

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
APRIL 24, 2025

TESTIMONY MATERIALS

The following materials have been submitted by county veterans affairs representatives for reference by subcommittee members:

- I. FY 2025-26** (*general CVSF-related testimony materials are also included here*)
 - a. Grant Guidance
 - b. Grant Timeline
 - c. Grant Application
 - d. Wexford County Grant Denial Timeline
 - e. Carrie Perez, Antrim County – Written Testimony
 - f. Amy Poca, Ingham/Clinton Counties – Solutions Moving Forward

- II. FY 2019-20**
 - a. Grant Guidance
 - b. Grant FAQs

- III. FY 2017-18**
 - a. Grant Guidance
 - b. HB 6403 of 2018 (*enacted as 2018 PA 514*)

COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND GRANT GUIDANCE

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) is accepting applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2026 County Veteran Service Fund grants (PA 210 of 2018). Public Act 210 of 2018 amends PA 192 of 1953, entitled “An act to create a county department of veterans’ affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers’ relief commission in such counties,” (MCL 35.621 to 35.624) by amending the title and by adding section 3a. This Act creates a county department of veteran’s affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldier’s relief commission in those counties.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism: Grant

Total Available Funding: \$4,041,500

Anticipated Number of Awards: 83

Purpose: to enhance the connection between veterans, eligible dependents, survivors, and the federal veteran benefits they may not have accessed previously. Aligning with MVAA’s goal of surpassing the national average in benefit connection rates, the grant program supports initiatives that raise awareness of available benefits and services at the federal, state, and local levels, ensuring veterans, their families, and survivors are well-informed about the benefits and resources they are entitled to receive. Additionally, it seeks to address critical gaps in services that significantly affect the quality of life for veterans within each county, fostering a comprehensive support network tailored to the unique needs of Michigan’s veteran population.

Length of Project: Up to 1 fiscal year, depending on fund availability

Cost Sharing/Match Required: No

Continuation Funds: Contingent upon appropriation funding

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total disbursement for each grant shall be determined by combining the following amounts:

- (a) A base amount of \$50,000.
- (b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be obtained from 2023 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA).

- (c) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subsection (a) is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties receiving grants, MVAA shall not perform a calculation under subsection (b) and shall not disburse the portion of grant funds described under that subsection.

TIMELINE

March 3, 2025	Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and Letter of Intent (LOI) to Apply announced
March 17, 2025	LOI due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
March 21, 2025	Applications and grant guidance sent to those that submitted LOI
April 1, 2025	Application technical assistance webinar
May 1, 2025	Applications due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
July 1, 2025	Award letters/grant agreements sent to grantees for signature
September 1, 2025	Signed grant agreements due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
October 1, 2025	FY26 grant cycle begins

The time of receipt by MVAA is determined by the time stamp provided by the State of Michigan's e-mail system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application in advance of the due date to avoid any delays in electronic mail delivery. There will be no extensions of this deadline.

Applications received by MVAA beginning at 5:01PM EST on May 1, 2025, and thereafter may not be considered for funding.

DEFINITIONS

For this funding opportunity, below is a list of commonly used terms as defined by Public Act 210 of 2018:

1. "Accredited veteran service officer": an individual who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.
2. "County veteran service fund" or "fund": the county veteran service fund created within the state treasury.
3. "PIV card": a personal identity verification card issued by USDVA.

4. “Veteran service operations”: assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer to obtain USDVA health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to Michigan counties that meet the eligibility criteria.

To be eligible to receive a grant, a county must satisfy the following:

- (a) Maintain at least 70% of the total county funding for veteran service operations for the fiscal year immediately preceding October 1, 2018; (i.e., Fiscal Year 2017).
- (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) computing systems and require county veteran service officers (VSO) to obtain a PIV card.
- (c) Submit quarterly reports to MVAA in accordance with the reporting requirements detailed in this document.
- (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran service operations.
- (e) Submit all required reports, in the requested format, to MVAA on a quarterly basis demonstrating that the county department of veterans’ affairs expended the grant funds received directly and solely on veteran service operations during the period of the report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The same person shall not serve as The Project Director, the Authorized Official, and the Financial Officer.

Project Director*—The person from the applicant’s County Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) with overall responsibility for project management and ensuring that all grant guidelines and requirements are met.

Financial Officer—The person from the applicant’s organization responsible for the financial accounting of project-related expenditures (must be different than the Authorized Official).

Authorized Official—The person from the applicant’s organization authorized to enter into an agreement with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)/MVAA to accept grant funds (must be different than the Financial Officer).

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Grant applications must be submitted on the supplied forms and in the required format to be accepted. Applications submitted that do not follow the guidelines may be rejected. Each proposed program/initiative and expenditure must be described in detail and include how each links to one or more of the following:

- **Veteran Service Officer Capacity Building:** funding to hire/retain, train, and equip VSOs to assist veterans, eligible dependents, and survivors in filing claims to improve benefit connection rates.
- **Veteran Benefits and Services Outreach and Awareness:** activities to increase awareness of federal, state, and county-level veteran benefits and services, such as public events, marketing campaigns, and digital outreach.
- **Emergency Relief and Quality of Life Enhancements:** funds to support immediate needs such as utility assistance, food security, or home repairs for veterans experiencing hardships that cannot be covered by the Michigan Veterans Trust Funds and/or Soldier Sailor Relief Funds.
- **Service Gap Solution:** projects aim to address critical gaps in available services, ensure that underserved needs are met, and enhance overall service delivery within the veteran community. Only counties above the state average disability connection rate are eligible for this initiative.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND NARRATIVE

All applications must have a detailed Budget Justification and Narrative that supports the requested funding. The Budget Justification and Narrative explains how the costs were calculated and must tie directly back to the Project Narrative.

The Budget Justification and Narrative is the justification of ‘how’ and/or ‘why’ a line item helps to meet the program deliverables. All costs must be utilized to support the provision of assistance and programing to meet the needs of veterans residing in the county. The proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary for the supported activity.

All budget calculations must follow the prescribed format on the Budget Request Form.

If operational/programmatic changes are needed during the award period, a Project Amendment form must be submitted for PRIOR approval to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov. The subject line should state, “FY26 CVSF XXX County Amendment.” If the change also requires moving funds from one line item to another, you will also need to complete and attach an updated Budget Request Form. All MVAA grant reporting forms will accompany the grant award agreement.

EXPENDITURES

Consistent with the best practices of USDVA and MVAA, all proposed expenditures must facilitate, enhance, and improve county veteran service operations to connect veterans to their federal benefits. Failure to obtain prior written approval from DMVA/MVAA may result in an expense not being authorized or reimbursed. Funds expended without prior MVAA approval will not be reimbursed.

Allowable costs are charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that are consistent with State of Michigan legislation and the guidelines established in the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges can be reimbursed when provided in an approved application/budget, serve programmatic intent and are reasonable/allocable under CFR Part 200, Subpart E.

A cost is reasonable if it does not exceed an amount that a prudent person would incur under the circumstances prevailing when the decision was made to incur the cost. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost consideration must be given to the following:

1. Whether the cost is generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the recipient's or subrecipient's operation or the proper and efficient performance of the award.
2. The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as sound business practices; arm's-length bargaining; Federal, State, local, tribal, and other laws and regulations; and terms and conditions of the award.
3. Market prices for comparable costs for the geographic area.
4. Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances considering their responsibilities to the recipient or subrecipient, its employees, its students or membership (if applicable), the public at large, and the Government; and
5. Whether the cost represents a deviation from the recipient's or subrecipient's established written policies and procedures for incurring costs.

A cost is allocable to an award or other cost objective if the cost is assignable to that award or in accordance with relative benefits received. The standard is met if the cost satisfies any of the following criteria:

1. Is incurred specifically for the award.
2. Benefits both the award and other work of the recipient or subrecipient and can be distributed in proportions that may be approximated using reasonable methods; or
3. Is necessary to the overall operation of the recipient or subrecipient and is assignable in part to the award as a direct cost.

Unallowable costs are charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that do not meet the criteria established by the State of Michigan legislation or the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges cannot be reimbursed.

See Attachment A for additional guidance on allowable and unallowable expenses.

POST AWARD

All grantees must be registered to do business with the State of Michigan. Registration is available at the following website: <https://sigma.michigan.gov/PRDVSS1X1/Advantage4>

The State of Michigan will not accept Signature Pages without the entire Grant Agreement. A complete signed copy of the Grant Agreement must be returned to MVAA no later than 60 days after the award letter is received.

When communicating with MVAA regarding your grant award, the Grant Award Number or County must be included in the subject line of the e-mail.

There will be a mandatory post award training for Project Directors and Financial Officers to learn correct reporting formats. If one or more parties fails to attend, the grantee is still required to adhere to all grant standards.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Financial reports will be required monthly. Reports are due to MVAA by the 10th of each month.

Progress and Activity Reports will be required quarterly and are due to MVAA according to the Progress and Activity Reporting Schedule below.

Reporting templates will be provided to grant recipients with the notice of award. Submitting reimbursement requests starts with an approved budget. Reimbursements will be made monthly once the \$50,000 advance is surpassed.

Reimbursement for salaries/fringes will be supported by submitting Staff Budget Quarterly Reports and certified timesheets. Travel or Training requests must be submitted using the MVAA Training and Travel Reimbursement Form.

Quarterly progress reports that identify the major tasks completed during the reporting period, any issues or difficulties during the quarter, project milestones, and performance standards and metrics must be submitted to MVAA as part of the quarterly report.

All reimbursable expenses must be incurred during the grant award cycle. Requests for reimbursement for activities/services prior to the award or after the close of the award will not be reimbursed.

PROGRESS AND ACTIVITY REPORTING SCHEDULE

Reporting Period	October 1 -December 31, 2025	January 1 – March 31, 2026	April 1 – June 30, 2026	July 1 – September 30, 2026
Report Due	January 10, 2026	April 10, 2026	July 10, 2026	October 5, 2026

MONITORING

All grant recipients will be subject to grant monitoring of performance, including data collection.

Standardized templates will be provided with the notice of award. Budget, progress, and activity reports will be required quarterly. Grant and performance monitoring will be conducted by MVAA. If MVAA determines by audit or otherwise, that a county department of veterans' affairs expended the grant funds received for purposes other than veteran service operations, MVAA shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the county department of veteran's affairs in the succeeding fiscal year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly expended.

RESOURCES

The following sites may be of assistance in researching and developing your grant application.

The 2023 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report:

<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mvaa/quality-of-life/emergency-assistance/panel-content>

Michigan Travel Rates:

<https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/-/media/Project/Websites/dtmb/Services/Travel/Travel-Rates->

[FY2025-and-High-Cost-Cities-effective-1-1-](https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/-/media/Project/Websites/dtmb/Services/Travel/Travel-Rates-)

[2025.pdf?rev=6e16aff7dc9d4877b86927a92b3be98f&hash=F1EE3E66F633004365D41F106AD](https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/-/media/Project/Websites/dtmb/Services/Travel/Travel-Rates-)

[5153B](https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/-/media/Project/Websites/dtmb/Services/Travel/Travel-Rates-)

ATTACHMENT A

Purpose

To list common cost categories for Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency's (MVAA) grant programs and provide guidance on whether they are allowable or unallowable. This section is not intended to be all-inclusive. If grantees have questions after reviewing this section they should contact the applicable Grant Analyst.

Definitions

Allowable Costs: Charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that are consistent with State of Michigan legislation and the guidelines established in the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges can be reimbursed when provided in an approved application/budget, serve programmatic intent and are reasonable/allocable (CFR Part 200, Subpart E).

Unallowable Costs: Charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that don't meet the criteria established by State of Michigan legislation or the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges cannot be reimbursed.

Reasonable Costs: A cost is reasonable if it does not exceed an amount that a prudent person would incur under the circumstances prevailing when the decision was made to incur the cost.

Allocable Costs: A cost is allocable to an award or other cost objective if the cost is assignable to that award or in accordance with relative benefits received.

