

Tribal Veterans Service Officer Corner

Greetings Veterans & Family Members!

File your PACT Act claim by August 9, 2023 to be eligible for backdated benefits

There's no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits. But if you file We will be having a larger PACT Act your PACT Act claim—or quickly submit vour intent to fileby August 9, 2023, you may receive benefits backdated to August 10, 2022. So don't wait, ~ Ramona, TVSO apply today.

We have been working on various

events around the PACT Act so you can file all applicable claims and potentially receive backdated benefits if granted.

Please see all the flyers inside this issue.

Claims Event in September as well because we want to get veterans the opportunity to apply for PACT Act service-connection!

(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
- **PACT Presentation**
- **Veterans Honoring**
- Examples of "toxics"
- **PACT Claims Event**
- Clothing Allowance









IT2(SW) ~ United States Navy

Tribal Veterans Service Office Events

Veterans Summit & Resource Fair



Seeking Tribal Member Purple Heart Veterans

Tribal Veterans!

Were you awarded a Purple Heart?

Contact the TVSO to submit your information.

I would like to recognize you.

Deadline to Submit:

June 30, 2023

PACT Act Presentation Friday, July 7, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the Powwow Grounds



ATTENTION VETERANS!

PACT Act Presentation by Portland Veterans Benefits Administration

6 p.m, Friday, July 7, at the Veterans Powwow

Veterans Service Officers will be available to answer questions, to submit Intent to File forms, and potentially file on-the-spot PACT Act claims.

There is no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits. If you file your claim or submit an Intent to File by Aug. 9, 2023, you *may receive benefits backdated to Aug. 10, 2022.

(*If your claim is granted by Veterans Affairs as per their guidelines).

Bring your DD-214!

Save the Date Announcement
We are following up this presentation with a PACT Act Claims Event
at 10 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 28, at the CTGR Community Center.

More information to come!



Make an appointment with your nearest accredited Tribal/Veterans Service Officer. CTGRTribalVSO@GrandRonde.Org

Veterans Honoring at 1 p.m.



1 to 2 p.m. at the Veterans Summit

We will be honoring our Tribal Purple Heart Veterans at the Summit at 1 p.m.

We will also honor other eras of Veterans with a small gift and a moment of recognition.

Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde PACT Act Claims Event

File your PACT Act claim by August 9 to be eligible for backdated benefits

There's no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits. But if you file your PACT Act claim—or quickly submit your intent to file—by **August 9, 2023**, you may receive benefits backdated to August 10, 2022. So don't wait, apply today.



This event will offer a full array of services for veterans to be able to file a claim, get tested for toxic exposure, and get a compensation and pension exam completed all in one day at one location.

File your PACT Act claim by August 9, 2023 to be eligible for backdated benefits

Find your nearest accredited Tribal Veterans Service Officer or County Veterans Service Officer. And file a claim or an Intent to File. If you are not prepared to file a full claim before August 9, 2023, file an Intent to File before that date to preserve your filing date and remain eligible for backdated benefits if granted by VA.

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.

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&F 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):

PERCENTAG	E DESCRIPTION
hypertens reading, to number o	sion refers to both the diastolic and systolic pressure, and systolic ion refers to only the systolic pressure. When looking at a blood pressure he systolic hypertension is the number on top, and the diastolic is the n bottom.
60%	If the average diastolic pressure is 130 or more
400/	If the average diastolic pressure is 120 to 129

number o	n bottom.
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) fit 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).

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....



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

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

Events

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



*Widows of and family members of Veterans also welcome

Contest Powwow



Marcellus Norwest Veterans Powwow



Oregon Events





Important Information

Beneficiary Travel

From Beneficiary Travel: the 30-Day Timely Filing Rule is coming back into effect on Friday, June 9, 2023, meaning eligible Veterans will have 30 days to file their travel claim for reimbursement after an appointment that meets the criteria. More info here: <a href="https://www.va.gov/health-care/get-reimbursed-for-travel-pay/?fbclid=lwAR2hXxg7GV2kDy4rF3wXMiDN9nMwiXBrGXlCb-iPSg7eL4MW0HRPPrhrHRY#:~:text=VA%20travel%20pay%20reimbursement%20pays,how%20to%20file%20a%20claim

Another note: Travel Reimbursement is going paperless. To add your direct deposit account go to: https://www.cep.fsc.va.gov/ or If you do not have a bank account, apply for a Direct Express card at Go Direct® - Home https://godirect.gov/gpw/

More info here: https://www.va.gov/health-care/get-reimbursed-for-travel-pay/?
fbclid=lwAR2hXxg7GV2kDy4rF3wXMiDN9nMwiXBrGXICb-iPSg7eL4MW0HRPPrhrHRY#:~:text=VA%20travel%20pay%20reimbursement%20pays,how%20to%20file%20a%20claim

Annual Clothing Allowance

Clothing Allowance - VA Form 10-8678—Must submit before August 1st!!

Has your clothing been damaged by your prosthetic or orthopedic device (such as a wheelchair) or by the medicine you're taking for a skin condition? If it has, you may be able to get money each year to help you buy new clothes. This is a disability compensation benefit known as an annual clothing allowance. Find out if you can get this benefit.

https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/special-claims/clothing-allowance/

Introduction

Military service members can receive expedited processing of disability claims from Social Security. Benefits available through us are different from those available through the Department of Veterans Affairs and require a separate application.

The expedited process is used for military service members whose disability occurred while on active military duty on or after October 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs.

What is Social Security's definition of disability?

By law, we have a very strict definition of disability:

- You must be unable to do substantial work because of your medical condition(s).
- Your medical condition(s) must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least 1 year or to result in death.

While some programs give money to people with partial disability or short-term disability, we do not.

Download your VA Decision Letters

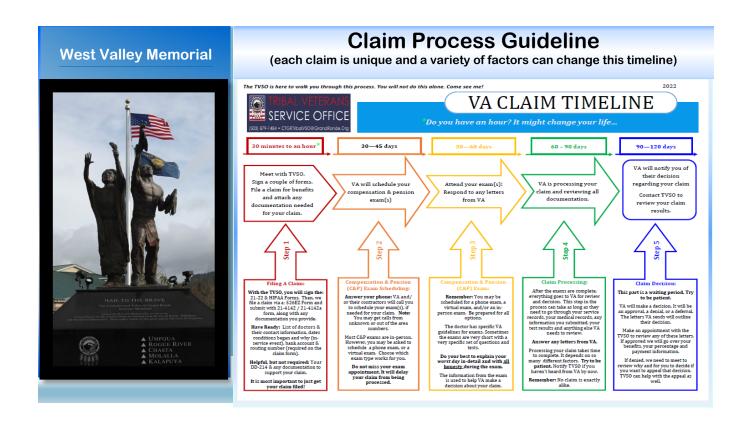
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9TKxj3P-A4

Disability Benefits for Wounded Warriors

Did you know that *100% service-connected total and permanent disabled veterans can submit a copy of their letter stating their disability to Social Security when they apply? This letter will be used as evidence to support your request for Social Security benefits and may potentially expedite your request.

(*Being 100% service-connected total and permanently disabled doesn't guarantee approval of Social Security benefits).

For more information: https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10030.pdf





Community Programs / SSD Attn: TVSO 9615 Grand Ronde Rd. Grand Ronde, OR 97347 PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE