

**KITTITAS COUNTY INDIGENT VETERANS'**  
**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MANUAL**

1.0 SUBJECT TITLE: Financial Assistance Guidelines

1.1 EFFECTIVE DATE:

1.2 TYPE OF ACTION: 2015 Update

KEY WORDS: Veteran, Qualified Veteran, Honorable Discharge; DD214; Residency; 12 Month Rule; Application; Voucher; Vendor; Warrant; Grant, Indigent.

2.0 PURPOSE: To assure controls on determination of eligibility, computation of grant amount and authorization of payment for the Kittitas County Veteran's Assistance Program to pay grant amounts to be authorized for food, shelter (hotel), rent, transportation for medical needs, utilities, employment related clothing, or employment search; and other special needs as may be approved by the Advisory Board.

3.0 DEFINITIONS:

3.1 "Veteran" includes every person, who at the time he or she seeks the benefits under this program has received an honorable discharge or received a discharge for medical reasons with an honorable record, where applicable, and who has served in at least one of the following capacities as referenced in RCW 73.08.005 Sec. 1 (5):

(1) As a member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States, including the National Guard, Coast Guard and armed forces reserves, and has fulfilled his or her initial military service obligation;

(2) As a member of the women's air forces service pilots;

(4) As a civil service crewmember with service aboard a U.S.

Army Transport Service or U.S. Naval Transportation Service vessel in oceangoing service from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946;

(5) As a member of the Philippine armed forces/scouts during the period of armed conflict from December 7, 1941, through August 15, 1945; or

(6) A United States documented merchant mariner with service aboard an ocean going vessel operated by the department of defense, or its agents, from both June 25, 1950, through July 27, 1953, in Korean territorial waters and from August 5, 1964, through May 7, 1975, in Vietnam territorial waters, and who received a military commendation.

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- 3.3 "DD214" means a Defense Department Form or other comparable equivalent document by the applicable military service which documents military service, including conditions of discharge, as now existing or hereafter amended or replaced.
- 3.4 "Residency" means having established a domicile in Kittitas County for a minimum of 30 days.
- 3.5 "12 Month Rule" means that no client(s) shall receive more financial aid within any 12 consecutive month period than allowed under current guidelines unless approved by the Advisory Board. The 12 consecutive month period shall commence on the date of the first payment received.
- 3.6 "Application for Assistance" means the form used by Kittitas County to apply for aid, which must be completed, signed and verified as to its accuracy by the applicant, and signed by an authorized claims officer. Applications for assistance must be confirmed and re-verified by the applicant at least every 3 months in order to maintain eligibility under this program.
- 3.7 "Voucher" means the form used to authorize payment to vendors for food and services received by Veterans.
- 3.8 "Vendor" means the seller of goods or services.

3.9 "Warrant" means check(s) issued to vendor(s) for payment of invoices/charges of goods or services.

3.10 "Grant Amount" means the amount paid for the services(s) needed.

3.11 "Qualified Veteran" means every "veteran" that meets the criteria for financial assistance under these policies.

3.12 "Income" means any financial resource including but not limited to wages, salaries, interest, dividends, property, real estate, grants, loans, VA benefits, public assistance, social security, disability payments, retirement benefits, food stamps, unemployment, welfare, etc.

3.13 "Indigent" means a person who is :

(a) Receiving an annual income, after taxes, of up to one hundred fifty percent or less of the current federally established poverty level AND receiving one of the following types of public assistance: Temporary assistance for needy families, general assistance, poverty-related veterans' benefits, food stamps or food stamp benefits transferred electronically, refugee resettlement benefits, medicaid, or supplemental security income;

(b) Unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities, or transportation because his or her available funds are insufficient.

3.14 "Authorized claims officer" means the individual(s) appointed by a majority of the Veterans Advisory Board with the approval of the Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners to process claims under these policies on behalf of Kittitas County.

