

October Veteran & Family Support Promotion

Jacqueline Rauch, Department Chairman

2026 Veterans Benefits Guide

Navigating the VA doesn't have to be scary... it just takes a bit of information and the VA has just announced the 2026 Veterans Benefits Guide is now available Online and can be accessed from here:

<https://department.va.gov/get-started/>

The guide will help Veterans, service members and their families understand the full scope of available VA resources so that they can make the most of life after service. It provides details on eligibility requirements for each benefit, and because VA serves different generations of Veterans, outlines the qualification guidelines for distinct periods of service to clarify eligibility for Veterans with service spanning both peace and wartime periods.

Some of the information include

- Compensation
- Life insurance
- Pension and fiduciary services
- Education benefits
- Economic development and employment
- Home loan guaranty programs and housing assistance
- Mental health resources

The information in the guide is validated by the VA as of October 10, 2024. For the most up-to-date information, Veterans and Family members should visit www.va.gov or call the VA at 800-827-1000 from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET Monday through Friday to speak with a representative.

Military Appreciation Program (MAP)

Our **Military Appreciation Program (MAP)** is the outstretched hand between the local VFW and military community, offering support around the world. Since 2005, MAP has sponsored events supporting more than 3.4 million service members and their families. Let's not forget about our Active military who are deployed right now, and how scary this can be for the families. One of the ways our Auxiliaries can help our Active Military and families is to Adopt-a-Unit.

Adopt-a-Unit:

Auxiliaries, working together with their Post's, are encouraged to join forces to provide support through the MAP program with examples like these:

- Family Days - VFW understands the importance of family to the military member and their mission
- Welcome Home & Deployment events
- Holiday events
- Meetings and Support Seminars
- Community Projects - Annually, VFW posts donate \$45 million dollars and 5 million volunteer hours to community activities.
- Direct assistance - lawn care, auto repairs, renovations to help accommodate a newly wounded service member
- So many more....

How it works:

VFW Posts work with unit commanders and senior enlisted personnel to develop supportive relationships with units before, during and after deployments. A vast network of free resources and a variety of direct support are available for military members and their families. **It is important to remember that VFW Posts – Only may adopt a unit.** Auxiliaries must work together with their Post to participate, but oh what a worthy cause it is. Donating to the MAP Program annually is a big part of participation as it helps fund the program Grants available to support the endeavors of the Posts who participate in the program. **The auxiliary donation is reportable under Veterans and Family Support, MAP activity.**

Why you should participate:

To support your local military members and their families. As a VFW Auxiliary member, you understand the challenges many members and their families face and the support they need.

When should you participate:

There is no time like the present and our military members and their families need your assistance now more than ever. Your assistance is equally important whether the unit is home or deployed overseas. **The application period is now open for the 2026-2027 MAP grants period. The MAP Grant application can be found on the National Programs Dashboard. Please encourage your Posts to consider Adopting a Unit today.**

How to find a military unit:

- • Contact your local National Guard, Reserve and Active Duty units
- • Access the “Find a Unit Flyer” which is available at vfw.org/TroopSupport/
- • Speak with other VFW Posts and Veterans Organizations who may have knowledge of units in the area.

How to Apply:

Submit an Adopt-a-Unit Application to the MAP Office, the form is located on the VFW website at www.vfw.org/TroopSupport - remember this is the Post's responsibility, please encourage and assist them in any way necessary.

If you have questions around how to approach your Post members, the Community page on the website provides the following MAP Resources in PDF and can be presented to your Post members to help them get started.

MAP Resources	
	Adopt-A-Unit FAQ
	Adopt-A-Unit Application
	Adopt-A-Unit for Military
	Adopt-A-Unit Report
	How to Find a Unit
	MAP Grant FAQ

Veteran and Family Support Activities guide:

At the Department Council of Administration meeting, I presented what I believe to be a more comprehensive list of activities that fall under the Veteran and Family Support program to assist you with reporting. I'm including it here as an attachment and ask that it be presented to everyone in your next Auxiliary meeting. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me at the information below.

