

Oceana County Department of Veteran's Affairs  
Policies and Procedures

Adopted on June 3rd, 2022

Chairman: 

Secretary: 

## II. VETERAN'S RELIEF FUND DISBURSEMENT

1. Emergent Need. Emergent Need is defined to be any emergency in the life of a veteran discharged under honorable conditions and/or their legal dependents, who meet the prescribed eligibility requirements (see below), which necessitates immediate temporary assistance. Emergent Need is further defined as a condition where the necessities to sustain life and/or prevent an immediate threat to life are not accessible because of financial hardship.
2. Eligibility Requirements. An individual is deemed eligible if he or she meets one of the four criteria listed below:
  - a. The veteran must have been honorably discharged, retired, or reverted to an inactive status under honorable conditions, during a wartime period, after serving at least 90 days on active duty, (veterans who served in more than one period of wartime may combine their active-duty dates to satisfy this requirement). Only the last separation certificate of wartime service will be considered for character of service.
    - i. War time periods are defined as follows
    - ii. Periods are defined as follows:
      1. WW II 12-7-1941 thru 12-31-1946
      2. Korean Conflict 6-27-1950 thru 1-31-1955
      3. Vietnam Era 8-2-1961 thru 5-7-1975
      4. Persian Gulf Era 8-2-1990 thru 10-6-2001
      5. Iraqi Conflict Era 10-7-2001 thru Ongoing
  - b. A person separated from military service prior to completion of 90 days of wartime service as a result of a physical or mental disability incurred in the line of duty, or aggravation of a preexisting disability while on active duty, is eligible for assistance from the OCDVA.
  - c. National Guard and Reserve members are not eligible for assistance unless they were on active duty ordered by the Federal government, not State government.
3. Residency. The veteran and/or their dependents must be a resident of Oceana County as defined by the Oceana County Administrator's office. Information

2. Rentals. A copy of the rental agreement and/or receipt , the amount of the delinquency, and the cause of the problem must be articulated. A rent account statement signed by the rental agent is also required.

3. Security Deposits. Security Deposits will only be approved for extreme cases, (i.e. a move required due to fire, etc.) Security Deposits are the sole property of the Department. At the conclusion of the grantee's rental agreement, the security deposit is to be refunded back to the Department on a negotiable instrument made out to the Treasurer of the County directly from the landlord to the credit of the Department.

4. Delinquent Taxes. The same information required for mortgages and land contracts is required for the payment of delinquent property taxes. Property taxes will only be considered six months after the Forfeiture notice (proof is required). An exception is when a Land Contract is involved and a breach of its conditions may result in forfeiture. Property taxes are only to be paid once by the OCDVA. The VSO shall verify with the Oceana County Treasurer the actual amount owed.

5. Home Repairs or Improvements. The same information required for mortgages and land contracts is required for the payment of home repairs and/or improvements. At least two (2) bids from licensed contractors (with evidence of a current state license, other county and state insurance or bonding requirements) must accompany the recommended application. Local resources should be contacted for alternate funding. The nature of the emergency need must be clearly stated by the applicant and supported by the VSO's findings.

#### **IV. FOOD GRANTS**

1. Food assistance grant shall be authorized not to exceed \$100.00 for a single veteran and \$200.00 for a veteran with dependents.

2. Food assistance grants are for food items only. The only exception would be for cleaning supplies in the case of a move due to fire, flood damage, etc.

In the event unauthorized items have been purchased, the VSO will highlight the item on the receipt, and the amount of payment to the vendor will be adjusted accordingly and the County Treasurer will not disburse OCDVA funds for those unauthorized items. The voucher shall note that cleaning supplies are or are not authorized. If it appears that there will be an on-going need for assistance, the applicant may be referred to 211, 5Cap, or the Department of Human Services.

#### **IV. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

1. Grants for doctor, hospital, and/or dental bills for treatment already received, prescriptions, and emergency medical treatment to include ambulance bills shall be

- a. The VSO should give the applicant the opportunity to correct or withdraw some or all of the information during the initial interview. This may be done by asking for confirmation of the information in question.
  - b. If the applicant insists that the information they provided is true and correct, continue with the processing procedure; however, do not issue a request for payment, food voucher or purchase order.
  - c. Do not accuse or question the applicant when questionable information is discovered during the application process. The VSO will contact the OCDVA Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chair when fraud is suspected.
7. If there is reasonable belief that a fraud has been or is being committed, the VSO, with the consent of the Chairman will contact the Oceana County Sheriff and file a complaint, providing proof and/or documents to support the allegation.

## **VII. APPEALS AND HEARINGS**

1. A veteran who disagrees with a decision rendered on his/her request may appeal to the Committee. The request to appeal must be made in writing to the committee within ten days after receipt of the committee's decision.
2. If an applicant fails to file an appeal within ten days of the committee's decision, the request for appeal will not be approved.
3. Following the committee's determination, a letter containing the appeal results will be sent to the applicant. A copy will be filed in the applicant's file, and a copy in the appeals file.
4. The committee will hear an appeal if the applicant provides additional substantive information or documents that could have an effect on the initial decision to deny relief. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide their representative at the personal hearing and to also present all supporting documentation necessary to support their case.

## **VIII. ANNUAL REPORT**

1. The committee recognizes that the County Commissioners had the public have a vested interest in the financial operation of the department as well as how effective and efficient it is operated.
2. The committee recognizes that the more efficient and effective the Department is, the better the chances for it to be successful in assisting the county veterans and their families.
3. The committee will prepare by the end of January for the previous calendar year, a report that includes the following:
  - a. Number of relief applications
  - b. Number of approved applications