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ELDER LAW MINUTE

Did you know that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers a pension to persons of limited income who provided this country with at least 90 days of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war?

In order to qualify, the applicant should have investments of less than \$70,000, and income of not more than \$1,554 per month for a single veteran or \$1,842 per month for a married Veteran. Medical expenses like health insurance premiums or the cost of obtaining assistance with the activities of daily living are used to reduce the applicant's gross income so that the applicant can receive this pension. And, spouses of deceased Veterans are also eligible for this benefit if their incomes are less than \$998 per month after being reduced by their medical expenses.

Consider Rodney and Beth. Rodney was a Private in the Army during WWII. He served for two years. Rodney is now 86 years old, has Alzheimer's Disease but still lives at home. Beth is not able to care for him alone. She has aides who come in eight hours per day, seven days a week. This costs the family \$3,640 per month. Rodney's monthly income is \$1,500 from Social Security and \$1,200 from a pension. They have very few investments left after paying these expenses for several years. Because Rodney's income is zero after reducing it by his medical expenses, the V.A. will pay Rodney a pension of \$1,842 per month.

Unlike Medicaid, which expects repayment of its subsidy after the death of the recipient, the V.A. pension is not subject to recovery after death.

Please feel free to forward this Elder Law Minute on to someone you know who would enjoy it. And, if you know of anyone who wants their name added to the distribution list, please let me know.