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Cold War Patriots is a division of Professional Case Management and not affiliated with the U.S. Department of Labor.

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FOR THE LATEST UPDATES

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Founded by Professional Case Management

What Is Breast Cancer and How Would I Know If I Have It?

The breast is a mammary gland overlying the chest wall. Cancer of the breast is a primary cancer causing uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells of the breast in women and men.

Incidence:

It is the second most common cancer in women in the United States. It does occur in men, but is rare, accounting for less than one percent of all breast cancers. The two most common types of breast cancer are ductal cell carcinoma and lobular carcinoma. Breast cancer can occur in all age groups but is far more common in adults than children, occurring more frequently in older adults.

Risk Factors:

- ★ Occupational exposure to ionizing radiation, such as at a U.S. Department of Energy nuclear weapons site
- ★ Toxic chemicals such as PAHs, PCBs, Benzenes, PFCs
- ★ Genetic inheritance of certain abnormal genes such as a well-known BRCA2 genetic mutation
- ★ Family history of breast cancer
- ★ Exposure to excess estrogen over time
- ★ Heavy metals
- ★ Obesity associated with high levels of estrogen in the body, increasing the risk of breast cancer



Signs and Symptoms:

- ★ Breast lump or thickening of skin that looks or feels different than surrounding tissue
- ★ Change in size, shape or general appearance of a breast including dimpling of the skin
- ★ "Orange Peel" appearance of the skin over a breast
- ★ Newly inverted nipple or colored discharge from the nipple
- ★ Redness, peeling or crusting of the dark area (areola) surrounding the nipple
- ★ A new lump or swelling in the armpit

Diagnosis and Treatment:

- ★ Self-exam of the breasts which reveals a new lump or other changes as noted
- ★ Physical exam by a physician that includes a careful bilateral breast exam checking for lumps, enlarged lymph nodes or skin changes in the breast, armpit, neck or chest wall
- ★ Mammogram (x-ray of the breast) looking for abnormalities on the image
- ★ Breast ultrasound
- ★ Breast biopsy, taking a sample of tissue from the area of concern which can help determine the type of cancer and what stage it is
- ★ MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), bone scan, CT (computed tomography) or PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scan
- ★ Staging, determining how advanced the cancer is, the type and size of tumor, the grade, and hormone sensitivity, can help decide the best type of treatment and prognosis

Treatment can include surgery, from a simple lumpectomy to total mastectomy (removing the breast), radiation or chemotherapy and/or hormone therapy. Early detection and treatment allow for a better chance for a cure. See your doctor for breast exams, mammograms and physicals.

Helpful Hints for Filing a Successful Claim with the U.S. Department of Labor:

- ★ Breast cancer is a covered Special Exposure Cohort (SEC) cancer. If you worked at a nuclear weapons or uranium site during a specified time period, you may automatically qualify for benefits if you have breast cancer. Visit bit.ly/USDOLSECList to see the list of approved SECs. If your work dates are not covered through an SEC year and you have breast cancer, you are still eligible for benefits, but through a different process called Dose Reconstruction.
- ★ Make sure you have completed an occupational history questionnaire. What you were exposed to, when, where, and for how long is important information to help successfully prove your EEOICPA claim. Obtain a copy of your employment records including job titles.
- ★ Obtain copies of all your medical records from your doctors, including history and physical exams, test results, diagnoses and treatments related to your condition(s).

Cold War Patriots Outreach Help Center

The Cold War Patriots Outreach Help Center assists nuclear weapons and uranium workers navigate programs related to EEOICPA and RECA. Many Help Center representatives are former workers themselves and understand personally the issues that you may face. The Outreach Help Center is open Monday through Friday from 7 am to 5 pm MST.

Please call 877.335.0779 or email us at info@coldwarpatriots.org.



News from the Advisory Boards

The Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health (ABTSWH) advises the U.S. DOL Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC) on EEOICPA issues. The Board met in Paducah, KY on November 20-21, 2019.

At this meeting:

- ★ The board welcomed their new member, Dr. Rose Goldman, MD, MPH, Harvard Medical School
 - ★ John Vance, DEEOIC Policy Director updated the Board on changes to the EEOICPA Procedure Manual and Site Exposure Matrix
 - ★ Mr. Vance announced DEEOIC is expanding their Medical Benefits department and Quality Assurance program
 - ★ DEEOIC expects to re-open around 300 claims to determine if they qualify for the new SEC's at the Y-12 Plant in Tennessee and West Valley Demonstration Project in New York
 - ★ Malcom Nelson, U.S. DOL Ombudsman for EEOICP, presented findings from his 2018 Report to Congress
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The Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH) advises National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) on EEOICPA dose reconstruction and Special Exposure Cohorts (SEC). The Board met in Oakland, California on December 11, 2019.

