

The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a diagonal orientation.

CLARK COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

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Clark County Veterans Advisory Board



New Member Packet

Updated January 2024

Dear New Board Member,

We are excited that you are joining the Clark County Veterans Advisory Board! The information in this packet will give you a good idea of who we are and what we do. We've included:

- ❖ Board Member Responsibilities
- ❖ Veterans Advisory Board Membership
- ❖ Meeting Information
- ❖ Veterans Assistance Rules and Regulations
- ❖ Veterans Advisory Board Bylaws Overview
- ❖ Veterans Assistance Fund
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Funded Services

If, after reviewing this packet, you would like some additional information, please contact Abby Molloy, Program Coordinator.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Abby Molloy
Clark County Community Services
PO Box 5000
Vancouver, WA 98666
Phone: (564) 397-7832
abby.molloy@clark.wa.gov

Board Member Responsibilities

Clark County Community Services has primary responsibility for developing and implementing human services programs for residents of Clark County. Many of these programs are managed with the oversight and guidance of community advisory boards.

The Clark County Council has encouraged the development of knowledgeable and involved community groups and outlined the role and functions of these volunteer groups.

To ensure decisions are made in the best interest of our community, groups are asked to:

- Facilitate a process for integrating community input and other expertise with the perspectives of the advisory board members as a basis for recommendations to the Clark County Council;
- Recommend long-range program plans, annual program priorities and service delivery funding allocations to the Clark County Council;
- Communicate and/or collaborate with other individuals and groups who have complementary interest and expertise;
- Maintain public awareness of program policies, priorities and direction;
- Maintain formal and informal periodic communication with the County Council;
- Maintain the advisory board as a dynamic, diverse and responsive entity, with membership, composition and rotation designed to sustain vigor and preserve continuity; and
- Review funding proposals and make recommendations to the County Councilors.

The Veterans Advisory Board is tasked with overseeing the Veterans Assistance Fund, a property tax levy that is a local funding source guided by Washington State law as well as local county code and policy.

Please review the **Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Membership Handbook** for additional information about participating in this Clark County Advisory Board. The Handbook contains important information about the roles and responsibilities of advisory board members, laws affecting board activities and expectations for your participation on the Board.

Board Membership and Leadership

Each nationally recognized Veterans' organization in Clark County can appoint two representatives to the Veterans Advisory Board (VAB), a primary member and an alternate. Honorably discharged Veterans who are not members of a post can request to join the committee as a Member-at-Large. Their membership must be approved by a vote of the Board. Per Washington State regulations, a majority of VAB members must represent a post.

2023 Veterans Advisory Board Appointed Members

Organization	Primary	Alternate
40 et 8	Bob Brennan	Steve Slegers
American Legion #14	Gene Couture	
Camas Post #27	Wes Forgey	Shawn O'Neil
American Legion #44	Darren Wertz	Charles Ingalls
American Legion #168	Robert Nichols	
American Legion #176	Michael Gibson	
American Vets #6	John Lovejoy	Vanise Pratt
DAV Chapter #4	Bruce Maas	Thomas Cousino
Korean War Veterans Assoc. #321	Earl Edwards	Dixie Hotaling
Marine Corps League #826	Steven Slegers	John Stofiel
VFW #4278	Shannon Roberts	Dana Difford
VFW #7824	Michael Harding	
Vietnam Vets of America #512	Greg Whitson	Nick Herber
Members at Large		
Tamara Elam	Bryan McGillis	Megan Anderson
Eliezer Gonzalez	Kelly Jones	Tonya Wark
Michael Langsdorf	Lloyd Bowman	

Board Officers

The VAB has an executive board consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, who are assisted by Clark County staff. For 2024 these positions are held by the following Board members:

Chair: Michael Harding, VFW Post #7824 (minsh101@gmail.com)

Vice-Chair: Robert Nichols, Am. Legios #168 (Bobolink1969@icloud.com)

Secretary: Bruce Maas, DAV Chapter #4 (bmaasjr@earthlink.net)

Standing Committees

The Veterans Advisory Board has three standing committees. Committee responsibilities are detailed in the VAB Bylaws. Below are the three standing committees and their members for 2024:

Policies and Procedures Committee

Chair: Kelly Jones (kjtamu86@gmail.com)

Member: Tonya Wark (tonyarose15@hotmail.com)

Member: Steve Slegers (sslegers@juno.com)

Appeals Committee

Chair: Gene Couture (genetc65@gmail.com)

Member: Tom Philips (tominportland@msn.com)

Member: Tamara Elam (tamara.l.elam@gmail.com)

Nominations Committee

Chair: Bruce Maas (bmaasjr@earthlink.net)

Member: Kelly Jones (kjtamu86@gmail.com)

Member: Steve Slegers (sslegers@juno.com)

Meeting Information

Veterans Advisory Board meetings are open to the public, they are also broadcast and available on CVTV's website.

Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Until further notice all Veterans Advisory Board Meetings are held in a hybrid format. Members and guests may participate in either of the following ways:

In-person:

Public Service Center
1300 Franklin Street
Council Hearing Room, #680
Vancouver, WA 98661

Remote:

Webex video conference call:

<https://clarkwa.webex.com/clarkwa/j.php?MTID=md6de9d7a3323167961a672958cd086fa>

Meeting number: 2497 145 0325

Password: dnJbqq35Cp4

Join by phone:

+1-408-418-9388

Access code: 2497 145 0325

Veterans Assistance Rules and Regulations

The Veterans Assistance Fund and the Veterans Advisory Board are governed by state and local requirements. For additional detail on any of the following, please contact Clark County staff.

State Regulations

RCWs governing the Veterans Relief can be found at [Chapter 73.08](#). This chapter includes:

- 73.08.005 Definitions.
- 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families -- Requirements.
- 73.08.035 Veterans' advisory boards.
- 73.08.070 County burial of indigent deceased veterans.
- 73.08.080 Tax levy authorized.
- 73.08.090 Public assistance eligibility.

County Regulations

The local Clark County code governing Veterans Relief can be found in [Chapter 2.29](#). Sections include:

- 2.29.010 Veterans' organizations to provide relief—Registration.
- 2.29.020 Reporting.
- 2.29.025 Clark County veterans' advisory board.
- 2.29.030 Performance bond. (REPEALED)
- 2.29.031 County service officer.
- 2.29.035 Contracting for services.
- 2.29.040 Veterans' assistance administration.
- 2.29.050 Eligibility for veterans' assistance.
- 2.29.060 Burial or cremation assistance.
- 2.29.070 Limitations on relief benefits.
- 2.29.080 Rule 4: Applications for assistance and warrants.
- 2.29.085 Screening of applicants.
- 2.29.090 Rule 6: Payment of rental of meeting place. (REPEALED)

Veterans Advisory Board Bylaws Overview

The Veterans Advisory Board has developed bylaws for membership requirements and board operations. The Bylaws are attached to this packet and can also be accessed online at <https://www.clark.wa.gov/community-services/veterans-advisory-board>.

The bylaws include information on:

- Article I – Purpose

- Article II – Membership

 - 2.1 - Organization Requirements

 - 2.2 - Membership Qualification

 - 2.3 - Termination

 - 2.4 - Alternate Membership

 - 2.5 - Fees

- Article III – Voting

 - 3.1 - Quorum

 - 3.2 - Voting

- Article IV - Officers

 - 4.1 - Officers

 - 4.2 - Elections

 - 4.3 - Term of Office

 - 4.4 - Contract and Correspondence

 - 4.5 – Ascension

- Article V – Committees

 - 5.1 - Assignments

 - 5.2 - Responsibilities

- Article VI – Meetings

 - 6.1 - Regular Meetings

 - 6.2 - Special Meetings

- Article VII - Fiscal Year

- Article VIII – Amendments

- Article IX - Parliamentary Authority

- Article X - Clark County Roles and Responsibilities for the CCVAB

 - 10.1 - Fiscal Management

 - 10.2 - Administrative Support

Veterans Assistance Fund

Policies and Procedures

The Veterans Assistance Fund Policies and Procedures govern the use of the local, tax-levy supported Veterans Assistance Fund. The Policies and Procedures are adopted by the Clark County Council upon consideration of recommendations from the Veterans Advisory Board.

The complete Policies and Procedures for the Veterans Assistance Fund are attached to this packet and are also available online at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/veterans/>. The following sections are included in the Policies and Procedures:

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Source of Funds
- 1.3 Clark County Veterans Advisory Board
- 1.4 Contracted Services
- 1.5 Service Administration

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Use of Veterans Assistance Fund
- 2.2 Service Requirements
- 2.3 Documentation of Veterans Status
- 2.4 Family Member
- 2.5 Domestic Partner
- 2.6 Indigence
- 2.7 Washington State Residency
- 2.8 County Residency
- 2.9 Falsification

3. DIRECT EMERGENCY RELIEF (through Veterans Service Officer)

- 3.1 Overview
- 3.2 Method of Payment
- 3.3 Documentation of Costs
- 3.4 Rent Assistance
- 3.5 Utility Assistance
- 3.6 Food Assistance
- 3.7 Transportation Assistance
- 3.8 Prescription Coverage
- 3.9 Burial or Cremation Assistance
- 3.10 Work Related Assistance
- 3.11 Other Assistance

4. VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

- 4.1 General
- 4.2 Certification
- 4.3 Screening
- 4.4 Community Resources
- 4.5 Reporting
- 4.6 Case Management

5. APPEAL REQUEST PROCESS

- 5.1 Filing an Appeal Request
- 5.2 Determination
- 5.3 Due Process

Funded Services

Clark County does not directly administer Veterans Services. The County contracts with community organizations to deliver services. Clark County currently maintains contracts funded by the Veterans Assistance Fund for the following programs:

- **Clark County Veterans Assistance Center, Veterans Emergency Relief Program**
- **Free Clinic of Southwest Washington, Veterans Dental Services Program**
- **Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Service Officers**

