



Government
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Veterans
Ombud

Ombud
des vétérans

Kingston Respect Forum / Forum du Respect de Kingston

le 25 mars / 25 Mar 2026

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman

Le bureau de l'ombudsman des vétérans

Veterans
Ombud
des vétérans

Col (Ret'd) Nishika Jardine

Canada 

About the Veterans Ombud

- Ombudsman/Ombud: independent official who investigates complaints from the public about problems in government administration
 - OVO created April 2007
 - Receive complaints from CAF/RCMP serving members and Veterans and their families
 - Where we find unfairness: review and recommendations to VAC to resolve
 - Where it might also be a systemic issue of unfairness: review and report with recommendations to Minister of Veterans Affairs
- Ombudsman/ombud : fonctionnaire indépendant qui fait enquête sur les plaintes du public concernant des problèmes dans l'administration du gouvernement
 - BOV créé en avril 2007
 - Il reçoit les plaintes des membres en service des FAC/de la GRC et des vétérans et de leurs familles
 - Là où il y a injustice : examen et recommandations à ACC en vue de résolution
 - Quand ce peut être aussi une question systémique d'injustice : examen et rapport contenant des recommandations à l'intention du ministre des Anciens Combattants

À propos de l'Ombud des vétérans



**Individual
Complaints**

**Plaintes
individuelles**



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Key Points

- Contact us if you have a concern with VAC – we can provide information or refer you to the correct office
- Within our mandate, with your consent – we determine whether you were treated fairly or unfairly by VAC; if unfair, we advocate for resolution
- Our analysts are trained to do this important, fundamental Ombud work

Les points clés

- Communiquez avec nous si vous avez une préoccupation relative à ACC – nous pouvons fournir de l'information ou vous diriger vers le bureau approprié
- Dans le cadre de notre mandat, avec votre consentement – nous déterminons si vous avez été traité de façon équitable ou non par ACC; si ce n'était pas le cas, nous plaidons en faveur d'une résolution
- Nos analystes sont formés pour exécuter ce travail important et fondamental de l'ombud



Top Complaints 2025

Les plaintes principales de 2025

1. Denial of Treatment Benefits – favourable decisions
 2. Disability Claim Wait Times:
 - Decision outcomes
 - Wait times
 - Communications
 3. Rehabilitation and Case Management (includes Income Replacement Benefit)
 4. CAF/DND Issues
1. Refus d'avantages liés au traitement – décisions favorables
 2. Délais de traitement des demandes de prestations d'invalidité :
 - Résultats liés aux décisions
 - Délais d'attente
 - Communications
 3. Réadaptation et gestion de cas (cela inclut la prestation de remplacement du revenu)
 4. Enjeux liés aux FAC/au MDN

Systemic Reviews & Resource Guides

Revue systémiques & Guides éducatifs



Published Reviews

- **Jan 2021:** *Mental Health Treatment Benefits for Family Members*
- **Mar 2024:** *Full and Fair Payment of Pain and Suffering Compensation*
- **Mar 2024:** *The Burden of Care: A Fairness Gap in the Veterans Independence Program Policy*
- **Feb 2025:** *Additional Dependant Care Reimbursement Under the Veterans Affairs Canada Rehabilitation Program*
- **Dec 2025:** *The VAC Internal Review Process*
- **Jan 2026:** *Unfair Veterans-related Measures in Bill C-15, Budget 2025 Implementation Act*

Revue publiées

- **Janv. 2021 :** *Avantages pour soins de santé mentale pour les membres de la famille*
- **Mars 2024 :** *Paiement complet et équitable de l'indemnité pour souffrance et douleur*
- **Mars 2024 :** *Le fardeau des soins : un écart en matière d'équité dans le Programme pour l'autonomie des anciens combattants*
- **Févr. 2025 :** *Remboursement des frais de garde supplémentaire dans le cadre du Programme de réadaptation d'Anciens Combattants Canada*
- **Déc. 2025:** *Processus de Révision Interne d'Anciens Combattants Canada*
- **Janv. 2026:** *Mesures inéquitables à l'égard des vétérans dans le projet de loi C-15, Loi d'exécution du budget de 2025*



