

# How applications for hearing loss work

Applications start with the veteran. Then Veterans' Affairs and audiologists work through steps with the veteran to process the application.

## 1 The veteran makes an application for hearing loss, tinnitus, or both

The veteran applies for hearing loss using either the Disablement Pension Application form or the Veteran Support application form.

If they served before 1 April 1974 or in Viet Nam:

 [Disablement Pension application form \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Disablement-Pension-application-form.pdf\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Disablement-Pension-application-form.pdf)

If they served after 31 March 1974:

 [Veteran Support application form \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Veteran-Support-application-form.pdf\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Veteran-Support-application-form.pdf)

This application may be just for hearing loss or may include other issues.

A veteran can request assistance from family or their audiologist to fill in the form.

The veteran needs to satisfy the requirements for:

- Qualifying service, and
- Hearing loss or tinnitus.

This can be either a suitable audiogram or their GP's attestation that the veteran has a hearing loss.

[Qualifying service explained \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/qualifying-service/\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/eligibility/qualifying-service/)

## 2 Veterans' Affairs receives and acknowledges the claim and checks that the claim has all the required information

We will send a letter acknowledging receipt and let the veteran know if more information is required.

## 3 Veterans' Affairs makes a decision on the claim, and will let the veteran know the outcome of the claim

Hearing Aids are the standard treatment for hearing loss.

Veterans' Affairs has a funding package that is sufficient to provide a suitable aid to meet the needs of 90% of veterans.

## 4 A Case Manager will contact the veteran if the claim is accepted

They will confirm which audiology clinic the veteran wants to see for their hearing aids.

**5 The Case Manager will send a purchase order to the chosen audiology clinic**

The audiology clinic will contact the veteran to make an appointment.

The Case Manager will also send a Your Plan letter to the Veteran to confirm funding.

**6 The Audiologist will provide suitable hearing aids that meet the veteran's needs**

They will conduct a needs assessment and fit suitable hearing aids for the veteran.

The veteran will be able to have a trial with the recommended aids.

Accessories are not funded by Veterans' Affairs unless the veteran meets certain criteria.

The Audiologist will develop a rehabilitation plan and finalisation form which is signed by the veteran and retained by the Audiologist.

**7 Once the veteran is satisfied, any repairs to the aids in the first year should be covered by the warranty**

**8 If the veteran's needs cannot be accommodated within the schedule:**

The Audiologist will discuss co-payment options with the veteran, or apply to Veterans' Affairs if they think the veteran will meet the exceptional circumstances criteria.

[Hearing aid exceptional circumstances criteria \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/for-providers/audiologists/hearing-aid-exceptional-circumstance-criteria/\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/for-providers/audiologists/hearing-aid-exceptional-circumstance-criteria/)

**9 The veteran must insure the hearing aids**

Veterans' Affairs will not pay to replace lost aids or damaged aids which have been broken through accident or misuse.

**10 When a veteran requires an annual check up, some minor repairs or adjustments, or ear wax removal:**

They ask their Case Manager to issue a Hearing Aid Support and Maintenance Purchase Order which will cover the costs of standard support and maintenance services.

An Audiologist could ask the Case Manager on behalf of the veteran.

**11 If a repair that exceeds \$345 including GST is required, or the veterans' hearing needs change significantly:**

Then the audiologist will need to use the Exceptional Circumstances Application Form on behalf of the veteran to request funding for repairs, early replacement or additional accessories.

 [Hearing Exceptional Circumstances form \(https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Hearing-Exceptional-Circumstances-Form.pdf\)](https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/assets/Forms/Hearing-Exceptional-Circumstances-Form.pdf)

**12 Replacement aids will be funded when the veteran has had the aids for six years**

The veteran needs to contact their Case Manager to request new hearing aids.

The Case Manager will issue a purchase order to the veteran's choice of audiologist.