

# Camp Lejeune Contaminated Water Lawsuit

*Camp Lejeune Justice Act*

## Overview

For more than three decades, service members, military families, and civilians living and working at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were exposed to toxic drinking water which has been linked to life-long health effects. The below information has been gathered to answer frequently asked question from veterans and their families.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: How do I know if I am eligible to file a lawsuit?**

A: Section 804 of the Public Law 117-168, *the Honoring our PACT Act of 2022*, known as the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA) enables any individual (including veterans, military families, and civilian contractor) who resided, worked, or was otherwise exposed (including in utero exposure) to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune or Marine Corps Air Station New River for at least 30 days between August 1953 and October 1987 – and has suffered injuries or adverse health conditions due to exposure to contaminated water – to join the Camp Lejeune contaminated water lawsuit.

### **Q: Am I eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits and the lawsuit?**

A: Veterans impacted by exposure to contaminated Camp Lejeune water are also eligible for VA disability & compensation benefits for [eight health conditions](#) associated such exposure. Family members are also eligible to have VA reimburse them for health care costs related to [fifteen specific conditions](#). Veterans and family member may apply for both VA benefits and the Camp Lejeune Lawsuit. However, the Camp Lejeune Justice Act requires any amounts awarded under the lawsuit to be offset by payments or benefits claimants have received from VA.

### **Q: I want to participate in the Camp Lejeune lawsuit, but how do I choose from the seemingly endless number of law firms saying they want to represent me?**

A: Those suffering from the effects of toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune will need appropriate legal representation to join the Camp Lejeune Justice Act lawsuit. The VFW cautions veterans and their families to avoid predatory law firms advertising endlessly on television. To assist those who wish to join the Camp Lejeune Justice Act lawsuit, the VFW has [collaborated with several law firms](#) with a long history of honorably serving the veterans community. These firms have agreed to cap attorney fees at a reasonable rate, no upfront costs, work with the VFW to ensure veterans explore their earned VA benefits, counsel claimant on the impact of the offset included in the Camp Lejeune Justice Act before accepting an award, encourage VFW membership to eligible veterans, and provide resources to support the VFW Service Officer Program. Visit [vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp](https://vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp) for more information.

**Q: Is there a time limit for applying?**

A: The law provides two years for eligible individual to join the Camp Lejeune Lawsuit. The current deadline is August 10, 2024.

**Q: How will the lawsuit impact my ability to receive VA benefits?**

A: While seeking relief through the Camp Lejeune Justice Act does not impact eligibility for VA benefits. Those who received VA benefits before joining the Camp Lejeune Lawsuit will have their CJLA award impacted. The VFW has asked for clarification on how VA benefits will be impacted for veterans and family members who apply after receiving a CLJA award. Stay tuned to [vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp](https://www.vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp) for updates on this question.

**Q: What is an offset and how will it impact what I receive from the lawsuit?**

A: The Camp Lejeune Justice Act requires any amounts awarded to claimants to be offset by the sum of payments or benefits they have received from VA, Medicare, Social Security, or Medicaid in connection with health conditions stemming from exposure to contaminated Camp Lejeune water. However, the Department of Justice has not clarified exactly how the offset will be calculated. It is also unclear how legal fees will be incorporated into the offset. The VFW has asked for clarity and will post updates at [VFW.org/CampLejeuneHelp](https://www.vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp).

**Q: The Navy is offering the ability to file a claim without legal representation. Why should I retain a firm when I can file a claim on my own?**

A: The Camp Lejeune Justice Act requires claimants to submit an administrative claim through the Navy before

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