Published Resource Guides

- **Oct 2022:** *Care at Home Resource Guide*
- **Dec 2023:** *What to do when you disagree with a VAC decision*
- **Feb/Mar 2024:** *Disability Benefit Adjudication Educational Resource Guide*
- **Oct 2024:** *What to Expect When You Contact Our Office*
- **May 2025** - *How to Access the Services you Need from VAC*
- **Jul 2025:** *Income Replacement Benefit*

WHAT To Expect When You Contact Our Office

Our role is to assess fairness in the delivery of programs and services offered by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). Anything outside of this is beyond our mandate.

Seeking Information?

When you contact us seeking information, we will do our best to provide that information in a timely manner or refer you to resources best suited to answer your question(s).



Have a Complaint?

When you contact us with a complaint or concern, we will review your complaint to determine if we can accept it.

Reasons we may not accept your complaint include:

- The issue is outside of our mandate (for example, disability benefits assessment and entitlement, Veterans Review and Appeal Board appeals, Department of National Defence policy and process matters, or issues with external or provincial bodies)
- Too much time has passed since the issue occurred
- Other avenues still remain to be pursued before we get involved (we are the office of last resort)
- There is no resolution that we can reasonably pursue



Accepting Complaints

If we accept your complaint, it will be handled on a first-come first-served basis. We only prioritize complaints if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Immediate and substantial financial concerns (for example, Income Replacement Benefits that are ending or significant health costs that you are paying for while you are waiting for a decision)
- An unmet health need
- Advanced age (80+) or palliative



Information Gathering

If we accept your complaint, the assigned Analyst will:

- Speak with you
- Review your file
- Examine the legislation, regulations and relevant policies
- Consult our legal counsel, if needed
- Speak with VAC
- Ask you for more information, if needed
- Ask you for documents and evidence



Fairness Assessment

We assess fairness based on the facts, information, and evidence available to us in reviewing your case. Our job is to be impartial. We don't take sides in any case —not yours and not VAC's.

We will do our best to advise you of expected timeframes, but these may vary depending on the number of cases we are working on, the timeliness of responses from VAC, and the complexity of your case.

If our assessment finds an unfairness:

- We will advise you of our findings
- We will work with VAC, if possible, to try to resolve the issue and make recommendations on what they should do to address the unfairness
- We will keep you informed
- We may write a report or letter to the Minister of Veterans Affairs



GOOD TO KNOW

Our office does not have the power to compel someone to give us information or to require VAC to change a decision.



We want to hear from you

Call us or use our [Online Form](#) to get started.

Telephone (toll-free): 1-877-330-4343

Fax (toll-free): 1-888-566-7582

TTY (toll-free): 1-833-902-9399

Mail: Office of the Veterans Ombud
P.O. Box 66 Charlottetown, PE C1A 7K2

Website: www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca



Barriers to Access: What We Have Heard

- Lack of access to primary health care impacts access to benefits and programs
- VAC application process is perceived as complex
- Systemic unfairness in two areas of the VAC internal review process
- Older Veterans have issues with technology and prefer in-person service
- Some Veterans struggle to access VAC benefits and programs
- VAC communications: Website, My VAC Account, Letters

Obstacles à l'accès: Ce que nous avons entendus

- Le manque d'accès aux soins de santé primaires a une incidence sur l'accès aux prestations et aux programmes
- Le processus de demande à l'ACC est perçu comme complexe
- Injustice systémique dans deux domaines du processus d'examen interne d'ACC
- Les anciens combattants plus âgés ont des difficultés avec la technologie et préfèrent les services en personne
- Certains anciens combattants ont de la difficulté à accéder aux prestations et aux programmes d'ACC
- Communications d'ACC : site Web, Mon dossier ACC, lettres





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