Veterans and Family Support Web Article July 2026

Brothers and Sisters,
I hope you are all doing well and that you've started the new year strong in your continued support of our veterans and military families. The following areas are what we will be working on this year, in addition to all the wonderful work you do at each of your Posts and Auxiliaries

VA Claims & Separation Service Benefit

1. Understand how our Veteran Service Officers work to help veterans, service members, their families, and survivors
2. Share the Department of OR Veteran Service Office information.
3. VFW Service Officers are Accredited and are FREE OF CHARGE
4. Pre - Discharge was established in 2001. This is a newly added discussion for Auxiliary members to let our military and their families know.

Adopted Units and MAP Grants

1. Units must be adopted before MAP Grant funds can be used.
2. **PLAN AHEAD**! National Headquarters no longer requires applications to be submitted two weeks before an event. Once funding becomes available, you may apply for all eligible events. If you have an event planned for Summer 2027, apply early to ensure funding is allocated.
3. Each VFW Post, including its Auxiliary, may receive up to $5,000 per fiscal year for adopted unit functions. The maximum award is $1,500 per event.
4. MAP Grant funding will become available on October 1, 2026, following the National Council meeting.
5. Applications are now available through the National VFW Dashboard.
6. Only the Post Commander or Quartermaster may submit applications, so Auxiliaries should coordinate with their Posts.
7. The Dashboard displays a running balance of available grant funds. The program begins each year with $150,000, and once those funds are exhausted, no additional grants will be available until the next fiscal year.
8. Final reports and receipts must be submitted within two weeks after the event.
9. National also encourages Posts and Auxiliaries to raise funds within their communities to strengthen relationships with both the military and the communities we serve.
10. I will be emailing all Presidents and Post Commanders the layout of questions to ask their adopted units in mid-July.

<u>VFW Financial Assistance for Service Members</u>

Eligible service members and families may apply for financial assistance if they meet the following criteria:

1. The service member or eligible dependent must be enrolled in DEERS.
2. Deployed service members and their families may receive up to $2,500 in assistance.
3. Applicants must be on active duty (including Active Guard and Reserve) and experiencing financial hardship due to:
    - Current deployment,
    - A military pay error through no fault of their own, or
    - A pending medical discharge resulting from service-connected injuries or illnesses incurred while on active duty.
4. Grant payments are made directly to the creditor, not to the applicant.

Suicide Awareness

September is Suicide Awareness Month, making it the perfect time to engage your community.

1. Partner with your county offices to host a Suicide Prevention education event for military members, veterans, and their families.
2. Work with a local organization to organize a community walk in October.
3. Plan activities that help educate your community on recognizing warning signs and responding during a mental health crisis.

Sport Clips Help A Hero

The Sport Clips Help A Hero program is now administered through our Scholarship Program.

Please talk with your Posts and Auxiliaries about adopting a military unit, and let me know if you can participate. We are currently updating our adopted unit list with the National VFW and the National Guard. With new leadership in place on both sides, now is an excellent time to prepare for the October MAP Grant application period.

I look forward to reading about your activities and the difference you're making in your communities.

Thank you for all you do to support our veterans, service members, and their families.

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