

## 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 on 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.

## 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 do 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 1-800-3318

## 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](http://www.legion.org)

## Important Contact Information:

- > The American Legion  
National Headquarters DC Office  
(202) 861-2700
- > Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
Regional Office 1-800-827-1000
- > VA's Agent Orange Newsletter &  
Special Issues Helpline: 1-800-749-8387 – Agent Orange: Press 3

At 2.5 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



## Local contact:

The American Legion @ VARO  
400 South 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 106  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
Phone: 314-552-9884

# 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 the 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 by medical research or substantiated medical opinion. 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 Veterans Affairs (VA).

Public Law 107-103 provides a presumption of exposure to herbicides for all veterans who 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 needs to be submitted. The law also removes the 30-year limitation of presumptive service connection for respiratory cancers due to herbicide exposure. Some conditions do require proof that symptoms started within a specific time frame after departure from Vietnam.

## Eligibility for Agent Orange-Related Compensation

- 1) 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.
  - Proof of service in Vietnam during wartime (January 9, 1962 to May 7, 1975)
  - Medical documentation of the condition(s) officially recognized by VA
- 2) Claim for a Condition Not Officially Recognized by VA as Related to Agent Orange Exposure
  - Medical documentation (preferably a confirmed diagnosis) of the claimed condition and
  - A well documented medical opinion from a doctor stating that it is as likely as not that the condition is the result of Agent Orange exposure, and why.
  - Proof of service in Vietnam during wartime (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 of service member. Also, in cases where the veteran was receiving 100% compensation (including 100% due to individual Unemployability) for eight years or more, the unmarried surviving spouse and qualifying dependents may receive payments.

## Conditions Currently Recognized by VA as Related to Agent Orange Exposure

- Acute and sub acute transient peripheral neuropathy
- AL amyloidosis
- Chloracne
- Chronic lymphocytic leukemia
- Diabetes mellitus (Type 2)
- Hodgkin's lymphoma (Hodgkin's disease)
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Porphyria cutanea tarda
- Prostate cancer
- Respiratory cancers, and soft tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)
- B cell leukemias (like hairy cell leukemia)
- Parkinson's disease and
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD, CAD, Heart Attack e.g.)
- **All veterans, from any era of service, shall be service connected for ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), and their widow is entitled to service connected death benefits**