



Medical Center

130 W. Kingsbridge Rd  
Bronx, NY 10468  
(718) 741-4273  
Fax (718) 741-4269

## Health Headlines

For Immediate Release  
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### **President Obama Encourages Troops and Veterans to Claim 'Stop Loss' Pay**

*Deadline for application for special retroactive pay is October 21; Service members should submit applications to [www.defense.gov/stoploss](http://www.defense.gov/stoploss)*

WASHINGTON DC – Today, the White House, Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs jointly released a new web video in which President Obama encourages active duty troops and veterans whose service in Iraq or Afghanistan was involuntarily extended or retirement was suspended due to 'stop loss' to apply for the special retroactive pay to which they are entitled. Under legislation President Obama signed into law last year, servicemen and women who served between September 11, 2001 and September 30, 2009 and whose service was extended due to 'stop loss' are eligible for \$500 per month in retroactive pay for each month their service was extended.

"As your Commander in Chief, I'm here to tell you that this is no gimmick or trick," President Obama says in the video. "You worked hard. You earned this money. It doesn't matter whether you were Active or Reserve, whether you're a veteran who experienced 'stop loss' or the survivor of a service member who did – if your service was extended, you're eligible."

To see the full video, click here: [LINK](#)

Eligible servicemen and women should submit their applications for this retroactive pay to [www.defense.gov/stoploss](http://www.defense.gov/stoploss). While by law, service members who received a bonus for voluntarily reenlisting or extending their service are not eligible, it is strongly recommended that all who may be eligible submit an application before the deadline. The deadline to apply is October 21, 2010. The tens of thousands of veterans who have already been approved have received an average of nearly \$4,000.

Special retroactive pay for servicemen and women impacted by 'stop loss' is just one of the many ways the Obama Administration is working to serve the men and women

who have served our country. Since President Obama took office, the Administration has:

- Provided one of the largest funding increases in decades to help create a 21st century VA that provides our veterans better health care, better services, and better support, including in rural communities.
- Eliminated inpatient, outpatient and prescription co-pays for the catastrophically disabled, which today account for a historically large percentage of our veterans coming home from war.
- Worked to break the back of benefit claims backlog so vets don't have to wait years for the benefits they need, and continues to work to improve and modernize VA's delivery of services.
- Helped our veterans transition back to civilian life by helping them get jobs and sending them to college through the post-9/11 GI Bill, which has already helped more than 300,000 veterans or their family members pursue their dream of a college education.
- Provided unprecedented resources to treat the wounds of today's wars -- traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress disorder -- and provided additional resources to help family members and caregivers who put their own lives on hold to care for their loved one.
- Made it easier for those suffering from PTSD to qualify for VA benefits. A veteran can now establish a claim based on his or her own testimony of events that caused PTSD without the requirement of corroborating evidence -- no matter which war they served in.
- Eliminated obstacles for about 200,000 Vietnam veterans who may have been exposed to Agent Orange to get the health care and benefits they need.

For more information related to this press release or the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact James E. Connell, III, Director of Community and Government Relations, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

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