

## **VETERANS WHO SERVED IN THE SOUTHWEST THEATER OF OPERATIONS**

The Department of Veterans Affairs will propose adding certain rare respiratory cancers to the list of [presumed service-connected disabilities](#) in relation to military environmental exposure to particulate matter.

When the proposal becomes final, dependents, survivors, and Veterans who had claims previously denied for any of the below respiratory cancers would be encouraged to file a [supplemental claim](#) for benefits.

- Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) of the larynx;
- SCC of the trachea;
- Adenocarcinoma of the trachea;
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea;
- Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung;
- Large cell carcinoma of the lung;
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung;
- Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung and;
- Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung.

Any Veteran who had one of these cancers manifest to a degree of 0% or more at any time during or after separation would become eligible for service-connection.

VA intends to focus its rule on the rare respiratory cancers above in Veterans who served any amount of time in the Southwest Asia theater of operations and other locations. VA will invite and consider public comments as part of this process. The publication date of the federal register will occur in the coming weeks.

Once rulemaking is complete, VA will conduct outreach to impacted veterans and survivors to inform them about potential eligibility.

The Southwest Asia theater of operations refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.