

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 99-661 applicable with respect to persons who, after Nov. 14, 1986, incur or aggravate an injury, illness, or disease or die, see section 604(g) of Pub. L. 99-661, set out as a note under section 1074a of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of authorities, functions, personnel, and assets of the Coast Guard, including the authorities and functions of the Secretary of Transportation relating thereto, to the Department of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 468(b), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

§ 1477. Death gratuity: eligible survivors

(a) DESIGNATION OF RECIPIENTS.—(1) On and after July 1, 2008, or such earlier date as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe, a person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title may designate one or more persons to receive all or a portion of the amount payable under section 1478 of this title. The designation of a person to receive a portion of the amount shall indicate the percentage of the amount, to be specified only in 10 percent increments, that the designated person may receive. The balance of the amount of the death gratuity, if any, shall be paid in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) If a person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title has a spouse, but designates a person other than the spouse to receive all or a portion of the amount payable under section 1478 of this title, the Secretary concerned shall provide notice of the designation to the spouse.

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF REMAINDER; DISTRIBUTION IN ABSENCE OF DESIGNATED RECIPIENT.—If a person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title does not make a designation under subsection (a) or designates only a portion of the amount payable under section 1478 of this title, the amount of the death gratuity not covered by a designation shall be paid as follows:

(1) To the surviving spouse of the person, if any.

(2) If there is no surviving spouse, to any surviving children (as prescribed by subsection (d)) of the person and the descendants of any deceased children by representation.

(3) If there is none of the above, to the surviving parents (as prescribed by subsection (c)) of the person or the survivor of them.

(4) If there is none of the above, to the duly-appointed executor or administrator of the estate of the person.

(5) If there is none of the above, to other next of kin of the person entitled under the laws of domicile of the person at the time of the person's death.

(c) TREATMENT OF PARENTS.—For purposes of subsection (b)(3), parents include fathers and mothers through adoption. However, only one father and one mother may be recognized in any case, and preference shall be given to those who exercised a parental relationship on the date, or most nearly before the date, on which the decedent entered a status described in section 1475 or 1476 of this title.

(d) TREATMENT OF CHILDREN.—Subsection (b)(2) applies, without regard to age or marital status, to—

- (1) legitimate children;
(2) adopted children;
(3) stepchildren who were a part of the decedent's household at the time of his death;
(4) illegitimate children of a female decedent; and
(5) illegitimate children of a male decedent—

(A) who have been acknowledged in writing signed by the decedent;

(B) who have been judicially determined, before the decedent's death, to be his children;

(C) who have been otherwise proved, by evidence satisfactory to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to be children of the decedent; or

(D) to whose support the decedent had been judicially ordered to contribute.

(e) EFFECT OF DEATH BEFORE RECEIPT OF GRATUITY.— If a person entitled to all or a portion of a death gratuity under subsection (a) or (b) dies before the person receives the death gratuity, it shall be paid to the living survivor next in the order prescribed by subsection (b).

(Added Pub. L. 85-861, §1(32)(A), Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1453; amended Pub. L. 101-189, div. A, title XVI, §1621(a)(2), Nov. 29, 1989, 103 Stat. 1603; Pub. L. 110-28, title III, §3306, May 25, 2007, 121 Stat. 136; Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title VI, §645(a), (b), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 158, 159; Pub. L. 110-417, [div. A], title X, §1061(a)(4), Oct. 14, 2008, 122 Stat. 4612.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Table with 3 columns: Revised section, Source (U.S. Code), and Source (Statutes at Large). Rows include 1477(a) through 1477(d) with corresponding code and statute references.

In subsection (a), the words "highest on the following list" are substituted for the words "first listed below", in 38:1131(c). The words "as prescribed by subsection (b)" are inserted in clause (2) to reflect that subsection. The words "or persons in loco parentis, as prescribed by subsection (c)" are inserted in clauses (3) (A) and (4) to reflect the fact that certain persons who are not parents in the normal sense are included as eligible survivors.

In subsection (d), the words "the death gratuity" are substituted for the words "the amount to which he is entitled under this subchapter". The words "next in the order prescribed" are substituted for the words "first listed under".

AMENDMENTS

2008—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(3), added subsec. (a) and struck out former subsec. (a) which required a death gratuity payable upon the death of a person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title to be paid to or for the living survivor highest on a specified list.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(3), added subsec. (b). Former subsec. (b) redesignated (d).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(3), added subsec. (c).

Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(1), struck out subsec. (c) which read as follows: "Clauses (3) and (4) of subsection (a), so far as they apply to parents and persons in loco parentis, include fathers and mothers through adoption, and persons who stood in loco parentis to the decedent for a period of not less than one year at any time before he acquired a status described in section 1475 or 1476 of this title. However, only one father and one mother, or their counterparts in loco parentis, may be recognized in any case, and preference shall be given to those who exercised a parental relationship on the date, or most nearly before the date, on which the decedent entered that status."

