



City of Boston
Office of Veterans' Services
43 Hawkins Street, Boston, MA 02114

A Statement From the Commissioner
Information on The PACT Act and VA Claims

March 9, 2023

In a historic move toward comprehensive healthcare for veterans, the PACT Act, or the "Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins" Act, was signed into law by President Biden. The PACT Act expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. Since it was signed by President Biden, Veterans and survivors have filed more than 1 million claims. This is over a 20% increase in claims than at the same period last year.

It is important to make sure every veteran knows about these new toxic exposure benefits and how to file a claim. I urge veterans to apply for toxic exposure benefits and care as soon as possible. ***Applying for these benefits before August 10, 2023 will ensure benefits are backdated to August 10, 2022*** when President Biden Signed the bill into law.

These benefits are hard earned so I want to make it very clear that you ***DO NOT*** have to pay someone or hire a lawyer to apply for VA benefits. Applying for VA benefits is easy and most importantly free of charge. All you have to do is contact your local Veterans' Services Officer.

Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare should undergo a toxic exposure screening at their local VA facility. This will give veterans access to specialists and address the many cases not previously known. If a veteran is not enrolled in VA healthcare, I urged them to do so by visiting their local VA Healthcare System to enroll. In Boston you can contact us or go to either the Jamaica Plain VA Medical Center or the West Roxbury VA Medical Center.

If you want information on enrolling in VA Healthcare, filing a VA Disability claim, or have questions about the PACT Act, please contact Boston Veterans' Services at 617-241-VETS(8387) or email us at veterans@boston.gov. We are here to assist veterans, servicemembers, and their families living in Boston by connecting them with the benefits, services, and resources they have earned.

Very Respectfully,



Robert Santiago
Commissioner