

# Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 – Health Care Eligibility

2022



# Honoring Our PACT Act



The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee named the bill after **Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson**, who deployed to Kosovo and Iraq with the Ohio National Guard.

After returning home from his last deployment, doctors diagnosed him with an autoimmune disorder and late-stage lung cancer—both associated with burn pit exposure.

SFC Robinson passed away in May 2020. He was 39 years old.

# Honoring Our PACT Act

- The PACT Act is a new law signed by the President on August 10, 2022.
- It is one of the largest benefit expansions in VA's history. The law expands benefits and care to generations of Veterans exposed to toxic substances– and their survivors.
- The PACT Act will bring these changes:
  - Expands eligibility for VA Health Care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post9/11 eras.
  - Adds more than 20 new presumptive conditions for burn pits and other toxic exposures.
  - Adds presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation.
  - Requires VA to provide screenings to every Veteran related to toxic exposure.
  - Helps us improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures.

# **PACT ACT Town Hall events**

**August 2022 to September 2023**

*New Mexico VA Health Care System  
Albuquerque Regional VA Benefits Office  
New Mexico Department of Veteran Services*

## Purpose

These Town Hall events provided an overview of the Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 including:

- Definition of toxic exposure
- Health care eligibility changes
- Toxic exposure screening and education
- Toxic exposure research
- Presumption of service connection changes

# Town Hall event results

- Twenty (20) Town Hall events in New Mexico and Southern Colorado
- Seven (7) out of Twenty presented at Pueblos or Tribes.
- Over 13,000 Veterans or Eligible Dependents reached
  - New Health Care new enrollments = 2407

# Town Hall event results

## New Mexico

7,739 Distinct Claimants



### Claim Data

Status	Total
Completed Claims	4,567
Processing Time	165.9
Claim Grant Rate	72.8%
Granted Claims	3,324
Pending Claims	4,394
Sum of Net Awards	\$20,221,100.54

### Most Common Granted PACT Act Disabilities

Counts are # of Distinct Decisions

Hypertensive vascular disease	986
Allergic rhinitis	724
Bronchial asthma	236
Maxillary sinusitis	192
Malignant growths of genitourinary ..	144

# Find Out if You are Eligible for VA Health Care or Benefits

- Visit [www.va.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT).
- Apply for VA health care:
  - [Apply For Health Care | Veterans Affairs \(va.gov\)](#)
- Submit a VBA claim:
  - [File for disability compensation with VA Form 21-526EZ | Veterans Affairs](#)
- Call 1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411)
- Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry: [HOME - Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry \(va.gov\)](#)



# Questions



Find PACT Act details at <https://www.va.gov/PACT>

# AP89 Bottom Line Upfront (BLUF)

- **Ground/Air Ambulance PWS**
  - Both have been completed & submitted
  - Will start working ground ambulance modifications next week for facility use, this will be part of weekly COR training that has been set-up with every facility
- **Air Ambulance Contract**
  - There will be 3 regional contracts and 1 or 2 OCONUS contracts solicited from ONE solicitation
  - The Pre-solicitation has been released
- **Informational Memo to be sent out**
  - Final comments/changes have been made
  - Still no date when memo will be sent out

# AP89 Bottom Line Upfront (BLUF)

- **S. 2757: VA Emergency Transportation Access Act**
  - New bill being introduced limiting the VA Secretary from modifying the rate of payment or reimbursement for transportation of veterans or other individuals via special modes of transportation under the laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes.
  - Strong support from both sides
  - If implemented, could delay AP89 to 10/01/2024
  - Link <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/118/s2757/text>
- **National Air Ambulance Broker Package**
  - Submitted to contracting for review on 9/14/2023
  - Final date for pre-solicitation set for Sep 25th or Sep 28th
  - Adding 911 calls to Air Ambulance package
    - Adds great deal of cost to estimated value of contract
- **Ground Ambulance Performance Work Statement (PWS)**
  - Final Version sent for review
  - 911 calls will not be included because Medicare/Medicaid are the standard payment rates
- **Informational Memo to be sent out**
  - No known date as to when memo will be sent