

# VBA Overview

## DAV Mid-Winter Conference

Briefed by: Ronald S. Burke Jr  
Deputy Under Secretary  
Office of Policy & Oversight



# Office of Policy & Oversight

**Ronald S. Burke Jr.**  
Deputy Under Secretary  
Office of Policy & Oversight



# VBA Beneficiaries Served and Dollars Paid in FY22



## VBA Footprint FY22

- **Compensation:** Paid **\$124 billion** to nearly **6 million** Veterans and survivors
- **P&F:** Paid **\$4 billion** to **314,000** beneficiaries
- **EDU:** Provided **\$11 billion** to **821,000** beneficiaries for all EDU programs
- **VR&E:** Paid over **\$1 billion** to **92,000** beneficiaries
- **LGY:** Guaranteed **687,000** loans totaling **\$238 billion**
- **Insurance:** Provided **\$1.2 trillion** in coverage to **5.6 million** Service members, Veterans, and family members
- **MDEO:** completed **1.84 million** compensation and pension (C&P) examinations under the VBA contracts
- **OTED:** **175,000+** Veterans reached through Solid Start

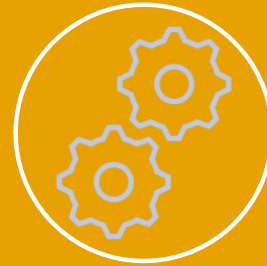
# People, Process, Technology Framework



## Office of Field Operations

The Office of Field Operations (OFO) provides oversight and support to VBA's 56 regional offices and 4 district offices.

People



## Office of Policy & Oversight

- The Office of Policy & Oversight (OPO) provides oversight to VBA's 10 business lines and program offices to ensure coordination of initiatives, projects, and procedural changes, as well as alignment with VBA strategic priorities.

Process



## Automated Benefits Delivery

The Office of Automated Benefits Delivery (ABD) is a key component of VBA's digital transformation strategy which leverages automation to maximize efficiencies and provides digital services to deliver business capabilities and process improvements.

Technology



Choose VA

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

# Guiding Principles



## Veterans at the Center

- Focused on delivering more benefits to more Veterans and Survivors in a timely manner to improve outcomes
- Communications/ Outreach



## Collaboration

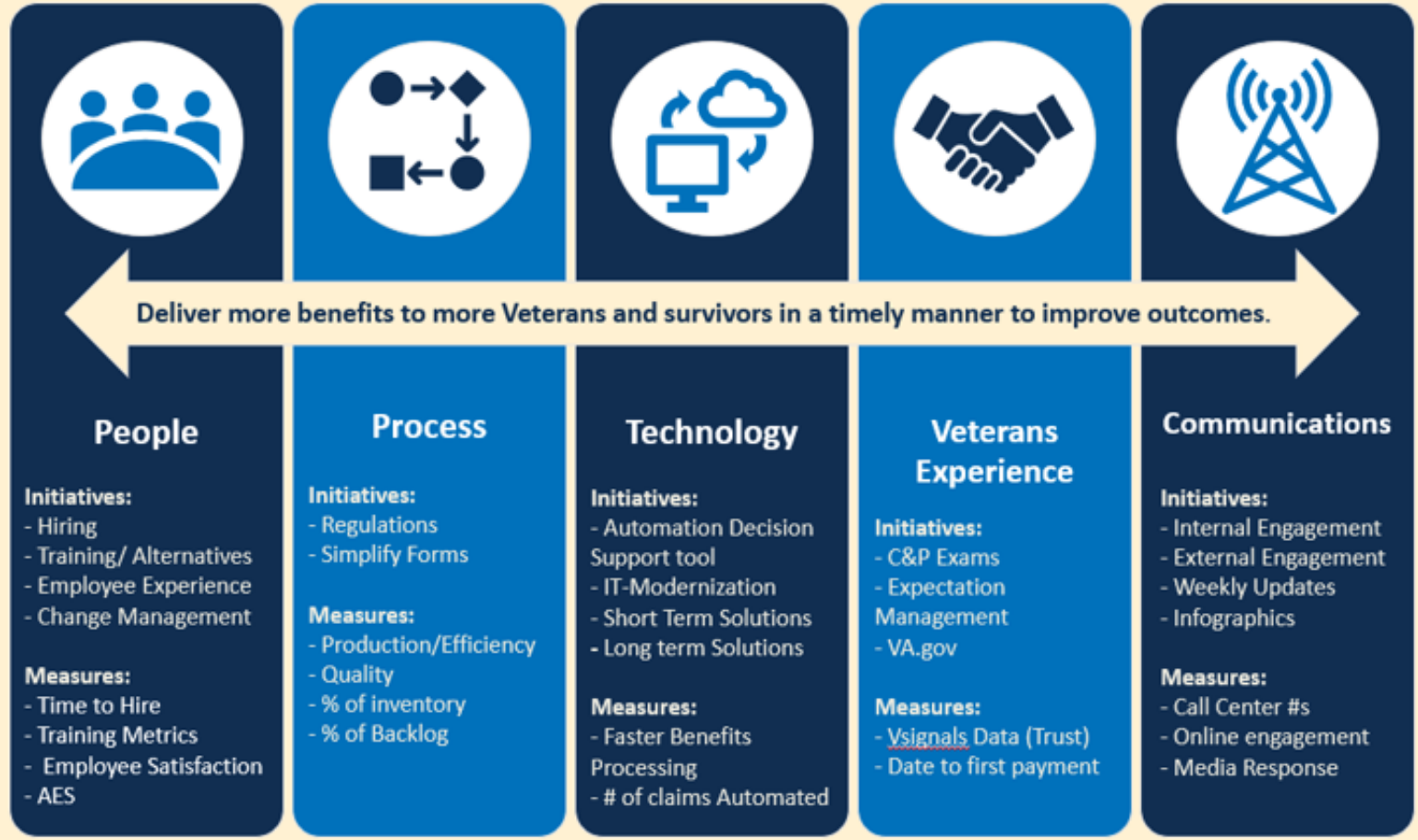
- Provide timely information to build trust
- Aligned to VA Strategy
- Evidence Based outcomes