2024 Veterans Advisory Board Members

	Representatives	Email	Address				Phone
Post	40 et 8 Vancouver Voiture 99	y-99correspondant@voiture-99.com	2809 NE 78th St	Vancouver	WA	98665	360.574.8461
Primary	Bob Brennan	bob.r.brennan@gmail.com		Vancouver	WA	98685	360.907.9553
Alternate	Steven Slegers	s.t.slegers@q.com ; sslegers@juno.com	8503 NE 13th St	Vancouver	WA	98664	503.348.9576
Post	Am. Legion #14		4607 NE St. James	Vancouver	WA	98663	360-696-2579
Primary	Gene Couture	genetc65@gmail.com	501 W 16th St	Vancouver	WA	98660	661.599.1974
Alternate							
Post	Am. Legion #44	ridgefieldamericanlegion@gmail.com	510 Pioneer St	Ridgefield	WA	98642	360.903.3466
Primary	Darren Wertz	wertzds@gmail.com	726 N 32nd Ct	Ridgefield	WA	98642	360-910-6270
Alternate	Charles Ingalls	charlescingalls@gmail.com	1743 S 50th Pl	Ridgefield	WA	98642	408.691.3402
Post	Am. Legion #168		PO Box 431	Amboy	WA	98601	360.247.5235
Primary	Robert Nichols	Bobolink1969@icloud.com	9317 NE 86th Avenue, #110	Vancouver	WA	98662	360-971-1455
Alternate							
Post	Am. Legion #176	scal@pacifier.com	14011 NE 20th Ave	Vancouver	WA	98686	360-573-2331
Primary	Michael Gibson	mdgibson72@hotmail.com	6705 NE 17th Ave	Vancouver	WA	98665	360.694.8005
Alternate							
Post	Am. Vets #6		400 N Andresen Rd	Vancouver	WA	98661	360.254.0155
Primary	John Lovejoy	johnl2010@msn.com	1709 NE 78th Street, Unit 56	Vancouver	WA	98665	360-726-8808
Alternate	Vanise Pratt	vanisepratt@yahoo.com	6807 NE 91st Avenue	Vancouver	WA	98662	360-910-0782
Post	Camas Post 27	wesforgey@gmail.com	P O Box 499	Camas	WA	98607	360.991.5302
Primary	Wes Forgey	wesforgey@gmail.com	720 SE 160th Ave ste 103 box 130	Vancouver	WA	98684	360.991.5302
Alternate	Shawn O'Neil	irish.tech@hotmail.com					360.831.1836
Post	DAV Chapter #4	davvancouver@gmail.com	PO Box 871211	Vancouver	WA	98687	360-209-4189
Primary	Bruce Maas	bmaasjr@earthlink.net	13216 NE 59th St #10	Vancouver	WA	98682	360.907.9670
Alternate	Thomas Cousino	thomascousino@gmail.com	1111 NW 131st Way Apt B	Vancouver	WA	98685	360.513.0009
Post	KWVA #321	jjmead@comcast.net	2809 NE 78th St	Vancouver	WA	98685	360.487.9270
Primary	Earl Edwards	mustangearl@aol.com	9216 NE 93rd Place	Vancouver	WA	98662	360-513-8251
Alternate	Dixie Hotaling	rebel2@comcast.net	2218 NE 90th St	Vancouver	WA	98665	360.953.8218
Post	Marine Corps League #826	jfstofiel@comcast.net	6204 Kansas Street	Vancouver	WA	98661	360-907-5342
Primary	Steven Slegers	sslegers@juno.com	8503 NE 13th St	Vancouver	WA	98665	360-260-9403
Alternate	John Stofiel	jfstofiel@comcast.net	6294 Kansas Street	Vancouver	WA	98664	360-907-5342
Post	VFW #4278	vfwpost4278@gmail.com	PO Box 579	Camas	WA	98607	360.260.7879
Primary	Shannon Roberts	slr711@hotmail.com	327 NE Wedgewood Court	Camas	WA	98665	509-637-5192
Alternate	Dana Difford	dgdiford@comcast.net	518 NE Countryside Drive	Vancouver	WA	98684	360-896-9219
Post	VFW #7824	info@vfw7824.org	400 N Andresen Rd	Vancouver	WA	98661	360-254-0155
Primary	Michael Harding	minsh101@gmail.com	7307 NE 64th Court	Vancouver	WA	98661	360-609-1775
Alternate							
Post	VVA #512		P O Box 65422	Vancouver	WA	98665	360-695-5456
Primary	Greg Whitson	jarlaco@yahoo.com	7720 NE Hwy 99 Ste D330	Vancouver	WA	98665	360.839.9422
Alternate	Nick Herber	skuternic@gmail.com	1923 F St	Vancouver	WA	98663	360.600.4997
Members-at-Large							
	Kelly Jones	kjtamu86@gmail.com	1013 NE 139th Avenue	Vancouver	WA	98684	360-721-1031
	Bryan McGillis	bryan.mcgillis@gmail.com	518 NW 153rd St	Vancouver	WA	98685	360-213-6667
	Tamara Elam	tamara.l.elam@gmail.com					
	Megan Anderson	mmanderson@clark.edu	141 N 45th Circle	Camas	WA	98607	253-263-5894
	Eliezer Gonzalez	e.gonzalezroman14@gmail.com	100 SE Olympia Dr. Apt. 12	Vancouver	WA	98684	863-216-9025

	Tonya Wark*	tonyarose15@hotmail.com	4500 Nicholson Rd 834	Vancouver	WA	98661	360.771.4529
	Michael Langsdorf		3923 Wauna Vista Dr	Vancouver	WA	98661	541-640-0039
	Lloyd Bowman	tatershome@comcast.net	1209 NE 127th Ave	Vancouver	WA	98684	503-708-0511
Clark County Veterans Assistance Center			1301 Columbia	Vancouver	WA	98663	360-397-8478
	Judy Russel	vetfund@ccvac.net					
Clark County Staff							
	Abby Molloy	abby.molloy@clark.wa.gov					564-397-7832
	Janet Snook	janet.snook@clark.wa.gov					
Chair	Michael Harding	minsh101@gmail.com					
Vice-Chair	Robert Nichols	Bobolink1969@icloud.com					
Secretary	Bruce Maas	bmaasjr@earthlink.net					

**CLARK COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD
MEMBER AT LARGE 2024 LETTER OF INTENT**

Membership eligibility shall be provided to each nationally recognized Veterans' organization or veterans from the community at large that have registered with the County under Washington State RCW 73.08.010. Veterans at large shall provide proof of service in the Armed Forces with their initial request. Letter of Intent shall be submitted annually. Service organizations and Veterans at large may be given full membership by majority vote of the Veterans Advisory Board. No less than a majority of board members shall be members from nationally recognized veterans' service organizations and only veterans are eligible to serve as board members.

Please Print:

NAME

STREET

CITY, STATE, ZIP

PHONE

E-MAIL ADDRESS

SIGNATURE

DATE

If you are a new member, please provide a brief explanation about why you are interested in serving on the Clark County Veterans Advisory Board:

CLARK COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD ORGANIZATION 2024 LETTER OF INTENT

Membership eligibility shall be provided to each nationally recognized Veterans' organization or veterans from the community at large that have registered with the County under Washington State RCW 73.08.010. Veterans at large shall submit a letter of appointment and provide proof of service in the Armed Forces. Service organizations and Veterans at large may be given full membership by majority vote of the Advisory Board. This Letter of Intent shall be presented to the CCVAB no later than 1 December. No less than a majority of the board members shall be members from nationally recognized veterans' service organizations and only veterans are eligible to serve as board members.

Each organization may appoint one (1) alternate member. Alternate members who are appointed in accordance with Sections 2.1 and 2.3 shall be able to vote on issues only in the absence of the Primary Member of the organization or agency they are representing.

ORGANIZATION NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

PHONE/E-MAIL ADDRESS

We appoint the following individuals to represent our organization at CCVAB meetings as specified below.

PRIMARY:	ALTERNATE:
NAME	NAME
STREET	STREET
CITY, STATE, ZIP	CITY, STATE, ZIP
PHONE	PHONE
E-MAIL ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS

COMMANDER (TYPED NAME)

ADJUTANT/SECRETARY (TYPED NAME)

COMMANDER (SIGNATURE)

ADJUTANT/SECRETARY (SIGNATURE)

If not previously submitted, please attach your organization's charter as required by the County Code.



Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Membership Handbook

**Role of a Board Member and
Resources Available**

Laws Affecting Board Activities

Board Transactions

Based on Washington State Governor's Handbook

THE ROLE OF A BOARD MEMBER AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Citizen Participation through Boards and Commissions

Clark County's system of boards and commissions is fundamental to encouraging the use of citizen talent and interest in affairs of the county, keeping government innovative and responsive, and improving the performance of county services.

Our citizens have enjoyed a long tradition of participation in county government. Through representation on boards and commissions, Clark County residents are offered an important avenue to help create effective and equitable policies. Citizen involvement contributes to the success of government and the quality of life enjoyed by our families and communities.

Citizen participation works at all levels of government. It encompasses a broad range of issues, such as education, the environment and natural resources, general government, social services, economic development and transportation. Some boards appointed by the Governor shape policy for major state agencies and departments, others prepare regulations governing program areas, and some serve solely in an advisory capacity.

Veterans Advisory Board (VAB)

A VAB is required for every county in Washington State and was created by RCW 73.08.070. VAB members serve as advisers on policy matters to Clark County Community Services, which is responsible for administering policy. The VAB may study policy and make recommendations for changes or implementation. The VAB does not have authority to enforce policy or create rules, but their analysis and recommendations can play an important role in furthering the effective implementation of Veteran assistance.

