



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Benefits Administration

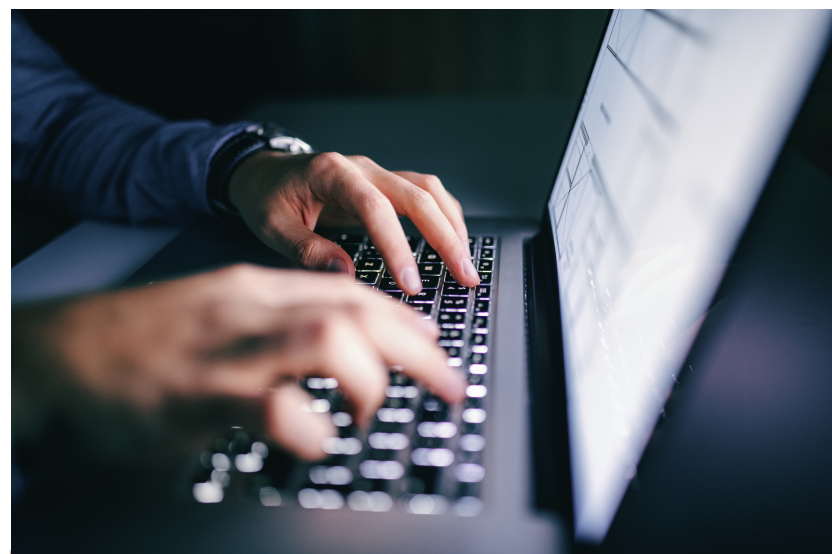
PACT Act Fraud Prevention and Awareness Campaign

11/9/2022 | Veterans' Financial Wellness: Fostering Financial Stability for Those Who Have Served



Possible Predatory Company Tactics

Potential Predatory Actions



Be cautious of aggressive law firms or companies.



AGGRESSIVE EMAILS

Law firms and companies may act aggressively – emails outline a sense of urgency and pressure Veterans to act immediately without enough information.



ON THE WEB

Be cautious of advertisements touting the need for legal representation and promising a quicker turnaround when using their services for filing VA claims. Many relate to the recently added presumptive disabilities associated with toxic exposure.



MISLEADING INFORMATION

Be cautious of law firms and companies claiming to contact you on behalf of VA, or presenting themselves as having a special affiliation with VA, or those guaranteeing a certain amount of VA benefits.



EGREGIOUS CONTRACTS

Law firms and companies may encourage Veterans to sign contracts calling for a fee larger than what is permitted by law.

- ### How is VBA Combating Fraud Related to the PACT Act?
- ✓ Preparing outreach campaign materials to warn Veterans about these potential schemes.
 - ✓ Leveraging internal and external partnerships to share communication artifacts for dissemination.
 - ✓ Collaborating with VA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) to investigate and support prosecution of criminals.



VBA has an ongoing communications campaign to spread awareness of PACT Act best practices, fraud tactics, and prevention strategies.

- ✓ **Apply directly to VA.** You may submit your application for VA benefits 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 evidence necessary to support it. There are no costs or hidden fees to apply.
- ✓ **Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized company** a fee to help you with your VA claim. There are VSOs, agents, and attorneys that can help you.
- ✓ **Only VA-accredited agents and attorneys** may charge you for assistance on your VA claim, and only when they provide you with assistance in connection with a proceeding after VA has made an initial decision on your claim. No individual or organization may charge you a fee for filing an initial VA claim.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **Be cautious of media advertisements** from companies who provide information about the recent changes in law for toxic-exposure benefit claims and suggest you can only obtain VA benefits with their help. These companies may not be recognized by VA and may be trying to charge you illegal fees.
- ✓ **Review all documents thoroughly.** Never sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. Always review the completed form before signing and retain a copy of the completed form for your records.

Follow VBA's social media profiles for the latest on PACT Act and fraud prevention.



[Instagram](#)



[Facebook](#)



[YouTube](#)



[Twitter](#)

Resources

Share these links and tools to ensure Veterans and their loved ones can safely and securely receive PACT Act benefits.



- Veterans and survivors who think they might be eligible should **apply for PACT Act benefits right now** by going to www.va.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 for more information. Review [frequently asked PACT Act questions](#).
- You can validate the credentials of attorneys or agents utilizing OGC's [Accreditation Search tool](#).
- For more information on the more than 20 burn pit and other toxic exposure PACT Act presumptive conditions click [here](#). Share the [PACT Act Fraud Prevention flyer](#) with Veterans and their loved ones.
- If you need help filing a claim, there are accredited representatives to assist you. If you are unsure about a phone call, email, or text, contact VA directly at 1-800-827-1000.
- If an entity is projecting misinformation or has questionable business practices regarding VA entitlements, file a complaint with the [Federal Trade Commission](#).
- To report suspected fraud or predatory companies, please contact VA OIG ([OIG Hotline \(va.gov\)](#)).