



Daryl Kramp, MP
Prince Edward-Hastings

NEWS RELEASE

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Government continues commitment to Veterans and their Families with Announcement of Important Changes to Agent Orange *Ex Gratia* Payment

Belleville, ON – Daryl Kramp, Member of Parliament for Prince Edward-Hastings, welcomes today's announcement by The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture), that the Government of Canada is extending the time that individuals have to submit an application for the Agent Orange *ex gratia* payment. Certain eligibility criteria have also been modified.

“This announcement illustrates our Government’s continued commitment to, and compassion for our Veterans and their families”, said Mr. Kramp.

As a result of today’s announcement, the deadline for submitting an application is extended to June 30, 2011. People will also have until June 30, 2011 to obtain a relevant medical diagnosis. They will no longer have to prove that they were expecting their medical diagnosis before February 6, 2006. Also, the requirement for applicants to have been alive on February 6, 2006 has been removed. This will allow more primary caregivers, including widows and widowers, to apply on behalf of a loved one who died before the *ex gratia* payment was first put in place.

In September 2007, the Government of Canada announced a one-time, tax-free *ex gratia* payment of \$20,000 related to the testing of unregistered U.S. military herbicides, including Agent Orange, at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick during the summers of 1966 and 1967.

While the best research available has confirmed there were no harmful long-term effects from the testing of Agent Orange, the Government of Canada acted with compassion by offering an *ex gratia* payment. This recognizes the uncertainty many individuals have lived with over the years.

To qualify for the *ex gratia* payment, individuals must be diagnosed with a medical condition listed in the U.S. National Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Medicine Update 2004. They must have worked at, trained at, been posted to, or lived within five kilometres of CFB Gagetown when Agent Orange was tested in 1966 and 1967.

Currently, a total of 3,137 applicants have received the tax-free, *ex gratia* payment, for a total payout of \$62.7 million. An additional sum of 7.7 million dollars was used to communicate information about this program to the general population, to hire personnel to deal with the applications and to open an office in Oromocto.

For more information, visit the Veterans Affairs Canada Web site at www.vac-acc.gc.ca or call **1-866-522-2122**.