ALLOWABILITY OF COSTS & ACTIVITIES		
Cost Category	Affected MVAA Grant Program(s)	Explanation of Allowable Costs
Advertising & Marketing	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for radio, newspaper, television, direct mail, billboards or electronic/computer transmittals.
Air Travel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status, consistent with Department of Technology, Management and Budget's (DTMB) Standardized Travel Regulations (STR) for the current Fiscal Year (FY), Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' (DMVA) Travel Policy, and at the lowest rate available.
Alcoholic Beverages	All	Unallowable
Apparel	All	Unallowable
Bonuses	All	Unallowable
Buildings and Land Construction	MiVHPG	Allowable for the acquisition of buildings or land to make improvements, modifications, replacements, renovations or alterations to an existing building. This also includes construction and construction related materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall or plumbing.
Business/Travel Insurance	All	Unallowable
Conferences	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable if the conference fulfills the purpose of a grant program's legislated purpose. Allowable conference costs may include rental of facilities, speakers' fees, costs of meals (see meals for restrictions), refreshments, local transportation and registration fees. If renting a building or room for training, the grantee should use the most cost-effective facility.
Contractual/Consulting/Professional Services	All	Allowable in an approved application/budget.
Contributions or Donations	All	Unallowable
Dental Services	CVSF	Allowable in an approved application/budget and in accordance with grant-supported project/initiative.
Dues or Memberships Fees	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for costs of business, technical and professional organizations when in an approved application/budget. Unallowable for civic or community organizations.
Entertainment	CVSF	Unallowable including amusement, diversion and social activities (e.g., bands, dance groups, tickets to shows) except where specific costs have a programmatic purpose (e.g., Modern Warrior Live production).
Fees	All	Allowable for Emergency Services only (e.g., late fees, fees associated with delinquent taxes for approved initiatives).
Fines or Legal Settlements	All	Unallowable
Food Cards/Vouchers	CVSF	Allowable
Fringe Benefits	All	Allowable to include, but not limited to, the costs of annual/personal or sick leave, holidays, employee insurance, and unemployment benefits.
Fuel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for rental vehicles only.
Fundraising	All	Unallowable
Furniture	CVSF/MiVHPG	Allowable in an approved application/budget for office use or to furnish permanent or temporary shelter (e.g., desks, desk chairs, tables, beds, dressers).
Gas Cards	CVSF	Allowable
Gifts or Prizes	All	Unallowable
Infrastructure	CVSF/SVSPG	Unallowable
Legal Services	CVSF	Allowable in an approved application/budget and in accordance with the grant-supported project/initiative.
Lobbying	All	Unallowable
Lodging	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status, consistent with DTMB's STR's for the current Fiscal Year (FY), and reasonable.
Lottery	All	Unallowable
Maintenance and Repair Costs	All	Allowable for Emergency Services in an approved application/budget.
Meals	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for meals consumed while in travel status and consistent with DTMB's STR's established meal reimbursement rates for the current FY and DMVA's Travel Policy. Unallowable for meals consumed while not in travel status and/or amounts exceeding DTMB's STR's established meal reimbursement rates for the current FY, grocery items (e.g., loaf of bread, lunch meat, lettuce, mayonnaise and mustard to make a "meal").
Meal Tips	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable with sit-down meals. Maximum 20%. Unallowable on take-out or at fast food restaurants.
Mileage	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for organizational or privately owned vehicles for business, based on actual miles traveled consistent with DTMB's STR, local policy prevails. Unallowable between home and official or remote work locations.
Office Equipment	All	Allowable for purchase or rent, the rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle (e.g., copiers, computers, laptops). If replacing equipment previously purchased with the grant, greater than \$5,000, a depreciation schedule must be submitted to demonstrate the equipment has surpassed its useful lifespan.
Office Rent/Mortgage	All	Unallowable
Office Supplies	All	Allowable
Organizational Cell Phones	All	Allowable
Payroll Taxes	All	Allowable
Per Diems	CVSF	Allowable for applicable staff attending committee meetings in an approved application/budget.
Pre/Post-Award Costs	All	Unallowable for expenses incurred outside of the grant cycle.
Printing and Publications	All	Allowable for informational brochures, flyers, manuals and publications relating to an approved project.
Promotional Items	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for marketing activities directly related to the funded project (e.g., signs, table tents, t-shirts, hats, coasters).
Recreational Therapy	All	Unallowable
Rental/Mortgage Assistance	CVSF/MiVHPG	Allowable
Salaries & Wages	All	Allowable as part of employee compensation for personnel services in relation to the amount of time an employee devotes to the grant-supported project/program. Unallowable for staff who devote time to activities that do not meet the legislated intent of the grant program.
Sales Tax	All	Unallowable
Service/Emotional Support Animals	All	Unallowable
Service Charges	All	Allowable for charges that are unavoidable (e.g., credit card processing fee)
Snacks/Refreshments	All	Allowable consistent with DMVA's Group Meetings Policy.
Software Licenses	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable consistent with the Office of Financial Management guides's expense cut off.
Sponsorships	All	Unallowable
Stipends	All	Unallowable
Subscriptions	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for business, technical and professional services. Unallowable for civic or community organizations.
Tobacco	All	Unallowable
Training	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when meeting the legislative intent of the grant program and in an approved application/budget.
Transportation Services	CVSF	Allowable in an approved application/budget and in accordance with the grant-supported project/initiative.
Travel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status, consistent with DTMB's STR's for the current FY, and reasonable.
Utility Assistance	CVSF/MiVHPG	Allowable for Emergency Services in an approved application/budget.
Vehicles	All	Allowable to rent while in travel status. Unallowable to purchase.
Warranties	All	Unallowable

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FY26 County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) Grant Timeline

March 3, 2025	Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and Letter of Intent (LOI) to Apply announced
March 17, 2025	DEADLINE – LOI due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
March 21, 2025	Application and grant guidance sent to those that submitted LOI
April 1, 2025	Application technical assistance webinar
May 1, 2025	DEADLINE – Applications due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
July 1, 2025	Award letters/grant agreements sent to grantees for signature
September 1, 2025	DEADLINE – Signed grant agreements due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
October 1, 2025	FY26 grant-cycle begins

*MVAA must receive county signed copy of the CVSF Grant Agreement within 60 days of receipt of the Grant Award Packet. **Grant Agreements received after the 60 days may be forfeited.**

Grant Agreements will be processed as received. Fully executed Grant Agreements will be returned to the county and payment requests will be submitted.

Please note: All documents should be sent to: MVAAGrants@michigan.gov. The time/date of receipt by MVAA is determined by the time/date stamp provided by the State of Michigan e-mail system.

Documents received to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov will be replied to with a confirmation of receipt; if you do not receive a receipt confirmation within three business days of submission, please contact Wynette Adamson, Contract and Grant Compliance Analyst directly at AdamsonW@michigan.gov.

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FY26 COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND GRANT APPLICATION TEMPLATE

This is the only approved template for use in submitting the County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) grant request.

Definitions to determine the proper individual to list as a contact can be found in the Grant Guidance. The Authorized Official is the person able to accept funds and enter the County into agreements and contracts. This is usually the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners. The three contacts listed must all be different individuals.

Requested Total Grant Amount is the total of all initiatives/programs/salaries and must balance with the total of all Budget Request Forms and Staff Salary Budget Request Forms.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant County			
Requested Total Grant Amount			
SIGMA Vendor Code		SIGMA Address Code	

Project Director	
Mailing Address	
Phone	
E-mail Address	

Financial Officer	
Mailing Address	
Phone	
E-mail Address	

Authorized Official	
Mailing Address	
Phone	
E-mail Address	

All assistance, programming, and service initiatives must be submitted with separate Project Narrative, Budget Narrative/Justification, and Budget Request Forms. Duplicate forms as needed for each initiative and attach supporting documentation (quotes, contracts, etc.) as necessary.

PROJECT DETAIL

Enter the name of the initiative in the Project Title and which of the four initiative categories listed in the Grant Guidance the initiative falls into in the Grant Focus Area.

Project Title	
Grant Focus Area	

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Describe, in detail, the project/initiative and how grant funds will be used to execute. Include how the project/initiative links to the Grant Focus Area.

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BUDGET NARRATIVE/JUSTIFICATION

Describe the budget and include an **itemized list** of all planned expenditures. The items listed below must be included on the Budget Request Form(s) or Staff Salary Budget Request Form(s) and balance with the Requested Total Grant Amount.

PROGRAMMING/INITIATIVE JUSTIFICATION

Describe how the requested programming/initiative meets the purpose of the grant, to enhance the connection between veterans, eligible dependents, survivors and the federal veteran benefits they may have not accessed previously. Include how each initiative links to the Grant Focus Area identified in the Project Narrative.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Type an "X" in the box for confirmation of the following statements

I understand that my County must become registered to do business with the State of Michigan prior to receiving any grant funding. Registration is available at the following website: www.michigan.gov/SIGMAVSS .	
I have included a digitally signed FY26 PIV Verification Form indicating active remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs computing systems or will submit one no later than September 25, 2026 .	
I understand that my County must submit Michigan Veterans Trust Fund applications for emergency assistance prior to utilizing the County Veteran Service Fund when applicable.	
I have included itemized Budget Request Forms for each initiative/program/salary request.	
I have included a FY17 and current year county budget for the veteran service office that provides assistance to veterans and/or family members.	
I understand that I should receive an email confirmation of submission of my application within 24 business hours, and if I do not receive an email confirmation, I should contact the agency for confirmation.	
I understand that the grant agreement must be signed by the <u>Authorized Official</u> before grant funds can be expended.	

