

Radiation Exposure Presumptive

You may be eligible for disability benefits if you didn't receive a dishonorable discharge and you meet these requirements.

Both of these must be true:

- You have an illness that's on our list of illnesses believed to be caused by radiation or that doctors say may be caused by radiation, and
- Your illness started within a certain period of time (as shown along with the list of illnesses)

And you must have had contact with ionizing radiation in one of these ways while serving in the military:

- You were part of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing, or
- You served in the postwar occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki, or
- You were a prisoner of war (POW) in Japan, or
- You worked as an x-ray technician, in a reactor plant, or in nuclear medicine or radiography (while on active duty or during active or inactive duty for training in the Reserves), or
- You did tasks like those of a Department of Energy (DOE) employee that make them a member of the Special Exposure Cohort (See 42 U.S.C. 7384L(14))

You may also qualify for disability benefits if you served in at least one of these locations and capacities:

- You were part of underground nuclear weapons testing at Amchitka Island, Alaska, or
- You were assigned to a gaseous diffusion plant at Paducah, Kentucky, or
- You were assigned to a gaseous diffusion plant at Portsmouth, Ohio, or
- You were assigned to a gaseous diffusion plant at Area K-25 at Oak Ridge, Tennessee

3 new response efforts to the list of presumptive locations:

- Cleanup of Enewetak Atoll, from January 1, 1977, through December 31, 1980
- Cleanup of the Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons off the coast of Palomares, Spain, from January 17, 1966, through March 31, 1967
- Response to the fire onboard an Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons near Thule Air Force Base in Greenland from January 21, 1968, to September 25, 1968

VA recognizes that the following diseases are possibly caused by exposure to ionizing radiation during service:

All cancers
Non-malignant thyroid nodular disease.
Parathyroid adenoma.
Posterior subcapsular cataracts.
Tumors of the brain and central nervous system.