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(2), redesignated subsec. (b) as (d) and substituted "Treatment of Children.—Subsection (b)(2)" for "Subsection (a)(2)" in introductory provisions.

Pub. L. 110-181, §645(a)(1), struck out subsec. (d) which read as follows: "During the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection and ending on September 30, 2007, a person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title may designate another person to receive not more than 50 percent of the amount payable under section 1478 of this title. The designation shall indicate the percentage of the amount, to be specified only in 10 percent increments up to the maximum of 50 percent, that the designated person may receive. The balance of the amount of the death gratuity shall be paid to or for the living survivors of the person concerned in accordance with paragraphs (1) through (5) of subsection (a)."

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 110-417 inserted period at end.

Pub. L. 110-181, §645(b), inserted heading and substituted "subsection (a) or (b)" for "subsection (a) or (d)" and "subsection (b)" for "subsection (a)."

2007—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 110-28, §3306(1), substituted "Subject to subsection (d), a death gratuity" for "A death gratuity".

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 110-28, §3306(3), added subsec. (d). Former subsec. (d) redesignated (e).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 110-28, §3306(2), redesignated subsec. (d) as (e) and substituted "If a person entitled to all or a portion of a death gratuity under subsection (a) or (d) dies before the person" for "If an eligible survivor dies before he".

1989—Subsec. (b)(5)(C). Pub. L. 101-189 substituted "Secretary of Veterans Affairs" for "Administrator of Veterans Affairs".

REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title VI, §645(d), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 160, provided that:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than April 1, 2008, the Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations to implement the amendments to section 1477 of title 10, United States Code, made by subsection (a).

"(2) ELEMENTS.—The regulations required by paragraph (1) shall include forms for the making of the designation contemplated by subsection (a) of section 1477 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a) of this section, and instructions for members of the Armed Forces in the filling out of such forms."

EXISTING DESIGNATION AUTHORITY

Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title VI, §645(c), Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 159, provided that: "The authority provided by subsection (d) of section 1477 of title 10, United States Code, as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 28, 2008], shall remain available to persons covered by section 1475 or 1476 of such title until July 1, 2008, or such earlier date as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe, and any designation under such subsection made before July 1, 2008, or the earlier date prescribed by the Secretary, shall continue

in effect until such time as the person who made the designation makes a new designation under such section 1477, as amended by subsection (a) of this section."

§ 1478. Death gratuity: amount

(a) The death gratuity payable under sections 1475 through 1477 of this title shall be \$100,000. For this purpose:

(1) A person covered by subsection (a)(1) of section 1475 of this title who died while traveling to or from active duty (other than for training) is considered to have been on active duty on the date of his death.

(2) A person covered by subsection (a)(3) of section 1475 of this title who died while traveling directly to or from active duty for training is considered to have been on active duty for training on the date of his death.

(3) A person covered by subsection (a)(3) of section 1475 of this title who died while traveling directly to or from inactive duty training is considered to have been on inactive duty training on the date of his death.

(4) A person covered by subsection (a)(3) of section 1475 of this title who died while on authorized stay at the person's residence during a period of inactive duty training or between successive days of inactive duty training is considered to have been on inactive duty training on the date of his death.

(5) A person covered by subsection (a)(4) of section 1475 of this title who died while performing annual training duty or while traveling directly to or from that duty is considered to have been entitled, on the date of his death, to the pay prescribed by the first sentence of section 209(c) of title 37. A person covered by section 1475(a)(4) of this title who dies while attending field training or a practice cruise under section 2104(b)(6)(B) of this title, or while traveling directly to or from the place where the training or cruise is conducted, is considered to have been entitled, on the date of his death, to the pay prescribed by the second sentence of section 209(c) of title 37.

(6) A person covered by subsection (a)(5) of section 1475 of this title is considered to have been on active duty, on the date of his death, in the grade that he would have held on final acceptance, or entry on active duty.

(7) A person covered by section 1476 of this title is considered to have been entitled, on the date of his death, to pay at the rate to which he was entitled on the last day on which he performed duty or training.

(8) A person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title who performed active duty, or inactive duty training, without pay is considered to have been entitled to basic pay while performing that duty or training.

(9) A person covered by section 1475 or 1476 of this title who incurred a disability while on active duty or inactive duty training and who became entitled to basic pay while receiving hospital or medical care, including out-patient care, for that disability, is considered to have been on active duty or inactive duty training, as the case may be, for as long as he is entitled to that pay.

(b) A person who is discharged, or released from active duty (other than for training), is