



Tribal Veterans Service Officer Corner

Greetings Veterans & Family Members! Welcome to the first newsletter of 2023!

Please take a look at what is *Inside This Issue* and at the *Special Points of Interest*. This information is included in this newsletter to help you decide if you want to file a PACT Act presumptive claim. Being service-connected for your disabilities will help you in the long run and could help your family as well.

Events are starting to kick off again and recently we had a PACT Act Presentation from the Veterans Benefits Administration. Thank

you to those veterans who attended!

I am working on setting up programming for veteran suicide awareness and prevention from April to June. I will send out flyers and emails for those events as details are finalized.

Please contact me to set up a claim appointment or for any questions!

I normally try not to make the newsletter this this long, but there is a lot of information to share.

~ Ramona, TVSO (Accredited)



Claim appointments are available on Mondays and Tuesdays. Walk-in claim appointments are available on Thursdays. (same day as the food box pickup).

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Special Points of Interest

- TVSO Appointment Schedule
- TVSO & Oregon Vet Events
- Seeking Purple Heart Vets
- Examples of “toxics”
- Documents Needed for Claims
- Agent Orange & Hypertension Rating Information

Our New Sign



Tribal Veterans Service Officer



IT2(SW) ~ United States Navy

Tribal Veterans Service Office Events

***Veteran Only ~ Food Box Pick Up
Every Thursday
9 am to 3 pm**



*Widows of and family members of Veterans also welcome

Social Security Administration Presentation



Upcoming Tribal Veteran Service Office Events

Veteran Suicide Awareness



The Tribal Veterans Service Office will be doing a lot of work around Veteran Suicide Awareness & Prevention this year. Keep an eye out for more information as the events are planned.

- ◆ Yoga Classes
- ◆ Oregon CALM Training
- ◆ Giveaway items



Memorial Day Gifts

Tribal Veterans Service Office Veteran Outreach Event
Memorial Day
Honoring families of Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans who have walked on...

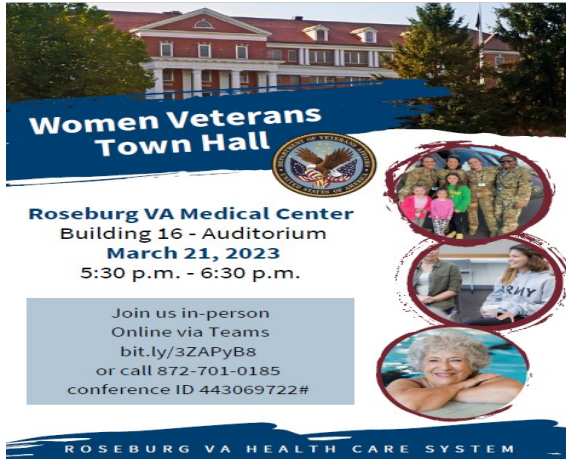
Let us express our gratitude and pride for those who served; those who put their lives on the line; and the families who supported them. We raise our hands to acknowledge and honor the service of the Veteran in your family and their memory. hayu masi.

Widows and/or family members of Tribal Veterans, please stop by the Tribal Veterans Service Office between May 1 and 25, 2023 to choose and pick up a gift honoring your Veteran.

Gifts are:

- Picture frame kit
- Grave site tool kit
- Grave decoration kit

Women Veterans Town Hall March 21, 2023



Women Veterans Town Hall

Roseburg VA Medical Center
Building 16 - Auditorium
March 21, 2023
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Join us in-person
Online via Teams
bit.ly/3ZAPyB8
or call 872-701-0185
conference ID 443069722#

ROSEBURG VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Oregon
Veteran
Events

Women Veterans Conference May 20 - 21, 2023



2023 OREGON WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE
Stronger Together. Voices of Service

REGISTER NOW!
MAY 20-21, 2023
Salem Convention Center

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs is excited to announce the return of the Oregon Women Veterans Conference which will be held in-person, welcoming women veterans from all eras of military service and from every corner of the state.

The two-day conference will take place at the Salem Convention Center on May 20-21, 2023. Since 1998, this free biennial event has celebrated the contributions, diversity and strength of Oregon's women veteran community, and is the largest gathering of women identifying veterans in the state.

