

Taking Care of Service Members and Families

BASIC NEEDS ALLOWANCE FACT SHEET

APRIL 2, 2025



WE ARE IMPLEMENTING A BASIC NEEDS ALLOWANCE.

FAST FACTS:

- **WHAT IS IT?** Basic Needs Allowance is a monthly allowance for active-duty service members with dependents whose gross household income falls below 150% of federal poverty guidelines. By law, payment of the allowance began in January 2023.
- **WHAT DOES IT DO?** A BNA provides a supplemental taxable allowance for eligible service members who are the most financially challenged. It will promote economic security for those members and their families.
- **WHO BENEFITS?** Active-duty service members with dependents, who have completed initial entry training and whose gross household income falls below 150% of federal poverty guidelines for their location and the size of their household, are eligible. The military services will proactively screen service members for eligibility (based on service member pay) and notify them of their potential eligibility.
- **HOW DO I GET IT?**
 - **DO I HAVE TO APPLY?** Yes. Service members will have to apply to receive the allowance using the procedures of their military service.
 - **WHO CAN APPLY?** Service members can apply to receive a BNA if they believe their situation warrants this allowance; their application will be reviewed for eligibility.
 - **HOW DO I APPLY?** The application procedure may vary by service; however, all service members must submit documentation that confirms their income such as a tax return or W2. Service members can obtain assistance from installation financial counselors and installation community and family support services offices in submitting applications.
 - **IS THERE A DATE BY WHICH I SHOULD APPLY?** Military services may establish application deadlines following eligibility notification to members, e.g., applications must be submitted within 60 days of notification.
- **WHAT DEFINES GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME?** A service member's gross household income includes all income from all members of the household, including pay and allowances, investment income and any other household income.
- **HOW MUCH WILL I GET?** For members approved to receive BNA, the amount will be calculated so as to bring their gross household income up to 150% of Federal Poverty Guidelines which vary according to household size and location (CONUS, Alaska and Hawaii). Thus, the amount of BNA eligible members receive will vary according to their individual circumstances.

- › **HOW WILL MEMBERS BE NOTIFIED THAT THEY MAY BE ELIGIBLE?** The military services are required to screen members for eligibility, notify “screened” members in writing of their potential BNA eligibility and advise them how to apply for the allowance. Notifications will occur according to service-specific procedures.
- › **CAN WE PROVIDE RETROACTIVE BENEFITS IF THERE ARE PROCESSING ISSUES?** Entitlement to a BNA will be effective as of the date a member’s application is approved by their branch of service after Jan. 1, 2023. Services will be required to process and adjudicate applications within 30 days of receipt. Retroactive payments prior to application approval are not authorized.
- › **IS THERE A DEADLINE TO APPLY OR IS THE PROCESS ROLLING?** There is no specific application deadline date. However, services may establish application submission timelines following eligibility notification to members, e.g., applications must be submitted within 60 days of notification. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.
- › **WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?** Visit <https://finred.usalearning.gov/Benefits/BNA> for more information about eligibility and how to apply.

INFORMATION BY SERVICE BRANCH

- › **MARINE CORPS:** Visit <https://www.manpower.marines.mil/Plans-and-Policies/Manpower-Plans-and-Policy/Manpower-Military-Policy-MPO/Military-Compensation/>.
- › **NAVY:** Visit <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/Pay-Benefits/NC/>.
- › **DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE:** Visit <https://myfss.us.af.mil/USAFCommunity/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2FUSAFCommunity%2Fs%2Fknowledge-detail%3Fpid%3DkA0830000001NrCAI>.
 - ›› Airmen and Guardians may contact the Total Force Service Center at 210-565-0102 or via myFSS and select “Ask A Question” from the top menu bar:
<https://myfss.us.af.mil/USAFCommunity/s/>.
 - ›› For BNA questions, select “Compensation” from the “What program does your question pertain to” and use “BNA” in the subject of the question.
- › **COAST GUARD:** Contact the Military Pay and Compensation Division by emailing Compensation@USCG.mil.