



Department of Maryland VFW Auxiliary Veterans & Family Support Program August 2023

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

VETERAN &
MILITARY SUICIDE
PREVENTION

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VETERANS
MENTAL HEAL
RESOURCES

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UNMET NEEDS
PROGRAM

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NATIONAL
VETERANS
SERVICES ,
MILITARY
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM ,
UNMET NEEDS &
HELP A HERO
SCHOLARSHIPS

*

DATES TO
REMEMBER

Hello Officers, Veterans & Family Support Chairman and Members,

I am looking forward to hearing about all of the wonderful things that you and your auxiliaries are doing to assist our Veterans.

Veterans & Family Support is a very important part of the VFW Auxiliary programs. After all, our Veterans are the reason WHY we get to be a part of this wonderful organization.

Remember that the reporting period for this year began on April 16, 2023. So don't forget to include programs, events, and other activities that you had during that time frame, including, but not limited to, Memorial Day ceremonies.

Monthly, you will receive mailings on the Veterans & Family Support Program. I am asking that you thoroughly read and discuss the mailings at your meetings. Vote on activities, programs, events, and donations that you can provide through the various VFW Auxiliary avenues to support our Veterans.

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Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness

This is our National President Carla Martinez's Special Project this year. She wants us to spread awareness about Veteran & Military Suicide and to raise mental health awareness regarding our active duty and veteran populations.

The blue teardrop is the VFW Auxiliary's symbol that we can use to open a conversation. This also gives attention to the mental health and suicide rates in our country.

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their



Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1

If you're in crisis, call the new Veterans Crisis Line number.

Dial 988 then Press 1.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text.

Veterans and their loved ones can call 988 and Press Option # 1, send a text message to 838255 or chat online at: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/chat/> to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.

I would like to see how your auxiliary can promote this very important program. You could hold a fundraiser to promote awareness. You could utilize youth to color teardrops to hang up around your Post and in your communities with the Veterans Crisis phone number. There are some additional resources on our National Website at: <https://vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/veteran-family-support/>. You can "advertise" the tear drop by hanging up flyers in your communities and other places such as libraries, grocery stores, laundry mats and liquor stores and/or dispensaries. The beautiful blue color will draw people in and when they ask, sadly explain to the purpose and ask them to spread the word about veteran and military suicide and mental health and offer them a veterans resource rack card.



Additional Mental Health Resources Include:



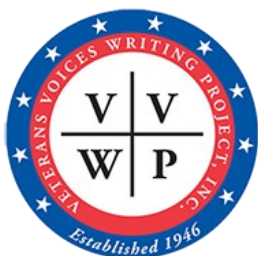
PatientsLikeMe's mission is to improve the lives of patients through new knowledge derived from shared real-world experience and outcomes. Making healthcare better for everyone through sharing, support, and research www.patientslikeme.com/join/vfw

Founded in 1971, Help Heal Veterans (HEAL VETS) has provided free therapeutic craft kits to hospitalized and homebound veterans for generations. Over that time, Help Heal Veterans has helped traumatized veterans improve their motor skills, while also developing better feelings of self-esteem and self-worth. Their kits help veterans take their minds out of the past and off their pain, letting them live more in the present.

www.healvets.org



Help Heal Veterans
Therapeutic Craft Kits



The Mission of the Veterans Voices Writing Project is to enable military veterans to experience solace and satisfaction through their writing program. Their vision is a world where people appreciate that writing can both heal and entertain.

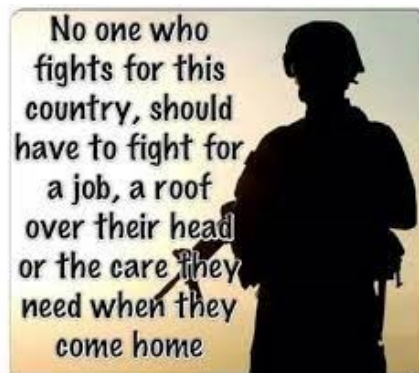
www.veteransvoices.org



The UNMET Needs Program:

The Unmet Needs Programs assists America's service members who have run into unexpected financial difficulties. The program provides financial aid of up to \$1,500 to assist with basic life needs in the form of a grant – not a loan – so no repayment is required. To further ease the burden, the creditor is paid directly. The financial hardship must be due to one of the following:

- *Currently on active duty, whose financial hardship is a result of a current deployment, military pay error, or from being discharged for medical reasons.
- *Discharged on or after September 11, 2001, whose financial hardship is a direct result of your military service connected injuries and/or illnesses.
- *Discharged prior to September 11, 2001, are on a fixed income that must include VA compensation for a service connected injury/illness and facing an unexpected financial hardship.



Expenses Eligible for payment under this Program:

- ⇒ Household expenses – mortgage, rent, repairs, insurance.
- ⇒ Vehicle expenses – payments, insurance, repairs (major repairs for vehicles over ten years old will not be considered).
- ⇒ Utilities.
- ⇒ Children's school or childcare expenses.
- ⇒ Medical bills, prescriptions & eyeglasses applies to the patient's portion for necessary or emergency medical care only

****The eligible expense list is not all inclusive. Each case will be carefully reviewed for its own merits.****

National Veterans Service (NVS)

GET VA HELP
VFW VETERAN SERVICE OFFICE



VA Certified Veteran Service Officer

The VFW's **National Veterans Service (NVS)** was established to help all veterans, service members and their families obtain the benefits they deserve—at no cost.

NVS consists of a nationwide network of VA accredited service officers and pre-discharge representatives who are experts in dealing with the VA.

VFW Service Officers are trained experts, helping veterans develop their case with ease by reviewing and applying current law, pertinent legislation, regulations and medical histories. As skilled professionals, they assist in filing for disability compensation, rehabilitation and education programs, pension and death benefits, and employment and training programs.

VFW Veterans & Military Support Program

These three programs assist veterans in different ways as listed below:

- ◆ **Military Assistance Program (MAP)**



MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The MAP program serves active military and recently discharged military. One of the more common parts of this program consists of the **Adopt-a-Unit** program, which provides VFW Posts and their Auxiliaries the opportunity to adopt military unit deployed around the world.



- ◆ **Unmet Needs**

The Unmet Needs program focuses on assisting Veterans and other military personnel with financial assistance for household expenses.

- ◆ **The Help A Hero Scholarship**

The Help A Hero Scholarship Program is a way of saying THANK YOU to our Heros. The Scholarship awards range up to \$5,000

VFW SportClips
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS. HAIRCUTS

HELP A HERO
SCHOLARSHIP ★ PROGRAM



August 4th is the Coast Guard's Birthday

August 7th is Purple Heart Day

August 29th is Marine Forces Reserve Birthday

The month of September is dedicated to Military Suicide Awareness and Prevention.

Consider the ways in which you can Be A Veteran's P.A.L. on these special days:

- ⇒ Say Thank you and if they want to talk—LISTEN (maybe this will lead to breakfast, lunch or dinner with the veteran)
- ⇒ You can send a card, text, or email just to say you are thinking of them
- ⇒ Send or Drop Off an anonymous gift card, from a restaurant, shopping center or just a Visa or Mastercard gift card to be used for whatever their needs may be.
- ⇒ Bring them lunch or dinner, or provide a gift card to a local restaurant.
- ⇒ Host a luncheon or dinner in their honor at your Post home.

****These ideas can be used anytime during the year.**