Registration now open at www.wvc.oregonva.com

Sign up to receive 2023 Women Veterans Conference email updates from Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs [Subscribe](#)

The Tribal Veterans Service Office is a program under Community Programs in the Social Services Department. This program is separate and apart from the Veterans Special Events Board.



TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE



As the Tribal Veterans Service Officer, my primary role is to:

- ◆ Assist tribal veterans, community veterans and their family members with VA claims and advocate on their behalf.
- ◆ File service-connected disability claims on behalf of tribal veterans and community veterans.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans Special Event Board is a Native American Veteran organization to represent The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

The Board:

In addition, I create programming intended to provide:

- ◇ Information and education
- ◇ Opportunities for engagement
- ◇ Outreach
- ◇ Cultural opportunities

- ⇒ Performs Honor Guard (Color Guard) duties around the State
- ⇒ Puts on the annual Marcellus Norwest Veterans Powwow
- ⇒ Assists with community events such as the Roll the Dice Car Show
- ⇒ Oversees the applicants for the Veterans Memorial Wall
- ⇒ Accepts donations and give donations to veterans programs in the community

Facebook Page:
@CTGRTVSO

Facebook Page:
@CTGRVeteransSEB

#ctgrtribalveterans #ctgrhonorsveterans
#ctgrwomenveterans #ctgrtvso #weneedyouhere

Seeking Tribal Member Purple Heart Veterans

Tribal Veterans!

Were you awarded a Purple Heart?

Contact the TVSO if you wish to share that information.

I would like to recognize you.

Deadline to Submit:

May 31, 2023

Save the Date - Upcoming Tribal Events

Veterans Memorial Wall Name Ceremony

West Valley Veterans Memorial ~ Date / Time TBD

Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow

Uyxat Powwow Grounds ~ July 7, 8, and 9, 2023

PACT Act Claims Workshop - Tentative

Uyxat Powwow Grounds ~ July 7, 2023

New - Veterans COMPACT Act of 2020 (effective January 17, 2023)

VA now allows veterans in acute suicidal crisis to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost. Under the COMPACT Act of 2020 (the final policy took effect on January 17, 2023) will allow VA to :

- ⇒ Provide, pay for, or reimburse for treatment of eligible individuals' emergency suicidal care, transportation costs, and follow-up care at an inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for 90 days.
- ⇒ Make appropriate referrals for care following the period of emergency suicide care
- ⇒ Determine eligibility for other VA services and benefits.
- ⇒ Refer eligible individuals to appropriate VA programs and for benefits following the period of emergency suicide care.
- ⇒ Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

Starting January 17, Veterans in suicidal crises can go to any health care facility, at VA or in the community, for free emergency health care – including transportation costs, inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days, and outpatient care for up to 90 days, including social work.

It is important that your visit to a community emergency room be reported to VA as soon as possible because it allows VA to assist in coordinating your care or transfer, and it helps ensure that administrative and clinical requirements for VA to pay for the care are met.

Inform your Emergency Provider to Report Your Emergency Treatment to VA

- Providers should report your emergency treatment through VA's Emergency Care Reporting (ECR) portal, <https://EmergencyCareReporting.CommunityCare.va.gov>, or by calling 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842).
- They also need to contact the local VA medical center (VAMC) to coordinate follow-on care and transfer activities, if necessary.

Important Information

New - Oregon Veteran Dental Program

Contact Cassandra (C.J.)
Rhamy at GRHW at
(503) 879-1359 with any
questions or if you need
assistance filling out the
application.

Program Eligibility

Description:

Who is eligible for the program?

People who:

- Live in Oregon;
- Are not eligible for OHP (Medicaid);
- Are a veteran as described in **Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 408.225**, except the veteran may be discharged or released under honorable conditions or other conditions; and
- Have income at or below 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Once determined eligible for the Veteran Dental Program, veterans will need to provide discharge documentation. To view the list of discharge documents accepted by OHA/ODHS, visit this Veterans Administration website.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Oregon Veteran Dental program has the same dental care as OHP Plus, such as:

- Teeth cleanings
- Filling and extractions
- Emergency dental care
- Some dentures

<https://www.oregon.gov/odva/Benefits/Pages/Dental.aspx>



Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs; Notice of Meeting

April 4, 5, and 6, 2023 at Seven Feathers Resort or Virtual (link below)

The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary on all matters relating to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, and Native American Veterans. The meetings are open to the public (virtually) and will be recorded. Members of the public can attend the meeting by joining the Zoom meeting at the link below. The Secretary will be attending Day 2.