4.0 POLICIES:

4.1 It is the policy of Kittitas County that only qualified veteran and eligible family members of veterans receive financial assistance from the Veterans' Relief Fund.

4.2

It is the policy of Kittitas County to approve a maximum of

the Military Basic Allowance for Housing for single veterans without dependent rate and veterans with dependents calculated at the E5 rate a Basic Allowance for Subsistence shall be added for households with minor children. (Reference [www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahcalc.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahcalc.cfm))

- 4.3 These maximums are for a consecutive 12-month period per applicant except under extreme exceptional cases with prior approval by Veterans' Advisory Board for the first year, and the County Commissioners each year after that. The maximum amounts listed renew for each successive 12 month period.
- 4.4 The Veterans Advisory Board must approve all claims made by eligible veterans after the initial 12 month period. The Board of County Commissioners must approve any claims made during the 3rd 12 month period and all successive 12 month periods with recommendation by the Veterans Advisory Board.
- 4.5 It is the policy of Kittitas County to comply with RCW 73.08.070 that allows Kittitas County to pay a maximum of \$300.00 to assist with the burial expenses of a deceased indigent veteran. Qualification for indigent veteran burial expense benefits will take into account the income of the surviving spouse and value of the estate.
- 4.6 For burial expenses, the widow(er) must have a copy of the death certificate and proof of service of the veteran if applying for financial aid.
- 4.7 The veteran must be referred for work registration with Employment Security and actively seek employment if physically and mentally capable of employment.
- 4.8 The veteran must apply for income from all available sources if potentially eligible.
- 4.9 The veteran must report all household income.
- 4.10 If married proof of marital status and dependency must be provided.

- 4.11 Refusing to apply for or accept additional income sources will cause denial of assistance.
- 4.12 The burden is upon the veteran applicant to demonstrate eligibility for financial assistance. Failure of veteran to provide documentary proof as may be requested by the authorized claims officer to verify eligibility will result in denial of assistance.

## 5.0 CLAIM PROCEDURES:

- 5.1 The applicant is interviewed by an authorized claims Eligibility determined; a permanent case file is set up to include copies of all necessary documents that determine eligibility; the application is completed entirely including proper signatures; the grant amount and vendor(s) are identified. Voucher or vouchers are prepared payable to the vendor(s) identified. Records of these are to be maintained in the permanent case file, along with a copy of the application for assistance and the other documentation copies and retained according to pertinent records retention schedules.

The Indigent Veterans' Financial Assistance Program is not to be considered an entitlement program. The Veteran must work with the Veterans' Coalition and contact all appropriate agencies that may be able to help increase the veteran's income. If the veteran does not assist his/herself to secure additional income, the veteran may be denied assistance from the program.

## 5.2 ITEMIZED STATEMENTS FROM VENDORS MUST ACCOMPANY VOUCHERS FOR PAYMENT:

### A. Groceries:

1. Food items are limited to groceries that are exempt from sales tax and do not include soda pop or candy. Itemized cash register receipt or itemized invoice signed by client.
2. Sundries are limited to essential items such as toiletry items, personal hygiene items, etc.

B. Rent:

1. Landlord statement usually provided by issuing officer signed by the landlord.
2. If not provided, on face of voucher print: Monthly rent is \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Residing at \_\_\_\_\_  
Landlord Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_; Rent for Month of \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Veteran may receive only their share of the rent.

C. Utilities:

1. Current itemized statement from servicing utility company. Only basic service will be paid for telephone up to a maximum of \$75 per month.
2. Water, Sewer, Wood, Wood Pellets, Propane, Oil, etc., current itemized dated statement.

D Transportation:

1. Fuel vouchers will be provided only for legitimate purposes, i.e.; medical/dental, employment, or house hunting.

E Burial Expense:

1. Copy of Death Certificate and itemized funeral home statement.

5.4 The County's auditing officer reviews the voucher and attached billing for completeness, correctness and appropriateness within the County's guidelines. The voucher is then placed in line for final approval and signatures of the Board of County Commissioners on the next regular meeting day (normally Tuesday of each week).