At this meeting:

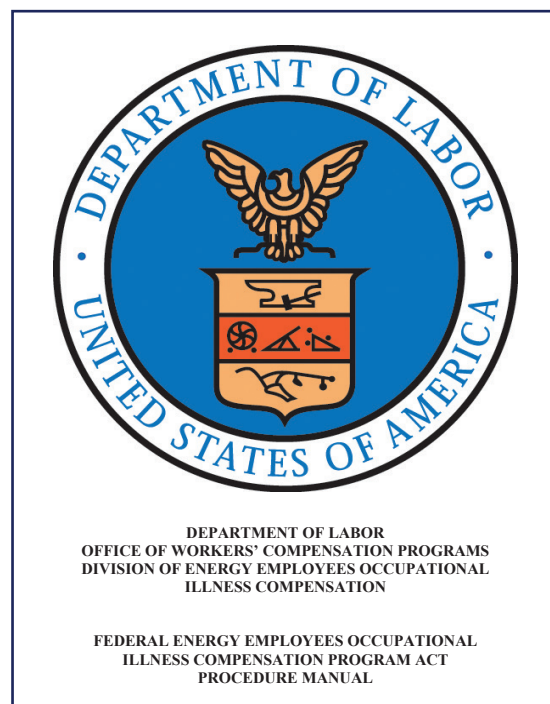
- ★ NIOSH reported that Advanced Technologies and Laboratories International, Inc. (ATL) will continue as their outreach contractor
- ★ The Board approved two new dose reconstruction methodologies; one on external dose reconstruction and one on the use of external co-worker data
- ★ The Board reported on the work done on updating the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's site profiles
- ★ The following SECs are currently being reviewed by the Board:
 - Hanford, petition #56
 - Savannah River Site, petition #103
 - Los Alamos National Lab, petition #109
 - Sandia National Lab, petition #188
 - Idaho National Lab, petition #219
 - Argonne National Lab-West, petition #224
 - Area IV Santa Susana, petition #235
 - De Soto Avenue Facility, petition #246
 - Superior Steel Company, petition #247
 - Metals and Controls, petition #236

How Changes to the U.S. Department of Labor's EEOICPA Procedure Manual May Affect Claims

On November 14, 2019, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released the updated EEOICPA Procedure Manual which is used to decide claims. Below are the highlights of the changes. This is Cold War Patriots' interpretation. If you feel you may be affected by these changes, please contact the Cold War Patriots Help Center at 1.888.903.8989.

- ★ Claimants previously denied for asbestos exposure are now presumed to have had asbestos exposure. The U.S. DOL acknowledges that many lung diseases are the result of exposure to asbestos. A few of these include: Asbestosis, Mesothelioma, Pleural Plaques and Effusions, Lung or Pulmonary Fibrosis, and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

- Nuclear Weapons Workers cutoff date for asbestos exposure was previously 1986, but has been extended to 1995.
- Uranium Miners & Millers are now in the labor category of workers presumed to have significant exposure to asbestos. However, post 1971 miners do not qualify.



Courtesy of www.dol.gov.

- ★ The Site Exposure Matrix updated exposure data on 25 DOE sites including Los Alamos National Lab (LANL), Mound Plant, Nevada Test Site, Rocky Flats, Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP) and Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (A-Plant). This could be helpful when filing a claim or appealing a denied claim.
- ★ A U.S. DOL staff or consulting Industrial Hygienists (IH) will now be able to interview claimants directly if they feel it is necessary.
- ★ Additional authority has been granted to the EEOICP Ombudsman to provide guidance and assistance to claimants.
- ★ Requirements for Oxygen Therapy have changed. A letter of medical necessity (LMN) must be submitted after a face-to-face visit with your doctor. The letter of medical necessity must specify why the oxygen is necessary for your covered disease. If you are a client of Professional Case Management, the premier in-home health care provider and impairment evaluators for Nuclear Weapons and Uranium Workers, they can facilitate your getting the proper documentation.

Updates & News

Helpful Hints: How to Obtain Job Descriptions and Other Records for Your Claim

A long-standing concern for claimants is that the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) claims examiners rely heavily on the Site Exposure Matrix (SEM) when deciding claims. While this database is a great starting point in developing claims, there are instances where information is missing. Claims have been denied because a job category was not included at a site or if no toxic substances were associated with it. Here's an idea that may help improve the SEM and, if successful, could be used to reopen a claim. It's a bit time consuming and may be tedious but may well be worth the effort.

A Freedom of Information Act Request can be filed with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) requesting a copy of your job description and duties.

Here is a sample request:

"I respectfully request a copy of (title of job description) and responsibilities for the (name of facility) for years (enter dates of employment)."

The request can be mailed to:

FOIA Requester Service Center
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Mail Stop MA-46
Washington, DC 20585

OR faxed to (202) 586-0575



It will take some time for U.S. DOE to search and release the document. Hopefully, the job description and responsibilities will include enough information to prove that the worker was in a building or was exposed to toxic materials which are not reflected in the SEM.

