

Basic Needs Allowance

The Department of Defense is implementing a monthly allowance called the Basic Needs Allowance, or BNA. BNA may help qualifying large military households with low income to better afford basic needs.

Eligibility for BNA is based on gross household income and household size. BNA applies to service members on active duty (including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty) who have dependents listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, or DEERS, have completed initial entry training and have gross household income that falls below 130% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) for their assigned duty station and household size. The Department is authorized to begin payments for approved applications starting in January 2023.

Fast Facts:

- Service members must apply for the allowance by following their military service’s procedures.
- The submission of an application and receipt of the allowance is voluntary. Service members may voluntarily discontinue BNA at any time.
- Receiving BNA may affect a household’s eligibility for the [Family Supplemental Subsistence Allowance](#) or government assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC.
- Any BNA received is taxable income.

Screening:

- The military services will proactively screen service members and notify them in writing of their eligibility to apply. Screening eligibility does not guarantee certification of application and payment of BNA.
- Service members who receive a screening notification will need to pay close attention to the instructions and deadline indicated.
- Service members do not need to receive a screening notification to apply for BNA and may apply at any time using their service-specific application procedures.

BNA Eligibility Basics

BNA eligibility is determined by several factors, including the number of members in the household and the total gross household income (both current annualized calendar year and preceding calendar year).

- The household includes the service member plus dependents registered in DEERS.
- Gross household income is all income derived from each member of the household from any source, unless specifically excluded in DoD guidance. Gross household income could include wages, allowances, child or spousal support payments, or government assistance payments.
- For those eligible, the monthly BNA disbursements are calculated as the difference between 130% of the current year’s Federal Poverty Guidelines minus the preceding year gross household income, divided by 12.
- Use the chart below to assist service members in determining whether their gross household income is less than 130% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

130% of 2022 Federal Poverty Guidelines per Household Size*

If the service member’s gross household income in the preceding calendar year is **LESS** than the guideline at the right, they may be eligible for BNA. If their gross household income is **GREATER**, they are not eligible. In that case, seek information on other assistance programs.

Persons in family/household (service member plus dependents)	48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND DC**	ALASKA	HAWAII
2	\$23,803	\$29,757	\$27,378
3	\$29,939	\$37,427	\$34,437
4	\$36,075	\$45,097	\$41,496
5	\$42,211	\$52,767	\$48,555
6	\$48,347	\$60,437	\$55,614
7	\$54,483	\$68,107	\$62,673
8	\$60,619	\$75,777	\$69,732
For each additional person above 8 add:	\$6,136	\$7,670	\$7,059

* Data derived from the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) published annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources

** Use for service members assigned overseas and in U.S. territories and possessions

The Application Process

- Application procedures vary by military service. Service members must follow their service-specific guidance for completing and submitting BNA applications.
- Service members may voluntarily submit applications to their service-designated official with all substantiating documentation required by their military service.
- Military services adjudicate and certify applications to determine eligibility to receive BNA.
- Military services notify applicants and initiate monthly payments for those who elect to receive the allowance.
- Military services recertify applications annually or upon a triggering event, such as an increase in gross household income.

How to Start the Conversation

- Have you considered whether you are eligible for assistance programs or the new BNA entitlement?
- Are you having difficulty providing basic needs for all the members of your household?
- Are all of your dependents registered in DEERS? A household includes all DEERS dependents, regardless of geographic location.
- What is your total household income (current annualized and preceding calendar year) and does it fall below 130% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for your geographic location and household size? (Refer to chart on page 1.)

If a service member believes they meet the household size and income requirements, they may submit a BNA application in accordance with their service's guidance.

Resources and Links

- [Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Taking Care of Our Service Members and Families"](#)
- [Military OneSource Basic Needs Allowance Fact Sheet](#)
- [Resources for Financial Stress](#)
- [DoD Instruction 1341.15 "Basic Needs Allowance," Nov. 15, 2022](#)



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