

Deadline to receive backdated benefits for PACT Act approaching soon

You need to apply or submit an intent to apply before Aug. 9. If you need help filling out an application, there's help available.

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Published: 8:38 PM EDT August 3, 2023

Updated: 8:38 PM EDT August 3, 2023

DUBLIN, Ga. — According to the [Veterans Affairs website](#), The PACT Act is was signed a year ago by President Biden that "expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances."

If you submit an intent to file or apply by Wednesday, Aug. 9, you can be eligible for a year of backdated benefits.

The [VA's website](#) said, "The PACT Act adds to the list of health conditions that we assume (or 'presume') are caused by exposure to these substances."

Normally in order to receive a VA disability rating, your disability needs to be connected to military service.

However, for some conditions, it's assumed (or presumed) that your service caused your condition. These are called "presumptive conditions."

These cancers are considered presumptive conditions:

- Brain cancer
- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Head cancer of any type
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Neck cancer of any type
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type

Additionally, these are also considered presumptive conditions:

- 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

This list is not every condition that may make you eligible for the PACT Act. For the full list, visit this [website](#).

According to the Dublin VA Medical Center's Keith Griffin, those benefits include both monetary and health benefits. You can apply for yourself, and surviving family members can also apply on behalf of someone.

He said he encourages anyone who's on the fence about applying to take action sooner than later.

"I feel like a lot of times we're on the fence and instead of us taking that next step, trying to get to the subject matter expert, we just sort of waver and waver and then per say the deadline passes," Griffin said.

If you're ready, you can apply at this [link](#) for the PACT Act.

You can also find information to file an intent to claim at this [link](#).

If you're applying on behalf of a family member, you can find more information at this [link](#).

Additionally, you can also stop by the Georgia Department of Veterans Service or call the VA at 1-800-698-2411 for more information.

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