



PACT ACT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits 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.

The Act **(1)** expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era, and **(2)** expands eligibility for benefits for Veterans exposed to toxic substances.

What new or expanded presumptions will the Act create and when will they be in effect?

VETERANS AND SURVIVORS CAN FILE CLAIMS FOR ALL CONDITIONS OUTLINED IN THE PACT ACT IMMEDIATELY.

For Gulf War and post 9-11 Veterans, that includes:

Brain cancer, Glioblastoma, Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type, Gastrointestinal cancer of any type, Head cancer of any type, Lymphoma of any type, Lymphatic cancer of any type, Neck cancer, Pancreatic cancer, Reproductive cancer of any type, Kidney cancer, Melanoma, Asthma (diagnosed after service), Chronic rhinitis, Chronic sinusitis, Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis,

Emphysema, Granulomatous disease, Interstitial lung disease (ILD), Pleuritis, Pulmonary fibrosis, Sarcoidosis, Chronic bronchitis, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

For Vietnam Veterans and other Veterans exposed to tactical herbicides, that includes two Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), High blood pressure (hypertension).

How can Veterans apply for VA health care?

Apply **online** at [VA.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction](https://va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction).

Call our toll-free hotline at 877-222-8387, M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET.

Mail a completed, signed Application for Health Benefits (VA Form 10-10EZ).

Bring a completed, signed VA Form 10-10EZ with you to your nearest medical center or clinic or get help through your state’s Department of Veterans Affairs Service Officer.

Get help filing your claim by working with an accredited representative.

What are the PACT Act key components?



The Act **expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic-exposures** and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era.



VA **will improve the decision-making process** for determining what medical conditions will be considered for presumptive status.



Every enrolled Veteran will **receive an initial toxic exposure screening** and a follow-up screening every five years. Veterans who are not enrolled, but who are eligible to enroll, will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.



VA health care staff and claims processors will receive **toxic exposure-related education and training**.



The Act requires **research studies** on mortality of Veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War, Post-9/11 Veteran health trends, and Veteran cancer rates.



The Act will help VA **build a stronger, more skilled workforce** to meet the growing demand for benefits and services.



The Act authorizes **31 new medical facilities** across the country, providing greater access to VA health care.

How can a Veteran file a claim?



Veterans who would like to file a claim must complete VA Form 21-526EZ to apply for benefits and submit any supportive evidence.



To learn about standard VA disability claims, supplemental claims, secondary claims, and more visit: [VA.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/when-to-file](https://va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/when-to-file).

If a Veteran was previously denied a claim, what can they do?

VA will contact Veterans when a presumption of service connection is established or changed. However, **Veterans previously denied a toxic-exposure related claim** are encouraged to file a supplemental claim. Once a supplemental claim is received, VA will review the claim under the new law.

VA



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PACT ACT VA HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY

The **PACT Act** is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. This law helps provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve.

The law **expands health care eligibility to several groups of Veterans** who may not have been eligible before and requires VA to phase in hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care for any illness to three new categories of Veterans:

Category 1: Veterans who participated in a toxic exposure risk activity (as defined by law) while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training.



Category 2: Veterans assigned to a duty station in certain locations (including airspace above) on or after:



August 2, 1990, in Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, or United Arab Emirates

September 11, 2001, in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, or Yemen, or any other country determined relevant by VA

Category 3: Veterans who deployed in support of:



Operation Enduring Freedom Operation Freedom's Sentinel
Operation Iraqi Freedom Operation New Dawn
Operation Inherent Resolve Resolute Support Mission

Veterans who served in these countries during specific time periods may enroll in VA health care effective on enactment (August 10, 2022).

Republic of Vietnam
January 9, 1962 - May 7, 1975

Thailand
Any U.S. or Royal Thai base
January 9, 1962 - June 30, 1976

Guam or American Samoa
(or in their territorial waters)
January 9, 1962 - July 31, 1980

Laos
December 1, 1965 - September 30, 1969

Cambodia
at Mimot or Krek,
Kampong Cham Province
April 16, 1969 - April 30, 1969

Johnston Atoll
(or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll)
January 1, 1972 - September 30, 1977

Between October 1, 2022, and October 1, 2023, **Veterans who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities** after November 11, 1998, and who were discharged or released between September 11, 2001, and October 1, 2013, may enroll in VA health care.

VA will publish more specific information on the PACT Act and exposure-related disability benefits on [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) as it becomes available.



KEY ELIGIBILITY DATES

AUGUST 10, 2022:
PACT Act signed into law.

ON ENACTMENT (AUGUST 10, 2022):
Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, certain provinces in Cambodia, Guam, or American Samoa (or their territorial waters), or the Johnston Atoll (or a ship that called there) during specific time periods may enroll in VA health care.

OCTOBER 1, 2022 - OCTOBER 1, 2023:
Veterans who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998, and who were discharged or released between September 11, 2001, and October 1, 2013, may enroll in VA health care.

NOVEMBER 8, 2022:
Begin incorporating toxic exposure screening for enrolled Veterans.

OCTOBER 1, 2024:
Phase in enrollment for Categories 1 and 2 for Veterans discharged or released August 2, 1990 - September 11, 2001.

OCTOBER 1, 2026:
Phase in enrollment for Categories 1 and 2 for Veterans discharged or released September 12, 2001 - December 31, 2006.

OCTOBER 1, 2028:
Phase in enrollment for Categories 1 and 2 for Veterans discharged or released January 1, 2007 - December 31, 2012.