Meeting Link:

<https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/j.php?MTID=m84b407c76887afa5d1db9bb499c27d64>


PACT Act - What Are Toxics?

The PACT Act stands for: Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive **Toxics** (PACT) Act of 2022. This legislation encompasses **toxics** of all types (see list below). Keep this in mind when deciding whether to file a claim:

Below are examples of toxics to which servicemembers may have been exposed during service:

- Chemicals (Herbicides, pesticides, industrial solvents)
- Radiation (nuclear weapons, depleted uranium)
- Air pollutants (burn pit smoke, particulate matter)
- Occupational hazards (asbestos, lead, paint, fuels)
- Warfare agents (mustard gas, nerve agents, biological weapons)
- Other garrison exposures (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, volatile organic compounds, solvents, paints, fuels)

If you believe you were exposed to toxins in service but;

- ◇ You did not serve in one of the presumptive locations previously shown, and / or
- ◇ You did not serve during one of the time periods shown, and / or
- ◇ You have a disability related to exposure, but it's not one of the presumptive disabilities previously shown... 

**If you aren't
sure, file a
claim anyway!**

Filing A Successful Regular Claim for VA Benefits

To file a successful claim, you need **three** things:

- 1) A current, diagnosed disability and
- 2) An in-service event, injury, or illness; and
- 3) A medical nexus between the current disability and the in-service event, injury, or illness (a link between 1 and 2).

Documents Needed to Prove Your Claim:

- 1) Your medical diagnosis, information, and records
- 2) Your military medical records if you have them
- 3) Any and all documentation that could help support your claim

Filing a Claim for Presumptive Conditions

Ask yourself the following questions

(refer to p. 8 or 9) :

- Have I served in any of the identified **presumptive locations**? **And,**
- Have I served during the identified **presumptive time periods** for that location? **And,**
- Am I diagnosed with a **chronic illness** from the presumptive lists ?

Bring the evidence you have to show proof of these three elements to your claim appointment.

If you do not have all the needed documents, you can also submit an “Intent to File” Form by setting up an appointment with me. Or, call 1-800-827-1000. This will preserve your filing date for up to a year while you gather your documents.

Are you ready to file your claim?

If so, you can file multiple ways:

- ⇒ Set up an appointment with me or an accredited representative in your state
- ⇒ Gather all of the items from the “Documents Needed” (on p.6) or,
- ⇒ Go online and file through your VA.Gov Online Account or,
- ⇒ By Mail or,
- ⇒ Drop off your application and documents at the nearest Regional Office (check in your state).

Where to get help from VBA:

- (800) 827-1000
- 100 SW Main Street, 2nd floor, Portland
- [Vets.force.com/VAVERA](https://vets.force.com/VAVERA)

VBA - Veterans Benefits Administration

How to file a toxic exposure claim:

- Consult an accredited VSO (*strongly recommended*)
 - National VSO
 - State VSO
 - County VSO
- Describe your exposure to toxins
 - VA Form 21-526EZ, Section IV: Exposure Information
- Identify the disability you believe is a result of toxic exposure
 - VA Form 21-526EZ, Section V: Claim Information



Burn Pit and Other Toxic Exposures Presumptive Conditions (added due to PACT)

Burn Pits and Other Toxins

Presumptive Disabilities

(manifested at any time, and to any degree)

- Asthma
- Chronic Sinusitis
- Chronic Rhinitis
- Head cancers **PACT Act**
- Neck cancers **PACT Act**
- Respiratory cancers **PACT Act**
- Gastrointestinal cancers **PACT Act**
- Reproductive cancers (including breast cancer) **PACT Act**
- Lymphoma cancers **PACT Act**
- Lymphomatic cancers **PACT Act**
- Kidney cancer **PACT Act**
- Brain cancer **PACT Act**
- Melanoma **PACT Act**
- Pancreatic cancer **PACT Act**
- Chronic bronchitis **PACT Act**
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease **PACT Act**
- Constrictive or obliterative bronchiolitis **PACT Act**
- Emphysema **PACT Act**
- Granulomatous disease **PACT Act**
- Interstitial lung disease **PACT Act**
- Pleuritis **PACT Act**
- Pulmonary fibrosis **PACT Act**
- Sarcoidosis **PACT Act**
- Glioblastoma **PACT Act**

