not,
- 3) To the parent or parents of the insured, if living, in equal shares.

QUESTIONS?

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How To Contact Us

V

Phone Numbers, Fax Numbers and Mailing Addresses

There are several ways for a policyholder to contact VA about their VA Life Insurance. Besides the old fashioned letter in a mailbox, policyholders can contact the Insurance Center through a toll free number, by facsimile, by e-mail and through the world wide web.

Insurance Toll Free Service -- 1-800-669-8477

Customers calling the Insurance Toll Free Service can speak to an Insurance Specialist or use the Insurance Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System.



Insurance Specialists are available 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM (Eastern Time) Monday - Friday (*The best days to call are Wednesdays through Fridays*).

Insurance Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

The Insurance IVR system allows customers using the toll-free telephone number to access their own insurance records 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The Insurance IVR system provides four basic functions for callers:

1. **Informational letters and forms:** By making a touch-tone input, callers can have the following letters and forms mailed to them:

Forms/Applications	Informational Letters/Statements:
Beneficiary Designation	Premium status letter
Application for a loan or cash surrender	Dividend status letter
	Loan and cash values letter
	Annual policy statement (shows current status and values of policy)

2. **Policy information:** Callers can hear detailed insurance policy information within three major categories:
 - Dividends
 - Loan and cash values
 - General policy and premium information
3. **Voice mail:** During the hours when Insurance Specialists are not available, 6:00 PM to 8:30 AM (Eastern Time) on weekdays, and 24 hours per day on the weekends, callers can leave voice messages requesting information and service.
4. **Pre-recorded informational messages:** Callers also have the option to listen to pre-recorded information after hours and weekends concerning a variety of insurance topics.

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov

VA Insurance Information Available On The Internet

Insurance information is available through the internet at www.insurance.va.gov

Through the VA insurance web site, an insured can **access *two* insurance sites from our home page:**

- **The VA Insurance Web Site** *and*
- **The SGLI & VGLI Web Site**



The **VA Insurance Web Site** contains information about:

- National Service Life Insurance
- Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance
- United States Government Life Insurance
- Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance

Online Policy Access is available for all of these policies *except* VMLI (see “Online Policy Access” below).

The **SGLI & VGLI Web Site** contains information about:

- Servicemembers Group Life Insurance
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance
- SGLI Family Coverage
- many other SGLI/ VGLI policy features



Online Policy Access is now available for VGLI policyholders.

(see “Online Policy Access” below)

Online Policy Access is not yet available for SGLI policyholders.

Online Policy Access

Insureds can now access their insurance policy information online at our website by clicking on the link “Online Policy Access”.

To access VA administered policies (National Service Life Insurance, Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance, United States Government Life Insurance):

- A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is necessary to access this information and can be requested at this web site by clicking on the “PIN Request Link”. This link takes the insured to the “Government Life Insurance PIN Registration” webpage. The following information is required to receive a PIN number:
 - Insurance File number
 - Social Security number
 - Date Of Birth

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Once the PIN number is received in the mail the insured will have access to information about their policy plan, values, premium status, dividends, loans, and beneficiary designation.

To access VA supervised policies (Veterans' Group Life Insurance):

First time users must enter their Social Security Number and last name. After submitting this information they are then given the opportunity to create their own User ID and Password.

NOTE: This feature is not yet available for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) policyholders.

Life Insurance Needs Calculator



This new interactive website feature will help veterans to determine if they have enough life insurance to meet their family's needs. VA's Life Insurance Needs Calculator provides veterans with an estimated amount of life insurance necessary to support their survivors. The calculator is located in the SGLI/VGLI section of the VA website.

By using the following information that the veteran inputs:

- **current assets** (these include such things as investments, bank accounts, savings bonds, social security benefits, retirement funds, etc...)
- **net income survivors will need** (the annual income that will provide the standard of living desired for survivors minus the annual income available to survivors)
- **financial obligations** (these include such things as car loans, credit card debt, funeral/burial expenses, children's educational expenses, mortgages, etc.)

the calculator suggests the amount of life insurance the veteran should have.

Note: VA's Life Insurance Needs Calculator does not include every financial situation that may affect a veteran. The Calculator should be used as a guide only and is not a substitute for a financial planner. Financial information is not saved or transmitted to VA.

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Insurance Web Site Features

Among the many options available on our website an insured can:

Link	to the Department of Veteran's Affairs Home Page which provides links for all Veterans Benefits & Services.
View	various information on VA's life insurance and SGLI/VGLI programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • insurance benefits for service-disabled veterans • how to file a death or disability claim • dividend options available • Frequently Asked Questions about VA life insurance, SGLI, SGLI Family coverage, and VGLI • buying life insurance
Calculate	the estimated amount of life insurance necessary to support their survivors should the veteran die. 
Access	their insurance policy information online through the Insurance web site. (All policies <i>except</i> VMLI and SGLI.) (See " Online Policy Access " on page 76.) 
Ask	questions about, or request an action be taken on, their Government life insurance policy.
Search	a data base to determine if VA is holding unclaimed insurance funds. This money represents death awards, dividend checks and premium refunds that were mailed to policyholders. These payments were returned to VA by the Post Office because they could not be delivered.
View, Download or Print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this VA Life Insurance Programs handbook • the SGLI/VGLI handbook • SGLI forms and VA insurance forms such as Designation of Beneficiary, Application for Reinstatement, Claim for Disability Insurance Benefits, and many others.
E-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the VA Insurance Center • the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance

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Visit our Website: www.insurance.va.gov