

VFW, Bergmann & Moore Collaborate to Assist with Camp Lejeune Claims

The goal of the relationship is to assist and guide veterans and military families affected by toxic water exposure at Camp Lejeune

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WASHINGTON — For nearly a decade, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the law firm of Bergmann & Moore have worked together to provide effective legal representation for veterans with VA disability benefit appeals before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Through a renewed agreement, the VFW is entrusting Bergmann & Moore with guiding and assisting its members in navigating the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA).

“Ensuring veterans harmed in the line of duty are made whole has been a guiding principle for the VFW since our founding more than 123 years ago,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. “We are honored to expand our association with Bergmann & Moore to ensure veterans and their families who benefit from filing a lawsuit are represented by someone who has their best interest at heart.”

In August, the VFW-championed SFC Health Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 was signed into law. Along with the most significant expansion of health care and benefits in more than a century, Section 804 of the PACT Act, known as the Camp Lejeune Justice Act, authorizes veterans and military families who were exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune from August 1953 to December 1987 to file a federal tort claim for harm caused by such exposure.

“Since the PACT Act added another recourse for veterans and their families suffering the effects of toxic exposure at Camp Lejeune, getting the right legal advice is crucial,” added Borland. “That’s why we turned to our long-trusted relationship with Bergmann & Moore to provide the best counsel possible for those we assist.”

The VFW cautions its members and supporters to avoid predatory law firms advertising endlessly on television and other media. To assist those who wish to join the Camp Lejeune

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Justice Act lawsuit determine if a law firm has their best interest at heart, the VFW has established six guiding principles. Bergmann & Moore has a proven track record of treating our members honestly and fairly and has agreed to (1) cap attorney fees at a reasonable rate, (2) no upfront costs, (3) work with the VFW to ensure veterans explore their earned Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits, (4) counsel claimant on the impact of the offset included in the Camp Lejeune Justice Act before accepting an award, (5) encourage VFW membership to eligible veterans, and (6) provide resources to support the VFW Service Officer Program.

“The goal of the agreement between VFW and Bergmann & Moore is to ensure VFW members who file a Camp Lejeune claim receive the greatest benefit and understand what they may be giving up as a result of any offset,” said Glenn Bergmann, Bergmann & Moore’s Managing Partner. “The Camp Lejeune Justice Act contains broad offset language that no one is talking about. Understanding whether an award under the CLJA will result in an offset of VA care or benefits will allow VFW members to make an informed decision before they accept the one-time benefit.”

To date there are differing opinions on the meaning of the offset language. The VA is expected to release regulations related to this in the coming months. The VFW continues to encourage its members and supporters to consult with a VFW-Accredited Service Officer to determine whether filing a lawsuit is the right step for them. This includes determining how the offset required by the law impacts their VA benefits and any possible award from a Camp Lejeune Justice Act claim.

The Camp Lejeune Justice Act potentially offers historic benefits to veterans and their families. However, these benefits need to be carefully evaluated by a firm that understands VA disability benefits. The VFW encourages anyone who served or lived at Camp Lejeune from Aug. 1, 1953, to Dec. 31, 1987, to visit vfw.org/CampLejeuneHelp or call 800.898.9450.