

**VA**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

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## VA to begin processing PACT Act benefits claims immediately for terminally ill Veterans

**WASHINGTON** — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced it will begin processing PACT Act benefits claims for eligible terminally ill Veterans.

While VA does not have the authorities or capabilities to begin fully processing PACT Act claims for all other Veterans until Jan. 1, 2023, VA was able to expedite processing for terminally ill Veterans to Dec. 12. This ensures terminally ill Veterans will receive their earned benefits and health care on the earliest possible date.

“These Veterans have stepped up to serve our country in the times when we needed them most — and now it’s our job to step up for them,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “It’s the right thing to do to get these heroes the world-class health care and benefits they’ve earned as soon as possible, and that’s exactly what we’re going to do.”

Dec. 12 is the earliest date VA could begin processing claims for terminally ill Veterans. Until Jan. 1, 2023, VA will only finalize decisions on PACT Act claims that result in a grant of benefits for terminally ill Veterans. Claims that cannot be granted immediately will be held for further evaluation after publication of sub-regulatory guidance implementing the PACT Act.

When VA can begin processing all PACT claims Jan. 1, 2023, VA will continue to prioritize the processing of PACT Act claims for terminally ill Veterans. At that point, VA will also prioritize PACT Act claims filed by [Veterans with cancer](#), Veterans experiencing homelessness, Veterans older than 85 years old, Veterans experiencing financial hardship and Medal of Honor and Purple Heart recipients.

From the moment that the PACT Act was signed into law VA’s priority has been getting Veterans the benefits they deserve as quickly as possible. VA sped up the timeline for Veterans to get their PACT Act benefits by several years by deciding not to phase in PACT Act benefits through 2026, as written into the legislation, and instead make all conditions in the PACT Act presumptive on Aug. 10, the date President Biden signed it into law.

Since President Biden signed the PACT Act into law on Aug. 10, more than 176,000 Veterans have applied for PACT Act-related benefits. VA is currently executing the largest Veteran outreach campaign in its history to inform Veterans, their families and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the health care and benefits they have earned. As a part of that effort, this week, VA is hosting more than [90 events](#) across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as a part of a [PACT Act Week of Action](#).

For more information about PACT Act and how to file a claim, visit [va.gov/PACT](http://va.gov/PACT). If Veterans, their families, caregivers or survivors have questions about PACT Act and wish to speak with someone to help, they may call 1-800-MyVA411 at any time.

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