5.5 When approved vouchers are returned to the Auditor's Office. Warrants are released twice a month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays. Vouchers are due in the Auditor's Office no later than the 1st

and 3rd Mondays of the month for processing. Payment will be delayed if applications are incomplete or incorrect, or vendors' billings are not itemized.

#### 5.6 EXCLUSIONS:

1. County veterans' assistance funds ***cannot*** be used for the purpose of paying off a mortgage or making a payment on a mortgage.
2. County veterans' assistance funds cannot be used for perpetual care and maintenance of veterans' gravesites.
3. Once remarried, a widow or former spouse loses all eligibility and this cannot be reinstated. Therefore, all eligibility for County assistance is lost.
5. A veteran who misrepresents income or uses veteran's assistance funds for unauthorized purposes will be ineligible to receive any further benefits under this program. The veteran can appeal such denial as set forth in Section 6.0 below. The veteran may only be reinstated for eligibility upon clear and convincing proof by the veteran that the misrepresentation or misuse of funds was inadvertent and done in good faith..

#### 6.0 APPEALS PROCESS:

1. Review of a decision on a claim for assistance may be requested within 15 days of decision by any authorized claims officer or the affected veteran applicant. Such review will be conducted by the Veterans' Advisory Board. Review of the decision of the Veterans Advisory Board can be appealed by filing an appeal with the Board of County Commissioners within 15 days of decision by the Veterans Advisory Board. The claim will be reviewed by a representative of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Auditor and an authorized claims officer other than the authorized claims officer making the initial decision. The veteran or their family will be notified in writing as to the outcome of that review. All review hearings under this appeals process should be completed within 30 days of request for review.

## VETERAN'S RESOURCES FOR KITTITAS COUNTY

### CRISIS:

ASPEN  
Child Protective Services (CPS)  
Court Advocates for Children of Kittitas County  
Crisis Line  
Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Helpline  
Ministerial Association  
Red Cross

### EDUCATION/WORK:

Cle Elum/Roslyn Developmental Preschool  
Ellensburg Developmental Preschool  
Head Start/ECEAP Preschool  
High School Equivalency Program  
People for People  
Migrant Education Program  
Work Source

### ELDERLY:

Aging and Long Term Care  
Ellensburg Fire Department Senior Assistance Program  
Retired and Senior Volunteer  
Program Kittitas County Veterans  
Coalition Senior Nutrition  
Volunteer Chore Services  
Hopesource Dial-a-ride

### FINANCE/BILLS AND CLOTHING/HOUSING SERV

ICES: Energy Assistance and Weatherization-Hope  
Source  
Housing Authority of Kittitas  
County Kittitas County Veterans  
Coalition Methodist Church  
Clothing Bank Social Security  
Hopesource –SSVF, housing, Hope U





HEALTH:

American Cancer Society  
Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health  
Home Care of Kittitas Valley  
Hospice Friends  
Kittitas County Department of Health  
Kittitas Valley Health

NUTRITION:

Hopesource Cle  
Elum Food  
Bank Fish Food  
Bank  
DSHS SNAP

PARENTING:

Care Net Pregnancy Center of Kittitas  
County Planned Parenthood of Central  
Washington Safe Kids

SPECIAL NEEDS:

Central Washington Disabilities Resources  
Elmview  
Parent to Parent Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

SUBSTANCE ABUSE/PREVENTION SERVICES: Alcohol and Drug  
Dependency Service  
Alcohol Anonymous  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Youth Tobacco Prevention Program  
Kittitas County Public Health Department

OTHER:

Veteran's of Foreign Wars  
American Legion  
Vietnam Veterans  
Disabled American Veterans  
Kittitas County Veterans' Association