The Advisory Role

Members of advisory boards provide an important link between the public and agencies, and the Clark County Council. The information that members provide about community needs and opinions can have a profound effect on policies and lead to better service. Advisory board members play a very special role in creating recommendations for Veteran services in Clark County.

If you are appointed as a member of the VAB, you will be expected to:

- Interpret and communicate community opinions, attitudes, and needs to Clark County Community Services and the Clark County Council.
- Study programs and services and analyze issues and needs.
- Offer proposals and recommend changes in programs, policies, and standards.
- Provide the public with information on county policies, programs, and budgets.

Veterans Advisory Board members support and counsel staff and make important recommendations about policy. They do not administer policy, programs, or services. When presenting recommendations, it is essential that board members keep the following in mind:

- Ideas should be expressed in clear and concise language.
- Proposed solutions should be viable and cost-effective.
- Recommendations should identify reasons for the changes suggested.
- Advice should reflect the views of a consensus or a majority of board members.

About Policy Making

As a board member, you are responsible for being knowledgeable about board policies and changes. Understanding the fundamental meaning and characteristics of policy is essential.

Policy is a written statement intended to be a guiding principle that defines an organization's intent and direction. It is most useful when set forth in broad terms so that it remains applicable and usable for a long period of time. It should not be so detailed that it dictates how, when or where things must be done. Policy should be stated clearly and concisely. Policy may be amended, rewritten or abolished. Thus, policy should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains appropriate.

Being an Effective Board Member

It is imperative that board members recognize they are in a critical position to shape and influence board decisions and actions. It is important that each member keeps informed and up to date on issues, legislative activity and statutes affecting the board.

Attendance. Regular attendance is essential so that decisions will represent the opinions of the board as a whole. In addition, regular attendance enables board members to keep abreast of board concerns and helps ensure that issues are examined from a variety of perspectives. The bylaws of the board define attendance requirements. A person may forfeit his or her position on the board as a result of poor attendance.

Preparation. Adequate preparation is another requisite for effective board membership. Your board's staff members will provide reports, proposals, and other information to help you make informed decisions. Do not hesitate to request additional information you need to make thoughtful and appropriate decisions.

In a nutshell, effective board members:

- Attend all board meetings.
- Are well prepared for meetings.
- Recognize that serving the public interest is the top priority.
- Recognize that the board must operate in an open and public manner.
- Are knowledgeable about the issues affecting the board.
- Examine all available evidence before making a judgment.
- Communicate well and participate in group discussions.

- Are aware that authority to act is granted to the board as a whole, not to individual members.
- Exhibit a willingness to work with the group in making decisions.
- Recognize that compromise may be necessary to reach consensus.
- Do not let personal feelings toward other board members or staff interfere with their judgment.

Resignations. If you are unable to complete your term, it is important to inform Community Services staff. A letter of resignation should be sent indicating the date your resignation is effective and whether you are able to serve until a replacement is named.

Staff Functions. The primary function of the board staff is to carry out the rules, policies and programs developed by the board. In addition, staff members notify board members of pertinent issues and legislative activity. They also arrange meetings, prepare meeting materials, compile background information and conduct research.

Staff members also serve as a liaison to other boards and agencies, the county attorney, the council and the public. Staff members are a valuable resource to boards. A good staff member can enhance the productivity and effectiveness of a board. Board members should not hesitate to ask staff for help in carrying out their responsibilities.

Legal Counsel. The County Attorney serves as legal counsel to the Clark County Council, department staff, and boards and commissions. The attorney advises and represents the county as it fulfills its official duties, issues legal opinions, and defends county officials and employees for actions performed in their official capacities and in good faith.

The county attorney provides valuable information and advice about statutes and legal issues. Community Services staff may request the following services from the county attorney as needed:

- Assurance that board decisions and actions fall within statutory authority.
- Questions about conflict of interest.
- Review of proposed regulations and revisions, and the drafting of such documents in legally correct language.
- General legal advice about board actions and activities.

LAWS AFFECTING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Restrictions and Requirements

There are certain restrictions and requirements that may affect you during your tenure as a board member:

- Board members must be familiar with and operate within their board's governing statutes and bylaws, as well as state and federal laws.
- To ensure accountability, all applicable policies and procedures adopted by the board should be in written form.
- No board member may make unilateral decisions or take action without the consent of the board as a whole.
- At professional or industry gatherings, or in other settings where appearance may be construed as representing the board, individual board members must use discretion to avoid the appearance of speaking for the board, unless specifically authorized to do so.
- Board members must keep in mind that their mission is to serve the public, and that it is inappropriate to use board membership to create a personal platform.
- Members are restricted by RCW 42.52.130, 140, 150 and 42.18.230 from accepting or soliciting anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity or favor if it is given only because the member holds a responsible position with the county.
- Questions about board issues should be directed to the board chair or county staff, who will see that all board members receive needed information by the next regular meeting.
- Details of board investigations, personnel files or business discussed at closed executive sessions should not be disclosed unless they are part of the public record.

Open Public Meetings Act

The Open Public Meetings Act applies to the Veterans Advisory Board.

Notification of Meetings. The Open Public Meetings Act requires that all meetings of the governing body of a public agency, as well as some other meetings on policies affecting the public, be open to the public. In addition, the public must be notified of such meetings in a timely manner.

If a quorum of the board members meets (or even emails) about board business without prior public notification, they are violating the OPMA. Board members also need to be aware of the perception of them meeting as well. This could cause issues, even if it's not a violation of the law.

Public Disclosure. The minutes of all regular meetings must be recorded and made available for public inspection.

Accessibility Requirements. To afford members of the public who have disabilities an equal opportunity to participate, meetings subject to the Open Public Meetings Act are to be held in facilities which are wheelchair accessible. Public notices about such meetings must include a statement that sign language interpreters, materials in Braille, large print or tape, and other necessary auxiliary aids will be provided with advance notice. Notices should include the name and phone number of the individual responsible for coordinating such requests. Refer to RCW 42.30.010 and 42.30.900 for more information.

Reasonable Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities

In addition to the Open Public Meetings Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sets criteria for accessibility and accommodation. Under the ADA, people who have disabilities have a right to an equal opportunity for effective participation in the activities of boards and commissions, whether as appointed members or as members of the public.

Accessible Locations and Communications. Meetings and other board-sponsored activities should be held in wheelchair-accessible locations. Qualified sign language interpreters, materials in accessible formats such as Braille, large print and tape, and other forms of auxiliary aids for effective communications should be provided upon request. Reasonable modifications should be made to policies or procedures if they create a barrier to the full and equal participation of a person who has a disability.

To further support ADA requirements, the board and staff should:

- Provide regular notice to members, participants, and the public about ADA protections against discrimination based on disability.
- Conduct a self-evaluation to identify policies or practices that do not comply with the ADA and modify policies and practices if needed.
- Identify any physical barriers that limit the accessibility of programs, services, or activities to people with disabilities. If identified, describe methods and timeframe for eliminating those barriers.

Ethics and the Appearance of Fairness

As a board member, you are expected to uphold a high ethical standard. It is extremely important that board members avoid conflicts of interest or even the appearance of conflicts of interest. Using a public position for private gain is improper and illegal. Similarly, actions benefiting close relatives are prohibited. There are penalties for violations of state ethics statutes.

The following are examples of conflicts of interest:

- Directing contracts to a business in which you have a financial interest.
- Using confidential information for private investments.
- Accepting gifts or favors in exchange for certain regulatory rulings.
- Accepting gifts or favors in exchange for making certain purchases.
- Obtaining personal favors from employees.
- Accepting favors for disclosure of confidential information.
- Engaging in outside employment which assists non-governmental entities in their quests for business.

Board members can avoid conflict of interest issues by being aware of and adhering to statutory restrictions, using good judgment, and being fair and equitable in decision-making. For additional information on provisions of the state ethics law, visit the Washington State Executive Ethics Board website at www.ethics.wa.gov/.

BOARD TRANSACTIONS

The Veterans Advisory Board has a set of bylaws to direct and clarify its actions, procedures and organization. Board members are expected to adhere to bylaws and all relevant statutes.

Bylaws are the guidelines by which a board functions. According to Robert's Rules of Order, bylaws define the primary characteristics of an organization, prescribe how it should function, and include rules that are so important that they may not be changed without prior notice to members and formal vote and agreement by a majority of members.

Bylaws should include expectations as well as guidelines for members. Issues such as attendance, responsibilities and discipline should be addressed in the bylaws.

Quorum

A quorum is the number of members who must be present to conduct official business. If a quorum is not present, any business transaction is null and void. The quorum protects against unrepresentative actions by a small number of individuals.

The bylaws specify the number of individuals who constitute a quorum and whether a majority of this quorum may take action.

At meetings where a quorum is not present, the only actions that may be legally taken are to fix a time for adjournment, adjourn, recess, or take measures to obtain a quorum (such as contacting absent members).

The Chair and Voting

If the chair is a member of the board, he or she may vote just as any other member. When not a member of the board, the chair may vote whenever his or her vote will affect the outcome; or, to break or cause a tie.

A chair has only one vote and may not vote as a member of the board and as a presiding officer.

Voting by secret ballot is prohibited by the open meetings law.

Public Disclosure

County agencies and boards are required to have available for public inspection and copying their public records, such as procedural rules and statements of general policy, and other records, written or electronic, pertaining to the board's business. Exemptions to disclosure are limited and identified in statute.

Records relating to the conduct of official business are subject to disclosure even if they are on a personal computer. Records regarding advisory board business must be retained for six years.

For additional information on disclosure requirements and exemptions from disclosure, refer to Chapter 42.56 RCW or consult with the County Attorney.

Lobbying

There exists a fine line between advising and lobbying. It is important that board members be aware of this distinction. Board members are in a unique position that allows them to provide information and recommendations on issues. However, a board member becomes a lobbyist when he or she attempts to influence the passage or defeat of any legislation by council, or the adoption or rejection of any rule, standard, rate or other legislative enactment or any agency action under the Administrative Procedure Act, RCW 18.185.200, Chapter 34.05 RCW.

