

TDVS Fact Sheet

Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 August 2022

The Honoring our Pact Act of 2022 or PACT Act is being hailed as the largest expansion of care and benefits in VA history. VA anticipates it may double its claim receipts and is leaning forward on implementation. Here's VA's web page - www.va.gov/pact - to help answer questions.

Why it matters: Veterans and their families are already asking you for advice on whether and how this legislation impacts them. VA is considering all the presumptive conditions established by the PACT Act presumptive on the date the bill becomes law - the day the President signs the bill.

Here's how it expands care and benefits:

- 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 more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits 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.

Here are more details on how it expands care and benefits.

- **Extended eligibility period for VA health care** - from 5 to 10 years - for combat Veterans who served after September 11, 2001, and toxic-exposed Veterans, including those who did not enroll to receive VA care during the eligibility period.
- **Adds to the list of radiation exposed Veterans to include:**
 - Veterans who participated in cleanup of Enewetak Atoll; and
 - Veterans who participated in nuclear response near Palomares, Spain or Thule, Greenland.
- **Adds more Agent Orange presumptive-exposure locations** for Veterans who served in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Atoll.
- **Adds Monoclonal Gammopathy and Hypertension** to the list of diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange.
- **Creates a presumption of service connection** for certain diseases associated with exposure to burn pits and other toxins for Gulf War era and post 9/11 Veterans.
 - **These cancers are now presumptive:**
 - Brain cancer

- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Head cancer of any type
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphatic cancer of any type
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Neck cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type
- **These illnesses are now presumptive:**
 - Asthma that was diagnosed after service
 - Chronic bronchitis
 - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
 - Chronic rhinitis
 - Chronic sinusitis
 - Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
 - Emphysema
 - Granulomatous disease
 - Interstitial lung disease (ILD)
 - Pleuritis
 - Pulmonary fibrosis
 - Sarcoidosis

Here's what you should do next:

- You should **visit VA's web page** - www.va.gov/pact - to familiarize yourself with Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and post-9/11 Veteran and survivor eligibility criteria.
- You should **assist Veterans and survivors in developing and filing claims** as soon as the President signs this bill into law for Pact Act related benefits.

The big picture: This comprehensive legislation's intent is to provide care and benefits to toxic-exposed Veterans of all generations. It codifies VA's new process for evaluating and determining presumption of exposure and service connection for various chronic conditions, which was highlighted in [Benefit Bulletin 21-12](#). It improves research, VA staff education and treatment related to toxic exposures. It also includes other provisions such as an epidemiological study on Fort McClellan Veterans, ability to sue in Federal Court for harm caused by exposure to the water at Camp Lejeune, and authorization to provide electronic notice for certain claim related actions.



I need more: Visit VA's web page - www.va.gov/pact - to help answer questions. Direct questions to the [Appeals & Accreditation Team](#) by emailing tdva.vbanas@va.gov, so we can answer your question and share answers to common questions more broadly. Here's a [White House Fact Sheet](#) if you want even more.

TDVS will continue to provide additional information and guidance in the weeks and months ahead including a deep dive into the PACT Act as a block of instruction at the Annual Conference, September 26th – 28th at Montgomery Bell State Park.