

TARGET AUDIENCE: PREVIOUSLY DENIED SURVIVOR CLAIMANTS (WITH NO EP-335 PENDING)

You May Qualify for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Benefits

Dear [Survivor Name],

Due to a recent law change, you may be eligible for VA benefits.

Why We Are Contacting You

The new law (Public Law 116-23¹, *Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019*):

- extends presumption of herbicide exposure to service within the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam, and
- provides a potential earlier effective date for DIC claims that were previously denied.

How This May Affect You

You were previously denied DIC benefits that were related to the Veteran's exposure to herbicides, and you may now be eligible. You may also be eligible for a potential retroactive effective date, if VA grants service-connected benefits under the new law, for benefits you previously claimed on or after September 25, 1985, and before January 1, 2020, that were subsequently denied.

VA will start processing and deciding claims based on the date of the new law. This means eligible survivors will be awarded benefits as early as January 1, 2020.

Eligibility Criteria

You may apply for benefits if you believe the following criteria are met:

1. The Veteran served aboard a US Navy or Coast Guard ship on the offshore "blue waters" of the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, VA will presume herbicide exposure if the Veteran's service included:
 - Duty or visitation within the Republic of Vietnam itself, or
 - Travel on a vessel in the inland waterways of the Republic of Vietnam, or
 - Travel on a vessel within the eligible offshore waters as listed in P.L. 116-23
2. You provide medical evidence showing that the principal or contributory cause of the Veteran's death is, or is secondary to, one or more of the conditions listed in 38 C.F.R § 3.309(e) and listed below:

¹ PL 116-23, *Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019*, can be accessed online at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/299/text>.

- Amyloid light-chain (AL) amyloidosis
- Chloracne or other acneform disease consistent with chloracne
- Chronic B-cell leukemias
- Diabetes mellitus type 2
- Ischemic heart disease
- Lymphoma, Hodgkin's
- Lymphoma, Non-Hodgkin's
- Multiple myeloma
- Parkinson's disease
- Peripheral neuropathy, early-onset
- Porphyria cutanea tarda
- Prostate cancer
- Respiratory cancers (lung, bronchus, larynx, or trachea)
- Soft-tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)

What We Need From You

If you feel you meet the eligibility criteria:

1. Submit the enclosed **VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim**.
2. Submit any evidence relevant to the circumstances of the Veteran's Vietnam service such as the vessel served on, the dates of service on that vessel, and dates of duty or visitation within the Republic of Vietnam or within the offshore waters as listed in Public Law 116-23.
3. Submit or tell us or consult with your Veterans service officer (VSO) about any evidence, such as treatment for one or more of the conditions as referenced above that is/are associated with the Veteran's death, that VA can assist you in gathering in support of your claim.

Please note, if you do not submit a completed VA Form 20-0995, VA will not take any action to review your claim.

If You Have Questions or Need Assistance

VA Website	www.va.gov/
National Cemetery Administration	https://www.cem.va.gov/
VA Forms Website	www.va.gov/vaforms
VA Agent Orange Website	https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/
Frequently Asked Questions	https://iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/list
Submit a Question*	https://iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/ask
Mailing Address*	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Pension Intake Center PO Box 5365 Janesville, WI 53547-5365

Fax Numbers*	(844) 655-1604 (inside the U.S.) (248) 524-4260 (outside the U.S.)
Toll Free Number	1-800-749-8387, Option 2
TTY, Federal Relay	711
Veterans Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255 and press 1
VA Regional Office Location	www.va.gov/find-locations

** Please include your full name and VA file number with your question; on the inside of mailed correspondence (not on the envelope); or on the fax coversheet.*

You may wish to contact an accredited VSO to assist you with your application. For a list of accredited Veterans service organizations go to <https://www.va.gov/vso/>. You may also contact your state office of veterans affairs at <https://www.va.gov/statedva.htm>, should you need further assistance with the application process.

We appreciate your support of our nation's Veterans and we are honored to serve you.

Sincerely,

Ronald S. Burke
Executive Director, Pension and Fiduciary Service
Veterans Benefits Administration

Enclosure: VA Form 20-0995