



Presumptive Disability Benefits

What is “Presumptive” Service Connection?

VA presumes that certain disabilities were caused by military service. This is because of the unique circumstances of a specific Veteran’s military service. If a presumed condition is diagnosed in a Veteran within a certain group, they can be awarded disability compensation.

What are “Presumptive” Conditions?

If you are diagnosed with a chronic disease within one year of active duty release, you should apply for disability compensation. Examples of chronic disease include: arthritis, diabetes or hypertension.

Or, if you served continuously for at least 90 days and are diagnosed with **amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)** after discharge, you can establish service connection for the disease.

Veterans in the following groups may qualify for “presumptive” disability benefits:

- **Former prisoners of war** who:
 - Have a condition that is at least 10 percent disabling
 - Depending on length of imprisonment, specific conditions are presumed
 - Imprisoned for any length of time:
 - Psychosis
 - Any of the anxiety states
 - Dysthymic disorder (or depressive neurosis)
 - Organic residuals of frostbite
 - Post- traumatic osteoarthritis
 - Heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease
 - Stroke and the residual effects
 - Osteoporosis, when the Veteran has posttraumatic stress disorder

- Imprisoned for at least 30 days:
 - Beriberi (including beriberi heart disease)
 - Chronic dysentery
 - Helminthiasis
 - Malnutrition (including optic atrophy)
 - Pellagra
 - Other nutritional deficiencies
 - Irritable bowel syndrome
 - Peptic ulcer disease
 - Peripheral neuropathy
 - Cirrhosis of the liver
 - Avitaminosis
 - Osteoporosis

- **Vietnam Veterans** who were:
 - Exposed to Agent Orange
 - Served in the Republic of Vietnam or on a vessel operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975
 - Specific presumed conditions are:
 - AL amyloidosis
 - B-cell leukemia
 - Chronic lymphocytic leukemia
 - Multiple myeloma
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Hodgkin's disease
 - Ischemic heart disease (including but not limited to, coronary artery disease and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease)
 - Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
 - Parkinson's disease
 - Parkinsonism
 - Prostate cancer
 - Respiratory cancers
 - Soft-tissue sarcoma (not including osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma or mesothelioma)
 - Bladder cancer
 - Hypothyroidism

- The following conditions, if they become greater than 10 percent debilitating within a year of exposure to an herbicide agent:
 - Acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy
 - Chloracne or other similar acneform disease
 - Porphyria cutanea tarda
- **Atomic Veterans exposed to ionizing radiation** and who experienced one of the following:
 - Participated in atmospheric nuclear testing
 - Occupied or were prisoners of war in Hiroshima or Nagasaki
 - Served before Feb. 1, 1992, at a diffusion plant in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio or Oak Ridge, Tennessee
 - Served before Jan. 1, 1974, at Amchitka Island, Alaska Specific presumed conditions are:
 - All forms of leukemia, except chronic lymphocytic leukemia
 - Cancer of the thyroid, breast, pharynx, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, pancreas, bile ducts, gall bladder, salivary gland, urinary tract, brain, bone, lung, colon or ovary
 - Bronchioloalveolar carcinoma
 - Multiple myeloma
 - Lymphomas, other than Hodgkin’s disease
 - Primary liver cancer, except if there are indications of cirrhosis or hepatitis B
- **Gulf War Veterans** who:
 - Served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations
 - Have a condition that is at least 10 percent disabling by Dec. 31, 2026
 - Specific presumed conditions are:
 - Medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses that exist for six months or more, such as:
 - Chronic fatigue syndrome
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Irritable bowel syndrome
 - Any diagnosed or undiagnosed illness that warrants a presumption of service connection, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

- Signs or symptoms of an undiagnosed illness include:
 - Fatigue
 - Skin symptoms
 - Headaches
 - Muscle pain
 - Joint pain
 - Neurological or neuropsychological symptoms
 - Symptoms involving the upper or lower respiratory system
 - Sleep disturbance
 - Gastrointestinal symptoms
 - Cardiovascular symptoms
 - Weight loss
 - Menstrual disorders

- **Gulf War Veterans** who:
 - Served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations or in Afghanistan on or after September 19, 2001
 - Manifest one of the following infectious diseases to a degree of 10 percent or more within 1 year of separation:
 - Brucellosis
 - Campylobacter jejuni
 - Coxiella burnetii (Q fever)
 - Nontyphoid Salmonella
 - Shigella
 - West Nile virus
 - Malaria (or when accepted treatises indicate the incubation period began during a qualifying period of service)
 - Manifest to a degree of 10 percent or more at any time after separation:
 - Mycobacterium tuberculosis
 - Visceral leishmaniasis

- **Gulf War Deployed Veterans** who:
 - Served any length of time in the Southwest Theater of Operations during the Persian Gulf War, or
 - Served any length of time in Afghanistan, Syria, Djibouti or Uzbekistan on or after September 19, 2001 and
 - Manifests one of the following to any degree within 10 years from the date of separation from military service:
 - Asthma
 - Rhinitis
 - Sinusitis, to include rhinosinusitis