



SWANALERT -

Historic VA Policy Change Ignores MST Survivors

The Veterans Administration passed historic regulations this week making it easier for veterans with combat-related PTSD to file claims for compensation. Veterans who have served in combat are no longer required to provide the VA with documented evidence of a specific trauma-inducing event when filing a claim for PTSD. As such, the VA is recognizing for the first time that exposure to the hostile environment of combat is enough to induce PTSD.

While [SWAN](#) applauds the VA for taking this remarkable step in providing much needed compensation for combat-related PTSD, we also recognize that the VA has not gone far enough. In creating this new policy, the VA has institutionalized a two-tier system in which veterans with PTSD originating from Military Sexual Trauma (sexual harassment or sexual assault) are still held to a higher, unjust and unreasonable standard of proof when filing VA claims.



It is a fact that among women, Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is the primary causal factor of PTSD. Lest we mistake the epidemic as a woman's issue, it is useful to know that last year, 40 percent of the patients seeking treatment for Military Sexual Trauma at V.A. hospitals were men. For these vets, their uphill struggle against an unfair process still exists.

You can read more in this New York Times Op-Ed from SWAN's Executive Director, Anuradha Bhagwati:

<http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/07/08/should-more-veterans-get-p-t-s-d-benefits/>

SWAN will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of all our veterans and will not stop until the VA acknowledges the trauma of MST survivors and awards them the claims they justly deserve.

We urge you to click on the Donate button below and make a contribution to SWAN, however small. Your donations are tax-deductible and will go directly towards helping our policy team do this incredibly important work.

From all of us at SWAN, we thank you for your generous support!

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Service Women's Action Network
PO Box 1758
New York, New York 10156-1758

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