Happy Halloween to All,

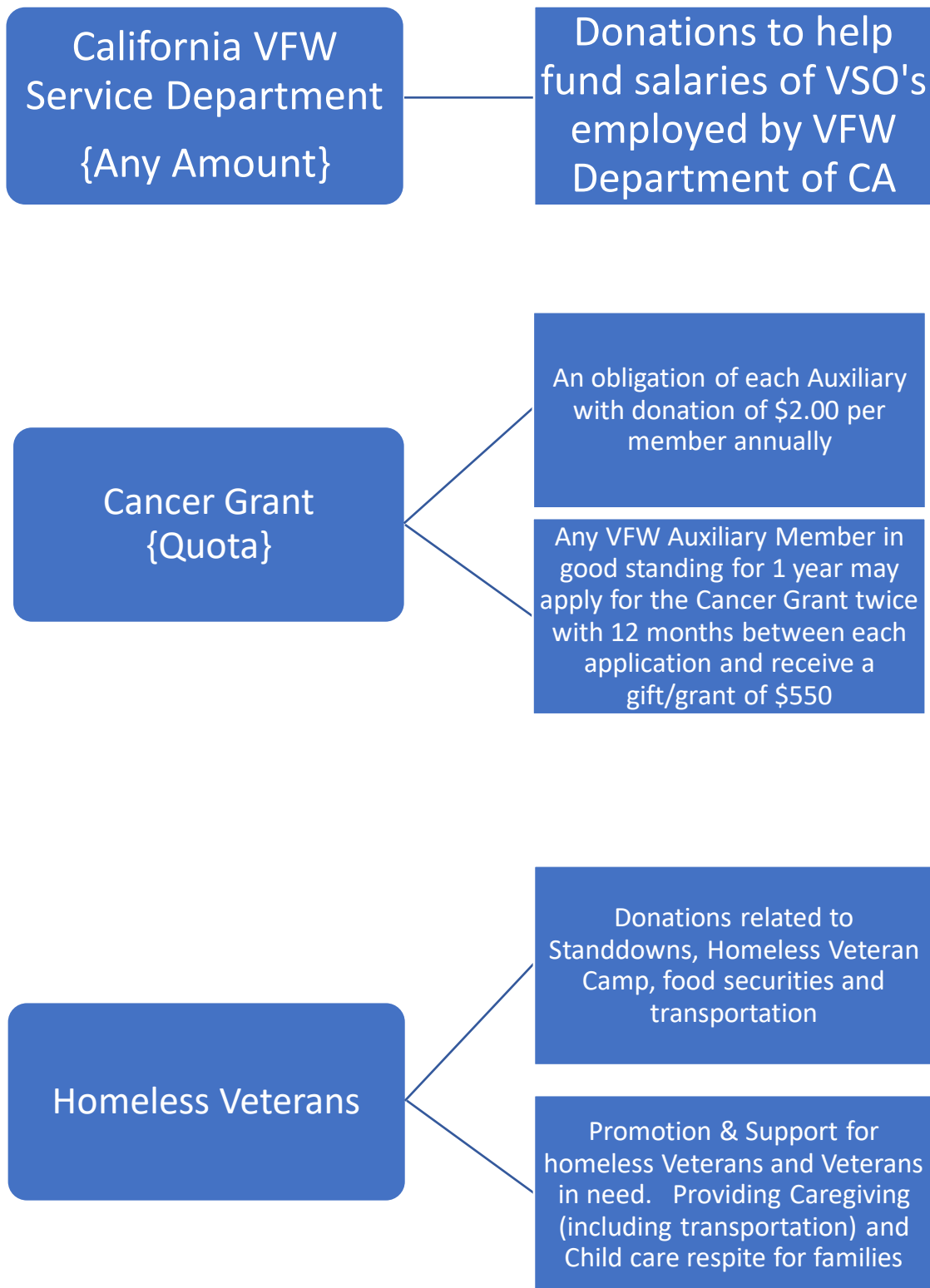
Jacqueline Rauch

Veteran and Family Support Program Chairman, Department of California

President, District 7

Trustee, VFW Aux 1679, Ventura, CA

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES



Military Appreciation Program
(MAP)
{Any Amount}

Donations, Promotion and
Support of MAP

A Military Appreciation Program Grant helps provide financial assistance to VFW Posts and Auxiliaries who Adopt-a-Unit (up to \$2,000 annually and \$1,000 per adopted Unit) to sponsor troop send-offs, homecomings and get-togethers. Posts and Auxiliaries participating in Adopt-A-Unit and Family Readiness Groups can also receive assistance. The MAP application can only be submitted by a VFW Member and must be signed by the appropriate individuals specified in the MAP Grant Guidelines. See the VFW Community Page: Troop support for all details.

National & Military Support Programs

{Any Amount}

Donations to: National VFW Auxiliary HQ for Nat'l & Military Support Program: Serves active-duty and recently discharged members of the military.

Donation, Promotion and Support of Veteran and Military Support Program: Safety / Drug Abuse

Donation, Promotion and Support of Veteran and Military Support Program: Emergency/Assistance/Disaster Fund

Donations, Promotion and Support for events held for Veterans and Active Military members and their families such as sponsoring Thanksgiving Dinners for Hospitalized Veterans or Baby showers for spouse of deployed military personnel.

