



Medical Opinions

It is the factually accurate, fully articulated, sound reasoning for the conclusion, not the mere fact that the claims file was reviewed, that contributes probative value to a medical opinion. (*Nieves v. Peake*)



Proposed Process for Providing Medical Opinions for Camp Lejeune Claims

- All claims related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune are managed through the Louisville regional Office:
- After claims development by VARO, a medical opinion, if needed will be routed through one of two mechanisms:
 - Routine requests:
 - Advisory Opinion requests:



Proposed Process for Providing Medical Opinions for Camp Lejeune Claims

- **Routine requests:**
 - Are sent to the facility closest to the Veteran's location
 - Involve only those conditions that have significant scientific basis for determining a nexus: (e.g. AML and Benzene exposure)
 - Also have documentation of reasonable time period for significant exposure to occur (e.g. a full tour at Camp Lejeune)
 - Guidance will be given through DMA Fact Sheet on how to estimate exposure (concern about being prescriptive)
- **Advisory Opinion requests:**
 - All other conditions, especially if medical evidence supporting a nexus is provided by the Veteran
 - Conditions usually managed through the routine process, if exposure evidence is not adequate
 - If a facility has difficulty formulating an opinion, they can request advice from the SMEs.