



*“Veterans helping Veterans & Their Families”*

The RCMP Veterans' Association assists all categories of employee of the RCMP whether serving or retired, and their families. This role is holistic in nature and functions on three pillars: advocacy, support and fellowship. The Association seeks to ensure that all receive the supports and benefits they require during discharge, and throughout their post-service years.

**A PRO -ACTIVE APPROACH**

The **Support and Advocacy Committee** was formed in 2011 to provide assistance to the retired and former employees of the RCMP and their families in various quality of life issues and in seeking wellness in retirement. The concern for the welfare of others extends to those who are current Regular and Civilian Members of the Force, including auxiliary constables, special constables and public servants.

**Assistance provided by the Committee and Consultants** focuses heavily on the processes for the **Veteran's Affairs Canada (VAC) disability benefits and allowances**. Through the pro-active efforts of the Support and Advocacy Committee hundreds of former and serving eligible candidates have benefited from the knowledge and expertise of the Committee members.

**Bereavement support** is another important pillar of the Committee's work and often means interactions with families and spouses who have little knowledge of survivor pension payments following the death of the pensioner.

**Education** of former, retired members and their families assures **better preparation** for retirement and post-death requirements. This is not only true for serving employees but also serving members. The Committee has developed and shared an extensive document series - the **Survivor and Executor Guide** and two checklists (one for the member and one for the immediate survivor).

**Types of PRO-ACTIVE Assistance Provided by the Association Support & Advocacy Committee and Region Consultants:**

**SUPPORT -**

- Initial VAC Application preparation including the VAC Quality of Life form preparation
- Process for obtaining the medical/service/personal files from the RCMP.
- Referrals to Medical Professionals such as Audiologists and Psychologists.

- Applications for various VAC Allowances – Attendance, Clothing, Exceptional Incapacity.
- VAC Reassessments and Appeals.
- VAC Travel claims, hospital benefits and equipment rental.
- Research of Medical conditions that may qualify for VAC disability Pension.
- Utilizing Benefit Trust Fund: In the past, the trust fund has assisted several former members and qualified survivors within the Association with support.
- Utilizing RCMP Veterans' Association Foundation – sourcing funding for assistance for qualified applicants.
- Bereavement Assistance – service is delivered to member and non-member spouses/ families to enable speedy transition of pensions to the survivor. Also – prior death - planning and survivor information shared.
- Canada Revenue Agency Disability Tax Credit applications and Income Tax Medical Deductions.
- Development and continuous review and update of the Survivor & Executor Packages for members and spouses.
- Development of Post Death Protocol documents.
- Partnership with the RCMP Support Operational Stress Injury Program (SOSI) and “H” Division Wellness.
- Provisions for respectful commemoration of members while also remembering and supporting survivors.
- Populating Division webpage and providing articles on benefits and activities for Division Newsletter.
- Maintain an inventory of donated mobility /sickroom aids made available free of charge to all Association members, non-members and families.

**ADVOCACY** – representation on police/ RCMP related committees and boards to further the benefits and welfare for members.

- Example – advocacy to VAC through the Service Excellence and Transition Advisory Committee (SETAG) with recommendations went to the Minister that included a more focused MyVAC experience enabled by AI and targeted information depending upon population.
- Example – NS Mass Murder Commission – ensuring that voice of the retirees/members was included in deliberations.
- Response to supporting survivors in housing, social outreach and government service.

Additionally, since 2012, there have been **Benefits & Information Workshops** presented to the RCMPVA membership, spouses and non-members, serving members and First Responders throughout all Nova Scotia. At these twice-yearly Workshops, experts and resource persons have delivered information related to VAC Disability Pensions and Appeals, medical and psychological conditions, various support available for members/families through BTF and RCMP Veterans' Foundation, information on “Aging in Place”, nursing home services (from the Provincial Government), and legal information such as wills, power of attorney and personal directives.