



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Montana VA Health Care System

Montana VA Wants to Inform all Montanans Veterans About PACT Act Benefits

New PACT Act signed into law gives Montana Veterans additional benefits

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HELENA, Mont.— Montana VA Health Care System (Montana VA) encourages all Montana Veterans and their families to examine the potential benefits available to them through the new PACT Act legislation.

On Aug. 10, 2022, the PACT Act was signed into law.

“The PACT Act is a historic new law that will help VA deliver for millions of Veterans — and their survivors — by empowering us to presumptively provide care and benefits to Vets suffering from more than 20 toxic exposure-related conditions,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “It will also bring generations of Veterans into VA health care, which will improve Veteran health outcomes across the board.”

The PACT Act expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era, and expands eligibility for benefits for Veterans exposed to toxic substances. For post-9/11 combat veterans, the bill extends the period of time they have to enroll in VA health care from five to ten years post-discharge. For those combat veterans who do not fall within that window, the bill also creates a one-year open enrollment period. These expansions mean that more veterans can enroll in VA health care without having to demonstrate a service-connected disability.

Veterans can begin filing claims now.

“We are grateful for the opportunities the PACT Act provides to our Veterans,” said Dr. Judy Hayman, Montana VA Health Care System’s Executive Director. “Our Veterans deserve the highest quality of care. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve.”

The PACT Act is expected to reduce the amount of paperwork and streamline the exams process for Veterans. This will cover specific conditions like respiratory related conditions, along with several forms of cancer, including reproductive cancers, melanoma, pancreatic cancer, kidney cancer, and brain cancers such as glioblastoma.

Surviving family members of Veterans who died due to one of these conditions may now also be eligible for benefits.

Montana Veterans and their family members can learn more about the PACT Act by going to www.va.gov/PACT or calling 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411).

Montana VA serves over 47,000 enrolled Veterans across Montana—an area roughly 147,000 square miles in size. Veterans are cared for by a staff of 1,400 at 18 sites of care across the state. One third of Montana VA employees are Veterans. Veterans can connect to their VA healthcare records, information, and message their VA care teams 24 hours a day through the [MyHealthVet patient portal](https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/how-to-use-mhv) (<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/how-to-use-mhv>). Montana VA information, updates, and events are available on the [Montana VA website](https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care) (<https://www.va.gov/montana-health-care>) and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/VAMontana) (<https://www.facebook.com/VAMontana>).