

Greetings VSO leaders,

On August 10, 2022, President Biden signed [the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins Act of 2022 \(PACT Act\)](#) — possibly the largest expansion of Veterans benefits in history — into law.

The PACT Act expands Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances, and it helps VA provide generations of Veterans and their survivors with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve.

However, predatory companies are targeting Veterans' retroactive benefit payments and VA needs your continued support to help us educate Veterans and their survivors about the types of fraud tactics being used against them – especially now that the PACT Act has been passed.

Some predatory companies, not accredited by VA, are targeting Veterans by offering to assist them with their VA benefit claim. These companies charge absurd fees or require those applying to pay a portion of their VA benefits for this 'help'. VA will never charge Veterans or their family members to apply for the benefits they may be entitled to receive.

Please share the following information with Veterans and their survivors to help them guard against fraud and scams:

- Apply directly to the VA, or through your respective state, county, or city Veteran Service Agency or established Veteran Service Organizations. You may submit your application securely [online](#) via VA.gov or in person at any regional office. You may file your claim directly with VA, and VA will help gather the necessary evidence to support it. There are no costs or hidden fees to apply.
- Be suspicious of media advertisements from companies which provide information about the PACT Act and suggest you can only obtain benefits with their help. These companies may not be accredited with VA and may be attempting to charge you illegal fees.
- Use the VA Office of General Counsel (OGC) [Accreditation Search](#) to confirm and validate the credentials of anyone offering claims assistance.
- Be cautious of aggressive law firms or companies expressing a sense of urgency and insisting you must act now.
- Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized company a fee to help you with your VA claim. There are [accredited Veterans Service Organizations, agents and attorneys](#) who may assist you.
- Be cautious of companies claiming to be contacting you on behalf of VA. Contact VA directly at 1-800-827-1000 if you are unsure about the authenticity of a message you've received.

- Review all documents thoroughly. Never sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. Always review the fully completed form.

Helpful Resources and Tools

Veterans and their survivors who think they might be eligible should apply for PACT Act benefits right now. Go to www.va.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 for more information.

To report suspected fraud or predatory companies, please contact VA OIG ([OIG Hotline \(va.gov\)](#)).

Veterans and their survivors who suspect a company is using predatory practices, should file a complaint with the [Federal Trade Commission](#) and the [Better Business Bureau](#). For more information on how to avoid scams, go to <https://www.fcc.gov/veterans-targeted-benefits-scams>.

Although there's still a lot of work to be done, we appreciate your partnering with us to help protect Veterans and their survivors against fraudsters and PACT Act scams!

Respectfully,

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