

VETERANS CORNER

Vietnam Service “Presumptive” Disability Benefits

VA *presumes* that specific disabilities diagnosed in certain veterans were caused by their military service. VA does this because of the unique circumstances of their military service. If one of these conditions is diagnosed in a veteran, VA presumes that the circumstances of his/her service caused the condition, and disability compensation can be awarded.

The following health conditions are presumptively recognized for service in Vietnam. Veterans with one or more recognized conditions do not have to show that their illness is related to their military service to get disability compensation. VA presumes that their condition is service-connected. Conditions include chloracne, non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, soft tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin’s disease, porphyria cutanea tarda, multiple myeloma, respiratory cancers including cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus, prostate cancer, acute and subacute transient peripheral neuropathy, type 2 diabetes, and chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Recently added conditions include B cell leukemias such as hairy cell leukemia, Parkinson’s disease and ischemic heart disease.

Certain conditions are also recognized for the children of Vietnam veterans. Covered birth defects include a wide range conditions. Eighteen defects are specifically included and others not specifically excluded are covered.

Vietnam veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between 1/9/62 and 5/7/75, and later contracted any of these conditions, or have children with birth defects, should apply for disability compensation benefits. There are no time limits to apply.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran I.D. cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran’s information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 582-3211, ext. 2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.