Signature: _____
Authorized Official

Date: _____

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Wexford County FY26 MVAA Grant Denial Timeline

- Director Emmons set up grant training with MVAA on March 13, 2025, via email to Wynette Adamson, prior to his employment start date.
- Director Emmons started work March 17, 2025 – was not made aware of MVAA grant timeline by outgoing staff.
- Director Emmons attended face to face training with Wynette Adamson – Grant and Contract Compliance Analyst for MVAA on March 28, 2025 – was not made aware of current grant deadlines at this training. In fact, it seemed that we were current on all deadlines until QTR 3 reporting. This was according to Wynette.
- Director Emmons sent an email on April 1, 2025, at 4:08PM asking Wynette if our FY26 LOI had been submitted as he had just received the current timeline.
- Director Emmons received a return email from Wynette on April 1, 2025, at 4:58PM informing him that MVAA grant office had not received Wexford County LOI and gave instructions on what to say when submitting it.
- Director Emmons submitted LOI on April 1, 2025 at 5:09PM to the MVAA Grant inbox.
- Director Emmons received a denial email from Kate Preston, MVAA Grant Manager, on April 7, 2025 at 4:08PM.
- Director Emmons returned email asking what the formal appeals process was for denial of grant submission on April 7, 2025, at 4:59PM.
- Director Emmons received a response from Kate Preston saying there was no formal appeals process, and to contact Emily Rissman with questions.
- Director Emmons called Emily Rissman on April 8th and was told there was nothing that she could do because calculations had been made for those that submitted LOIs.
- Director Emmons had a call with Todd Butler the Deputy Director of MVAA on April 9, 2025, to discuss my problem. He agreed that the process needed to be changed, and that he would do everything in his power to help with getting our funding.

- Director Emmons has since not heard from MVAA regarding the status of Wexford County FY26 grant. Wexford County is prepared to submit the FY 26 grant and continues to submit emails to MVAA grant email to ask what the status is.

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I wish I could attend. I grew up down state, but I cannot make it to the hearing in person. My input for the MVAA subcommittee hearing is mainly that I have been astounded that MVAA is not held to the standard of a fiscal year deadline for both balancing and distributing of funding and it is absolutely unacceptable to withhold funding (for months!), show no accountability for such a massive accounting error, reallocate funds that were specific to training, while placing extra workload onto the County offices that are often undermanned and barely able to provide service to our veterans statewide when this obvious error occurred at the fault of MVAA. This massive error of leadership in accounting and budgeting at MVAA all hurts the veterans within our entire state who come to us for assistance. We are in a rural area, like many and this has hindered our ability to help our veterans with claim submission, financial assistance and the time it takes to provide assistance to them. The standards must be met and the state requiring extra reporting on top of quarterly reports is irresponsible and highly unreasonable. It seems the MVAA is incompetent and it reflects poorly on us all but mainly, keeps critical funding withheld from veterans who need it. Our time should be utilized in doing our jobs directly with the veterans in our communities.

I was a Finance and Accounting Technician for several years for the Air Force, Air National Guard (military and civilian side) and for the USDA Forest Service and never have I seen such disregard for fiscal responsibility. I strongly believe it should be pointed out that we, as CVSOs want the accountability held on MVAA's level, for them to adhere to deadlines, proper and prudent accounting practices and to keep reporting from our counties quarterly-absolutely not monthly. Time and accuracy are valuable, which MVAA should recognize. Leadership at MVAA must do better or find better leadership.

Thank you for representing us! I will be watching again.

Carrie A. Perez, VSO I
Antrim County Veterans Affairs
PerezC@antrimcounty.org
231.533.8499
Veteran~U.S. Air Force 1997-2006

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SUBMITTED BY: Amy Poca, Director – Ingham & Clinton County Department of Veterans Affairs

MEETING DATE: 2025-04-24

Can you submit the attached information to the subcommittee for reference.

Solutions Moving Forward:

1. Audit and Accountability:

We support an Attorney General audit of the County Veteran Service Fund, as well as a thorough investigation into the removal of County Training Reimbursement Funds.

2. Restoring the Grant:

We urge the approval of a supplemental budget to fully fund the FY25 grant. This must include language requiring the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency to honor the original terms of the grant agreements with counties.

3. Fair Consideration for Wexford County:

We request that Wexford County's FY26 Letter of Intent be approved, given the extenuating circumstances that prevented timely submission.

4. Returning to the Original Purpose:

We call for the elimination of burdensome monthly reporting requirements and unnecessary service gap provisions.

Counties should not be required to submit Michigan Veterans Trust Fund applications for emergency assistance as a condition of the FY26 grant.

It's time to return the grants to their original intent—providing direct, effective support to Michigan veterans.

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FY20 COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND – GRANT GUIDANCE

COUNTY SERVICE VETERAN FUND

January 2020

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2020 County Veteran Service Fund grants (PA 210 of 2018). Public Act 210 of 2018 amends PA 192 of 1953, entitled "An act to create a county department of veterans' affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers' relief commission in such counties," (MCL 35.621 to 35.624) by amending the title and by adding section 3a. This Act creates a county department of veterans' affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the county veteran service fund and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers' relief commission in those counties.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism: Grant

Total Available Funding: \$6,364,119

Anticipated Number of Awards: 83

Purpose: Grant dollars are intended to enhance and improve county veteran service operations in an effort to connect veterans to their benefits and provide consistent access to services throughout the state.

Length of Project: Up to 1 fiscal year, depending on fund availability

Cost Sharing / Match Required: No

Continuation Funds: Contingent upon appropriation funding

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total disbursement for each grant shall be determined by combining the following amounts:

(a) A base amount of \$50,000.00

(b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be obtained from the most recent (2018) Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subsection (a) is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of

counties receiving grants, the MVAA shall not perform a calculation under subsection (b) and shall not disburse the portion of grant funds described under that subsection.

There is no cost sharing or match required.

TIMELINE

A completed and signed application (including any attachments) must be received by the MVAA, via email to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov no later than 12 p.m. (noon) EST on February 21, 2020. The time of receipt by the MVAA is determined by the timestamp provided by the State of Michigan email system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application in advance of the due date to avoid any delays in electronic mail delivery. There will be no extensions of this deadline. Applications received by the MVAA beginning at 12:01 p.m. EST on February 21, 2020, and thereafter, may not be considered for funding.

It is recommended you do not wait until the last minute to submit your grant application. This is a State of Michigan email address and you run the risk of a server overload.

Event	Deadline
Letter of Intent Re-opens	January 8, 2020
Letter of Intent amended Deadline	January 17, 2020 by 12:00 pm*
Grant Application Period Opens	January 21, 2020
Grant Application Informational Webinar	January 28, 2020 at 10:00 am*
Q & A Webinar	February 4, 2020 at 10:00 am*
Q & A Webinar	February 11, 2020 at 2:00 pm*
Grant Application Period Closes	February 21, 2020 at 12:00 pm*
MVAA Grant Application Review	February 21 – 28, 2020
Notification of Approval/Denial/Resubmission Requests**	March 2, 2020
Award Letters and Grant Agreement Packets sent for approved applications	March 2, 2020
**Individual conferences with counties to review denials and resubmission requests	TBD
**Grant resubmission Deadline (if applicable)	March 10, 2020 by 12:00 pm*
**Notification of Approval/Denial for Resubmissions & Grant Agreement Packets sent	March 16, 2020
County signed Grant Agreement returned to MVAA	MVAA must receive signed copy of Grant Agreement from County within 60 days of receipt of the Award packet. Grant Agreements received after the 60 days may be forfeited.
Fully executed Grant Agreement returned to County and payment request submitted	To be processed as received

*Denotes EST

CONTACT INFORMATION

The same person shall not serve as The Project Director, the Authorized Official and the Financial Officer.

