



Servicemember to Veteran Transition

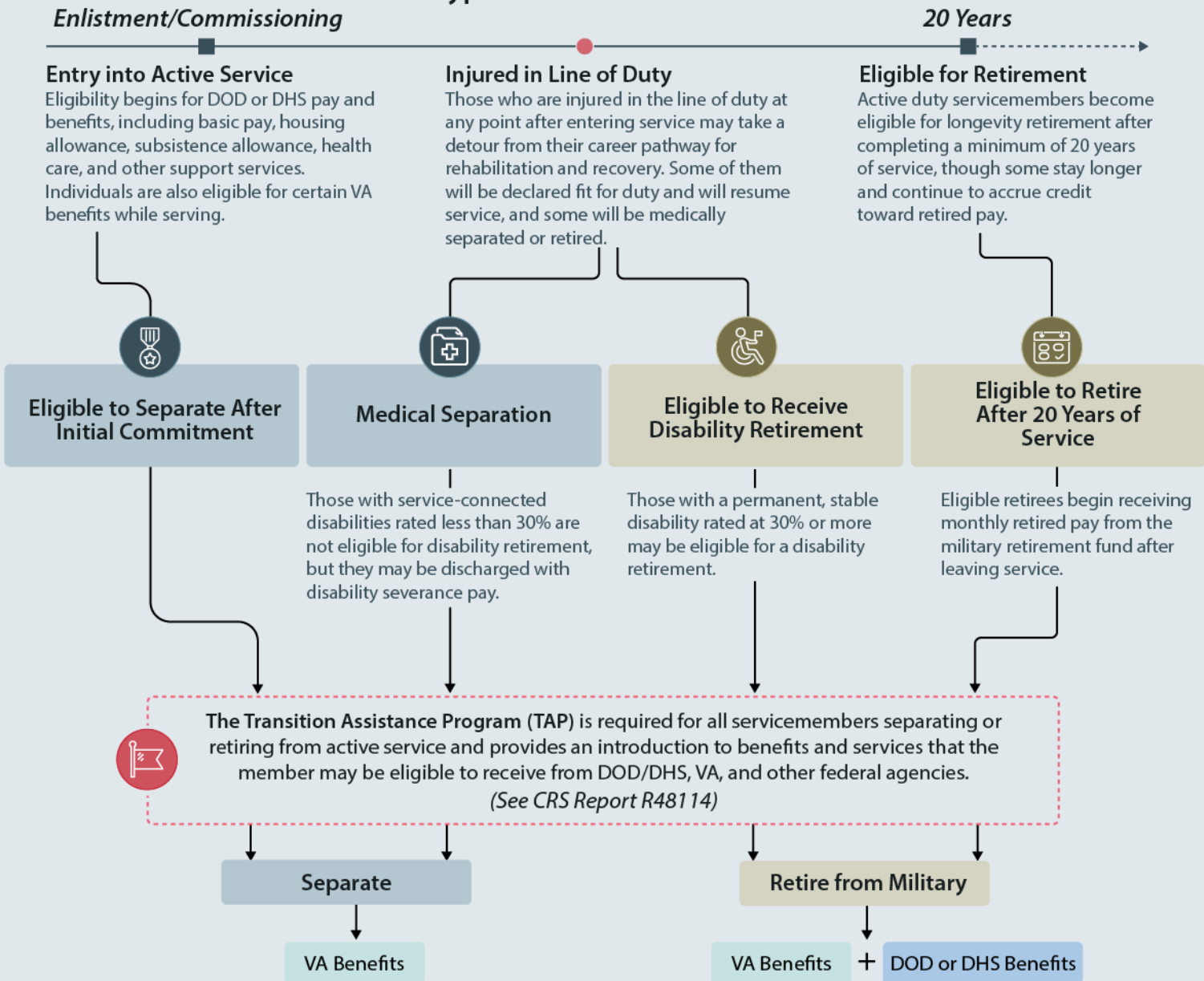
Individuals who serve on active duty in one of the six U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard) experience a range of career pathways. From the point of entry as an officer or enlistee, servicemembers become eligible for certain benefits under the Department of Defense (DOD) or Department of Homeland Security (DHS, for the Coast Guard) and also eligibility for certain benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). While some servicemembers may leave active service after their initial commitment (typically four to six years), others will remain 20 years or longer and become eligible for a lifetime retirement annuity from their military department based on longevity of service. Some may sustain injuries that confer earlier eligibility for disability retirement from their military department and/or disability compensation from the VA.



Who Is Considered a Veteran?

All who serve a minimum period of active duty are considered “veterans.” Those who are eligible for retired pay from DOD are also considered military retirees—all military retirees are veterans, but not all veterans are military retirees. (See CRS Report R47299)

Typical Timeline of Service



Selected VA Benefits

- Compensation for Service-Connected Disabilities or Death
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for Service-Connected Deaths
- Pension for Non-Service-Connected Disability or Death or For Service
- Hospital, Nursing Home, Domiciliary, and Medical Care
- Life Insurance
- Benefits for Homeless Veterans
- Specially Adapted Housing for Disabled Veterans
- Burial Benefits
- Educational Assistance Programs
- Housing and Small Business Loans
- Employment and Training of Veterans

Selected DOD or DHS Benefits

- Retired Pay
- Health Care Services (TRICARE)
- Survivor Benefit Plan
- Commissary and Exchange*
- Space-A Travel*

*Certain veterans who are not retirees are also eligible for these benefits.

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