Gulf War Veterans

Presumptive Disabilities

- Undiagnosed Illnesses like:
 - Abnormal weight loss
 - Fatigue
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - Muscle and joint pain
 - Headache
 - Menstrual disorders
 - Neurological and psychological problems
 - Skin conditions
 - Respiratory disorders
 - Sleep disturbances
- Medically Unexplained Multi-symptom Illnesses like:
 - Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Functional gastrointestinal disorders like IBS, dyspepsia, abdominal pain syndrome

Undiagnosed illnesses and MUCMIs may manifest at any time after service, and to any degree. **PACT Act**

Burn Pits Service Locations

Service Locations and Dates (on or after)

- Iraq (8/2/90)
- Kuwait (8/2/90)
- Saudi Arabia (8/2/90)
- Neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia (8/2/90)
- Bahrain (8/2/90)
- Qatar (8/2/90)
- United Arab Emirates (8/2/90)
- Oman (8/2/90)
- Gulf of Aden (8/2/90)
- Gulf of Oman (8/2/90)
- Persian Gulf (8/2/90)
- Arabian Sea (8/2/90)
- Red Sea (8/2/90)
- Afghanistan (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Syria (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Djibouti (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Uzbekistan (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Somalia (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Egypt (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Lebanon (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Yemen (9/11/01) **PACT Act**
- Jordan (9/11/01) **PACT Act**

Gulf War Veterans

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- Persian Gulf (8/2/90)
- Arabian Sea (8/2/90)
- Red Sea (8/2/90)
- Afghanistan (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Israel (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Syria (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Turkey (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Egypt (8/2/90) **PACT Act**
- Jordan (8/2/90) **PACT Act**



Agent Orange Toxic Exposures Presumptive Conditions (added due to PACT)

Agent Orange Exposed Veterans

Presumptive Disabilities (and Manifestation)

- AL amyloidosis (10% or more)
- Chloracne (10% or more within 1 year of exposure)
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus (none)
- Parkinsonism (none)
- Bladder cancer (none)
- Hypothyroidism (none)
- Hodgkin's disease (10% or more)
- Ischemic heart disease/coronary artery disease (10% or more)
- All chronic B-cell leukemias (10% or more)
- Multiple myeloma (10% or more)
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (10% or more)
- Parkinson's disease (10% or more)
- Early-onset peripheral neuropathy (10% or more within 1 year of exposure)
- Porphyria cutanea tarda (10% or more within 1 year of exposure)
- Prostate cancer (10% or more)
- Respiratory cancers (10% or more)
- Soft-tissue sarcoma (10% or more)
- Hypertension (none) PACT Act
- MGUS (none) PACT Act

Agent Orange Service Locations

Service Locations and Dates

- Vietnam ^(1/9/62 – 5/7/75)
 - Boots on ground
 - Brown waters
 - Blue waters
- Korean DMZ ^(9/1/67 – 8/31/71)
- Thailand US or Royal Thai Base ^(1/9/62 – 6/30/76)
 - Without regard to where on base or MOS PACT Act
- Laos ^(12/1/65 – 9/30/69) PACT Act
- Cambodia at Mimot or Krek ^(4/16/69 – 4/30/69) PACT Act
- American Samoa ^(1/9/62 – 7/31/80) PACT Act
- Guam ^(1/9/62 – 7/31/80) PACT Act
- Johnson Atoll ^(1/1/72 – 9/30/77) PACT Act

Vietnam Veterans - PACT Act Claim - Hypertension Explained

Hypertension Rating Formula Sheet

HOW DISABILITY RATINGS WORK

The VA determines a disability rating after reviewing your service treatment records ("STR"), C&P exam report and any other evidence submitted to them in support of your claim based on the criteria below. You may have one or more symptoms in a higher disability rating, but still receive a lower rating that reflects where MOST of your symptoms are present. If you have multiple injuries, disability ratings are not added together (60%+40%≠100%). The VA has an internal ranking system of injuries that will determine your final disability rating.

