

Claims Process

Don't do it alone. The VA claims process can be extremely complicated. Contact a professional American Legion Service Officer for assistance with filing a VA disability claim. This service is free of charge and not dependent on membership. To locate a service officer in your state, call 1-800-433-3318 or visit www.legion.org



Important Contact Information

- **The American Legion National Headquarters**
(202) 861-2700 (Washington Office)
www.legion.org/veterans/vietnamtoc.htm
 - **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**
Regional Office 1-800-827-1000
 - **VA's Agent Orange Newsletter**
[www1.va.gov/agent orange/page.cfm?pg=1](http://www1.va.gov/agent%20orange/page.cfm?pg=1)
- or
- (202) 273-8580
 - **VA's Agent Orange Helpline**
1-800-749-8387

Spina Bifida Contacts

- **Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**
1-800-733-8387
- **Shriners Hospital for Children**
1-800-237-5055 or www.shrinershq.org



For more information contact:

*Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
The American Legion
1608 "K" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 861 - 2700
www.legion.org*

7/04

Vietnam Veterans



Guide to Agent Orange Benefits



Benefits for Vietnam Veterans and Their Families

This benefit brochure is for Vietnam veterans and their family members. It is the goal of The American Legion to ensure that all veterans understand and receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

During the Vietnam War, herbicides were used to destroy jungle foliage in order to expose enemy troops. These herbicides, including Agent Orange, may have harmed some veterans who were exposed to them. Compensation is available for veterans suffering from illnesses or disabilities proven to be related to exposure. Monetary allowances are available to children of Vietnam Veterans who suffer from spina bifida and other birth defects identified by the Secretary of the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA).

Public Law 107-103 provides a presumption of exposure to herbicides for all veterans whom served in Vietnam during the Vietnam Era. Proof of exposure is not necessary for claim purposes. However, evidence of service in Vietnam during the war and supporting medical documentation need to be submitted. The law also removes the 30-year limitation on presumptive service connection for respiratory cancers due to herbicide exposure. But, some conditions require proof that symptoms started within a specific time frame after departure from Vietnam.

Eligibility for Agent Orange-Related Compensation

Claim for a Condition officially recognized by VA as Related to Agent Orange Exposure

Exposure to Agent Orange is conceded if a veteran served in Vietnam. However, the veteran will still need to submit the following evidence:

- proof of service in Vietnam during war time (January 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975)
- medical documentation of the condition(s) officially recognized by VA

Claim for a Condition not officially recognized by VA as Related to Agent Orange Exposure

If a veteran has been diagnosed with a condition(s) not shown at the right, he/she may submit a claim with the following supporting evidence:

- medical documentation (preferably a confirmed diagnosis) of the claimed condition and
- an opinion from a doctor stating that it is as likely as not that the condition is the result of Agent Orange exposure
- proof of service in Vietnam during war time (January 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975)

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

If a service-related disability caused or materially contributed to a veteran's death, monthly payments may be available to the unmarried surviving spouse, unmarried children under 18, helpless children, children between 18 and 23 if attending a VA-approved school and low-income parents of the deceased veteran or servicemember.

Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Program

TFA was established by The American Legion to assist veterans with dependent children meet the costs of shelter, food, utilities and minor health expenses when they are not able to so. This cash assistance is in the form of a grant and, as such, is non-repayable. For more information about TFA, please contact your local American Legion Post or call the National Headquarters at 1-800-433-3318.

Conditions Currently Recognized by VA as Related to Agent Orange Exposure

- Chloracne
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Multiple myeloma
- Respiratory cancers
 - lung
 - trachea
 - bronchus
- Prostate cancer
- Soft tissue sarcoma
- Hodgkin's disease
- Porphyria cutanea tarda
- Peripheral neuropathy (acute or subacute)
- Type 2 diabetes
- Spina bifida in children of veterans (not including spina bifida occulta)
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (CLL)

Other Birth Defects in Children of Female Vietnam Veterans

Public law 106-419 authorizes the Secretary of the VA to award monetary payments, vocational rehabilitation, and medical benefits to the children of female Vietnam veterans born with certain birth defects, other than spina bifida. The recognized birth defects, identified by the Secretary of VA, are based a study looking at the Vietnam experience for female veterans; it was not a herbicide exposure study. This law applies to female veterans who served in Vietnam during the period of **February 28, 1961-May 7, 1975**.

At 2.8 million strong, The American Legion is the largest veteran service organization in the world. Are you giving back? Join the ranks of America's veterans who are still serving their communities, become a Legionnaire. Contact a Legion Post in your area or call 1-800-433-3318, Ext. 321