## Transparency

- Working across the enterprise to improve outcomes
- Aligning workgroups
- Utilizing collaboration tools and reporting to manage processes

# Implementation Strategy



# People Strategy

- Filled 64% of positions authorized by initial PACT Act Spend Plan
- 8 Nation-wide VBA In-Person Hiring Fairs in Feb. 2023 hiring *hundreds* of applicants.
- 4 Virtual Hiring Information sessions in Feb. 2023.

## Hiring



- From Oct '22 to Feb '23, there will be 1995 VSR/RVSR personnel trained and future numbers are expected to maintain or expand.
- 315 added training seats to meet demand.
- Training waitlists are utilized to maximize class participation and expansion.

## Training



- The PACT Act hiring initiative promotes many career-ladder positions nationwide
- VBA has developed helpful flyers, social media messages, and easy email links that employees can share.

## Employees



VBA is hiring, nationwide!

Are you looking for a **customer-centric career?**

The Veterans Benefits Administration has **three career-path positions** now open to the public.

**No experience required!**



Choose **VA**

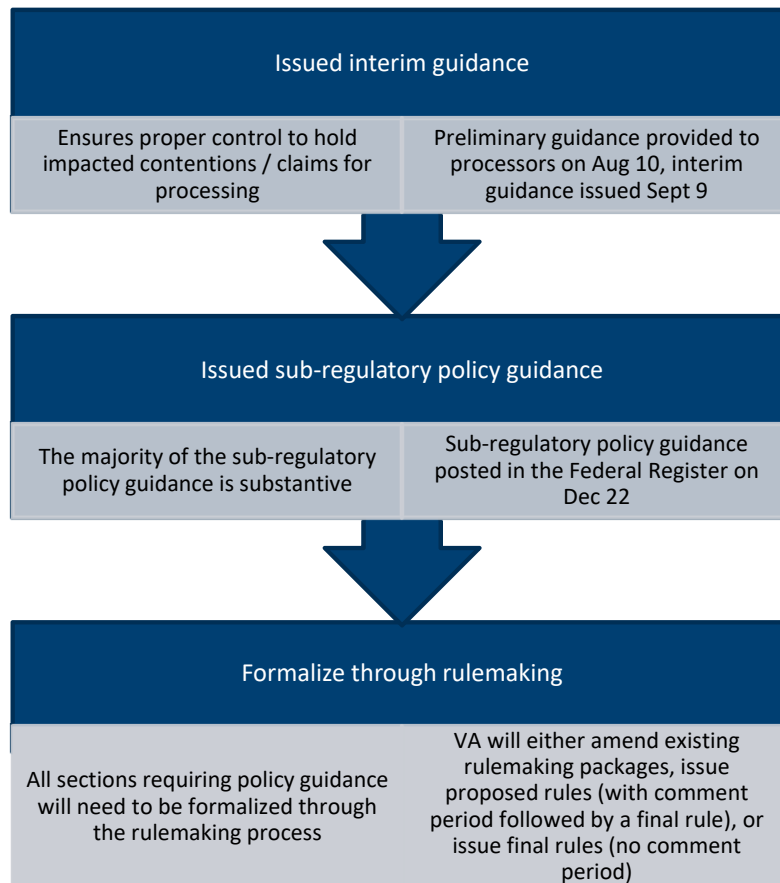
**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Process Strategy

