



FAQs: Previously Awarded Benefits and PACT Act

Background: The PACT Act establishes new disabilities for Veterans based on exposure to toxins. This means that Veterans will not need to prove that a claimed disability for specific illnesses is related to service, if they served in a recognized location that exposed the Veteran to toxins.

Will signing up for new benefits affect my old ones?

No. Veterans who currently receive compensation for a service-connected condition(s) will not have their previously awarded claims re-adjudicated simply because they file for new benefits under the PACT Act.

If I'm already receiving benefits for one of these conditions, do I need to file a new claim?

No, unless your condition has worsened. Veterans who are already service connected for any of the PACT Act presumptive conditions, such as asthma, need not file a new claim related to that illness unless their condition has worsened. Otherwise, the PACT Act does not change their existing benefits.

Can I request to have a previously rated disability reevaluated?

Yes. A Veteran can request to have their previously rated disability reevaluated. If that request is made, and the disability exam actually demonstrates improvement, VA is required to provide the Veteran notice of proposed changes to their disability rating. If the Veteran disagrees with the reevaluation, they will have time and opportunity to submit additional medical evidence to show the disability has not actually improved.

Does it cost anything to file a claim?

No. Filing claims is 100% free. VA encourages Veterans to work with a qualified Veterans Service Organization (VSO) at no cost to the Veteran to review their VA disability compensation benefits and submit new claims for conditions that are not already service connected. For tips on how to avoid scams, visit <https://www.va.gov/files/2022-10/Pact%20Act%20Scams%20information.pdf>.

When can I expect these new benefits?

VA will begin processing and deciding claims based on the PACT ACT on **January 1, 2023**.

What is an effective date?

The date which the VA uses as a start date to pay you for your claim. Conditions outlined in the PACT Act have already taken a serious toll on many Veterans and their families. To ensure Veterans, their families, and Survivors receive the benefits they have earned, VA is considering all conditions established in the PACT Act to be presumptive as of August 10, 2022, the date President



Biden signed the bill into law. We are encouraging Veterans to file a PACT Act claim before the one-year mark, August 10, 2023, to preserve that effective date. If Veterans file after this date, their effective date for payment will be whatever date they file their claims on.

Our Commitment

VA and our partners in the Veterans Service Organization (VSO) community have a common goal of improving the lives of Veterans impacted by service-related diseases and disabilities. VA encourages Veterans to work with a qualified VSO **at no cost** to the Veteran to review their VA disability compensation benefits and submit new claims for conditions that are not already service connected.

For more than seven decades, VA has been committed to serving Veterans, their families, Caregivers and Survivors and ensuring they get the benefits they deserve. Today, VA is delivering more benefits to more Veterans faster than ever before. All of us at VA across the country strongly encourage Veterans and Survivors to apply now for benefits under the PACT Act.

We encourage all Veterans and Survivors to apply for benefits today, to visit www.va.gov/PACT, or call us at 1-800-MyVA411 to learn more about what this bill means for them and their families.