

PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION ELIGIBILITY



WHAT IS PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION?

For some conditions and certain disabilities, VA automatically assumes (or “presumes”) that your service caused your condition. We call these presumptive conditions. This is because of the unique circumstances of a specific Veteran’s military service. If Veterans are diagnosed with a presumptive condition and meet the service requirements for the presumption, then disability compensation may be awarded.

Additionally, when a Veteran’s cause of death is a presumptive condition and the service requirements are met, the Veteran’s surviving spouse, dependent children, or parents may qualify for service-connected death benefits, to include Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and burial benefits.

WHAT ARE PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS?

Presumptive conditions are established by law or regulation, which provides a link to the Veteran’s military service, reducing the evidentiary burden on the Veteran. These conditions are considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by military service if manifested to a certain severity level within a specific timeframe, if applicable—even if there is no evidence of such disease during military service. Veterans who served in recognized locations during timeframes in which toxic exposure occurred do not need to prove actual exposure or a link between the claimed condition and exposure.

CHRONIC (LONG-LASTING) CONDITIONS

The following chronic conditions are presumptive if the disease manifests in the specified timeframe and the Veteran served continuously for at least 90 days.

WITHIN ONE YEAR OF RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY:

- » Anemia, primary
- » Arteriosclerosis
- » Arthritis

- » Atrophy, progressive muscular
- » Brain hemorrhage
- » Brain thrombosis
- » Bronchiectasis
- » Calculi of the kidney, bladder, or gallbladder
- » Cardiovascular-renal disease, including hypertension
- » Cirrhosis of the liver
- » Coccidioidomycosis
- » Diabetes mellitus
- » Encephalitis lethargica residuals
- » Endocarditis
- » Endocrinopathies
- » Epilepsies
- » Hodgkin’s disease
- » Leukemia
- » Lupus erythematosus, systemic
- » Myasthenia gravis
- » Myelitis
- » Myocarditis
- » Nephritis
- » Other organic diseases of the nervous system
- » Osteitis deformans (Paget’s disease)
- » Osteomalacia
- » Palsy, bulbar
- » Paralysis agitans
- » Psychoses
- » Purpura idiopathic, hemorrhagic
- » Raynaud’s disease
- » Sarcoidosis
- » Scleroderma
- » Sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral (ALS)
- » Syringomyelia
- » Thromboangiitis obliterans (Buerger’s disease)
- » Tumors, malignant, or of the brain or spinal cord or peripheral nerves
- » Ulcers, peptic (gastric or duodenal)

WITHIN THREE YEARS OF RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY:

- » Tuberculosis
- » Hansen's disease (leprosy)

WITHIN SEVEN YEARS OF RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY:

- » Multiple sclerosis

ANY TIME AFTER RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY:

- » Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)

CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH HAZARDOUS EXPOSURES

Veterans may have been exposed to chemical hazards or other hazardous materials if they served in specific locations during a specific time period.

- » **Vietnam Era Veterans:** The following conditions are presumptive due to herbicide/Agent Orange exposure for Veterans who served in specific locations and time periods:



PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS	LOCATIONS AND TIME PERIODS
• Chloracne or other acne-form disease consistent with chloracne* • Soft-tissue sarcoma, other than ○ Osteosarcoma ○ Chondrosarcoma ○ Kaposi's sarcoma, or ○ Mesothelioma • Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL) • Porphyria cutanea tarda (PCT)* • Hodgkin's disease • Respiratory cancers of the ○ Lung ○ Bronchus ○ Larynx, or ○ Trachea, and • Multiple myeloma • Prostate cancer, and • Type 2 diabetes mellitus (also known as Type II diabetes mellitus or adult-onset diabetes) • Chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) • AL amyloidosis • Ischemic heart disease (IHD) (including, but not limited to, acute, subacute, and old myocardial infarction; atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease including coronary artery disease (including coronary spasm) and coronary bypass surgery; and stable, unstable and Prinzmetal's angina) • All chronic B-cell leukemias (including, but not limited to, hairy-cell leukemia and chronic lymphocytic leukemia), and • Parkinson's disease • Early-onset peripheral neuropathy* • Parkinsonism • Bladder cancer • Hypothyroidism • Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) • Hypertension	• Republic of Vietnam (to include territorial waters within 12 nautical miles of shore) from January 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975 • Service in the Air Force or Air Force Reserve when the individual concerned regularly and repeatedly operated, maintained, or served onboard C-123 aircraft known to have been used to spray an herbicide agent during the Vietnam era • Korean DMZ from September 1, 1967, to August 31, 1971 • Thailand at any United States or Royal Thai base, without regard to where on the base the Veteran was located or what military occupational specialty the Veteran performed, from January 9, 1962, to June 30, 1976 • Laos from December 1, 1965, to September 30, 1969 • Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province, from April 16, 1969, to April 30, 1969 • Guam or American Samoa, or in the territorial waters thereof from January 9, 1962, to July 31, 1980 • Served on Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from January 1, 1972, to September 30, 1977

Note: Conditions marked with an asterisk (*) must have manifested within one year of exposure.