## Overview



## Key Points

- Claims processing began following completion of training, delivery of procedural guidance, and publishing of substantive sub-regulatory guidance.
- Early claims processing for terminally ill Veterans began on **Dec 12, 2022**.
- Full claims processing began on **Jan 1, 2023**.
- VA continues to work on formalizing the PACT Act through rulemaking packages
- Claims processors have extensive resources to assist in processing claims related to PACT Act:
  - Standard Operating Procedure
  - PACT Act Intranet page
  - Job Aids
  - FAQs
  - PACT Act Inquiry Tool



# Claims Data

## Since August 10, 2022:

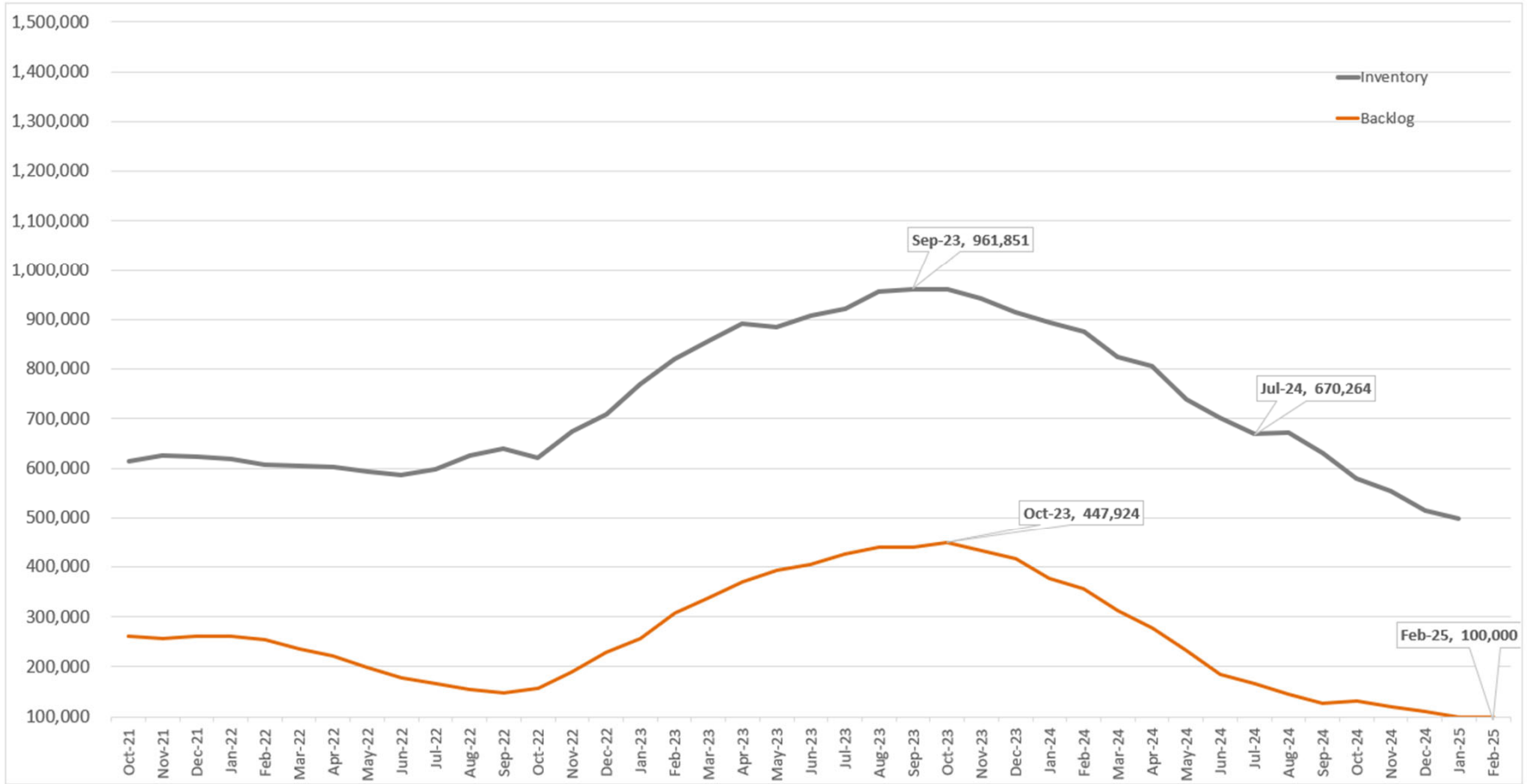
- 1,093,165 total claims filed (Veterans and Survivors)
- 325,180 PACT related claims filed
- 252,645 PACT related claims pending (80,891 in backlog)
- 138,634 PACT related claims completed

Note: Above data current as of February 18, 2023

## As of EOM January 2023:

- MDE Vendors have 214,592 pending exams
- 66,679 exams associated with claims in the backlog
- ADP for exams conducted by MDE Vendors is 21.2 days

# Inventory and Backlog



# PACT Act Overview

The PACT Act is a generation-defining achievement that affects millions of Veterans, caregivers, survivors, and family members. With **over 20 new presumptive conditions and new locations** for toxic exposure to Agent Orange and radiation, the PACT Act impacts how we train new personnel, deploy new technology, and determine new presumptive conditions down the line.



