

Published on *VirginiaNavigator* (<https://virginiannavigator.org>)

## [The PACT Act and Your VA Benefits](#)

### **The PACT Act**

The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their [survivors](#)—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. And starting **March 5, 2024**, we're expanding VA health care to millions of Veterans—years earlier than called for by the PACT Act.

This page will help answer your questions about what the PACT Act means for you or your loved ones. You can also call us at 800-698-2411 [TTY: 711]. And you can file a claim for PACT Act-related disability compensation or apply for VA health care now.

► [File a disability claim online](#)

► [Apply for VA health care](#)

### **What's the PACT Act and how will it affect my VA benefits and care?**

The PACT Act is perhaps the largest health care and benefit expansion in VA history. The full name of the law is The Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

### **The PACT Act will bring these changes:**

- Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras
- Adds 20+ more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures
- Adds more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation
- Requires VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care

- Helps us improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures

If you're a Veteran or survivor, you can file claims now to apply for PACT Act-related benefits.

### **What does it mean to have a presumptive condition for toxic exposure?**

To get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For many health conditions, you need to prove that your service caused your condition.

But for some conditions, we automatically assume (or “presume”) that your service caused your condition. We call these “presumptive conditions.”

We consider a condition presumptive when it's established by law or regulation.

If you have a presumptive condition, you don't need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

### **Am I eligible for VA health care under the PACT Act?**

You're eligible to enroll now—without needing to apply for disability benefits first—if you meet the basic service and discharge requirements and any of these descriptions are true for you:

- You served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, or any other combat zone after 9/11, **or**
- You deployed in support of the Global War on Terror, **or**
- You were exposed to toxins or other hazards during military service at home or abroad

Specific toxins and hazards include burn pits, sand and dust, particulates, oil well or sulfur fires, chemicals, radiation, warfare agents, depleted uranium, herbicides, and other occupational hazards. [Find more military exposure categories on our Public Health website](#)

**Note:** Even if none of these descriptions are true for you, you may still be eligible for VA health care based on your service. [Check the full health care eligibility](#)

## [requirements](#)

► For more information and answers to your questions go to:

[www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits](http://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits)

### **Topics covered include:**

- Gulf War era and post-9/11 Veteran eligibility
- Vietnam era Veteran eligibility

### **Getting benefits**

**If you haven't filed a claim yet for the presumptive condition,** you can file a new claim online now. You can also file by mail, in person, or with the help of a trained professional.

- [File for VA disability compensation online](#)
- [Learn more about how to file a disability compensation claim](#)

**If we denied your disability claim in the past and we now consider your condition presumptive,** you can submit a Supplemental Claim. We'll review your case again.

► [Find out how to file a Supplemental Claim](#)

### **Information for survivors**

Can Veterans' survivors get compensation paymentes under the PACT Act? Yes. If you're a surviving family member of a Veteran, you may be eligible for these benefits:

- **A monthly VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (VA DIC) payment.** You may qualify if you're the surviving spouse, dependent child, or parent of a Veteran who died from a service-connected disability.  
[Learn how to apply for VA DIC](#)
- **A one-time accrued benefits payment.** You may qualify if you're the surviving spouse, dependent child, or dependent parent of a Veteran who we owed unpaid benefits at the time of their death.  
[Learn about evidence needed for accrued benefits](#)

- **A Survivors Pension.** You may qualify if you're the surviving spouse or child of a Veteran with wartime service.

[Learn how to apply for a Survivors Pension](#)

## Related information

- [Exposure to hazardous chemicals and materials](#)
- [VA benefits for spouses, dependents, survivors, and family caregivers](#)

## VA benefits

- [Health care](#) - Apply for VA health care, find out how to access services, and manage your health and benefits online.
- [Disability](#) - File a claim for disability compensation for conditions related to your military service, and manage your benefits over time.

## Need more help?

- **MyVA411 main information line:** 800-698-2411

Article Source

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Source URL

<https://www.va.gov>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, March 26, 2024