

## **VA extends deadline Through Monday for Veterans and survivors to apply for PACT Act benefits backdated to August 10, 2022**

*Extension will ensure that no Veteran or survivor will miss out on a single day of backdated PACT Act benefits*

Today, VA announced that Veterans and survivors who apply (or submit their [intent to file](#)) for PACT Act benefits by 11:59PM ET on Monday, August 14, 2023 will be eligible to have their benefits backdated to August 10, 2022 – the day that President Biden signed the PACT Act into law. This is an extension from the original deadline of August 9, 2023. We encourage all Veterans and their survivors to apply – or submit their [intent to file](#) – for PACT Act benefits now by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](https://VA.gov/PACT).

VA has made this decision out of an abundance of caution after experiencing technical difficulties with VA.gov/PACT in recent days. Specifically, due to extremely high demand, some Veterans who have sought to submit their [intent to file](#) for PACT Act benefits have received error messages while doing so. Despite these messages, VA has successfully logged every one of these intents to file – meaning that every Veteran or survivor who has received an error message while applying for PACT Act benefits can consider their intent to file complete. We are working to contact these individuals to confirm directly to them that their intent to file will be honored and their effective date protected. Most importantly, no Veteran or survivor will miss out on a single day of benefits due to this issue.

VA has also resolved nearly all of the technical issues with VA.gov/PACT. As of 5:00pm, less than one tenth of one percent of attempts to submit an “intent to file” today (August 9) had resulted in an error message. This percentage is down from about 18% on August 8. Additionally, we have had a high volume of calls to VA call centers throughout this week, and we are working to decrease abnormally long call center wait times. We continue to work on these issues and will not rest until they are fully resolved.

Throughout the past day, VA has sent out communications from all channels to reassure Veterans and survivors that they would not miss out on their earned benefits due to this issue. We put an emergency banner on the VA website to tell Veterans and survivors that their intents to file will be honored. We changed the intent to file error message to confirm that, despite the error message, the intent to file has been saved. Finally, we communicated with Veterans directly on [social media](#), via email, and through coordination with Congressional leaders and Veterans Service Organizations. All of this messaging will be updated tonight (details below) to reflect the extended deadline for Veterans and survivors to apply for benefits backdated to August 10, 2022.

We at VA will continue to encourage Veterans and their survivors to immediately file their PACT Act claims — or submit their intents to file — at VA.gov/PACT. With the extended deadline, Veterans and survivors who do so by 11:59PM ET on Monday, August 14, 2023 may receive benefits backdated to August 10, 2022.

## **Updated website banner:**

### **PACT Act backdated benefits deadline extended!**

**You now have until 11:59PM ET on Monday, August 14, 2023** to file your PACT Act claim—or submit your intent to file—and be eligible for benefits backdated to August 10, 2022. Take advantage of this extension and file now!

Due to high volume, some Veterans have received error messages when submitting their intent to file PACT Act claims. If you received one of these messages, don't worry! We have logged your intent to file and saved your effective date for benefits.

[File a disability claim online](#)

[Submit your intent to file](#)

## **Updated Error Message**

Due to the high volume of submissions we are receiving, you can't continue with this claim form at this time – but we have received your intent to file and saved your effective date for benefits.

Here's what this means for you:

- You have 1 year from today to complete your claim.
- If we determine that you're eligible for disability compensation, we'll use today to determine the effective date of your benefits.
- If you're filing a claim based on the PACT Act, you may still be eligible to receive benefits backdated to August 10, 2022.

Note: If you come back to this form in the next few days and continue to get this message, don't worry. Your intent to file date is set for today.

## **Legal background for this extension:**

Under the authority in 38 C.F.R. 3.1(r), the Under Secretary for Benefits may extend a deadline such as this “when he or she determines that a natural or man-made interference with the normal channels through which the Veterans Benefits Administration ordinarily receives correspondence has resulted in one or more Veterans Benefits Administration offices experiencing extended delays in receipt of claims, information, or evidence from claimants served by the affected office or offices to an extent that, if not addressed, would adversely affect such claimants through no fault of their own.” In the coming days, VA will submit a federal register notice to codify this extension.