It is recommended that in addition to requesting employment, dosimetry, and medical records that claimants also ask for all reports of incidents in which they were involved.

You can also request a copy of your U.S. DOL case file. The request must be made in writing by mailing or faxing a letter to the District Office which is deciding your claim. You can find the fax number for the district offices by calling the DOL's EEOIC toll-free number, 1-866-888-3322. Remember to include your case number or Social Security Number. The file should include documents the U.S. DOE provided to the U.S. DOL through the Document Acquisition Request. By comparing the two files you can determine whether the U.S. DOL had everything it needed to decide the claim in a fair manner.

**If you have any questions during this time, please feel free
to call our Outreach Help Center at 866.494.3989.**

Cold War Patriots Website: A Source of Information During The COVID-19 Outbreak

Cold War Patriots knows many of you suffer from respiratory and other illnesses due to the service you provided for our nation's defense. Please be sure to frequently visit our Cold War Patriots website at www.coldwarpatriots.org for up-to-date information. Throughout this outbreak, Cold War Patriots will be taking the following steps:

- ★ **Keeping you informed.** Via the Cold War Patriots website, our Facebook page, and email notifications, we will be providing updates as it relates to the COVID-19 outbreak and the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICP).
- ★ **Checking-in periodically.** We will be checking in with you from time to time to make sure you are doing well. We hope to be a friendly voice you can talk to during this time of limited social interaction.
- ★ **Cancelling of in-person events.** Based on the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), our in person Cold War Patriots events are on hold. We look forward to restarting our popular Worker Benefit and Wellness Conferences and Doc Talk seminars, as well as our local community events.
- ★ **Hosting virtual events.** Cold War Patriots was founded to be an advocate and an information source for our nation's nuclear weapons and uranium workers. During this time, we will continue to provide valuable information to our membership by hosting virtual events. Please visit the Cold War Patriots Events Page on our website to see a list of our upcoming virtual events and check your emails.

FAQs for COVID-19 and Your EEOICPA Benefits

Recently, the Division of Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation (DEEOIC), who administers EEOICPA, released FAQs related to the DEEOIC response to COVID-19. The full FAQ can be found on the Cold War Patriots website.

- 1. Question:** I am a recipient of home health care benefits under EEOICPA, and I am required to have a face-to-face appointment with my physician to renew these benefits. I do not want to leave my house to see my doctor because of COVID-19. I don't want to lose my home health care, are there any flexibilities?

Answer: Yes, the DEEOIC staff will review each case individually to determine whether it would be appropriate to extend existing benefits without a face-to-face examination during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 2. Question:** I have filed a claim with DEEOIC, and they are requesting information within 30 days, but I am unable to see or talk to my doctor. Is there any flexibility on the timeframe?

Answer: Yes, DEEOIC will be flexible regarding timeframes for medical evidence on a case-by-case basis if the COVID-19 pandemic prevents you from obtaining the requested information.

- 3. Question:** Do you require claimants to have in-person hearings?

Answer: No, DEEOIC has both WebEx and telephone hearings available.

2020 Cold War Patriots Events

Cold War Patriots (CWP) is excited to introduce our Worker Benefits and Wellness Conference events, continuing our Doc Talks and Impairment Insights, and the 12th National Day of Remembrance.

Worker Benefits & Wellness Conferences

These well-rounded and comprehensive conferences will cover everything you need to know about EEOICPA and RECA, including how the recent U.S. DOL Procedural Manual changes can impact your U.S. DOL benefits.

Professional Case Management (PCM) and PCM Impairments, as well as a representatives from the U.S. DOL Office of the Ombudsman, Medical Screening Programs, and Advocates, will be there to answer your questions, if they are able to attend. A wellness topic, Promoting Respiratory Health in Nuclear Weapons and Uranium Workers, will be presented by a clinician from Professional Case Management.

Please review your invites to know what time to arrive, based on your U.S. DOL white card status.

Doc Talks and Impairment Insights

We will continue our Doc Talks and Impairment Insights events in partnership with PCM Impairments. At these educational talks you will have the opportunity to speak directly with an Impairment Doctor or Expert about receiving a free impairment evaluation.

Official Cold War Patriots National Day of Remembrance™

We look forward to seeing you at the 12th Annual Official Cold War Patriots National Day of Remembrance, allowing us to remember and honor our Living Legends and Fallen Heroes. We have already begun the work this year of asking Congress to designate October 30th as the National Day of Remembrance for Nuclear Weapon and Uranium Workers. More information to come.



Upcoming Cold War Patriots Events

Due to COVID-19, we will be rescheduling our Spring events, more details to come. During this time, we will continue to provide valuable information to our members by hosting virtual events. Please visit the Cold War Patriots Events Page on our website to see a list of our upcoming virtual events and check your emails.

For in-person events throughout the year, visit coldwarpatriots.org, call 1.866.937.4208, or check your mailbox for official invitations.