VAB members do not lobby on behalf of Clark County. Clark County has a lobbyist who takes direction from the Clark County Council.

Prohibition on Elections or Ballot Measures Using Public Resources. RCW 42.17.130 strictly forbids the use of public or agency facilities for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion or opposition to any ballot proposition.

The News Media

The news media has the important function of informing the public about government operations. In doing so, it provides a valuable communications link with the community. The county's Public Information Office (PIO) can assist with press releases or social media notices for newsworthy information. Any requests from the media about the Veterans Advisory Board or county-funded Veteran services, should be directed to Clark County Community Services staff.

Clark County Veterans Advisory Board Bylaws

Revised January 2024

Article I – Purpose

1. To develop programs or procedures that are consistent with the welfare of indigent and suffering Veterans and eligible family members of those veterans.
2. To serve, as an Advisory Board on Veterans needs in accordance within these guidelines, Clark County Codes, and RCWs relating to Veterans Assistance to the Clark County Legislature.
3. To provide a venue by which each nationally recognized Veterans organization and Veterans from the community at large, that have registered with the County under Washington State RCW 73.08.101 to provide services to veterans, may request representation on the Clark County Veterans Advisory Board (with proof of service in the United States Armed Forces).
4. To promote awareness of the CCVAB and its purpose throughout Clark County.
5. To provide policy guidance and advice to Clark County regarding all services funded by the Veterans Assistance Fund.

Article II – Membership

Section 2.1 - Organization Requirements

1. Each nationally recognized Veterans' organization or Veteran from the community at large that has registered with the County under Washington State RCW 73.08.010. Veterans at large shall present a letter of **intent** and provide proof of service in the Armed Forces.
2. Service organizations and Veterans at large may be given full membership by majority vote of the Advisory Board.
3. No less than a majority of the board members shall be members from nationally recognized Veterans' service organizations and only Veterans are eligible to serve as board members.
4. The County Legislative authority may provide for reimbursement to board members for expenses incurred on behalf of the CCVAB.

Section 2.2 - Membership Qualification

1. **Members from Veterans Organizations:** In even numbered years, nationally recognized Veterans' organizations within Clark County shall renew their membership with a Letter of Intent showing a Primary and an Alternate representative and signed by the Commander (President) and the Adjutant (Secretary). A copy of the charter and nonprofit status from the Secretary of the State of Washington from the organization shall be provided as documentation and shall be maintained on file with the CCVAB. The Letter of Intent shall be presented to the CCVAB no later than 1 December. The CCVAB shall forward said Letter of Intent with appropriate documentation to Clark County Community Services, who will maintain a copy on file. There shall be no limitation on the number of years that an appointee from a Veterans organization may serve on the committee.

- 2 **Members At Large:** All veterans at large in the community who desire to serve on the CCVAB shall provide a Letter of Intent, proof of residency in Clark County and proof of service in the Armed Forces. Members at Large must be approved by a vote of the CCVAB membership. If approved, Members At Large will have full membership with voting rights and will serve until the end of the calendar year. Members At Large can be reappointed annually in December by a vote of the CCVAB. Members At Large do not have alternate representatives. There shall be no limitation on the number of years that a member at large may serve on the committee.

Section 2.3 – Termination

1. When a member of the CCVAB voluntarily removes his/her membership from the CCVAB the committee shall notify the representative organization by letter and that organization will have 30 days to submit a new Letter of Intent. Members at large who voluntarily remove themselves from membership shall submit a letter of resignation and CCVAB shall keep the document on file.
2. A member of the CCVAB may only be involuntarily terminated by a vote of the membership. This vote is final. In all cases involving involuntary termination, the CCVAB shall provide documentation showing cause, delineating the problem, and results of the review by the committee to the representative organization. The representative organization will have 30 days to submit a new Letter of Intent.
3. If a CCVAB organization has more than two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from CCVAB scheduled business meetings, this may be cause for termination from the committee until a new Letter of Intent is submitted appointing active member representative. The organization shall be notified of their termination from the VAB until a new LOI is submitted to Clark County.
4. If a CCVAB Member-at-Large has more than two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from CCVAB scheduled business meetings, this may be cause for termination from the committee. The member shall be notified of their termination from the VAB.

Section 2.4 - Alternate Membership

Each organization may appoint one (1) alternate member. Alternate Members who are appointed in accordance with Sections 2.1 and 2.2 shall be able to vote on issues only in the absence of the Primary member of the organization they are representing. The Alternate member shall be guided by sections of the CCVAB Bylaws.

Section 2.5 - Fees

There shall be no fees assessed for membership.

Article III – Voting

Section 3.1 - Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a minimum of one elected officer and five Primary and/or Alternate members of the CCVAB, including members at large, at an appropriately announced meeting.

Section 3.2 - Voting

Each member that has filed a Letter of Intent with the CCVAB shall have one vote. Alternate members shall have one vote in the absence of the Primary member. Any voting member who is a part of any proposal or entity presenting a proposal to the CCVAB for a decision shall abstain from voting. The Chair shall only vote if needed to break a deadlock. The Chair or any member may call for a roll call vote on any question.

Article IV – Officers

Section 4.1 - Officers

1. Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Clark County Veterans Advisory Board.
2. Vice Chair shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the Chair and assume all duties if the Chair is absent or has vacated the position.
3. Secretary shall address questions of the RCW, Codes, Bylaws and Policies and Procedures when appropriate. The Secretary will call attendance roll for meetings and roll call votes.

Section 4.2 Elections

Elections shall be conducted at the scheduled meeting in December. The nomination committee shall have no less than three (3) members on the committee; the Chair shall appoint the nominating committee chair, who shall select from the membership at least two (2) members to serve on this committee. The nomination committee shall seek nominations from the membership and present those nominations at the November meeting of the CCVAB. Nominations may be presented by any member from the floor on the day of elections.

Section 4.3 - Term of Office

The elected officers of the CCVAB shall assume duties and responsibilities on 1 January of each year. Members are allowed to serve up to three consecutive years in each position of Chair and Vice Chair. Members are eligible for reelection to either position after one year has elapsed.

Section 4.4 - Contract and Correspondence

Clark County shall review all contracts and no contract shall be entered into without the specific consent and guidance of the Clark County Community Services. Once a contract is approved by Clark County, the Chair and Vice Chair may sign any contract and/or agreement with approval of the membership. Two signatures are required on any contract or agreement. All outgoing correspondence from the CCVAB shall be signed by the Chair or the acting Chair.

Section 4.5 - Ascension

Should any of the elected officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary) resign or become unable to perform their required duties, the order of ascension to the Chair is the Vice Chair then it ascends to the Secretary. If the Vice Chair or Secretary is not available to perform the duties of the Chair, the membership represented by a quorum shall appoint another member.

Article V – Committees

Section 5.1 - Assignments

There shall be three (3) standing committees: Nominating Committee, Appeals Committee and Policy and Procedures Committee. The Chair of the CCVAB shall appoint the Committee Chairs and it will be the responsibility of the Committee Chair to select members of the committee, no less than three (3) members and to make appropriate reports to the membership on activities of the committee and resulting action. In the event that the Committee Chair is unable to retrieve enough members, the Chair of the CCVAB shall appoint the needed members. The Chair may appoint other special committees as necessary with a timeline for completion of the task and reporting.

Section 5.2 - Responsibilities

1. Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee shall submit a list of prospective candidates for offices in the month of November to the membership for elections in December.
2. Appeals Committee: A three (3) or five (5) member Appeals Committee shall respond within five (5) working days to all appeals from Veterans who have submitted their requests within fifteen (15) days of assistance denial. The appeals committee shall be prepared to hear all appeals and submit a resulting letter to the person appealing and a copy of report to the Service Officer for filing.
3. Policy and Procedures Committee: The committee shall meet annually to review Bylaws, Policies, Procedures, and shall present recommended changes to the membership for a final determination.

Article VI – Meetings

Section 6.1 - Regular Meetings

The CCVAB shall conduct a minimum of eleven (11) regular meetings within the fiscal year. Any member organization of the committee who has three (3) unexcused absences may be terminated from membership by a vote of the CCVAB and notification to the member's organization and/or agency will be forwarded. Reinstatement will comply with Section 2.4 - Termination.

Section 6.2 - Special Meetings

The Chair may call for Special Meetings to address specified issues. Any member of the CCVAB may request of the Chair a special meeting with appropriate justification and by a vote of the membership.

Article VII – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be 1 January through 31 December.

Article VIII – Amendments

The CCVAB Bylaws may be amended at any authorized meeting of the CCVAB. Copies of any proposed changes and/or amendments to these bylaws will be presented to the membership ten (10) days prior to any meeting wherein they will be adjudicated.

Article IX – Parliamentary Authority

The CCVAB shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order, newly revised, in all cases that are not covered by the bylaws.

Article X - Clark County Roles and Responsibilities for the CCVAB

Section 10.1 Fiscal Management

The County Department of Community Services acts as the fiscal agent for the Veterans Advisory Board and provides the following assistance:

Monthly Reimbursements: Process monthly reimbursements to the contracted agencies, including CSO, for the cost of assistance provided to veterans.

Oversight: Provide oversight to ensure accountability of funds. County will make a monthly review of the submitted invoices/checks from the subcontractors to determine if funds are appropriately spent.

Annual Review: Work with the County Auditor’s Office to schedule and perform an annual review of the Veterans Relief Fund.

Annual Budget: Develop an annual budget, and process budget adjustments through the Supplemental Appropriation hearing process.

Tracking and Reporting: Compile revenue and expenditure tracking and reporting: perform internal auditing of vouchers and other expenses for compliance with state law and fiscal agency policies and procedures.

Financial Statements: Provide fiscal information to the Veterans Advisory Board, as requested, but a minimum provide quarterly financial statements and annual financial reports.

Section 10.2 Administrative Support

The County Department of Community Services provides administrative assistance to the Veterans Advisory Board, including the following:

Contracting: Prepare contracts, reviewed by the Veterans Advisory Board, that allocate funds to assistance organizations awarded contracts through the County procurement process.

Monitoring: Provide subcontractor monitoring following the County’s risk assessment process. Ensure oversight and documentation of organizations that make assistance determinations and process costs charged to the Veterans Assistance Fund. Monitoring includes ensuring that direct service providers have standard performance practices in accordance with county code, state, and federal laws.

Planning: Assist the Veterans Advisory Board with evaluations regarding the effectiveness of programs.

Indirect costs: Incurred in the administration of the Veterans Fund as authorized by RCW 73.08.080.

*Bylaws last updated: **January 12, 2024. Approved by a vote of the Veterans Advisory Board.***

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL
FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE
VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND
OF CLARK COUNTY



Approved by Clark County Board of Commissioners Resolution No: 2004-12-15
December 14, 2004

Most recent amendment approved by Clark County April 4, 2023

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References: RCW 73.08 Veterans' Relief, Clark County Ordinance Title 2 Administration and Personnel, chapter 2.29 Veterans Assistance, Veterans Advisory Board By-laws.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Overview: This document has been developed to provide guidance for the use of the Clark County Veterans Assistance Fund (VAF). The VAF was developed to assist indigent Veterans and their families. The fund is managed in accordance with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 73.08 and Clark County Ordinance Title 2 Administration and Personnel Chapter 2.29 Veterans Assistance.

Assistance from the fund is provided through contracted service officers and community service organizations.

Contracting for the use of the VAF is the responsibility of Clark County through the Community Services Department with the advice of the Veterans Advisory Board. Clark County Council has statutory oversight for the use and expenditures of the fund. Financial assistance is based on funding availability and service officer determination of need.

- 1.2 Source of Funds: Washington State law and the Clark County code have established the Veterans Assistance Fund as a steady source of tax dollars to be utilized for the needs of indigent Veterans and their families. A portion of property tax collected in Clark County is earmarked for the VAF.

- 1.3 Clark County Veterans Advisory Board: The Clark County Veterans Advisory Board (VAB) is an advisory group appointed by the Clark County Council to serve the Veterans of Clark County. The board is made up of members of Veterans organizations within Clark County. The purpose of the Veterans Advisory Board is to serve and act in the best interest of all Veterans, in cooperation with Clark County and the State of Washington.

Members of the board are registered with the Clark County Auditor through a Veteran's service organization in October every year. The registration for the board is valid from January through December. Each organization shall appoint a primary and alternate member. Each organization shall have one vote on the board. Members at large may be appointed by a vote of the VAB.

- 1.4 Contracted Services: The County, with the advice of the VAB, selects contracted organizations through the County's procurement process. The County is responsible for all contracts issued through this process.

- 1.5 Service Administration: Eligible Veterans may receive assistance through contracted agencies/individuals. Assistance must be provided to needy individuals without discrimination. Agencies/Individuals agree to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, rules, and ordinances relating to nondiscrimination. Two types of services are provided:

- Direct emergency relief through a Veteran's service officer.
- Ongoing support and assistance through contracted agencies/individuals that provide community services for indigent people.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Use of Veterans Assistance Fund: Eligibility is required for any service provided through the VAF. Eligibility for use of the VAF is determined by the County Service Officer or contracted agency/individuals.
- 2.2 Service Requirements: "Veteran" includes all persons qualified under RCW 73.08.005. General discharge under honorable conditions will also be an allowable service type per HB 1806. Any Veteran who has been released because of a medical condition and any honorable discharge should be considered as having completed the term of service commitment or having completed his/her initial obligation. This includes National Guard and Reserve.
 - 2.2.1. Service Requirements for Housing Assistance: Service and discharge requirements for housing assistance shall follow eligibility requirements for the Federal Housing and Urban Development - Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program (HUD-VASH) established in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283).
- 2.3 Documentation of Veterans Status: Documentation includes DD-214, VA Statement of Service (SOS), or if discharged prior to 1950, a Certificate of Discharge. The County Service Officer or agency staff will assist the Veteran in completing a request to receive a certified copy of their DD-214 as necessary. Other forms of documentation include a valid VA identification card or a retired military ID card with a second form of ID; a HINQ (Hospital Inquiry) from the VA showing honorable discharge; or a Washington driver's license or ID showing Veteran status. Service providers may also verify veteran status through the Status Query and Response Exchange System (SQUARES).
- 2.4 Family Member: A family member of a Veteran is defined as a wife, husband, registered domestic partner, Veteran's minor children (under 18 years of age, or under 23 if they are a full-time student and the Veteran is the natural parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, a person who has signed an affidavit acknowledging paternity, or determination, finding, decree, or order for support by an agency of this or another state), widow, widower, or surviving domestic partner. In the case of a single parent, the Veteran shall show proof that they are the custodial parent or paying child support to claim a child as a dependent for assistance through this fund.
- 2.5 Domestic Partner: a domestic partner is defined at Title 26, Domestic Relations, of the Revised Code of Washington 2008 and Second Substitute House Bill 3104 (2008).
- 2.6 Indigence: Veterans are considered income eligible if they meet the following definition: Receiving an annual family income, after taxes, not to exceed two hundred percent (200%) of the current federally established poverty level. For housing or dental assistance, income shall not exceed 250% of poverty. Documentation to establish income may include but is not limited to copies of last month's check stubs, bank statements, and/or SSI determination letter, etc. Income excluded from the eligibility calculation is: pay received while deployed in a combat zone, hazardous duty pay/imminent danger, VA education benefits, student loans/educational loans, scholarships and Pell grants.
- 2.7 Washington State Residency: Veterans or families of deceased Veterans must show proof of residency in the State of Washington, for at least 12 consecutive months preceding the

date of application for relief. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, Washington Drivers license, ID card, utility or other bills, copies of applications for public assistance, rental agreements, or bank statements.

The Clark County Veterans Assistance Fund may waive the residency requirement for those Veterans who have been accepted into a permanent rental subsidy program or who are qualified as a “covered individual” under the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 by meeting the following criteria: currently domiciled in Clark County, Washington State; has enrolled in a Washington state college or university within three years of discharge from an active duty service period of 90 days or more; and using the GI bill benefits at a Washington state college or university.

- 2.8 County Residency: Applicants must reside in Clark County or show proof of moving into Clark County at the date of application. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, Washington Drivers License, ID card, utility or other bills, copies of applications for public assistance, rental agreements or bank statements and home of record.
- 2.9 Falsification: Any person receiving assistance through the VAF, and found to have falsified any information or not disclosed all income for purposes of receiving assistance from the VAF, shall become ineligible for any assistance based on their current application for four years, and can be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. If a Veteran has been found to utilize the assistance in a manner it was not intended, this will also constitute falsification. If a Veteran does not repay the money that was received from the VAF under false pretenses, he or she will not be able to receive any additional assistance from the fund. HOWEVER, if restitution is completed the Veteran may be eligible to apply for reinstatement.
- 2.10 Any applicant whose behavior is belligerent or appears threatening in any way to the County Service Officer, other staff, or others in the vicinity of the Veteran's Assistance Office may be denied service.

3. DIRECT EMERGENCY RELIEF (through County Service Officer)

- 3.1 Overview: Clark County utilizes a contracted County Service Officer (CSO) as one method to assist eligible Veterans. The County Service Officer has access to information regarding community resources, and the Veterans Administration. The CSO is charged with assisting the Veteran respectfully and in a timely manner.
- 3.2 Method of Payment: Emergency Assistance is to be provided through a check payable directly to vendors/landlords/service agencies on behalf of the Veteran. Checks/vouchers are issued within two business days of eligibility determination.
- 3.3. Documentation of Costs: Costs will be documented by invoice, purchase order, quote, or bill.
- 3.4. Housing Assistance: Payment limited to one month's rent (either 3.4.2 or 3.4.3) or one security deposit as stated in 3.4.5 in a 12 consecutive month period. Security deposits as listed in 3.4.5, for a Veteran in a permanent rental assistance program are not included in this limitation. Additionally, up to \$1,200 in a 12-month period is available to assist a Veteran household in attaining or maintaining housing; other than rent assistance.

- 3.4.1 Rental Agreement: Veteran must have a document stating rental agreement with the property owner, property management firm, or lease holder. If the landlord is not the leaseholder, Veteran must provide documentation from the property owner showing permission to sublet.
- 3.4.2 First Month's Rent: Qualified Veteran can be assisted with first month's rent, but deposits are not allowed except as stated in 3.4.5.
- 3.4.3 Eviction Prevention: Qualified Veteran can be assisted with one month's rent. Veteran must show proof of imminent danger of eviction including but not limited to an eviction notice or notice to vacate. If more than one month's rent is owed, Veteran must provide documentation that property owner, property management firm or lease holder will not evict Veteran for 30 days if only one month's rent is paid, including late fees and utilities.
- 3.4.4 Rent Limit: The maximum monthly rental assistance may not exceed 130% of the current Clark County HUD Fair Market Rent (Attachment A). Rental assistance will only be provided for the number of bedrooms that are appropriate for the household size.
- 3.4.5 Security Deposit: Security deposits may only be paid for a qualified Veteran who has been accepted into a permanent rental subsidy program (for example, VASH or Housing Choice). Proof of enrollment in a long-term rental assistance program must be provided. The security deposit/rental agreement shall meet the requirements at RCW 59.18.260. The security deposit paid cannot exceed the amount equal to one month's fair market rent.
- 3.4.6 Application Fees: The cost of two rental application fees in a 12-month period may be covered to assist a Veteran household in accessing permanent housing.
- 3.4.7 Mortgage Assistance: Payment limited to one month's mortgage payment (up to 130% of FMR) in a 12-month period if Veteran can demonstrate ability to maintain their housing. Veteran cannot be more than two months in arrears.
- 3.4.8 Shared Dwelling: In case of Veteran sharing a dwelling with another person (not a family member as described in Section 2.4) the housing assistance will be prorated by the number of people living in the housing.
- 3.5 Utility Assistance: Veteran may receive up to \$1,000 per 12-month period to be used for payments of utilities. Veteran must show evidence of denial of assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) between November 15 and March 15. Assistance may include late fees.
 - 3.5.1 Utilities Notice: Veteran must have a disconnect or final notice from a utility company in his or her name.
 - 3.5.2 Alternative Heating Methods: In the case of wood, coal, propane or heating oil, a voucher can be issued for up to the maximum of \$1,000 per 12-month period.
 - 3.5.3 Shared Dwelling: In the case of Veteran sharing a dwelling with another person (not a family member as described in section 2.4) the utility assistance costs will be

prorated by the number of people living in the house and must be in the Veteran's name.

- 3.6 Food Assistance: Food assistance will be provided in the form of a voucher and no alcohol, tobacco or games of chance products may be purchased. Personal hygiene items and household cleaning products, as well as the purchase of pet food for certified service animals are allowable. Food assistance is based on family size. Veteran may receive the following amount per 12-month period:

Single person	\$300
Two-person family	\$400
Three-person family	\$450
Four or more people	\$600

- 3.7 Transportation Assistance: Veteran must show that the transportation assistance is necessary to seek work, attend medical appointments, maintain employment, look for housing or attend school. Veterans have access to free C-Tran Heroes passes. Gas vouchers are available to Veterans whose circumstances require it. A voucher may be provided in the amount of \$25 per eligible, documented appointment, up to \$100. Assistance may be provided up to six times per year.

3.7.1 Gasoline: Veteran must show proof of Washington State registration in Veteran's name, state-required insurance, and a valid Washington State operator's license and/or endorsement.

- 3.8 Prescription Coverage: Veteran may receive up to \$600 per 12-month period to be used for doctor prescribed, medically necessary medication. Prescriptions must be prescribed through the VA if Veteran is eligible for VA services. Exclusions to the Prescription Coverage include:

- Biological sera, blood or blood plasma;
- Prescription medications used for cosmetic purposes, including, but not limited to removal, inhibition or stimulation of hair growth; retardation of aging; or repair of sun-damaged skin;
- Growth hormones;
- Prescription medications used to inhibit and/or suppress drowsiness, sleepiness, tiredness or exhaustion;
- Insulin pumps and pump administration supplies;
- Prescription medications dispensed in connection with participation in a clinical trial;
- Prescription medications for smoking cessation;
- Prescription for over-the-counter medications;
- Prescription medications for treatment of infertility; and
- Prescription medications for erectile dysfunction.

- 3.9 Burial or Cremation Assistance: Families of qualified Veterans may receive up to \$2,000 to assist with the costs of burial or cremation of the Veteran. The Veterans Assistance Fund can be used to supplement the cost of the burial or cremation only for indigent Veterans. Any military discharge status will be eligible for this type of emergency relief only.

- 3.10 Work Related Assistance: Purchase of clothing and/or tools necessary for a Veteran to become or remain employed not to exceed \$800 per 12-month period. Assistance may

also be used for licensing or for state-issued identification (does not have to be work-related).

3.11 Other Assistance Types: Veterans may receive the following assistance not covered under the above sections.

3.11.1 Auto Repair: Repair or parts necessary for the Veteran to seek work or housing, attend medical appointments or school, or maintain employment. Veteran must show proof of Washington State registration in Veteran's name, state-required insurance, and a valid Washington State operator's license and/or endorsement. Up to \$2,000 per 12-month period. Auto repair assistance is only available from a licensed mechanic. Assistance will only cover repairs necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle, as certified by a licensed mechanic.

3.11.2 Dental Care: Assistance to address the Veteran's urgent dental needs as recommended by the Free Clinic of SW Washington dentist. Assistance is limited to urgent care provided by the Free Clinic only and excludes cosmetic dental procedures.

3.11.3 Storage: Assistance to address a Veteran's storage fees for personal property to prevent auction and loss of items. Up to \$750 per 12-month period to cover costs of past due storage rental and associated fees. Veteran must have a notice stating property will be sold or auctioned.

3.11.4 Communication: Assistance of up to \$200 in a 12-month period for a Veterans' communication needs (phone, internet), only if circumstances require it.

3.11.5 Textbooks: Assistance of up to \$500 in a 12-month period for textbooks required for Veteran's college, university or approved trade school in Washington State.

3.12 Emergency Declarations: During a state or federal declaration of emergency, certain policy requirements (e.g., eviction notices, shut off notices) may be waived for Veterans who otherwise are eligible. Assistance of any type may be extended up to 6 months during an emergency declaration. Assistance may be further extended if requested by the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center and approved by the Veterans Advisory Board and Clark County finance staff.

4. COUNTY SERVICE OFFICER

4.1 General: The County Service Officer (CSO) must be a Veteran. The CSO is hired under contract with a qualified Veterans service or state recognized organization that provides relief and services and support to area Veterans. The CSO is responsible for determining eligibility and issuing vouchers/checks for emergency assistance.

4.2 Screening: The CSO shall screen each applicant to determine eligibility and degree of need based on the eligibility and limits of assistance described in this document. The screening/application form shall be developed by Clark County with the cooperation of the County Service Officer.

- 4.3 Community Resources: The CSO will make every effort to collaborate and coordinate with other community services such as food banks, shelters, Veterans Service organizations, state-funded services, and services at the Veterans Administration.
- 4.4 Reporting: The CSO shall maintain all records for each Veteran who applies for services. Information shall include name, social security number, address, eligibility documentation, amount and use of relief funds. All records must be kept for a minimum of five years.
- 4.5 Case Management: When a Veteran household has received \$1,000 of assistance in a 12-month period (not including housing or auto repair), the Veteran will be required to create a plan for self-sufficiency and make progress toward goals outlined in their plan before receiving additional assistance. This fund is intended for emergency relief only.

5. APPEAL PROCESS

- 5.1 Filing an Appeal: The Veterans Advisory Board is responsible for hearing any appeal or dispute of County Service Officer's decision. The Service Officer shall determine if each application complies with the Clark County Code and Policies and Procedures for the Veterans Assistance Fund. Appeals to county code (Veteran status, residency requirements or income limits) cannot be considered. Any appeals or disputes of the CSO's decision must be made within 15 business days of the decision. Appeals shall be made in writing, include all supporting documentation, and be mailed to:

Veterans Advisory Board (Appeals)
c/o Veterans Program Coordinator
Clark County Community Services
PO Box 5000
Vancouver, WA 98666-5000

- 5.2 Determination: A written determination as to the outcome of the appeal will be forwarded to the Veteran within 15 business days of receipt. All committee decisions on such appeals will be final. All copies of appeals and determination must be sent to the County Department of Community Services. The decision of the Veterans Advisory Appeals Committee will be communicated to the appellant within seven business days of Appeals Committee action. (Appeal Form)
- 5.3 Due Process: Section 5.1 and 5.2 in no way limit an applicant's constitutional right of Due Process of Law. If an applicant desires to continue their appeal beyond the Veterans Advisory Board, they have every right to pursue legal action within the judicial system; however, the venue shall be Clark County.

Attachment A

Housing Assistance

Unit Size	Number of Bedrooms						
	Studio	1	2	3	4	5	6
130% Fair Market Rent (2023)	\$1,950	\$2,093	\$2,390	\$3,346	\$3,893	\$4,477	\$5,060

2023 HHS Poverty Guidelines for Clark County Annual Income by Household Size

Persons in Household	200 Percent of Poverty		250 Percent of Poverty	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
1	\$29,160	\$2,430	\$36,450	\$3,038
2	\$39,440	\$3,287	\$49,300	\$4,108
3	\$49,720	\$4,143	\$62,150	\$5,179
4	\$60,000	\$5,000	\$75,000	\$6,250
5	\$70,280	\$5,857	\$87,850	\$7,321
6	\$80,560	\$6,713	\$100,700	\$8,392
7	\$90,840	\$7,570	\$113,550	\$9,463
8	\$101,120	\$8,427	\$126,400	\$10,533
For each additional, add:	\$10,280	\$857	\$12,850	\$1,071

Source: Federal Register. January 19, 2023

**Clark County Veterans Assistance Fund
Request for Appeal**

Date: _____

Submit Appeal to:

Veterans Advisory Board (Appeals)
c/o Clark County Department of Community Services
PO Box 5000
Vancouver, WA 98666
Fax 360.759.6725
Email: vetfund@ccvac.net

Method: ☐ mail ☐ fax ☐ e-mail ☐ hand-deliver

Veteran/Client Statement – Please describe the decision being appealed (attach additional information if necessary):

County Veteran's Assistance Officer Statement – Please describe the specific reason(s) including referencing sections of the Veterans Assistance Fund Policies and Procedures for which you have denied services (attach additional information if necessary):

Veteran Advisory Board Appeals Committee Statement – Please describe the specific reason(s) for either denying or approving the Veteran/client appeal and any follow-up action to be taken (attach additional information if necessary):

Decision: ☐ approved ☐ denied

Date: _____ Reviewer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date Veteran Notified: _____ Check Number: _____ Amount: _____

County Service Officer: Determines eligibility, provides Veteran with appeal form, forwards appeal to county and Committee. **County:** Tracks appeal **Appeals Committee:** Forwards decision to County and CSO.

Chapter 73.08 RCW

VETERANS' RELIEF

Sections

73.08.005	Definitions.
73.08.010	County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families—Requirements.
73.08.035	Veterans' advisory boards.
73.08.070	County burial of indigent deceased veterans.
73.08.080	Tax levy authorized.
73.08.090	Public assistance eligibility.

NOTES:

Soldiers' and veterans' homes and veterans' cemetery: Chapter 72.36 RCW.

Soldiers' home: State Constitution Art. 10 § 3.

73.08.005

Definitions.

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

- (1) "Direct costs" includes those allowable costs that can be readily assigned to the statutory objectives of this chapter, consistent with the cost principles promulgated by the federal office of management and budget in circular No. A-87, dated May 10, 2004.
- (2) "Family" means the spouse or domestic partner, surviving spouse, surviving domestic partner, and dependent children of a living or deceased veteran, or a servicemember who was killed in the line of duty regardless of the number of days served.
- (3) "Indigent" means a person who is defined as such by the county legislative authority using one or more of the following definitions:
 - (a) Receiving one of the following types of public assistance: Temporary assistance for needy families, aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits, pregnant women assistance benefits, poverty-related veterans' benefits, food stamps or food stamp benefits transferred electronically, refugee resettlement benefits, medicaid, medical care services, or supplemental security income;
 - (b) Receiving an annual income, after taxes, of up to one hundred fifty percent or less of the current federally established poverty level, or receiving an annual income not exceeding a higher qualifying income established by the county legislative authority; or
 - (c) Unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities, and transportation because his or her available funds are insufficient.
- (4) "Indirect costs" includes those allowable costs that are generally associated with carrying out the statutory objectives of this chapter, but the identification and tracking of those costs cannot be readily assigned to a specific statutory objective without an accounting effort that is disproportionate to the benefit received. A county legislative authority may allocate allowable indirect costs to its veterans' assistance fund if it is accomplished in a manner consistent with the cost principles promulgated by the federal office of management and budget in circular No. A-87, dated May 10, 2004.
- (5)(a) "Veteran" means:
 - (i) A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service; a member of the women's air forces service pilots during World War II; a United States documented merchant mariner with service aboard an oceangoing vessel operated by the war shipping administration; the office of defense transportation, or their agents, from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946; or a civil service crewmember with service aboard a United States army transport service or United States naval transportation service vessel in oceangoing service from December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946, who meets one of the following criteria:
 - (A) Served on active duty for at least one hundred eighty days and who was released with an honorable discharge;
 - (B) Received an honorable or general under honorable characterization of service with a medical reason for separation for a condition listed as non-existed prior to service, regardless of number of days served; or
 - (C) Received an honorable discharge and has received a rating for a service connected disability from the United States department of veterans affairs regardless of number of days served;
 - (ii) A current member honorably serving in the armed forces reserve or national guard who has been activated by presidential call up for purposes other than training;
 - (iii) A former member of the armed forces reserve or national guard who has fulfilled his or her initial military service obligation and was released with an honorable discharge;
 - (iv) A former member of the armed forces reserve or national guard who does not have over one hundred seventy-nine days of active duty service, but meets the federal definition of a veteran having completed twenty years of service.
- (b) At the discretion of the county legislative authority and in consultation with the veterans' advisory board, counties may expand eligibility for the veterans assistance fund as the county determines necessary, which may include serving veterans with additional discharge characterizations.
- (6) "Veterans' advisory board" means a board established by a county legislative authority under the authority of RCW 73.08.035.
- (7) "Veterans' assistance fund" means an account in the custody of the county auditor, or the chief financial officer in a county operating under a charter, that is funded by taxes levied under the authority of RCW 73.08.080.

(8) "Veterans' assistance program" means a program approved by the county legislative authority under the authority of RCW **73.08.010** that is fully or partially funded by the veterans' assistance fund authorized by RCW **73.08.080**.

[**2017 c 185 § 9**; **2016 c 76 § 1**; **2013 c 42 § 2**; **2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 17**; **2010 1st sp.s. c 8 § 17**; **2009 c 35 § 1**; **2008 c 6 § 502**; **2005 c 250 § 2**.]

NOTES:

Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: See RCW **74.62.005**.

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW **74.62.005**.

Findings—Intent—Short title—Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 8: See notes following RCW **74.04.225**.

Part headings not law—Severability—2008 c 6: See RCW **26.60.900** and **26.60.901**.

Intent—2005 c 250: "(1) It is the intent of the legislature that each county establish a veterans' assistance program to benefit indigent veterans and their families. These programs must be funded, at least in part, by veterans' assistance funds. The legislature intends also for each county to establish a veterans' advisory board responsible for advising the county legislative authority on needed and appropriate assistance programs for local indigent veterans and their families. Recognizing the valuable insight and perspectives that veterans offer, it is the intent of the legislature that each board be comprised entirely of veterans.

(2) The legislature recognizes that ongoing veterans' relief or assistance programs in some areas of the state have provided meaningful assistance to indigent veterans and family members. The legislature further recognizes that veterans' service organizations have traditionally been the initial point of contact for indigent veterans and family members seeking assistance. In recognition of these factors, the legislature intends to authorize, upon the satisfaction of certain administrative requirements, existing veterans' relief or assistance programs to continue providing needed and effective assistance to indigent veterans and their families.

(3) The legislature recognizes that counties respond to the needs of indigent veterans and family members in the manner most appropriate to the needs and resources of the county. The legislature intends for the provisions of this act to facilitate the effective use of assistance funds through efficient model programs that benefit veterans and family members experiencing financial hardships.

(4) It is the policy of the state of Washington that bias shall not play a role in the distribution of the veterans' assistance fund." [**2005 c 250 § 1**.]

73.08.010

County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families—Requirements.

(1) For the relief of indigent veterans, their families, and the families of deceased indigent veterans, the legislative authority of each county shall establish a veterans' assistance program to address the needs of local indigent veterans and their families. The county legislative authority shall consult with and solicit recommendations from the veterans' advisory board established under RCW **73.08.035** to determine the appropriate services needed for local indigent veterans. Veterans' assistance programs shall be funded, at least in part, by the veterans' assistance fund created under the authority of RCW **73.08.080**.

(2) The county legislative authority may authorize other entities to administer a veterans' assistance program or programs through grants, contracts, or interlocal agreements. If the county legislative authority authorizes another entity to administer a veterans' assistance program or programs, the terms of the grant, contract, or interlocal agreement must, for each program, specify:

- (a) The details of the program;
- (b) The responsibilities of all parties;
- (c) The duration of the program;
- (d) The costs and sources of funding;
- (e) Any insurance or bond requirements;
- (f) The format and frequency of progress and final reports; and
- (g) Any other information deemed necessary or appropriate by either party.

(3) If the county legislative authority authorizes another entity to administer a veterans' assistance program or programs, the authorized entity should, to the extent feasible and consistent with this chapter, ensure that a local branch of a nationally recognized veterans' service organization is the initial point of contact for a veteran or family member seeking assistance.

(4) Nothing in this section shall prohibit or be construed as prohibiting a county from authorizing the continued operation of a veterans' relief or assistance program or programs existing on January 1, 2005, if the authorizing legislative authority:

- (a) Solicits advice from the veterans' advisory board established in RCW **73.08.035**; and
- (b) Satisfies the grant, contractual, or interlocal agreement requirements of subsection (2) of this section.

[**2005 c 250 § 3**; **2002 c 292 § 7**; **1983 c 295 § 1**; **1947 c 180 § 1**; **1945 c 144 § 1**; **1921 c 41 § 1**; **1919 c 83 § 1**; **1907 c 64 § 1**; **1893 c 37 § 1**; **1888 p 208 § 1**; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 10737. Cf. **1935 c 38 § 1**.]

NOTES:

Intent—2005 c 250: See note following RCW **73.08.005**.

73.08.035

Veterans' advisory boards.

(1) The legislative authority for each county must establish a veterans' advisory board. Upon its establishment, the board shall advise the county legislative authority on the needs of local indigent veterans, the resources available to local indigent veterans, and programs that could benefit the needs of local indigent veterans and their families.

(2) The county legislative authority must solicit representatives from either local branches of nationally recognized veterans' service organizations or the veterans' community at large, or both, to serve on the board. No fewer than a majority of the board members shall be members from nationally recognized veterans' service organizations and only veterans are eligible to serve as board members.

(3) Service on the board is voluntary. The county legislative authority may provide for reimbursement to board members for expenses incurred.

[2005 c 250 § 4.]

NOTES:

Intent—2005 c 250: See note following RCW 73.08.005.

73.08.070

County burial of indigent deceased veterans.

(1) The legislative authority for each county must designate a proper authority to be responsible, at the expense of the county, for the burial or cremation of any deceased indigent veteran or deceased family member of an indigent veteran who died without leaving means sufficient to defray funeral expenses. The costs of such a burial or cremation may not exceed the limit established by the county legislative authority nor be less than three hundred dollars.

(2) If the deceased has relatives or friends who desire to conduct the burial or cremation of such deceased person, then a sum not to exceed the limit established by the county legislative authority nor less than three hundred dollars shall be paid to the relatives or friends by the county auditor, or by the chief financial officer in a county operating under a charter. Payment shall be made to the relatives or friends upon presenting to the auditor or chief financial officer due proof of the death, burial or cremation, and expenses incurred.

(3) Expenses incurred for the burial or cremation of a deceased indigent veteran or the deceased family member of an indigent veteran as provided by this section shall be paid from the veterans' assistance fund authorized by RCW 73.08.080.

[2005 c 250 § 5; 2002 c 292 § 9; 1997 c 286 § 1; 1983 c 295 § 5; 1949 c 15 § 1; 1947 c 180 § 6; 1945 c 144 § 6; 1921 c 41 § 6; 1919 c 83 § 6; 1917 c 42 § 1; 1907 c 64 § 6; 1899 c 99 § 1; 1888 p 209 § 6; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 10757. Formerly RCW 73.24.010.]

NOTES:

Intent—2005 c 250: See note following RCW 73.08.005.

Counties, disposal of remains of indigent persons: RCW 36.39.030.

73.08.080

Tax levy authorized.