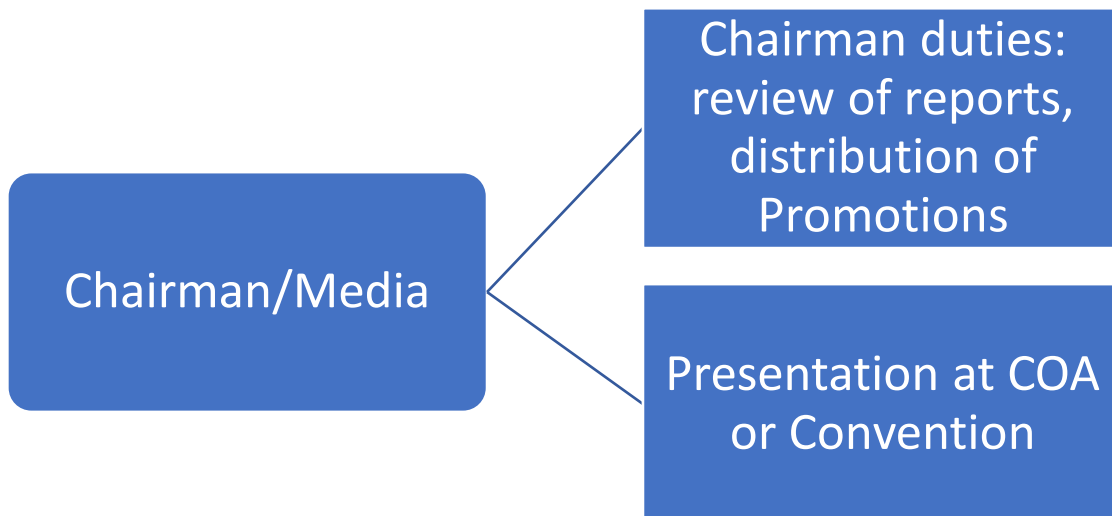
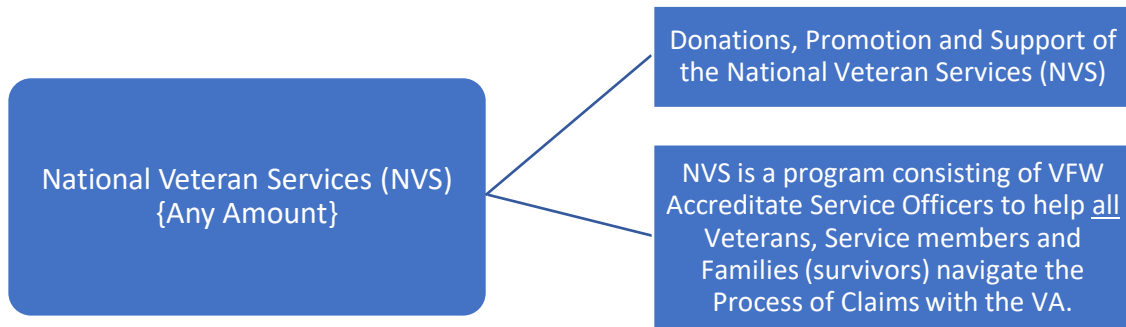
Donations, Promotion and Support for Adopt a Unit / Care Packages / Welcome Home

Promotion and Support of VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship that provides Service Members & Veterans with up to \$5,000 Scholarship to complete their education

Donation, Promotion and Support of Suicide Prevention and Mental Health awareness

Donation and Support of Financial Assistance for Service Members up to \$2,500 paid directly to the creditor

Chaplain Activities: Donations and Support in Procurement and sending of Cards, Flowers and Veteran or Military Family Visitations



Ineligible for Veteran & Family Support Programs reporting:

Donations to a Post

Cleaning, cooking for a Post

Support for a Post activity or fundraiser

Holding a fundraiser (not reportable until the money is spent/ distributed to the eligible project)

Any activity you are compensated for

Activities outside the current reporting period: (Q1 = 4/16 – 6/30) (Q2 = 7/1 – 9/30) (Q3 = 10/1 – 12/31) (Q4 = 1/1 - 4/15) Enter reports within the same quarter the event takes place.

Donations to Cancer Centers

Fundraisers for Department General Funds such as 365 Days of Giving/Raffles

Hosting and event for Veterans where this is a charge

Donations to non-veteran specific charities

Quilts of Honor/Valor *Reportable under Americanism*

Honor Flights *Reportable under Americanism*

POW/MIA ceremony *Reportable under Americanism*

Holiday Parades / Activities or Support *Reportable under Americanism*