**Benefits that Might be Available to Surviving Spouses of Veterans.**

The benefits below are not the only two types. There are educational benefits, health-care enrollment, and a host of other benefits that might be available to surviving spouses of veterans.

**Accrued Benefits**

The first benefit that we always consider is “Accrued Benefits”.

If the Veteran had a claim pending at the time of his/her death, then the surviving spouse of a veteran may be able to substitute into the veteran’s pending claim and recover monies that should have been paid for benefits to the Veteran while the veteran was living.

There are deadlines in this kind of case. The surviving spouse must either substitute into the veteran’s open and pending claim or file an accrued benefits claim within one year of the veterans death.

**DIC (Dependency and Indemnity Compensation).**

This benefit – often referred to as “service-connection of the cause of death” – provides a monthly payment to the surviving spouse of a veteran if the veteran’s service-connected condition (or conditions that SHOULD have been service connected while the Veteran was living) were a contributing factor to the veteran’s death.

That contributing factor does not need to be the SOLE cause of death, or even the primary cause of death.  It just needs to contribute to the cause of death.