Project Director* – The person from the applicant’s County Department of Veterans Affairs with overall responsibility for project management and ensuring that all grant guidelines and requirements are met.

* County must ask for permission and be granted an exception by the MVAA for someone other than Director of CDVA to be the Project Director.

Financial Officer – The person from the applicant’s organization responsible for the financial accounting of project related expenditures (must be different than the Authorized Official).

Authorized Official – The person from the applicant’s organization authorized to enter into an agreement with the DMVA/MVAA in order to accept grant funds (must be different than the Financial Officer).

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to Michigan counties that meet the eligibility criteria.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to receive a grant, a county department of veterans’ affairs must satisfy the following;

- (a) Maintain a minimum level of county funding for veteran service operations equal to the level of county funding for veteran service operations for the preceding fiscal year.
- (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs computing systems and require county veteran service officers to obtain a PIV card.
- (c) Submit quarterly reports to the MVAA in accordance with the reporting requirements detailed in this document.
- (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran service operations.
- (e) Submit financial reports, in the requested format, to the MVAA on a quarterly basis, demonstrating that the county department of veterans’ affairs expended the grant funds received directly and solely on veteran service operations during the period of the report.

EXPECTATIONS

It is the expectation of the MVAA that these services will be initiated/ implemented as soon as possible after the award. At the latest, grant recipients are expected to provide services no later than the third month post grant being awarded.

Priority will be given to applications that seek to establish a County Department of Veterans Affairs or enhance existing current veteran service operations. Other requests may be considered acceptable

unless it deviates too far from veteran service operations as defined. You will be notified if your application falls in this category and will be afforded the opportunity to reapply.

All submissions must support NEW initiatives or an increase in existing veteran service operations. Project personnel hired with FY19 grant funds may continue to be funded with FY20 grant funds.

Supplanting is not allowed.

DEFINITIONS

For this funding opportunity, below is a list of commonly used terms as defined by Public Act 210 of 2018.

1. "Accredited veteran service officer": an individual who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.
2. "County veteran service fund" or "fund": the county veteran service fund created within the state treasury.
3. "PIV card": a personal identity verification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
4. "Veteran service operations": assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Grant applications must be submitted on the supplied forms and in the required format to be accepted. Applications submitted that do not follow the guidelines may be rejected. Each proposed program/initiative and expenditure must be described in detail and include how each tie to one or both of the following goals:

Goal #1: Enhance or increase veteran service provision over past service provisions.

Goal #2: Connect eligible veterans, servicemembers, dependents or survivors to benefits by an accredited service officer to obtain United States Department of Veteran Affairs to health, financial, or memorial benefits. This includes applying for emergency grants from the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund to address a short-term unforeseen financial crisis.

In addition, the narrative must include how the county will measure the success of each implemented program/initiative.

EXPENDITURES

Consistent with the best practices of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, all proposed expenditures must facilitate, enhance, and improve county

veteran service operations to connect veterans to their benefits. Failure to obtain prior written approval from DMVA/MVAA may result in an expense not being authorized or reimbursed.

SUGGESTED EXPENDITURES

Please refer to the FAQ handout or contact the MVAA for further guidance.

DISALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

Funds expended without prior MVAA approval will not be reimbursed. Please refer to the FAQ handout or contact the MVAA for further guidance.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND NARRATIVE

All applications must have a detailed budget justification and narrative that supports the requested funding. The Budget Justification and Narrative explains how the costs were calculated and must tie directly back to the Project Narrative.

The Budget Narrative is the justification of 'how' and/or 'why' a line item helps to meet the program deliverables. All costs must be utilized to support the provision of assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans residing in the county. The proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable and necessary for the supported activity.

All Budget calculations must follow a prescribed format. Please refer to the FAQ handout or contact the MVAA for guidance.

If operational/programmatic changes are needed during the award period, you will need to complete a project amendment form and contact the MVAA Program Manager for PRIOR approval. If the change also requires moving funds from one-line item to another, you will need to complete a budget amendment form and contact the MVAA Program Manager for PRIOR approval. All forms will be accompany the grant award agreement.

If you are not sure if a cost is allowable, you will need prior approval from the MVAA Program Manager. If a cost is deemed disallowable after it has been expended, and there was not a PRIOR authorization, the grant WILL NOT reimburse the County.

Supplanting and administrative (in-direct) costs are not permitted.

Charges to the project for items such as salaries must conform to the written policies and established practices of the applicant organization.

POST AWARD

All grantees will need to be registered to do business with the State of Michigan. Registration is available at the following website: www.michigan.gov/SIGMAVSS.

The State of Michigan will not accept Signature Pages without the entire Grant Agreement. A complete signed copy of the Grant Agreement must be returned to the MVAA no later than 60 days after the Award Letter is received.

When communicating with the MVAA regarding your Grant Award, the Grant Award Number must be included in the Subject line of the e-mail. E-mails received without the Grant Award Number in the Subject line may be returned.

There will be a mandatory one-day training for Project Directors and Financial Officers to learn correct reporting formats. If one or more parties fails to attend, the grant award may be rescinded. Dates and locations will be provided with the Grant Award letter. Grant funds may be used to support travel to and from the mandatory training. Additional personnel assigned to the Project may attend at the expense of the county.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. Grant recipients will submit an updated county department of veterans' affairs budget and invoice for those expenses approved for payment by the grant no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.

Submitting budget reports for reimbursement start with an approved budget. Reimbursements will be made on a quarterly basis. All reimbursable expenses must be incurred during the grant award cycle. Requests for reimbursement for activities/services prior to the award or after the close of the award WILL NOT be reimbursed.

Reimbursement for salaries/fringes will need to be supported by submitting certified signed time sheets by both the employee and the employee's supervisor

Quarterly Financial Reports demonstrating the expenditure and division of grant funds and county funds, must be signed by the Chief Financial Officer.

Quarterly Progress Reports that identify the major tasks completed during the reporting period, any issues or difficulties during the quarter, project milestones, and performance standards and metrics must be submitted to the MVAA by the 30th of the month following the end of the quarter.

Reporting templates will be provided to grant recipients with the Notice of Award.

REPORTING SCHEDULE

Reporting Period	October 1 -December 31, 2019	January 1 – March 31, 2020	April 1 – June 30, 2020	July 1 – September 30, 2020
Report Due	April 10, 2020	April 10, 2020	July 10, 2020	October 10, 2020

MONITORING

All grant recipients will be subject to grant monitoring of performance, including data collection. Standardized templates will be provided with the Grant Award Letter. Budget and progress and activity reports will be required quarterly. Grant and performance monitoring will be conducted by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. If the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency determines, by audit or otherwise, that a county department of veterans' affairs expended the grant funds received for purposes other than veteran service operations, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the county department of veterans' affairs in the succeeding fiscal year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly expended.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding this funding opportunity, please e-mail MVAAGrants@michigan.gov.

