



## **Presumptive Disability Benefits**

### **What is “Presumptive” Service Connection?**

VA automatically presumes that certain disabilities were caused by military service. This is because of the unique circumstances of a specific Veteran’s military service. If a presumed condition is diagnosed in a Veteran within a certain group, they can be awarded disability compensation.

### **What are “Presumptive Conditions”?**

If you are diagnosed with a chronic disease within one year of active-duty release, you should apply for disability compensation. Examples of chronic disease include: arthritis, diabetes or hypertension.

Or, if you served continuously for at least 90 days and are diagnosed with **amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)** after discharge, you can establish service connection for the disease.

If you have a presumptive condition, you do not need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumptive.

Veterans in the following groups may qualify for “presumptive” disability benefits:

- **Former prisoners of war**
  - If you are a former prisoner of that has a condition that is at least 10% disabling, you may have a presumptive condition.
  - Whether or not a specific condition is presumed depends on the length of imprisonment.
  - **If you were imprisoned for any length of time, specific presumed conditions include:**
    - Psychosis

- Any of the anxiety states
  - Dysthymic disorder (or depressive neurosis)
  - Organic residuals of frostbite
  - Post-traumatic osteoarthritis
  - Heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease
  - Stroke and the residual effects
  - Osteoporosis, when the Veteran has posttraumatic stress disorder
- **If you were imprisoned for at least 30 days, presumed conditions include:**
  - Beriberi (including beriberi heart disease)
  - Chronic dysentery
  - Helminthiasis
  - Malnutrition (including optic atrophy)
  - Pellagra
  - Other nutritional deficiencies
  - Irritable bowel syndrome
  - Peptic ulcer disease
  - Peripheral neuropathy
  - Cirrhosis of the liver
  - Avitaminosis
  - Osteoporosis
- **Vietnam Veterans**
  - **If you were exposed to Agent Orange or served in the following locations, you may have a presumptive condition.**
    - Republic of Vietnam or on a vessel operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975
    - Any U.S. or Royal Thai military base in Thailand from Jan. 9, 1962 through June 30, 1976
    - Laos from Dec. 1, 1965 through September 30, 1969
    - Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province from April 16, 1969 through April 30, 1969
    - Guam or American Samoa or in the territorial waters off Guam or American Samoa from Jan. 9, 1962 through July 31, 1980

- Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from Jan. 1, 1972 through Sept. 30, 1977
  - **Specific presumed conditions include:**
    - AL amyloidosis
    - B-cell leukemia
    - Chronic lymphocytic leukemia
    - Multiple myeloma
    - Type 2 diabetes
    - Hodgkin's disease
    - Ischemic heart disease (including but not limited to, coronary artery disease and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease)
    - Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
    - Parkinson's disease
    - Parkinsonism
    - Prostate cancer
    - Respiratory cancers
    - Soft-tissue sarcoma (not including osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma or mesothelioma)
    - Bladder cancer
    - Hypothyroidism
    - Hypertension
    - Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)
  - **The following conditions are presumed, if they become greater than 10% debilitating within a year of exposure to an herbicide agent:**
    - Acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy
    - Chloracne or other similar acneform disease
    - Porphyria cutanea tarda
- **Atomic Veterans exposed to ionizing radiation**
  - **If you experienced one of the following**, you may have a presumptive condition:
    - Participated in atmospheric nuclear testing

- Occupied or were prisoners of war in Hiroshima or Nagasaki
  - Served before Feb. 1, 1992, at a diffusion plant in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio or Oak Ridge, Tennessee
  - Served before Jan. 1, 1974, at Amchitka Island, Alaska
  - Served in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll from Jan. 1, 1977 through Dec. 31, 1980
  - Served in the cleanup of the Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons off the coast of Palomares, Spain from Jan. 17, 1966 through March 31, 1967
  - Served in the response to the fire onboard an Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons near Thule Air Force Base in Greenland from Jan. 21, 1968 through Sept. 25, 1985
- **Specific presumed conditions include:**
  - All forms of leukemia, except chronic lymphocytic leukemia
  - Cancer of the thyroid, breast, pharynx, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, pancreas, bile ducts, gall bladder, salivary gland, urinary tract, brain, bone, lung, colon or ovary
  - Bronchioloalveolar carcinoma
  - Multiple myeloma
  - Lymphomas, other than Hodgkin's disease
  - Primary liver cancer, except if there are indications of cirrhosis or hepatitis B
- **Gulf War and Post 9/11 Veterans**
  - Presumptive conditions for Gulf War and Post-9/11 Veterans depends on where and when you served.
  - If you **served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations, Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, or Jordan, during the Persian Gulf War** and have:
    - A medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses that exist for six months or more, such as:
      - Chronic fatigue syndrome
      - Fibromyalgia

- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Any diagnosed or undiagnosed illness that warrants a presumption of service connection, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Signs or symptoms of an undiagnosed illness, including:
  - Fatigue
  - Skin symptoms
  - Headaches
  - Muscle pain
  - Joint pain
  - Neurological or neuropsychological symptoms
  - Symptoms involving the upper or lower respiratory system
  - Sleep disturbance
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms
  - Cardiovascular symptoms
  - Weight loss
  - Menstrual disorders
- If you **served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations or in Afghanistan on or after September 19, 2001** and:
  - Manifest one of the following infectious diseases to a degree of 10 percent or more within 1 year of separation, specific conditions include:
    - Brucellosis
    - Campylobacter jejuni
    - Coxiella burnetii (Q fever)
    - Nontyphoid Salmonella
    - Shigella
    - West Nile virus
    - Malaria (or when accepted treatises indicate the incubation period began during a qualifying period of service)
  - Manifest to a degree of 10% or more at any time after separation, specific conditions include:
    - Mycobacterium tuberculosis
    - Visceral leishmaniasis

- If you served **any amount of time in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Syria, or Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf War, from Sept. 19, 2001 to the present** or the **Southwest Asia theater of operations from Aug. 2, 1990 to the present**, specific conditions include:
  - Squamous cell carcinoma of the larynx
  - Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea
  - Adenocarcinoma of the trachea
  - Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea
  - Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung
  - Large cell carcinoma of the lung
  - Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung
  - Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung
  - Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung
- If you served **on or after Sept. 11, 2001 in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, or Yemen** or if you served in the **\*Southwest Asia theater of operations, or Somalia, on or after Aug. 2, 1990**, specific conditions include:
  - 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 of any type
  - Pancreatic cancer
  - Reproductive cancer of any type
  - Respiratory cancer of any type
  - 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
- The *Southwest Asia theater of operations* refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.