



Veterans Mesothelioma Benefits Handbook

VA disability, healthcare, survivor benefits, and how to file alongside a civil lawsuit

Disclaimer: This guide is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal or medical advice and does not create an attorney-client relationship with Danziger & De Llano, LLP. Consult a licensed attorney for legal advice. Consult a qualified physician for medical advice. Every case is unique — past results do not guarantee future outcomes.

Key Facts for Veterans

- One in three mesothelioma patients is a military veteran
- Mesothelioma is rated at **100% VA disability**
- Monthly compensation: **\$3,600+/month** (2025 rates)
- DIC for surviving spouses: **\$1,612.74/month**
- VA benefits do NOT offset lawsuit or trust fund compensation

Step 1: Determine Eligibility

To qualify for VA disability, you need: (1) a current mesothelioma diagnosis, (2) evidence of asbestos exposure during military service, and (3) a medical nexus linking the two. The VA recognizes that asbestos exposure was widespread in military service through the 1970s.

Step 2: Gather Service Records

You will need your DD-214, service medical records, duty station assignments, and any documentation of asbestos exposure during service. Request records from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) if you do not have copies.

Step 3: Document Military Asbestos Exposure

Common military exposure sources: Navy ship engine rooms and boiler rooms, shipyard repair and construction, Army/Air Force base building insulation, aircraft brake systems, military vehicle components. Buddy statements from fellow service members can support your claim.

Step 4: Obtain a Medical Nexus Letter

A physician must provide a written opinion connecting your asbestos exposure during military service to your mesothelioma diagnosis. This is the single most important document in your VA claim.

Step 5: File Your VA Claim

File VA Form 21-526EZ through eBenefits, VA.gov, or with help from an attorney. A Fully Developed Claim (FDC) includes all evidence upfront and is processed faster than a standard claim.

Step 6: C&P Examination

The VA will schedule a Compensation and Pension exam. Bring all medical records, service records, and your nexus letter. Be thorough in describing how your condition affects your daily life.

Step 7: Rating Decision

Mesothelioma is rated at 100% disability. If denied, you have one year to appeal. Your attorney can help file a supplemental claim or appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

VA Healthcare Benefits

Veterans with mesothelioma are eligible for Priority Group 6 enrollment, which includes treatment at VA medical centers and community care referrals to mesothelioma specialists.

Filing a Civil Lawsuit Alongside VA Benefits

You can pursue VA benefits AND file a civil lawsuit against asbestos manufacturers simultaneously. VA benefits do not reduce your lawsuit recovery, and lawsuit settlements do not affect your VA compensation. These are completely independent.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Our attorneys are available 24/7 for a free, confidential case review.

Call 1-800-400-1805

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