OCTOBER 1, 2030:
Phase in enrollment for Categories 1 and 2 for Veterans discharged or released January 1, 2013 - December 31, 2018.

OCTOBER 1, 2032:
Phase in enrollment for Category 3 Veterans.

Toxic Exposure Screening



Every enrolled Veteran will receive an **initial toxic exposure screening** and a follow-up screening at least every five years. Veterans not enrolled but who are eligible will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.

VA



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PACT Act

(Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act)

- When Veterans served our country, many of them were exposed to toxic hazards: radiation, Agent Orange, smoke, toxic air, burn pits, and other chemical and environmental hazards.
- The PACT Act expanded VA health care and benefits for Veterans and their survivors, including Vietnam-era, Gulf War-era, and Post-9/11 Vets.
- The PACT Act allows us to provide a service connection for 23 specific disabilities, simply as a result of the Veteran being in specific areas where we know they could have been exposed to hazardous chemicals and/or a toxic environment.
- Veterans and survivors need to know three things about the PACT Act:

First: We want you to get medically screened by your VA healthcare provider, so you can apply for PACT Act benefits and care.

Second: VA started processing most PACT Act-related benefits claims on January 1. If you apply for PACT Act-related benefits before August 10, 2023, then your benefits will be backdated to August 10, 2022. So get your claims in ASAP.

Third: Some Veterans are worried that applying for PACT Act benefits will affect their current benefits. Fact: If you file a claim, there is an excellent chance your benefits will increase or stay the same. So don't worry and don't wait. Apply today!

For more information, contact Craig Furst:

928.776.6013

craig.furst@va.gov



PACT ACT & VIETNAM, COLD WAR ERA VETERANS



The **PACT Act**, signed into law August 10, 2022, expands health care and benefits for Vietnam era Veterans.



PACT Act Health Care Eligibility

Veterans who served in these countries during specific time periods are eligible to enroll in VA health care **effective August 10, 2022.**

Republic of Vietnam

January 9, 1962 - May 7, 1975

Thailand

Any U.S. or Royal Thai base
January 9, 1962 - June 30, 1976

Guam or American Samoa

(or in their territorial waters)
January 9, 1962 - July 31, 1980

Laos

December 1, 1965 -
September 30, 1969

Cambodia

at Mimot or Krek,
Kampong Cham Province
April 16, 1969 - April 30, 1969

Johnston Atoll

(or on a ship that called there)
January 1, 1972 - September 30, 1977



Toxic Exposure Screenings

As a general matter, there are several types of possible exposures or hazards Veterans may have experienced during their military service, including:

- Air Pollutants
- Chemicals
- Radiation
- Warfare Agents
- Occupational Hazards

ON NOVEMBER 8, 2022: VA will begin incorporating toxic exposure screenings. Every Veteran enrolled for VA health care will receive an initial toxic exposure screening and a follow-up screening at least every five years. Eligible Veterans who have not enrolled will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.



The law expands health care and benefits for Veterans who participated in certain nuclear response or cleanup activities:

Enewetak Atoll

January 1, 1977 -
December 31, 1980

Palomares, Spain

January 17, 1966 -
March 31, 1967

Thule, Greenland

January 21, 1968 -
September 25, 1968



PACT Act Benefits

The PACT Acts adds two new Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

- **Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)**
- **High blood pressure (hypertension)**

Family members or dependents of a deceased Veteran may qualify for various VA benefits due to the additional disabilities defined in the PACT Act if they meet eligibility requirements. More information for survivors is available online at [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT).

4 EASY WAYS TO APPLY FOR VA HEALTH CARE



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4 EASY WAYS TO GET STARTED WITH CLAIMS



Learn more at [VA.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/)



Visit a VBA Regional Office [VA.gov/benefits/offices.asp](https://www.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp)



Call the Benefits hotline (for specific questions) at 1-800-827-1000



Work with an accredited VSO [VA.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp](https://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp)

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PACT ACT & GULF WAR, POST-9/11 ERA VETERANS



The **PACT Act**, signed into law August 10, 2022, **expands health care eligibility to several groups of Veterans** who may not have been eligible before.

 Veterans who participated in a **toxic exposure risk activity** (as defined by law) while serving on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty training.



Veterans assigned to a duty station in (including airspace above) certain locations during specific periods of time on or after:

August 2, 1990, in Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, or United Arab Emirates

September 11, 2001, in Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, or Yemen, or any other country determined relevant by VA



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As a general matter, there are several types of possible exposures or hazards Veterans may have experienced during their military service, including:

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- Radiation
- Occupational Hazards
- Chemicals
- Warfare Agents

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The PACT Act adds **20+ new presumptive conditions**. Learn more online at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT).

Participate in the [VA Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry](#) to help VA better understand potential health effects of exposures and proactively identify health concerns Veterans can discuss with their health care providers for follow-up care.



Veterans who deployed in support of:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Operation Enduring Freedom | Operation Iraqi Freedom |
| Operation Freedom's Sentinel | Operation New Dawn |
| Operation Inherent Resolve | Resolute Support Mission |



SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD:

Veterans who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998, and who were discharged or released between September 11, 2001, and October 1, 2013, may enroll in VA health care **between October 1, 2022 and October 1, 2023**.

Family members or dependents of a deceased Veteran may qualify for various VA benefits due to the additional disabilities defined in the PACT Act if they meet eligibility requirements. More information for survivors is available online at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT).

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