“Presumptive” Disability Benefits for Certain Groups of Veterans

What is “Presumptive” Service Connection?

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 in one of these groups, VA presumes that the circumstances of his/her service caused the condition, and disability compensation can be awarded.

What Conditions are “Presumed” to be Caused by Military Service?

Veterans in the groups identified below: Entitlement to disability compensation may be presumed under the circumstances described and for the conditions listed.

Veterans within one year of release from active duty: Veterans diagnosed with chronic diseases (such as arthritis, diabetes, or hypertension) are encouraged to apply for disability compensation.

Veterans with continuous service of 90 days or more: Veterans diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)/Lou Gehrig’s disease at any time after discharge or release from qualifying active service is sufficient to establish service connection for the disease, if the veteran had active, continuous service of 90 days or more.

Veterans with continuous service of 90 days or more: Veterans diagnosed with any other nutritional deficiencies defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms that have existed for six months or more, such as:

- chronic fatigue syndrome
- fibromyalgia
- irritable bowel syndrome
- any diagnosed or undiagnosed illness that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines warrants a presumption of service connection