

# Toxic Exposure: New Pathways for Veterans to Establish Service Connection



## The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act and what it means for you.

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act creates new pathways for veterans to establish service connection for more than 20 disabilities associated with burn pit exposure. Effective immediately, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will begin recognizing these disabilities for veterans with a history of service at specific times and places.

### A SUCCESSFUL CLAIM FOR SERVICE CONNECTION UNDER THIS NEW LAW WILL INCLUDE TWO COMPONENTS:

1

**Service in a specified time and location.**

2

**Diagnosis of a specified condition after service.**

If a veteran can show the following, VA will presume that the condition is connected to their service and disability compensation can be granted:

**Time and Location:** A veteran must show service in an area of known toxic exposure. The new law recognizes service in the following locations:

Time	Location
On or after August 2, 1990	Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia (new), or U.A.E.
On or after September 11, 2001	Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt (new), Jordan (new), Lebanon (new), Syria, Yemen (new), or Uzbekistan

**Disability Diagnosis:** A veteran must have a currently diagnosed medical condition from the following list of more than 20 presumptive disabilities:

### Diagnosed medical conditions

- ★ Brain cancer
- ★ Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- ★ Glioblastoma
- ★ Head cancer of any type
- ★ Kidney cancer
- ★ Lymphatic cancer of any type
- ★ Lymphoma of any type
- ★ Melanoma
- ★ Neck cancer of any type
- ★ Pancreatic cancer
- ★ Reproductive cancer of any type
- ★ Respiratory cancer of any type
- ★ 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

The Honoring Our Pact Act also establishes a presumption of exposure to burn pits and other toxic substances for all veterans who served in the specified times and locations.

Eligible veterans who filed claims for one of the listed conditions and were previously denied are encouraged to file a Supplemental Claim. Claims that are currently pending require no action and will be considered on a presumptive basis.

*Note: Only claims for dependency and indemnity compensation that were previously denied may be eligible for retroactive payments.*

## ★ ★ ★ HOW CAN VETERANS LEARN MORE? ★ ★ ★

**For further questions or guidance, the Wounded Warrior Project Benefits (WWP) team and Resource Center are here to help at:**

**resourcecenter@woundedwarriorproject.org**  
**888.WWP.ALUM (997.2586) | 904.405.1213 | Fax: 904.405.1301**  
**woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/benefits-service**