



**THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON**

**August 29, 2024**

The Honorable Jon Tester  
Chairman  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the requirements of 38 U.S.C. § 7322(d)(2), enclosed is the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) report, prepared in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, specifying other locations and corresponding periods of service that would qualify eligible Veterans for a clinically appropriate mammography screening by a health care provider of the Department under 38 U.S.C. § 7322(c).

VA has not identified any other locations or periods that will be included for purposes of eligibility at this time. VA will identify any other locations or periods based on coordination with the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD has limited the use of burn pits in policy. VA remains committed to honoring the Nation's Veterans by ensuring a safe environment to deliver exceptional health care.

In addition, as required by 38 U.S.C. § 116, a statement of cost for preparing the report is included. This report has been sent to the leaders of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AmAyk", written over a horizontal line.

Denis McDonough

Enclosures

## **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



### **Congressionally Mandated Report: Identification of Other Locations and Periods of Service for Mammography Screening (Biennial Report)**

**August 2024**

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## Introduction

On June 7, 2022, the President signed into law P.L. 117-133, the Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas Supported Expanded Review for Veterans in Combat Environments (SERVICE) Act. The SERVICE Act amended 38 U.S.C. § 7322 to require the Under Secretary for Health to ensure that any Veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, was deployed in support of a contingency operation in a location and during a period specified in § 7322(d) is eligible for a clinically appropriate mammography screening by a health care provider of the Department. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published a Notice in the [Federal Register](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/07/28/2023-15928/implementation-of-the-dr-kate-hendricks-thomas-supporting-expanded-review-for-veterans-in-combat) (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/07/28/2023-15928/implementation-of-the-dr-kate-hendricks-thomas-supporting-expanded-review-for-veterans-in-combat>) on July 28, 2023, announcing its implementation of these requirements.

Section 7322(d)(1)(A)-(I) identifies specific places and time periods that qualify an eligible Veteran for a clinically appropriate mammography screening as described above. These include service in:

- A. Iraq during the following periods:
  - “(i) The period beginning on August 2, 1990, and ending on February 28, 1991.
  - “(ii) The period beginning on March 19, 2003, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Iraq.
- B. The Southwest Asia theater of operations, other than Iraq, during the period beginning on August 2, 1990, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in such location, including the following locations:
  - (i) Kuwait.
  - (ii) Saudi Arabia.
  - (iii) Oman.
  - (iv) Qatar.
- C. Afghanistan during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Afghanistan.
- D. Djibouti during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Djibouti.
- E. Syria during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Syria.
- F. Jordan during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Jordan.
- G. Egypt during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Egypt.
- H. Lebanon during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Lebanon.
- I. Yemen during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on such date as the Secretary determines burn pits are no longer used in Yemen.

Veterans are also considered eligible for a clinically appropriate mammography screening if they served in other locations and corresponding periods as set forth by the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry established under section 201 of the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012 (P.L. 112–260; 38 U.S.C. 527 note).

Veterans are also eligible if they served in locations and periods as VA, in collaboration with the Secretary of Defense, may determine appropriate. If VA determines any additional locations and periods should be included, it is required to include this information in a report to Congress. This report satisfies this requirement.

## Overview

VA received a comprehensive list of burn pits used by the Department of Defense (DoD) in 2019. The Veterans Health Administration Health Outcomes Military Exposures (HOME) Office received additional information from the U.S. Central Command Surgeons Office in 2023 that is summarized in the table below.

### Current Status of Countries with Burn Pits Compared to 2019

Country	2019	2023	Date Closed
Iraq	Yes	Yes	Active
Afghanistan	Yes	No	2021
Syria	Yes	Yes	Active
Jordan	Yes	No	*Unknown
Egypt	Yes	No	2022
Lebanon	Yes	No	2021
Yemen	Yes	Yes	Active
Djibouti	*Unknown	*Unknown	*Unknown
<b>Yes:</b> At least one burn pit in the country (not all bases, to include forward operating bases, may have an active Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry <b>No:</b> No burn pits in the country as of this date. <b>*Unknown:</b> This information will be updated when Information from DoD is received.			

### Other Locations and Corresponding Periods

VA has not identified any other locations or periods that will be included for purposes of eligibility at this time. VA will identify any other locations or periods based on coordination with DoD. DoD has limited the use of burn pits in policy.

## **Conclusion**

There are no new locations or periods that establish eligibility for mammography screening. VA will continue to work with DoD to understand the initiation of new burn pit operations in the future to provide reports per requirements of the Dr. Kate Hendricks Thomas SERVICE Act

Department of Veteran Affairs  
August 2024