RESOURCES

The following sites may be of assistance in researching and developing your grant application.

The most recent (2018) Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report

<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund

<https://www.michiganveterans.com/a/Michigan-Veterans-Trust-Fund>

<https://www.michiganveterans.com/p/Emergency-Assistance>

State of Michigan Travel Rates

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dtmb/Travel_Rates_FY20_January_2020_675062_7.pdf

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FY20 County Veteran Service Fund Grants FAQs

1. How much grant money is available to each county?

There will be an upfront base payment of \$50,000.00 upon signed agreement. Per capita amounts will be available after all Letters of Intent are received by the MVAA. The deadline for those letters is Friday, January 17, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. Once received the 4 million FY20 appropriation plus the balance carried forward from FY19 will be calculated and the counties intending to apply will be notified of the per capita available.

2. In laymen's terms, can you tell me what this grant is for?

The FY20 CVSF Grant is to assist counties in establishing a County Department of Veterans Affairs, support NEW initiatives, and/or enhance or expand existing veteran service operations and connect veterans to their benefits.

3. What is the grant application process for FY2020?

Please see the final page of the FAQs for a timeline. Don't hesitate to Call the MVAA at (517)284-5298 and ask for the Grant Specialist if you have questions.

4. Why is a Letter of Intent mandatory?

Consider it the only method to secure a portion of the Grant funds for your county. Remember the Letter of Intent does not bind you to any legal contract or obligate you in any way to apply. We do ask that if you decide not to apply that you let the MVAA know as soon as possible because it will impact the per capita amounts.

5. The deadline for the Letter of Intent is very quick. What if the county is not sure that they want to apply?

If you think there is even a remote possibility that your county will want to apply and take advantage of the funding opportunity, SUBMIT THE LETTER OF INTENT. We do ask that if you decide not to apply that you let the MVAA know as soon as possible because it will impact the per capita amounts.

6. What can the grant funds be used for?

Grant dollars are intended to enhance and improve county veteran service operations. "Veteran service operations" means assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited VSO to obtain USDVA health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

Here are suggestions; this is not an exhaustive list. If you are not sure call the MVAA at (517)284-5298 and ask for the Grant Specialist to get guidance.

- County improvements
 - Establishing a county department of veterans' affairs office
 - Increased service hours to eligible veterans to connect them with their USDVA benefits
 - Training (to include out of state but must remain in the Continental US)
 - Technology (office equipment)
 - Administrative Assistant
 - Advertising (print, radio, tv, swag)
 - Travel Reimbursement

- Office improvements
- Office Supplies
- Veteran Services improvements
 - Bus tokens / gas cards (with qualifiers)
 - Therapy/Service Animals
 - Vehicles – must remain in the possession of the County and may not be transferred or donated to any other organization
 - Aide to peace-time veterans

7. What are examples of prohibited expenditures?

Anything that does not provide or improve assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in Michigan is prohibited. Remember, the purpose of the grant is to enhance and improve veteran service operations to connect veterans to their benefits and provide consistent access to services throughout the state. If the county cannot justify or tie their requests in the application narrative back to enhancement and improvement as a “veteran service operation” then it will not be an approved expenditure.

8. Can the county get guidance/pre-approval of their ideas before taking the time to apply?

Call the MVAA at (517)284-5298 and ask for the Grant Specialist to talk it through. Pre-approval cannot be guaranteed without the detailed narrative and budget numbers, and the other information in the application.

9. The criteria for eligibility seem subjective; what if the county is not sure they qualify?

Call the MVAA at (517)284-5298 and ask for the Grant Specialist and we’ll help you figure it out! A few rules are a.) the county applying for the grant must be providing at least 20 hours of veteran service operations; it cannot be contracted out to another county, b.) the county must maintain a minimum level of county funding for veteran service operations equal to the previous fiscal year...if the millage is not renewed, there is no exception, the county still has to maintain the funding level of the previous fiscal year.

10. How much detail is needed in the “Narrative” and “Budget” sections of the application?

As much as possible! Really think through the program, project, or initiative and how it will assist your county in establishing a County Department of Veterans Affairs, support NEW initiatives, and/or enhance or expand existing veteran service operations and connect more veterans to their benefits. Be persuasive, justify every action and itemize every expense in the narrative. Do not assume the Grant Review Committee are familiar with your processes; they want the “who, what, when, where, how, and why”.

11. How do we estimate costs to create a budget?

Research costs for items online. Use State of Michigan procurement rules and remember they differ from federal procurement rules. Ask MVAA to send you the link for Administrative Guide to Equipment purchases.

Here are a few specific guidelines:

- a. *Travel: Explain the need for travel and your calculations for travel costs. Break down by airfare, hotel, meals, mileage. Do not use travel sites such as Expedia or Kayak because we cannot reimburse travel packages. The FY2020 State of Michigan Travel rates are provided under the Resources section of this document. Travel expenses charged to the grant may not*

exceed the State of Michigan approved travel rates. Travelers must use the most economical method of travel including utilizing county vehicles or carpooling.

- b. Supplanting and administrative (in-direct) costs are not permitted.
- c. Charges to the project for items such as salaries must conform to the written policies and established practices of the applicant organization.

12. What should the budget look like in the application?

You will be given a template with the Notification of Award and Agreement. The budget in the application will be more generic than when reporting and submitting for reimbursement, but the amounts should be as close to actual as possible. The reports/reimbursement requests will have more details, date of expenditure, store/supplier, etc.).

13. Can you give a detailed example of how you want to see the budget for salary?

Yes! Here is an example of requested formats:

To calculate staff salary, follow the example below:

Personnel:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Computation</i>	<i>Requested Amount</i>
<i>Susan Smart</i>	<i>VSO</i>	<i>\$30/hr x 40 hrs/week x 52 weeks</i>	<i>\$62,400.00</i>

You will need to adjust the hourly rate to the current salary being paid by your county multiplied by the number of hours to be worked per week multiplied by the number of weeks per year to arrive at your actual grant requested amount.

Fringe Benefits: Must be calculated for any personnel paid for from the grant

<i>Name</i>	<i>Percentage Rate</i>	<i>Computation</i>	<i>Requested Amount</i>
<i>Employer FICA</i>			
<i>Retirement</i>			
<i>Hospital Insurance</i>			
<i>Dental Insurance</i>			
<i>Vision Insurance</i>			
<i>Unemployment</i>			
<i>Workers Compensation</i>			
<i>Life Insurance</i>			
<i>Other</i>			
<i>Other</i>			

This will need to be completed for each grant funded employee.

All expenses must be broken down by unit(s)/price/total. The following is an example of an acceptable request:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>HP Color Printer</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>\$500</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>
<i>Dell Laptop</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$1,500</i>	<i>\$1,500</i>
<i>Ink</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>\$100</i>	<i>\$400</i>
		<i>Total</i>	<i>\$1,900</i>

The following is an example of an unacceptable request:

<i>Office</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>Miscellaneous (this should not be used as a funding category and will be rejected)</i>	<i>All other funds not accounted for in budget</i>

14. How will the applications be reviewed and approved?

The MVAA review panel will consider the applications. Applications received before the deadline (February 21, 2020 at 12:00 pm EST) will be reviewed and approved based on completeness and accuracy of the application. Initiatives and requested funding MUST conform to the goal and intent of the grant itself, which is to enhance and improve county veteran service operations to connect more veterans to their benefits.

15. Will a minor error cause the entire application to be rejected?

No, MVAA wants to award the grant money to you! If there are minor errors or questionable expenditures, counties that have met the application deadline, will be given the opportunity to amend their application and resubmit. MVAA will work with each county individually to ensure success.

16. Will the counties get extra time if they are allowed a resubmission?

Yes, please refer to the timeline provided. If asked to resubmit the counties will have until March 10, 2020 to resubmit. The MVAA wants your application to be approved and is committed to working with you to make application adjustments and resubmit on time.

17. When will the first upfront base payment of \$50,000.00 go out?

Although we can't give a precise date, please note that processing is dependent upon the MVAA receiving the signed copy of the Grant Agreement. If your county requires presentation to and approval from the Board of Commissioners, it would be advised that plans be made to make them aware of the Grant requirement. A signed copy of the Grant Agreement from the County MUST be received within 60 days of receipt of the Award packet.

18. What paperwork is necessary from the county to get reimbursed for grant expenses after the first \$50,000.00 is spent?

Reporting a claim above the \$50,000.00 is the same as reporting and requesting for reimbursement. The same information is needed for verification and approval for payment.

19. Do invoices need a supervisor or budget person to sign-off on reimbursement requests?

The MVAA requires the Budget Reports be signed by the Chief Financial Officer or person responsible for the county budget. Counties should also follow local accounting policies, procedures and practice in obtaining other required signatures.

20. If there were grant related expenses incurred before the grant approval date will they be eligible for reimbursement?

They may be; however, each case will need to be reviewed individually. The county will need approval from DMVA/MVAA prior to submitting for reimbursement.

21. Can invoices for reimbursement be submitted as they are incurred?

No, reimbursements will be made on a quarterly basis. Counties using their funding for the purchase of a one-time large expense may request an early reimbursement from the Program Manager. Remember reports/reimbursement requests turned in late, or that do not follow reporting guidelines, may delay payment.

22. Reporting seems cumbersome; can you help?

Yes, if you have questions when completing the reporting templates, please Call the MVAA at (517)284-5298 and ask for the Grant Specialist and we will walk you through it!

23. If a county is non-compliant with the CSVF requirements, what will be the repercussions?

This would depend on the nature of the non-compliance. In accordance with the Public Act the funds would be recouped the following fiscal year.

24. What if counties need to change or revise the grant narrative and/or budget amounts after the grant is approved?

Project and/or budget revisions may be made; however, they REQUIRE approval from the MVAA Program Manager and the DMVA CFO before changing the project and/or incurring any expense.

25. If counties do not spend all funds received does it roll over to the next fiscal year?

No, in accordance with the Public Act, if the counties have unspent funds, they must be returned to the State of Michigan. If there is money in the state fund at the close of the fiscal year, the money shall remain in the fund and not lapse to the general fund.



FY20 County Veteran Service Fund Grant

Timeline

Event	Deadline
Letter of Intent Re-opens	January 08, 2020
Letter of Intent amended Deadline	January 17, 2020 by 12:00 pm*
Grant Application Period Opens	January 21, 2020
Grant Application Informational Webinar	January 28, 2020 at 10:00 am*
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**Grant resubmission Deadline (if applicable)	March 10, 2020 by 12:00 pm*
**Notification of Approval/Denial for Resubmissions & Grant Agreement Packets sent	March 16, 2020
County signed Grant Agreement returned to MVAA	MVAA must receive signed copy of Grant Agreement from County within 60 days of receipt of the Award packet. Grant Agreements received after the 60 days may be forfeited.
Fully executed Grant Agreement returned to County and payment request submitted	To be processed as received

*Denotes EST

PLEASE NOTE: The time/date of receipt by the MVAA is determined by the time/date stamp provided by the State of Michigan email system.

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2018 COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND GRANT

AMENDED PUBLIC ACT 192 OF 1953 – GRANT GUIDANCE

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2019 County Veteran Service Fund grants (PA 210 of 2018). Public Act 210 of 2018 amends PA 192 of 1953, entitled “An act to create a county department of veterans’ affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers’ relief commission in such counties,” (MCL 35.621 to 35.624) by amending the title and by adding section 3a. This Act creates a county department of veterans’ affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the county veteran service fund and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers’ relief commission in those counties.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism: Grant

Total Available Funding: \$2.1 million

Anticipated Number of Awards: 83

Length of Project: October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019

Cost Sharing / Match Required: No

Continuation Funds: Contingent upon appropriation funding

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total disbursement for each grant shall be determined by combining the following amounts:

(a) A base amount of \$25,000.00.

(b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be obtained from the most recent (2017) Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subsection (a) is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties receiving grants, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency shall not perform a calculation under subsection (b) and shall not disburse the portion of grant funds described under that subsection.

There is no cost sharing or match required.

Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursements will be made on a quarterly basis.

TIMELINE

September 17, 2018 - Applications or an Intent to Apply must be submitted to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 3:00 PM Eastern Time. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early.

September 28, 2018 – Awards announced for those counties that have applied for a grant and a confirmation for those counties that submitted an intent to apply.

Counties electing to submit an Intent to Apply in lieu of an application packet must submit the Intent to Apply form (see attached) by the application submission date and time. An Intent to Apply informs the MVAA that the county will submit an application packet no later than December 1, 2018. The MVAA will process applications received between September 21, and December 1, within 5 to 10 business days.

DEFINITIONS

For this funding opportunity, below is a list of commonly used terms as defined by Public Act 210 of 2018.

- (a) “Accredited veteran service officer”: an individual who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.
- (b) “County veteran service fund” or “fund”: the county veteran service fund created within the state treasury.
- (c) “PIV card”: a personal identity verification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
- (d) “Veteran service operations”: assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to Michigan counties.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to receive a grant, a county department of veterans’ affairs must satisfy the following;

- (a) Maintain a minimum level of county funding for veteran service operations equal to the level of county funding for veteran service operations for the preceding fiscal year.
- (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs computing systems and require county veteran service officers to obtain a PIV card.
- (c) Submit quarterly reports to the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency in accordance with the reporting requirements detailed in this document.
- (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran service operations.
- (e) Submit financial reports to the Michigan veterans affairs agency on a quarterly basis, demonstrating that the county department of veterans’ affairs expended the grant funds received directly and solely on veteran service operations during the period of the report.

GRANT FOCUS AREAS

- (a) Submissions should focus on enhancing veteran service operations as defined. Priority will be given to applications that seek to establish a new County Department of Veterans Affairs, increase existing hours dedicated to veteran service operations, and assist veterans with applying for emergency grants from the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund.
- (b) Other requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants will be notified if their proposal is not approved and afforded an opportunity to submit an amended or new application. It should be noted that submitting an amended or new application may delay the start date of the project.