*Began processing claims January 1, 2023.*



Choose **VA**

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Key Components of the PACT



The Act **expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures** and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era.



VA **will improve the decision-making process** for determining what medical conditions will be considered for presumptive status.



Every enrolled Veteran **will receive an initial toxic exposure screening** and a follow-up screening every five years. Veterans who are not enrolled, but who are eligible to enroll, will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.



VA health care staff and claims processors will receive **toxic exposure-related education and training.**



The Act **requires research studies** on the mortality of Veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War; Post-9/11 Veteran health trends; and Veteran cancer rates.



The Act will help VA **build a stronger, more skilled workforce** to meet the growing demand for benefits and services.



The Act **authorizes 31 new facilities** across the country, providing greater access to VA health care.



Choose VA

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

# Conditions Presumed to be Service-Connected

As of August 10, 2022, a long list of new conditions are presumed to be service-connected due to various in-service toxic exposures. **APPLY NOW** at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) to expedite your claim and benefits.

- Asthma (diagnosed after service)
- Brain cancer
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic rhinitis
- Chronic sinusitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Granulomatous disease
- Head cancer of any type
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Interstitial lung disease (ILD)
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)
- Neck cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type
- Sarcoidosis

# Gulf War Era and Post-9/11 Eligibility

If a Veteran served in any of these locations and time periods, they are eligible for the new Gulf War-related presumptions. This includes the airspace above any of these locations.



## On or After August 2, 1990:

- Bahrain
- Iraq
- Kuwait
- Oman
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- Somalia
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE)



## On or After September 11, 2001:

- Afghanistan
- Djibouti
- Egypt
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Syria
- Uzbekistan
- Yemen

# New Radiation Presumptive Locations



If you were called to respond to one of the listed cleanup and response missions below, you may be eligible for radiation exposure presumptives under the PACT Act.

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



# Toxic Exposure Screening for Veterans

**WHO:** All Veterans enrolled in VA health care

**WHAT:** A quick (5-10 minute) series of questions to identify and document any potential exposures to toxins during military service

**WHEN:** At least one every 5 years

**WHERE:** VA medical centers and clinics

**WHY:** Supports Veteran long-term health plans and informed, whole-health care

**HOW:** Veterans can ask about the screening at their next VA appointment






# Filing Claims to Receive Benefits

Veterans can file a claim for the new presumptive conditions:

- **New Claim**—Veteran has never filed for the presumptive condition
- **Supplemental Claim**—the presumptive condition was previously denied but is now considered to be presumptive
- If VA denied one of the new presumptive conditions in the past but the Veteran may now be eligible for benefits, VA will try to contact them. There is no need to wait to file a Supplemental Claim.
- VA is prioritizing the claims of Veterans with cancer to make sure they get timely access to the care and benefits they need.
- **Pending Claims:** If a Veteran's condition was added to the list of [presumptive conditions](#)\* after the claim was filed, VA will consider it on a presumptive basis.

 \* Presumptive conditions do not require proof that the military service caused the condition. Veterans only need to meet the service requirements and have a current diagnosis of the presumptive condition. Veterans should submit any supporting documentation to assist with their claim.

# Other Affected Veterans and Survivors

What about additional benefits and care for other Veterans and their survivors?

Under the PACT Act, survivors may be eligible for VA benefits, including Dependency and Indemnity Compensation and Burial benefits.

- [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation](#)
- [Burial Benefits](#)

**Get the care and benefits you EARNED and DESERVE!**

**Apply at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT) today.**



# Fraud Prevention

VBA and partners work together to ensure Veterans get information quickly and know how to **identify and report suspected scams**.

- Veterans and their families need to verify any entity they're considering engaging for PACT Act or other claims assistance by checking the **Office of General Counsel accreditation tool** available on the VA website.
- The fraud division in the Office of Financial Management coordinates with OIG to actively **investigate suspicious activity**.



- To report a suspected fraudulent operator, call the Office of Inspector General's hotline, **1-800-488-8244**.
- VBA has kept the C&P fraud rate under **1%**.

# Questions

