



## Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency County Veteran Service Fund Emergency Relief Guidelines

To provide emergent financial relief to wartime and peacetime veterans, service members, dependents, or survivors for vehicle repairs, home repairs, childcare if the veteran is deemed an essential worker, medical expenses, and food/personal care assistance, as well as other needs determined emergent. These emergent relief funds are funds of last resort, meaning all other available resources have been utilized or exhausted, to include the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund (SSRF), and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The emergent relief must be to meet the necessities of daily life and not for the relief of an inconvenience or the purchase of a want or desire.

### Eligibility:

- Honorable or General Under Honorable Conditions discharge from the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, or National Guard
- Resident of Applicant County

### Procedures:

Counties that have an SSRF or Veterans Committee should follow their local policy

Counties that opted to appoint the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) as the fiduciary of the County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) COVID-19 grant funds, please follow the procedures below

Where MVAA is the Fiduciary, the Following Financial Limits Apply:

- \$1,500.00 maximum FY benefit
- Food Assistance: \$500.00 maximum (no more than \$250.00 a month, minimum of 30 days between requests)
- Payments will go directly to vendors and/or service providers; no payments will be made directly to a veteran

Documentation to Establish Eligibility:

- Current state or government-issued ID
- Legible copy of DD-214, NGB-22, separation report, or military service letter belonging to the applicant or the veteran to whom the application is related
- Proof of eligible county residence (e.g., current driver's license or state ID, utility bill, tax bill, mortgage statement). If the applicant resides in a shelter or transitional housing, the applicant must provide a 'Shelter Verification' for the purpose of establishing residency
- If the applicant is claiming eligibility through their relationship to a veteran, the applicant must provide documentation proving a relationship exists, such as:
  - Birth certificate of minor children
  - Marriage License
  - Adoption documentation
  - Death certificate of veteran

**Proof of Household Income/Expenses (for Non-consumable Assistance Requests only):**

- Household income must include all household members 18 years of age and older
- Most recent 30 days of Pay stubs
- Check stubs for disability, pension, Social Security, SSDI, SSD, VA Income, annuity, worker's compensation, child support, unemployment compensations, Bridge card, educational payments for the last 30 days
- 1099 statements are required for self-employed persons
- Proof of assets such as checking and savings accounts, stocks, mutual funds, bonds, CDs, real estate
- Proof of expenses in the past 30 days, such as imprinted receipts, money order receipts, cancelled checks, duplicate checks, itemized bank activity report, stamped bill payments

**Substantiating Evidence (for Non-consumable Assistance Requests only):**

- Vehicle repairs—valid driver's license, proof of insurance, and registration
- Home repairs—Valid homeowner's insurance, proof of ownership
- Medical expenses—Copy of bill for services
- Food/personal care—Statement of Need: excludes alcohol, tobacco products, electronics, movies, games or lottery tickets

**Application/Review Process:**

- Complete Emergent Relief Application
- Submit Emergent Relief Application to [MVAAGrants@michigan.gov](mailto:MVAAGrants@michigan.gov)
- Emergent Relief Applications will be reviewed by the Grant Management Team for completeness and provisional approval/denial
- Review Michigan Veteran Trust Fund utilization
- Emergent Relief Application will be forwarded to MVAA leadership for final approval/denial

**Award Process:**

- Notification of decision to veteran
- Payment disbursed to Vendor
- or--
- Payment made by MVAA credit card for purchase of products, services, or equipment to fulfill approved emergent need

**Denial Process:**

- Relief Application forwarded to MVAA Administration
- Final determination letter sent to veteran
- If payment approved, payment will be made directly to vendor
- If payment is denied, no payment will be made

**Voucher Program for consumable goods:**

A Memorandum of Understanding exists between MVAA and Meijer dated May 1, 2020. Meijer will print and issue vouchers in \$100 and \$50 denominations to MVAA for distribution to Michigan counties

that offer emergency relief of consumable goods (a.k.a. grocery relief) and to eligible veterans that reside in Michigan counties that have named MVAA as fiduciary of their CVSF-ER grant funds.

***Vouchers can be used to purchase food, paper products, laundry and household cleaning products, health and beauty care items, and pet food only.***

*Vouchers are for emergent need purchases only and exclude general merchandise, apparel, alcohol, tobacco, prescriptions, fuel, gift and entertainment cards, prepaid phone and airline cards, Meijer Express locations, lottery, postage, park and entertainment tickets, prepaid debit cards and reload packs, in-store businesses, licenses, taxes, previous purchases, SIMPLR™ Protection Plans, and bottle deposits. They are valid for in-store purchases only, and the self-checkout lanes cannot be used.*

The vouchers can only be redeemed at Meijer stores and can only be used once. Duplicate denominations cannot be used in one transaction (for example, the veteran may use a \$100 voucher and a \$50 voucher in one transaction; however, if the veteran received two \$100 vouchers as part of the relief packet, they will not be able to present both \$100 vouchers at one time). In addition, if the veteran does not use the entire voucher amount, the balance will be surrendered and only the amount used will be billed to MVAA.

Vouchers are valid May 15 through September 30, 2020. Counties will return all unused vouchers by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **County Grant Administration**

CVSF Grant award recipients that are administering their own grant and offer emergency grocery relief to their county veterans can elect to utilize the MVAA/Meijer Voucher Program. Vouchers in \$100 and \$50 denominations, with unique bar code identifiers, will be issued to the interested counties for distribution to eligible veterans. Eligibility requirements and voucher limits will follow local policy.

Counties will request what they estimate to be the dollar amount of vouchers they will need. The amount requested cannot exceed the county's CVSF Grant award amount for emergency relief. Once vouchers are shipped and received, the county assumes responsibility for the security of the vouchers at their face value and agrees to provide distribution information to the MVAA on a monthly basis. A report template will be provided. Information required is date, veteran name, address, voucher barcode number(s), denomination amount(s), and name/email of individual issuing the voucher(s).

Meijer will invoice MVAA monthly for the actual dollar amount of redeemed vouchers. MVAA will verify amounts using the county barcode distribution list. Notification will be sent to individual counties informing them of their expenditures, and MVAA will lower the CVSF Grant award by the voucher redemption amount and forward payment to Meijer.

#### **MVAA Grant Administration**

CVSF Grant award recipients that have named MVAA as fiduciary will distribute vouchers directly to eligible veterans within their counties. The calls, applications, and veteran requests for grocery assistance will be handled through the Michigan Veterans Resource Service Center at 1-800-MICH-VET. Appropriate records will be kept determining expenditure by county for veteran assistance reporting purposes and for payment amount due Meijer. Eligibility will be determined using the criteria ascertained on page one of the CVSF-ER application. Limits stated herein will be imposed.