RATING FORMULA FOR HYPERTENSION (HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE)

(Hypertensive vascular disease, hypertension and isolated systolic hypertension):

| PERCENTAGE | DESCRIPTION |
|------------|--|
| 60% | If the average diastolic pressure is 130 or more |
| 40% | If the average diastolic pressure is 120 to 129 |
| 20% | If the average diastolic pressure is 110 to 119, or the average systolic pressure is 200 or more |
| 10% | If the average diastolic pressure is 100 to 109, or the average systolic pressure is 160 to 199 or the average diastolic pressure was 100 or more before fully controlled by medication and continuous medication is required to keep the blood pressure under control |

- **Readings are with blood pressure medications.**
- To qualify for a high blood pressure rating, the condition must be clearly documented by the physician. Blood pressure readings must be taken two or more times a day on at least three different days in order for the condition to be officially diagnosed. A blood pressure log of 2 or more readings over 3 or more days qualifies as lay evidence even if not done by a physician.
- **Your Primary Care Physician can give you a home blood pressure machine if requested.**
- A rating under this code cannot be combined with a rating for the underlying condition that caused the high blood pressure. Only the code that allows for the highest rating can be used for the condition such as renal dysfunction (kidney disease).
- A rating for high blood pressure can, however, be used in addition to ratings for hypertensive heart disease and other heart diseases.

Even a 0% service connected non-compensable rating is important if the Veteran were to pass away from a heart condition for survivor benefits (Dependent Indemnity Compensation) if the cause of death listed on the death certificate indicates or in a doctor's letter that service connected hypertension is at least as likely as not (50% chance or greater) a contributing factor in the death.

If you were granted for Hypertension at 0%, you are now considered service-connected for Hypertension; just at a non-compensable percentage (no pay).

If your rating came back at 0% and you feel it should be higher, speak with your physician.

Show your physician the Rating Formula Sheet and speak with them about your blood pressure. The provider can help you figure out what your blood pressure numbers are.

Your medical documentation needs to show that your condition meets the criteria on the rating sheet. We can submit that to VA as new evidence to request a rating higher than 0%.

(Remember, there is no guarantee that VA will rate you higher).

West Valley Memorial



Claim Process Guideline

(each claim is unique and a variety of factors can change this timeline)

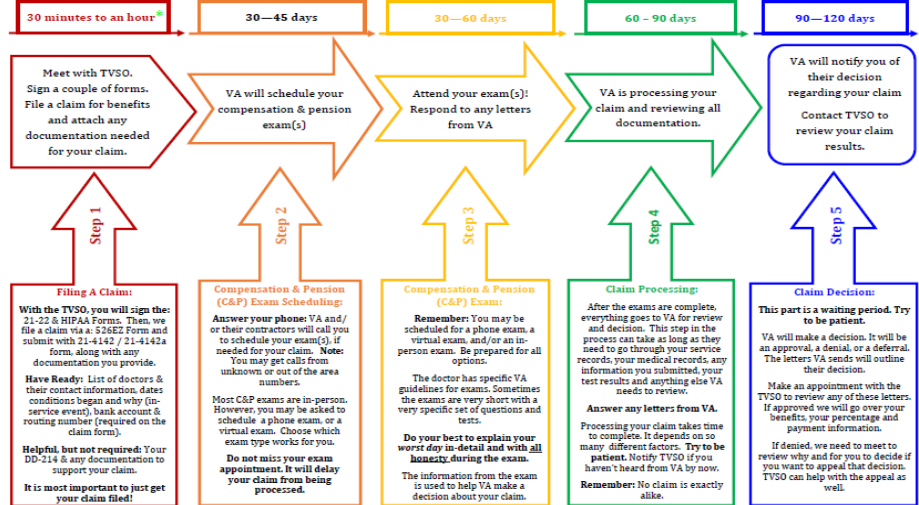
The TVSO is here to walk you through this process. You will not do this alone. Come see me!

2022



VA CLAIM TIMELINE

Do you have an hour? It might change your life...



TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

Community Programs / SSD

Attn: TVSO

9615 Grand Ronde Rd.

Grand Ronde, OR 97347

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE