

COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND GRANT GUIDANCE

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) is accepting applications for the fiscal year (FY) 2026 County Veteran Service Fund grants (PA 210 of 2018). Public Act 210 of 2018 amends PA 192 of 1953, entitled “An act to create a county department of veterans’ affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers’ relief commission in such counties,” (MCL 35.621 to 35.624) by amending the title and by adding section 3a. This Act creates a county department of veteran’s affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the County Veteran Service Fund (CVSF) and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldier’s relief commission in those counties.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism: Grant

Total Available Funding: \$4,041,500

Anticipated Number of Awards: 83

Purpose: to enhance the connection between veterans, eligible dependents, survivors, and the federal veteran benefits they may not have accessed previously. Aligning with MVAA’s goal of surpassing the national average in benefit connection rates, the grant program supports initiatives that raise awareness of available benefits and services at the federal, state, and local levels, ensuring veterans, their families, and survivors are well-informed about the benefits and resources they are entitled to receive.

Length of Project: Up to 1 fiscal year, depending on fund availability

Cost Sharing/Match Required: No

Continuation Funds: Contingent upon appropriation funding

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The total disbursement for each grant shall be determined by combining the following amounts:

(a) A base amount of \$50,000.

(b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be obtained from 2023 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA).

(c) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subsection (a) is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties receiving grants, MVAA shall not perform a calculation under subsection (b) and shall not disburse the portion of grant funds described under that subsection.

REVISED TIMELINE

October 7, 2025	FY26 grant cycle begins (date the SOM Budget was signed)
October 8, 2025	Application and grant guidance sent to those that submitted LOI
November 7, 2025	UPDATED Applications due to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov by 5pm EST
To be determined	Award letters and Grant Agreement packets for signature

*MVAA must receive county signed copy of the CVS Grant Agreement within 60 days of receipt of the Grant Award Packet. **Grant Agreements received after the 60 days may be forfeited.**

The time of receipt by MVAA is determined by the time stamp provided by the State of Michigan's e-mail system. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application in advance of the due date to avoid any delays in electronic mail delivery. There will be no extensions of this deadline.

Applications received by MVAA beginning at 5:01PM EST on Nov 7, 2025, and thereafter may not be considered for funding.

DEFINITIONS

For this funding opportunity, below is a list of commonly used terms as defined by Public Act 210 of 2018:

1. “Accredited veteran service officer”: an individual who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.
2. “County veteran service fund” or “fund”: the county veteran service fund created within the state treasury.
3. “PIV card”: a personal identity verification card issued by USDVA.
4. “Veteran service operations”: assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer to obtain USDVA health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.
5. “Allowable Expenditures”: As used in subsection 413, HB4706, allowable expenditures means any of the following:
 - A. Payroll and salaries

- B. Staff onboarding and training
- C. Office space
- D. Information technology and equipment

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to Michigan counties that meet the eligibility criteria.

To be eligible to receive a grant, a county must satisfy the following:

- (a) Maintain at least 70% of the total county funding for veteran service operations for the fiscal year immediately preceding October 1, 2018; (i.e., Fiscal Year 2017).
- (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) computing systems and require county veteran service officers (VSO) to obtain a PIV card.
- (c) Submit quarterly reports to MVAA in accordance with the reporting requirements detailed in this document.
- (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran service operations.
- (e) Submit all required reports, in the requested format, to MVAA on a quarterly basis demonstrating that the county department of veterans' affairs expended the grant funds received directly and solely on veteran service operations during the period of the report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The same person shall not serve as The Project Director, the Authorized Official, and the Financial Officer.

Project Director*—The person from the applicant's County Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) with overall responsibility for project management and ensuring that all grant guidelines and requirements are met.

Financial Officer—The person from the applicant's organization responsible for the financial accounting of project-related expenditures (must be different than the Authorized Official).

Authorized Official—The person from the applicant's organization authorized to enter into an agreement with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)/MVAA to accept grant funds (must be different than the Financial Officer).

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Grant applications must be submitted on the supplied forms and in the required format to be accepted. Applications submitted that do not follow the guidelines may be rejected. Each proposed program/initiative and expenditure must be described in detail and include how each links to one or more of the following allowable expenditures/grant focus areas:

- **Payroll and salaries** - May cover positions supporting veteran service office operations,

including Veteran Service Officers, Administrative Support, Transportation Coordinators, etc. The grant may also fund a portion of salaries for staff assisting with grant administration, such as Financial Managers or Grant Writers. Counties may request coverage for salaries and benefits of Veteran Service Officers hired prior to FY17, provided the operational budget is not reduced, allowing those funds to be leveraged for other previously allowable initiatives.

- **Staff onboarding and training** - Includes registration fees and travel for onboarding and accreditation-related training for Veteran Service Officers.
- **Office Space** - Rent and utilities.
- **Information technology and equipment** - Computers, printers/scanners, software subscriptions, and similar items.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION AND NARRATIVE

All applications must have a detailed Budget Justification and Narrative that supports the requested funding. The Budget Justification and Narrative explains how the costs were calculated and must tie directly back to the Project Narrative.

The Budget Justification and Narrative is the justification of ‘how’ and/or ‘why’ a line item helps to meet the program deliverables. All costs must be utilized to support the provision of assistance and programming to meet the needs of veterans residing in the county. The proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary for the supported activity.

All budget calculations must follow the prescribed format on the Budget Request Form.

If operational/programmatic changes are needed during the award period, a Project Amendment form must be submitted for PRIOR approval to MVAAGrants@michigan.gov. The subject line should state, “FY26 CVSF XXX County Amendment.” If the change also requires moving funds from one line item to another, you will also need to complete and attach an updated Budget Request Form. All MVAA grant reporting forms will accompany the grant award agreement.

EXPENDITURES

Consistent with the best practices of USDVA and MVAA, all proposed expenditures must facilitate, enhance, and improve county veteran service operations to connect veterans to their federal benefits. Failure to obtain prior written approval from DMVA/MVAA may result in an expense not being authorized or reimbursed. Funds expended without prior MVAA approval will not be reimbursed.

Allowable costs are charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that are consistent with State of Michigan legislation and the guidelines established in the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges can be reimbursed when provided in an approved application/budget, serve programmatic intent and are reasonable/allocable under CFR Part 200, Subpart E.

A cost is reasonable if it does not exceed an amount that a prudent person would incur under the circumstances prevailing when the decision was made to incur the cost. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost consideration must be given to the following:

1. Whether the cost is generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the recipient's or subrecipient's operation or the proper and efficient performance of the award.
2. The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as sound business practices; arm's-length

bargaining; Federal, State, local, tribal, and other laws and regulations; and terms and conditions of the award.

3. Market prices for comparable costs for the geographic area.
4. Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances considering their responsibilities to the recipient or subrecipient, its employees, its students or membership (if applicable), the public at large, and the Government; and
5. Whether the cost represents a deviation from the recipient's or subrecipient's established written policies and procedures for incurring costs.

A cost is allocable to an award or other cost objective if the cost is assignable to that award or in accordance with relative benefits received. The standard is met if the cost satisfies any of the following criteria:

1. Is incurred specifically for the award.
2. Benefits both the award and other work of the recipient or subrecipient and can be distributed in proportions that may be approximated using reasonable methods; or
3. Is necessary to the overall operation of the recipient or subrecipient and is assignable in part to the award as a direct cost.

Unallowable costs are charges incurred by a MVAA grantee that do not meet the criteria established by the State of Michigan legislation or the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges cannot be reimbursed.

See Attachment A for additional guidance on allowable and unallowable expenses.

POST AWARD

All grantees must be registered to do business with the State of Michigan. Registration is available at the following website: <https://sigma.michigan.gov/PRDVSS1X1/Advantage4>

The State of Michigan will not accept Signature Pages without the entire Grant Agreement. A complete signed copy of the Grant Agreement must be returned to MVAA no later than 60 days after the award letter is received.

When communicating with MVAA regarding your grant award, the Grant Award Number or County must be included in the subject line of the e-mail.

There will be a mandatory post award training for Project Directors and Financial Officers to learn correct reporting formats. If one or more parties fails to attend, the grantee is still required to adhere to all grant standards.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Financial reports will be required quarterly. Reports are due to MVAA according to Reporting Schedule below.

Progress and Activity Reports will be required quarterly and are due to MVAA according to the Progress and Activity Reporting Schedule below.

Reporting templates will be provided to grant recipients with the notice of award. Submitting reimbursement requests starts with an approved budget. Reimbursements will be made monthly once the \$50,000 advance is surpassed.

Reimbursement for salaries/fringes will be supported by submitting Staff Budget Quarterly Reports and certified timesheets. Travel or Training requests must be submitted using the MVAA Training and Travel Reimbursement Form.

Quarterly progress reports that identify the major tasks completed during the reporting period, any issues or difficulties during the quarter, project milestones, and performance standards and metrics must be submitted to MVAA as part of the quarterly report.

All reimbursable expenses must be incurred during the grant award cycle. Requests for reimbursement for activities/services prior to the award or after the close of the award will not be reimbursed.

REPORTING SCHEDULE

Reporting Period	October 7 -December 31, 2025	January 1 – March 31, 2026	April 1 – June 30, 2026	July 1 – September 30, 2026
Report Due	January 10, 2026	April 10, 2026	July 10, 2026	October 5, 2026

MONITORING

All grant recipients will be subject to grant monitoring of performance, including data collection. Standardized templates will be provided with the notice of award. Budget, progress, and activity reports will be required quarterly. Grant and performance monitoring will be conducted by MVAA. If MVAA determines by audit or otherwise, that a county department of veterans' affairs expended the grant funds received for purposes other than veteran service operations, MVAA shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the county department of veteran's affairs in the succeeding fiscal year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly expended.

RESOURCES

The following sites may be of assistance in researching and developing your grant application.

The 2023 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report:

<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mvaa/quality-of-life/emergency-assistance/panel-content>

Michigan Travel Rates:

<https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/-/media/Project/Websites/dtmb/Services/Travel/Travel-Rates-FY2025-and-High-Cost-Cities-effective-1-1-2025.pdf?rev=6e16aff7dc9d4877b86927a92b3be98f&hash=F1EE3E66F633004365D41F106AD5153B>

Purpose	To list common cost categories for Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency's (MVA) grant programs and provide guidance on whether they are allowable or unallowable. This section is not intended to be all-inclusive. If grantees have questions after reviewing this section they should contact the applicable Grant Analyst.
Definitions	<p>Allowable Costs: Charges incurred by a MVA grantee that are consistent with State of Michigan legislation and the guidelines established in the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges can be reimbursed when provided in an approved application/budget, serve programmatic intent and are reasonable/allocable (CFR Part 200, Subpart E).</p> <p>Unallowable Costs: Charges incurred by a MVA grantee that don't meet the criteria established by State of Michigan legislation or the grant agreement. Therefore, these charges cannot be reimbursed.</p> <p>Reasonable Costs: A cost is reasonable if it does not exceed an amount that a prudent person would incur under the circumstances prevailing when the decision was made to incur the cost (refer to Page X for determining the reasonableness of a given cost).</p> <p>Allocable Costs: A cost is allocable to an award or other cost objective if the cost is assignable to that award or in accordance with relative benefits received (refer to Page X for determining if a cost is allocable).</p>

ALLOWABILITY OF COSTS & ACTIVITIES		
Cost Category	Affected MVA Grant Program(s)	Explanation of Allowable Costs
Advertising & Marketing	SVSPG	Allowable for radio, newspaper, television, direct mail, billboards or electronic/computer transmittals.
Air Travel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status in support of an allowable expense, consistent with Department of Technology, Management and Budget's (DTMB) Standardized Travel Regulations (STR) for the current Fiscal Year (FY), Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' (DMVA) Travel Policy, and at the lowest rate available.
Alcoholic Beverages	All	Unallowable
Apparel	All	Unallowable
Bonuses	All	Unallowable
Buildings and Land Construction	MIVHPG	Allowable for the acquisition of buildings or land to make improvements, modifications, replacements, renovations or alterations to an existing building. This also includes construction and construction related materials such as wood, nails, concrete, asphalt, roofing, gravel, sand, paint, insulation, drywall or plumbing.
Business/Travel Insurance	All	Unallowable
Conferences	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable if the conference fulfills the purpose of a grant program's legislated purpose. Allowable conference costs may include rental of facilities, speakers' fees, costs of meals (see meals for restrictions), refreshments, local transportation and registration fees. If renting a building or room for training, the grantee should use the most cost-effective facility.
Contractual/Consulting/Professional Services	SVSPG/MIVHPG	Allowable in an approved application/budget.
Contributions or Donations	All	Unallowable
Dues or Memberships Fees	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for veteran service organizations accreditation status when in an approved application/budget. Unallowable for civic or community organizations.
Entertainment	All	Unallowable including amusement, diversion and social activities (e.g., bands, dance groups, tickets to shows).
Fees	SVSPG/MIVHPG	Allowable for Emergency Services only (e.g., late fees, fees associated with delinquent taxes for approved initiatives).
Fines or Legal Settlements	All	Unallowable
Food Cards/Vouchers	All	Unallowable
Fringe Benefits	All	Allowable to include, but not limited to, the costs of annual/personal or sick leave, holidays, employee insurance, and unemployment benefits.
Fuel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for rental vehicles only.
Fundraising	All	Unallowable
Furniture	MIVHPG	Allowable in an approved application/budget for office use or to furnish permanent or temporary shelter (e.g., desks, desk chairs, tables, beds, dressers).
Gas Cards	All	Unallowable
Gifts or Prizes	All	Unallowable
Legal Services	All	Unallowable
Lobbying	All	Unallowable
Lodging	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status in support of an allowable expense, consistent with DTMB's STR's for the current Fiscal Year (FY), and reasonable.
Lottery	All	Unallowable
Maintenance and Repair Costs	SVSPG/MIVHPG	Allowable for Emergency Services in an approved application/budget.
Meals	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for meals consumed while in travel status and consistent with DTMB's STR's established meal reimbursement rates for the current FY and DMVA's Travel Policy. Unallowable for meals consumed while not in travel status and/or amounts exceeding DTMB's STR's established meal reimbursement rates for the current FY, grocery items (e.g., loaf of bread, lunch meat, lettuce, mayonnaise and mustard to make a "meal").
Meal Tips	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable with sit-down meals. Maximum 20%. Unallowable on take-out or at fast food restaurants.
Mileage	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable for organizational or privately owned vehicles for business, based on actual miles traveled consistent with DTMB's STR, local policy prevails. Unallowable between home and official or remote work locations.
Office Equipment	All	Allowable for purchase or rent, the rental agreement must terminate at the end of the grant cycle (e.g., copiers, computers, laptops.) If replacing equipment previously purchased with the grant, greater than \$5,000, a depreciation schedule must be submitted to demonstrate the equipment has surpassed its useful lifespan.
Office Rent/Lease	CVSF	Allowable
Office Supplies	SVSPG/MIVHPG	Allowable
Organizational Cell Phones	All	Allowable
Payroll Taxes	All	Allowable
Per Diems	CVSF	Allowable for applicable staff attending committee meetings in an approved application/budget.
Pre/Post-Award Costs	All	Unallowable for expenses incurred outside of the grant cycle.
Printing and Publications	SVSPG/MIVHPG	Allowable for informational brochures, flyers, manuals and publications relating to an approved project.
Promotional Items	SVSPG	Allowable for marketing activities directly related to the funded project (e.g., signs, table tents, t-shirts, hats, coasters).
Recreational Therapy	All	Unallowable
Rental/Mortgage Assistance	MIVHPG	Allowable
Salaries & Wages	All	Allowable as part of employee compensation for personnel services in relation to the amount of time an employee devotes to the grant-supported project/program. Unallowable for staff who devote time to activities that do not meet the legislated intent of the grant program.
Sales Tax	All	Unallowable
Service/Emotional Support Animals	All	Unallowable
Service Charges	All	Allowable for charges that are unavoidable (e.g., credit card processing fee)
Snacks/Refreshments	All	Allowable consistent with DMVA's Group Meetings Policy.
Software Licenses	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable
Sponsorships	All	Unallowable
Stipends	All	Unallowable
Tobacco	All	Unallowable
Training	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when meeting the legislative intent of the grant program and in an approved application/budget.
Transportation Services	All	Unallowable
Travel	CVSF/SVSPG	Allowable when in travel status in support of an allowable expense, consistent with DTMB's STR's for the current FY, and reasonable.
Utility Assistance	MIVHPG	Allowable for Emergency Services in an approved application/budget.
Vehicles	All	Allowable to rent while in travel status. Unallowable to purchase.
Warranties	All	Unallowable