



Time Running Out for Troops, Veterans to Claim "Stop Loss"

Eligible service members and veterans have less than three months to apply for Retroactive "Stop Loss" Special Pay.

The special pay was approved by Congress as part of the 2009 War Supplemental Appropriations Act. Service members and veterans who involuntarily served or were on "Stop Loss" from Sept. 11, 2001 to Sept. 30, 2009, are entitled to \$500 for each month served past their contracted end-of-service, resignation or retirement date.



The Pentagon announced the program Oct. 21, 2009. Those eligible must apply by Oct. 21, 2010, to receive compensation. And, survivors of service members who were under 'Stop Loss' orders are entitled to the benefit.

Each service has its own criteria and specific outreach and application process. Members and veterans who qualify, or think they are eligible for the special pay must contact their individual services for eligibility requirements.

So far \$111 million has been paid out to 25,000 troops and veterans affected by "Stop Loss." The average payout is \$3,000 to \$4,000 per claim. The Pentagon has about \$423 million left in the program's fund.

The Pentagon and individual services have been reaching out to qualified members, veterans and beneficiaries through direct mailings, veteran services organization, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the media. Those efforts will be ongoing through Oct. 21, 2010, as there is much money left to be claimed.

An estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries are entitled for the retroactive pay.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates maintains the authority to extend military service during a period of national emergency, an authority that dates back to 1983. Many of these "Stop Loss" troops were extended involuntarily in order for their units to preserve manpower and readiness in critical skill areas.

For more information about the program, procedures and points of contact for each individual service, visit www.defense.gov/stoploss.