Live page: <https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/specific-environmental-hazards/>

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[Meta description] VA disability compensation provides tax-free monthly payments. If you have an illness or other health condition that’s connected to an exposure to burn pits or other specific toxic hazards in the air, soil, or water during your service, you may be eligible. Read this page to learn more.

# H1: **Exposure to burn pits and other specific environmental hazards**

[Intro] VA disability compensation provides tax-free monthly payments. If you have a health condition caused by exposure to burn pits or other specific hazards in the air, soil, or water during your service, you may be eligible. Read this page to learn more.

## **[H2] Am I eligible for VA disability compensation?**

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you meet these 3 requirements.

**All of these must be true:**

* You have a diagnosed illness or other health condition that’s caused by exposure to a specific toxic hazard in the air, soil, or water, **and**
* You served on active duty in a location that exposed you to the hazard, **and**
* You didn’t receive a dishonorable discharge

**Here are some ways you may have had exposure to specific environmental hazards:**

* Burn pits and other toxic exposures in Afghanistan, Iraq, and certain other areas
* A large sulfur fire at Mishraq State Sulfur Mine near Mosul, Iraq
* Hexavalent chromium at the Qarmat Ali water treatment plant in Basra, Iraq
* Pollutants from a waste incinerator near the Naval Air Facility at Atsugi, Japan

**Note:** Getting a disability rating may also make you eligible for VA health care and other benefits.

Keep reading to learn more about the conditions we’ve determined are connected to burn pit and other toxins in Afghanistan, Iraq, and certain other areas. We call these presumptive conditions.

## **[H2] What does it mean to have a presumptive condition for toxic exposure?**

To get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For many health conditions, you need to prove that your service caused your condition.

But for some conditions, we automatically assume (or “presume”) that your service caused your condition. We call these “presumptive conditions.”

We consider a condition presumptive when it’s established by law or regulation.

If you have a presumptive condition, you don’t need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

## **[H2] What burn pit and other toxic exposure conditions are now presumptive?**

We’ve added more than 20 burn pit and other toxic exposure presumptive conditions based on the PACT Act. The full name of the law is the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022. This change expands benefits for Gulf War era and post-9/11 Veterans.

### **[H3] These cancers are now presumptive**

* 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 cancer of any type

[Learn more about presumptive cancers related to burn pits](https://www.va.gov/resources/presumptive-cancers-related-to-burn-pit-exposure)

### **[h3] These illnesses are now presumptive**

* 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

## **[H2] How do I know if I have a presumptive exposure to burn pits?**

If you served in any of these locations and time periods, we’ve determined that you had exposure to burn pits or other toxins. We call this having a presumption of exposure.

### **[h3] On or after September 11, 2001**

If you served in any of these locations on or after September 11, 2001, you have a presumption of exposure to burn pits or other toxins.

* Afghanistan
* Djibouti
* Egypt
* Jordan
* Lebanon
* Syria
* Uzbekistan
* Yemen
* The airspace above any of these locations

### **[h3] On or after August 2, 1990**

If you served in any of these locations on or after August 2, 1990, you have a presumption of exposure to burn pits or other toxins.

* Bahrain
* Iraq
* Kuwait
* Oman
* Qatar
* Saudi Arabia
* Somalia
* United Arab Emirates (UAE)
* The airspace above any of these locations

If you served in any of these locations on or after August 2, 1990, you have a presumption of exposure to burn pits or other toxins.

* Arabian Sea
* Gulf of Aden
* Gulf of Oman
* Neutral zone between Iraq/Saudi Arabia
* Persian Gulf
* Red Sea

## **[H2] What if my condition or active-duty service location isn’t listed here?**

You can still apply for disability compensation. If your condition or service location isn’t listed here, you’ll need to submit more evidence to show how your condition connects to your service.

[Learn more about what evidence you’ll need to submit](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/evidence-needed)

## **[H2] How do I file a claim for compensation?**

### **[h3] If you haven’t filed a claim yet for the presumptive condition**

You can file a new claim online now. You can also file by mail, in person, or with the help of a trained professional.

**[Action link]** [**File for disability compensation online**](https://www.va.gov/disability/file-disability-claim-form-21-526ez/)

[Learn about other ways to file a disability compensation claim](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim)

[Learn how to submit your intent to file](https://www.va.gov/resources/your-intent-to-file-a-va-claim/)

### **[H3] If we denied your disability claim in the past and we now consider your condition presumptive**

You can file a Supplemental Claim. We’ll review your case again.

[Find out how to file a Supplemental Claim](https://www.va.gov/decision-reviews/supplemental-claim)

## **[H2] What if I need help filing my claim?**

You can get help from an accredited attorney, claims agent, or Veterans Service Organization (VSO) representative.

[Get help filing a claim](https://www.va.gov/get-help-from-accredited-representative)

## **[H2] What if I have a pending claim for a condition that’s now presumptive?**

You don’t need to do anything. If we added your condition after you filed your claim, we’ll still consider it presumptive. We’ll send you a decision notice when we complete our review.

## **More helpful information**

### [**Eligibility for VA health care**](https://www.va.gov/health-care/eligibility)

We’ve extended the period of health care enhanced eligibility for Gulf War era and post-9/11 combat Veterans. Find out if you may be eligible and how to apply.

### [**The PACT Act and your VA benefits**](https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits)

The PACT Act expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. Learn what this means for you or your loved ones.

### [**How to apply for a discharge upgrade**](https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/)

If you received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable discharge, you may not be eligible for some VA benefits. Find out how to apply for a discharge upgrade and other options.