

Veterans' case files

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), previously known as the Repatriation Department (1917–74 and 1975–76) and the Department of Repatriation and Compensation (1974–75), has responsibility for functions such as the provision of repatriation services, medical and hospital treatment, and payment of pensions and allowances to eligible veterans and dependents.

Case files, sometimes known as repatriation files or DVA case files, were created for each veteran who sought the services of the department, and may include medical, hospital, clinical treatment or pension files. Sometimes these different types of case files are incorporated into one set of papers, but in most cases they are kept separately.

The files *may* contain personal information on the veteran's physical or mental health, disabilities, and domestic and financial affairs. Because much of this information may be personally sensitive, veterans' case files are not always available for public access under the *Archives Act 1983*.

[Access to records under the Archives Act](#) outlines how the National Archives provides access to information in veterans' case files that are in the open access period.

World War I and World War II veterans' case files

Case files for veterans of both World Wars document the veterans' interaction with the Commonwealth government in the post-war period. They commonly contain details of injuries and illnesses suffered by veterans and their treatment while prisoners of war.

If we know that the veteran is deceased, or that they would be over 100 years of age, the files are generally suitable for release, although some information may be exempted to protect the privacy of a surviving spouse or other family members.

When applying to the National Archives for access to these files, please specify the State in which the veteran is likely to have received DVA benefits or treatment as this will assist us locate the record.

Access under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

When the National Archives exempts information on these files from public access, the veteran themselves and/or their next of kin may seek access to the exempt information under the Freedom of Information Act. Please direct these requests to your nearest DVA office. Only DVA can make decisions about access under Freedom of Information.

Post World War II veterans' case files

Because many veterans of post-World War II conflicts, or their spouse or siblings, are still alive, DVA case files for veterans of later conflicts are not suitable for public access under the Archives Act. Access is available for the veteran or the family of the veteran as described below.

If a DVA case file is about you, you are entitled to seek access under Freedom of Information. You should contact your nearest DVA office directly.

Next of kin seeking access to these files may also contact DVA and explain their need for access. Only DVA can make decisions about access under Freedom of Information.

Department of Veterans' Affairs services

Information about benefit entitlements, health cards and other services for veterans is available on the [Department's website](#). If you have a question about these matters, you should contact DVA directly. DVA has offices in each capital city and in many regional cities. Contact details for these offices can be found on the [Department's website](#).

DVA also circulates a quarterly newspaper, *Vetaffairs*, which provides information of interest to Australian war veterans and their families. Copies are available through veterans' organisations or through offices of DVA. You can also subscribe to *Vetaffairs* through the Department's website.

Records about defence service held by the National Archives

The following Fact sheets contain information on records held by the National Archives relating to service with the Australian defence forces:

- *Fact sheet 30 - Navy service records*
- *Fact sheet 32 - RAAF service records*
- *Fact sheet 136 - Army service records*
- *Fact sheet 63 - War service information*