APPLICATION

Applications for this grant require the submission of a project narrative, a budget justification and narrative, and a copy of the county's FY18 budget for the organizational structure that provides assistance to veterans and/or family members.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

All applicants must include a detailed narrative describing:

- (a) the county's current organizational structure that provides assistance to veterans and/or family members;
- (b) existing veteran services operations to include the type and number of claims submitted;
- (c) additional internal programs that assist veterans;
- (d) and how the grant funds will be used.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND NARRATIVE

All applications must have a detailed budget justification and narrative that supports the requested funding. The Budget Justification and Narrative explains how the costs were calculated and must tie directly back to the Project Narrative.

Click [here](#) for a sample Budget Narrative.

Proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable and necessary for the supported activity. For questions regarding cost, please e-mail MVAAGrants@michigan.gov.

Supplanting existing funding is not permitted.

Charges to the project for items such as salaries must conform to the written policies and established practices of the applicant organization.

Travel expenses charged to the grant cannot exceed the State of Michigan approved travel rates.

*A link to the State of Michigan approved travel rates can be found at the end of this document.

Note: Requests for reimbursement for activities/services prior to the actual grant award WILL NOT be reimbursed.

COUNTY BUDGET

All applications must include a detailed FY18 budget for the organizational structure that provided assistance to veterans and/or family members. For most counties, this will be their county department of veterans' affairs. Counties that do not currently provide assistance to veterans and/or family members are exempt from this requirement.

POST AWARD

All grantees will need to be registered to do business with the State of Michigan. Registration is available at the following website: www.michigan.gov/SIGMAVSS.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Within 10 days of the end of each quarter, grant recipients shall submit the following reports:

- (a) An updated county department of veterans' affairs budget and invoice for expenses incurred during the quarter.
 - Submitting budget reports for reimbursement start with an approved budget. Reimbursements will be made on a quarterly basis. All reimbursable expenses must be incurred during the grant award cycle. Requests for reimbursement for activities/services prior to the award or after the close of the award WILL NOT be reimbursed.
 - Reimbursement for salaries/fringe benefits will need to be supported by submitting certified signed time sheets by both the employee and employee supervisor.
 - Quarterly Financial Reports demonstrating the expenditure and division of grant funds and county funds, must be signed by the applicant organization's Chief Financial Officer.
- (b) A Quarterly Activity Report that identifies the number and types of claims submitted during the reporting period.
- (c) A Quarterly Progress Reports that shall include:
 - Major tasks completed in the previous quarter.
 - Work to be accomplished in the next quarter.
 - Identify what conditions, if any, which currently do or may in the future present challenges to county being able to fulfill terms of grant application or an affirmative statement that are no such challenges known or anticipated.

Reimbursement of expenses is dependent on the receipt of all reporting requirements listed above.

Reporting templates will be provided to grant recipients with the Notice of Award.

PROJECT/BUDGET AMENDMENTS

You must receive prior authorization from MVAA before making a project or budget revisions. Revisions made without prior approval will not be reimbursed.

MONITORING

All grant recipients will be subject to grant monitoring and performance, including data collection. Standardized templates will be provided. Budget, progress and activity reports will be required quarterly. Grant and performance monitoring will be conducted by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. If the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

determines, by audit or otherwise, that a county department of veterans' affairs expended the grant funds received for purposes other than veteran service operations, the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the county department of veterans' affairs in the succeeding fiscal year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly expended.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding this funding opportunity, please e-mail MVAAGrants@michigan.gov.

RESOURCES

The following sites may be of assistance in researching and developing your grant application.

Most recent (2017) Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report:

<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/expenditures.asp>

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund:

<https://www.michiganveterans.com/a/Michigan-Veterans-Trust-Fund>

<https://www.michiganveterans.com/p/Emergency-Assistance>

State of Michigan Travel Rates:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dtmb/Travel_Rates_FY18_Jan2018_609896_7.pdf

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HOUSE BILL No. 6403

September 27, 2018, Introduced by Rep. Wentworth and referred to the Committee on
Military and Veterans Affairs.

A bill to amend 1953 PA 192, entitled

"An act to create a county department of veterans' affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the county veteran service fund and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers' relief commission in those counties,"

by amending section 3a (MCL 35.623a), as added by 2018 PA 210.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 3a. (1) The county veteran service fund is created within
2 the state treasury.

3 (2) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from
4 any source for deposit into the fund. The state treasurer shall
5 direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit
6 to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

7 (3) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall
8 remain in the fund and shall not lapse to the general fund.

1 (4) The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall be the
2 administrator of the fund for auditing purposes.

3 (5) The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall create and
4 operate a grant program that provides grants to counties for county
5 veteran service operations. The Michigan veterans affairs agency
6 shall make grants from the fund, upon appropriation, to each county
7 ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ that meets the conditions listed in
8 subsection (7) for the sole use of the county's veteran service
9 operations. The total disbursement for each grant shall be
10 determined by combining the following amounts:

11 (a) A base amount of \$25,000.00.

12 (b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans
13 residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be
14 determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after
15 accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total
16 number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the
17 resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the
18 county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans
19 residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be
20 obtained from the most recent Geographic Distribution of VA
21 Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department
22 of Veterans Affairs.

23 (6) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for
24 all disbursements under subsection (5) (a) is less than the amount
25 obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties
26 receiving grants, the Michigan veterans affairs agency shall not
27 perform a calculation under subsection (5) (b) and shall not

1 disburse the portion of grant funds described under that
2 subsection.

3 (7) To be eligible for receiving a grant under subsection (5),
4 within 1 year of the effective date of the amendatory act that
5 added this section, and annually after that date, a county
6 ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ must satisfy all of the following
7 as certified in a form and manner prescribed by the Michigan
8 veterans affairs agency:

9 (a) Maintain a minimum level of county funding for veteran
10 service operations equal to the level of county funding for veteran
11 service operations for the fiscal year preceding the effective date
12 of the amendatory act that added this section.

13 (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of
14 Veterans Affairs computing systems and require county veteran
15 service officers to obtain a PIV card.

16 (c) Submit quarterly reports to the Michigan veterans affairs
17 agency in accordance with the reporting requirements determined by
18 that agency.

19 (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran
20 service operations.

21 (e) Submit financial reports to the Michigan veterans affairs
22 agency on a regular basis, as determined by that agency,
23 demonstrating that the county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~
24 expended the grant funds received under subsection (5) directly and
25 solely on veteran service operations during the period of the
26 report. If the Michigan veterans affairs agency determines, by
27 audit or otherwise, that a county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~

1 expended the grant funds received under subsection (5) for purposes
2 other than veteran service operations, the Michigan veterans
3 affairs agency shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the
4 county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ in the succeeding fiscal
5 year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly
6 expended.

7 (8) As used in this section:

8 (a) "Accredited veteran service officer" means an individual
9 who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904
10 and 38 CFR 14.629.

11 (b) "County veteran service fund" or "fund" means the fund
12 created in subsection (1).

13 (c) "PIV card" means a personal identity verification card
14 issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (d) "Veteran service operations" means assistance and
16 programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran
17 service operations include, but are not limited to, providing
18 advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers,
19 dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer
20 to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs health,
21 financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

22 Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect 90 days
23 after the date it is enacted into law.