» **Gulf War and Post-9/11 Veterans:** The following conditions are presumptive for Veterans who served in specific locations and time periods:



PRESUMPTIVE INFECTIOUS DISEASES	LOCATIONS AND TIME PERIODS
• Manifest within one year of separation: ○ Brucellosis ○ Campylobacter jejuni ○ Coxiella burnetii (Q fever) ○ Nontyphoid Salmonella ○ Shigella ○ West Nile virus ○ Malaria (or when accepted treatises indicate the incubation period began during a qualifying period of service) • Manifest at any time after separation: ○ Mycobacterium tuberculosis ○ Visceral leishmaniasis	• Service in the following locations (Southwest Asia theater of operations) and the airspace above during the Persian Gulf War on or after August 2, 1990: ○ Iraq ○ Kuwait ○ Saudi Arabia ○ the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia ○ Bahrain ○ Qatar ○ the United Arab Emirates ○ Oman ○ the Gulf of Aden ○ the Gulf of Oman ○ the Persian Gulf ○ the Arabian Sea ○ the Red Sea • Service in Afghanistan on or after September 19, 2001 (airspace not included)



UNDIAGNOSED ILLNESS AND MEDICALLY UNEXPLAINED CHRONIC MULTI-SYMPTOM ILLNESSES	LOCATIONS AND TIME PERIODS
• Chronic disability resulting from an undiagnosed illness or combination of undiagnosed illnesses that exists for six months or more • A medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illness (MUCMI) that exists for six months or more, such as: ○ Chronic fatigue syndrome ○ Fibromyalgia ○ Functional gastrointestinal disorders, including irritable bowel syndrome (structural gastrointestinal diseases, such as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), are not included) Note: Signs or symptoms that may be manifestations of undiagnosed illness or medically unexplained chronic multisymptom illness include, but are not limited to: ○ Fatigue ○ Skin symptoms ○ Headaches ○ Muscle pain ○ Joint pain ○ Neurological or neuropsychological symptoms ○ Symptoms involving the upper or lower respiratory system ○ Sleep disturbances ○ Gastrointestinal symptoms ○ Cardiovascular symptoms ○ Abnormal weight loss ○ Menstrual disorders	• Service in the following locations (Southwest Asia theater of operations) and the airspace above (unless otherwise noted) during the Persian Gulf War on or after August 2, 1990: ○ Iraq ○ Kuwait ○ Saudi Arabia ○ the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia ○ Bahrain ○ Qatar ○ the United Arab Emirates ○ Oman ○ the Gulf of Aden ○ the Gulf of Oman ○ the Persian Gulf ○ the Arabian Sea ○ the Red Sea ○ Afghanistan* ○ Egypt* ○ Israel* ○ Jordan* ○ Turkey* ○ Syria* Note: *airspace not included.



CONDITIONS BASED ON PRESUMED EXPOSURE TO BURN PITS/FINE PARTICULATE MATTER

- Asthma
- Chronic sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis)
- Chronic rhinitis
- 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
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic bronchitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Granulomatous disease
- Interstitial lung disease
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis
- Urinary bladder cancer, including over-lapping sites of the bladder
- Ureter cancer, including the ureteric orifice, and urachus
- Acute leukemias
- Chronic leukemias
- Multiple myelomas, including monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance
- Myelodysplastic Syndromes
- Myelofibrosis

LOCATIONS AND TIME PERIODS

- Service in the following locations (Southwest Asia theater of operations) and the airspace above during the Persian Gulf War beginning August 2, 1990:
 - Iraq
 - Kuwait
 - Saudi Arabia
 - the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia
 - Bahrain
 - Qatar
 - the United Arab Emirates
 - Oman
 - the Gulf of Aden
 - the Gulf of Oman
 - the Persian Gulf
 - the Arabian Sea
 - the Red Sea
 - Somalia
- Service in the following locations, including airspace above, beginning September 11, 2001:
 - Afghanistan
 - Egypt
 - Jordan
 - Lebanon
 - Syria
 - Yemen
 - Djibouti
 - Uzbekistan

- » **Veterans Exposed to Mustard Gas and Lewisite:** The following conditions are presumptive for Veterans who were exposed to specific vesicant agents during active military service under the circumstances described:

 PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS	EXPOSURE TO VESICANT AGENT
• Chronic conjunctivitis • Keratitis • Corneal opacities • Scar formation at the exposure site • Squamous cell carcinoma of the skin • Nasopharyngeal cancer • Lung cancer (except mesothelioma) • Laryngeal cancer	• Full-body exposure to nitrogen or sulfur mustard
• Chronic laryngitis • Chronic bronchitis • Emphysema • Asthma • Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	• Full-body exposure to nitrogen, sulfur mustard, or Lewisite
• Acute nonlymphocytic leukemia	• Full-body exposure to nitrogen mustard

- » **Veterans Stationed at Camp Lejeune:** The following conditions are presumptive for Veterans who served at least 30 days (consecutive or nonconsecutive) at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953, to December 31, 1987:



PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS

- Adult leukemia
- Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease

- » **Radiation Exposed Veterans:** The following conditions are presumptive due to ionizing radiation exposure for Veterans who meet the service requirements including, but not limited to the following:

	PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS*
	• All forms of leukemia, except chronic lymphocytic leukemia • Thyroid cancer • Breast cancer • Pharynx cancer • Esophageal cancer • Stomach cancer • Small intestine cancer • Pancreatic cancer • Bile duct cancer • Gall bladder cancer • Salivary gland cancer • Urinary tract cancer (kidneys, renal pelvis, ureters, urinary bladder, and urethra) • Brain cancer • Bone cancer • Lung cancer • Colon cancer • Ovarian cancer • Liver cancer (except if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated) • Bronchioloalveolar carcinoma • Multiple myeloma • Lymphomas (except Hodgkin's disease)	• Onsite participation in a test involving the atmospheric detonation of a nuclear device • Service in Hiroshima or Nagasaki from August 6, 1945, through July 1, 1946 • Service before February 1, 1992, at a diffusion plant in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio or Oak Ridge, Tennessee • Service before January 1, 1974, at Amchitka Island, Alaska • Service in a capacity which would qualify the individual for inclusion as a member of the Special Exposure Cohort • Cleanup of Enewetak Atoll from January 1, 1977, through December 31, 1980 • Cleanup of the Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons off the coast of Palomares, Spain from January 17, 1966, through March 31, 1967 • Response to the fire onboard an Air Force B-52 bomber Thule Air Force Base in Greenland from January 21, 1968, through September 25, 1968

* The service requirements listed above are not all inclusive. Refer to [38 § C.F.R. 3.309\(d\)](#) for detailed information regarding service requirements.

- » **Former Prisoners of War POWs:** The following conditions are presumptive for former POWs at any time after separation from service:

	PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS
	• Avitaminosis* • Beriberi (including beriberi heart disease)* • Chronic dysentery* • Helminthiasis* • Malnutrition (including optic atrophy associated with malnutrition)* • Any other nutritional deficiency* • Pellagra* • Psychosis • Any of the anxiety states • Dysthymic disorder (or depressive neurosis) • Organic residuals of frostbite, if it is determined that the Veteran was interned in climatic conditions consistent with the occurrence of frostbite • Post-traumatic osteoarthritis • Irritable bowel syndrome* • Peptic ulcer disease* • Peripheral neuropathy, except where directly related to infectious causes* • Stroke and its complications • Cirrhosis of the liver* • Atherosclerotic heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease) and their complications (including myocardial infarction, congestive heart failure, arrhythmia) • Osteoporosis* (if the Veteran has a diagnosis of PTSD then the requirement of at least 30 days of internment or detention does not apply) Note: Conditions marked with an asterisk (*) require at least 30 days of internment or detention.

TROPICAL DISEASES

The following conditions are presumptive for Veterans who meet the required active-duty service requirements:



PRESUMPTIVE CONDITIONS	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS
• Amebiasis • Blackwater fever • Cholera • Dracontiasis • Dysentery • Filariasis • Leishmaniasis, including kala-azar • Loiasis • Malaria • Onchocerciasis • Oroya fever • Pinta • Plague • Schistosomiasis • Yaws • Yellow fever • Resultant disorders or diseases originating because of therapy administered in connection with such diseases or as a preventative thereof	• 6 months or more of active, continuous service before January 1, 1947 • 90 days or more of active, continuous service on or after January 1, 1947, or during any period of war

OTHER DISEASES

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is also subject to presumptive service connection within fourteen days following the date of separation from a qualifying period of service:

- » active duty from March 1, 2020, until January 5, 2024
- » active duty for training (ADT) under Title 10 or full-time National Guard duty (as defined in Section 101 of Title 10) under orders issued on or after March 13, 2020, until January 5, 2024
- » certain periods of inactive duty for training (IADT) during which COVID-19 is presumed to have been incurred occurring between March 13, 2020, and January 5, 2024.