

Veterans & Family Support Program

The VFW supports veterans through programs like the **VFW National Veterans Service (NVS)**, as well as **VFW Financial Assistance** for Service Members. The **Military Appreciation Program (MAP)** offers further support during challenging times. Support can be provided to Units whether your National Guard or any Military Branch throughout all deployment phases, from pre-deployment training to homecoming. The VFW offers financial grants to help Auxiliaries and Posts host events for troops. Remember, today's service members and their families are future members.

More information on these and other programs can be found on the **vfw.org website/assistance**

VETERANS AND MILITARY SUPPORT PROGRAMS & NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICES:

The VFW offers extensive programs demonstrating its commitment to veterans. One of the VFW Auxiliary's major focus this year is the NVS.

The VFW National Veterans Service (NVS) provides a network of service officers who help Veterans obtain benefits they have earned including compensation, access to health care, education and pension benefits. By utilizing all our resources, we can spread the word effectively and connect veterans with vital support they need. With VFW's National Veterans Service (NVS), Pre-Discharge, Military Assistance Program (MAP), Disaster Relief, Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) programs, along with other government programs and organizations, the network of Veteran support is wide enough to help any Veteran, including those still serving. It is our responsibility to provide this information to help them stand proud.

PTS AND SUICIDE PREVENTION:

Our National Ambassador of Veterans and Family Support, Beth West, has made it clear that **Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and mental health awareness** will also be a focus this year.

With PTS, the family suffers too. Secondary PTS is perhaps less recognized and diagnosed than PTS, yet just as prevalent in the immediate families of veterans living with PTS. Our focus should be on promotion of resources to help those struggling and to educate the public on them as well.

While the number of veterans committing suicide each day has reduced in recent years, even one death is too many. In addition, many veterans and active military suffer from invisible injuries and emotional stress and they may not recognize the signs or know how to get help.

Many combat veterans experience ongoing challenges as they adjust to post-service life, including mental and emotional difficulties related to their experiences. The transition from military service can mark the beginning of new struggles for many veterans.

You can help by staying focused on Veteran Mental Health Awareness and support programs such as Veterans Crisis Line. No veteran needs to face a crisis alone. Help is available and reaching out can make a critical difference. The Veterans Crisis Line connects the caller with caring, qualified VA responders who provide free, confidential support.

The **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** is available to anyone and can be reached by **dialing 988**. Pressing 1 connects the caller directly to the Veterans Crisis Line, where responders are trained to support veterans, service members, and their families. You can also reach them by **texting 838255** from any cell phone.

The Veterans Crisis Line has handled millions of calls, texts, and chats, connecting veterans and their families to immediate counseling. As we continue to promote and inform the public about this important service, we can help those in need find support.

RESOURCES:

- **Military Appreciation Program (MAP):**

The VFW 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 service members and their families.

A large part of MAP is the Adopt-A-Unit program, providing VFW Posts with the opportunity to adopt hundreds of military units around the world. Adopt-A-Unit's goal is to develop supportive relationships with units before, during and after deployments to help deliver the vast network of resources the VFW has available to the military. Unfortunately, VFW Auxiliaries will no longer be eligible to request this money. This does not affect the VFW Auxiliaries' ability to request Foundation grants.

Additional information, links and forms are located on the VFW website:
<https://www.vfw.org/community/troop-support>

- **Student Veteran Support Grant:**

The VFW recognizes that both funding and support for our student veterans and dependents at institutions of higher learning can often be difficult to find. The VFW's Student Veteran Support Grant offers much needed assistance to support specific student veteran events. The grant, administered by the VFW Washington Office, focuses on supporting the overall student veteran population within the community, which consists of many student veterans at campuses across the country that are not affiliated with a Student Veterans of America chapter. The grants will be disbursed to a VFW Post or Department that has submitted an application, to support the student veterans at the university or college.

Additional information, links and forms are located on the VFW website:
<https://www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support>

- **VFW Foundation Grants:**

- **VFW #StillServing Grant:**

- The #StillServing Grant is offered exclusively to VFW Posts, Districts and their Auxiliaries to offset expenses incurred while doing community service projects.

- **Uniting for Veterans Grant:**

- The Uniting for Veterans Grant is a limited matching grant available to VFW Posts or VFW Auxiliaries for monetary, food, or item donations to local food banks, pantries or homeless relief organizations in their communities.

- **Post Assistance Grant (PAG):**

- The Post Assistance Grant is offered exclusively to VFW Posts to offset expenses incurred for building repairs and equipment that enhances or restores the applicant organization's ability to serve veterans and their community.

More information about VFW Foundation Grants is located on the VFW website: <https://www.vfw.org/community/community-initiatives/post-grants>

- **Disaster Relief:**

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is accepting donations to help veterans, service members and military families impacted by natural disasters.

The VFW's Disaster Relief Fund provides our organization with the opportunity to react quickly with immediate relief to those in the affected areas.

- **Uniting for Veterans:**

In 2018, the VFW and Humana created Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) to actively address food insecurity across America with an emphasis on the military community. VFW Posts and VFW Auxiliaries are integral to making a positive dent in food insecurity and veteran homelessness.

For more information about UTCH, please contact the VFW Foundation at foundation@vfw.org.

- **VFW Mental Wellness Campaign:**

The purpose of the project is to educate VFW and VFW Auxiliary members, veterans and communities about the important topic of mental health and wellness and offer proven tools to intervene on behalf of veterans in crisis.

Find links and learn about resources and support to change the stigma surrounding mental health on the VFW website: <https://www.vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness>

- **Other Resources:**

The VFW and VFW Auxiliary helped pass the Deborah Sampson Act that will enhance and improve VA programs and health services for women veterans and ensure they receive the care and support they need and have earned. It includes an expansion of the Women Veterans Call Center to include text messaging capability.

Women Veterans Call Center:
Call or text:855-829-6636 or 1-855-VA-WOMEN

Women Veterans Health Care:
<https://fwww.womenshealth.va.gov/>

- **You are a Resource:**

You, as a VFW Auxiliary member, are one of the best resources available to Veterans. **You** have the ability to take action, as a group or individual, by assisting Veterans at home with utilities, groceries, preparing food, yard work, helping pay for medications, providing child care, and caregiving, housekeeping/cleaning, etc. By attending funeral services of Veterans, who are not immediate family, to support the families in their time of sorrow. Supplying blankets, food and care packages to homeless veterans, and participation in any active Military and Veteran promotion of Veteran Support programs. There are many ways **you** can help our Veterans and Families. Become the best resource **you** can be for Veterans by joining us in our cause.

- **Veterans and Family Support Program:**

More information on Veterans and Family support services is available by scanning the QR Code, below:



Veterans and Family Support Program Awards
Awards for Auxiliaries 2026 - 2027:

1. Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding promotion of the VFW resources for veterans, service members, and their families.
 - Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.
 - VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the VFW Auxiliary Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman **by March 31, 2027**, for judging.
 - The VFW Auxiliary Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the VFW Auxiliary National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador by April 30, 2027, for judging.
 - Citations will be mailed directly to winning VFW Auxiliaries from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the VFW Auxiliary account after the 2027 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

2. Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event promoting resources, including those for PTS, and assistance for veterans and their families (resource fairs, mental health clinics, etc.) of the VFW resources for veterans, service members, and their families.
 - Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.
 - VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the VFW Auxiliary Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman **by March 31, 2027**, for judging.
 - The VFW Auxiliary Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the VFW Auxiliary National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador by April 30, 2027, for judging.
 - Citations will be mailed directly to winning VFW Auxiliaries from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the VFW Auxiliary account after the 2027 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

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