(1) The legislative authority in each county must levy, in addition to the taxes now levied by law, a tax in a sum equal to the amount which would be raised by not less than one and one-eighth cents per thousand dollars of assessed value, and not greater than twenty-seven cents per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property of their respective counties, to be levied and collected as now prescribed by law for the assessment and collection of taxes, for the purpose of creating a veterans' assistance fund. Expenditures from the veterans' assistance fund, and interest earned on balances from the fund, may be used only for:

(a) The veterans' assistance programs authorized by RCW 73.08.010;

(b) The burial or cremation of a deceased indigent veteran or deceased family member of an indigent veteran as authorized by RCW 73.08.070; and

(c) The direct and indirect costs incurred in the administration of the fund as authorized by subsection (2) of this section.

(2) If the funds on deposit in the veterans' assistance fund, less outstanding warrants, on the first Tuesday in September exceed the lesser of the expected yield of one and one-eighth cents per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property of the county or

the expected yield of a levy determined as set forth in subsection (5) of this section, the county legislative authority may levy a lesser amount than would otherwise be required under subsection (1) or (5) of this section.

(3) The direct and indirect costs incurred in the administration of the veterans' assistance fund must be computed by the county auditor, or the chief financial officer in a county operating under a charter, not less than annually. Following the computation of these direct and indirect costs, an amount equal to these costs may then be transferred from the veterans' assistance fund to the county current expense fund.

(4) The amount of a levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may be reduced in the same proportion as the regular property tax levy of the county is reduced by chapter 84.55 RCW.

(5)(a) The amount of a levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may be modified from the amount required by subsection (1) of this section as follows:

(i) If the certified levy is reduced from the preceding year's certified levy, the amount of the levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may be reduced by no more than the same percentage as the certified levy is reduced from the preceding year's certified levy;

(ii) If the certified levy is increased from the preceding year's certified levy, the amount of the levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section may not be less than the base allocation increased by the same percentage as the certified levy is increased from the preceding year's certified levy. However, the amount of the levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section does not have to be increased under this subsection (5)(a)(ii) for the portion of a certified levy increase resulting from a voter-approved increase under RCW 84.55.050 that is dedicated to a specific purpose; or

(iii) If the certified levy is unchanged from the preceding year's certified levy, the amount of the levy allocated to the purposes specified in this section must be equal to or greater than the base allocation.

(b) For purposes of this subsection, the following definitions apply:

(i) "Base allocation" means the most recent allocation that was not reduced under subsection (2) of this section.

(ii) "Certified levy" means the property tax levy for general county purposes certified to the county assessor as required by RCW 84.52.070, excluding any amounts certified under chapters 84.69 and 84.68 RCW.

(6) Subsections (2), (4), and (5) of this section do not preclude a county from increasing the levy amount in subsection (1) of this section to an amount that is greater than the change in the regular county levy.

[2013 c 123 § 2; 2005 c 250 § 6; 1985 c 181 § 2; 1983 c 295 § 6; 1980 c 155 § 6; 1973 2nd ex.s. c 4 § 5; 1973 1st ex.s. c 195 § 86; 1970 ex.s. c 47 § 9; 1969 c 57 § 1; 1945 c 144 § 7; 1921 c 41 § 7; 1919 c 83 § 7; 1907 c 64 § 7; 1893 c 37 § 2; 1888 p 210 § 7; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10742. Formerly RCW 73.08.020.]

NOTES:

Intent—2005 c 250: See note following RCW 73.08.005.

Effective date—Applicability—1980 c 155: See note following RCW 84.40.030.

Emergency—Effective dates—1973 2nd ex.s. c 4: See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

Severability—Effective dates and termination dates—Construction—1973 1st ex.s. c 195: See notes following RCW 84.52.043.

73.08.090

Public assistance eligibility.

The department of social and health services shall exempt payments provided under RCW 73.08.005, 73.08.035, 73.08.010, 73.08.070, and 73.08.080 when determining eligibility for public assistance.

[2005 c 250 § 7.]

NOTES:

Intent—2005 c 250: See note following RCW 73.08.005.

Chapter 2.29 VETERANS' ASSISTANCE

Sections:

- 2.29.010 Veterans' organizations to provide relief—Registration.
- 2.29.020 Reporting.
- 2.29.025 Clark County veterans' advisory board.
- 2.29.030 Performance bond. (REPEALED)
- 2.29.031 County service officer.
- 2.29.035 Contracting for services.
- 2.29.040 Veterans' assistance administration.
- 2.29.050 Eligibility for veterans' assistance.
- 2.29.060 Burial or cremation assistance.
- 2.29.070 Limitations on relief benefits.
- 2.29.080 Rule 4: Applications for assistance and warrants.
- 2.29.085 Screening of applicants.
- 2.29.090 Rule 6: Payment of rental of meeting place. (REPEALED)

2.29.010 Veterans' organizations to provide relief—Registration.

Each nationally recognized veterans' organization in Clark County wishing to provide assistance to indigent veterans shall register with the Clark County community services and the Clark County veterans' advisory board (CCVAB) during October of each year, and shall provide a copy of the organization's charter and a letter of appointment which will provide the name and signatures of the commander/president and adjutant/secretary authenticating said submission. Each organization so registered or the veterans' community at large will be offered membership in the Clark County veterans' advisory board. The filing required by this section shall be valid only until December of the following year. The CCVAB shall maintain a copy of the member organization charter and signatures on file. (Sec. 2, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 1, Res. 1981-11-78; amended by Sec. 1, Res. 1981-12-107; amended by Sec. 2 of Res. 1983-07-44; amended by Sec. 1 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2006-08-07; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2014-10-04)

2.29.020 Reporting.

Clark County department of community services shall maintain detailed records of the amount of veteran assistance furnished during the preceding year, and the names of all persons to whom such relief has been furnished, together with a brief statement of the basis for assistance and shall provide appropriate reports as requested by the veterans' advisory board and member veterans' organizations and/or other approved agencies of Clark County. (Sec. 3, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 2 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 2014-10-04)

2.29.025 Clark County veterans' advisory board.

The Clark County veterans' advisory board shall consist of appointed or elected representatives of nationally recognized veterans' organizations that have registered with the veterans' advisory board in accordance with Section 2.29.010. The county legislative authority may provide for reimbursement to board members for expenses incurred. The Clark County veterans' advisory board shall act as an advisory group to Clark County in all matters regarding veterans' relief and/or other assistance approved by the CCVAB. The CCVAB may enter into contracts with the county, or other agencies, to provide for administration of the Veterans' Assistance Fund as

authorized by Chapter 73.08 RCW. (Sec. 2, Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 3 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 2006-08-07; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2016-08-01)

2.29.030 Performance bond.

(Sec. 4, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 3 of Res. 1991-05-01; repealed by Sec. 3 of Ord. 1997-05-17)

2.29.031 County service officer.

Clark County, in conjunction with the Clark County veterans' advisory board, shall provide for administration of veterans' assistance, and will provide and appoint an individual to act as the county service officer. The county service officer shall be responsible to Clark County and CCVAB for determining and certifying veteran eligibility, insuring compliance with the rules governing assistance as required by Section 2.29.040 up to and including Section 2.29.085. The county service officer shall also provide for issuance of vouchers and daily administration of the assistance fund. (Sec. 3, Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 4 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 3 of Ord. 2014-10-04. Formerly 2.29.030A)

2.29.035 Contracting for services.

Clark County, or other agencies under contract with the Clark County veterans' advisory board to provide for the administration of veterans' assistance or veterans' support programs, shall be authorized to enter into contracts with other individuals, organizations and agencies to provide for services for qualified veterans at the request of the Clark County veterans' advisory board; provided, the contract is in compliance with Chapter 73.08 RCW, the Clark County Code, and the contract between the Clark County veterans' advisory board and the agency providing services. The amount of the contract shall be limited to the amount recommended by the Clark County veterans' advisory board and approved by Clark County. All proposals from individuals, agencies and/or organizations desiring to support veterans shall be heard, reviewed by the CCVAB with their recommendations forwarded to Clark County. (Sec. 4, Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 5 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 4 of Ord. 2014-10-04)

2.29.040 Veterans' assistance administration.

The regulations set out in Sections 2.29.050 through 2.29.085 are adopted and are to be controlling in the administration of the operational functioning of furnishing assistance through appropriate agencies approved by Clark County and the Clark County veterans' advisory board. (Sec. 5, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 5 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 6 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 5 of Ord. 2014-10-04; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 2016-08-01)

2.29.050 Eligibility for veterans' assistance.

- (1) No veteran or member of his/her family shall be entitled to receive veterans' assistance unless they and/or their family have been legal residents of the state of Washington for not less than twelve (12) months immediately prior to the application for assistance. Proof of residence qualifications must be made to the satisfaction of the county service officer responsible for providing veterans' assistance and applicants are required to furnish reasonable proof in support thereof. The Clark County veterans' assistance fund may waive the residency requirement for those veterans who have been accepted into a federally assisted HUD-VASH permanent rental subsidy program or who are qualified as a "covered individual" under the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 by meeting the following criteria: currently domiciled in Clark County, Washington State; have enrolled in a Washington State college or university within three (3) years of discharge from

an active duty service period of ninety (90) days or more; and using the GI Bill benefits at a Washington State college or university.

- (2) The applicant shall furnish documentary evidence showing that the applicant meets the definition of “veteran” as defined in RCW 73.08.005, including a veteran who has received a general discharge under honorable conditions or has received a medical or physical discharge with an honorable record.
- (3) Proof that the veteran’s and/or their family’s income does not exceed one hundred fifty (150) percent of the current federally established poverty level for Washington State adjusted for family size. For urgent dental care and housing assistance only, a veteran’s income may not exceed two hundred (200) percent of the federal poverty level.
- (4) For the limited purpose of veterans utilizing a center that provides referral and other information, chaplain services, and social interaction, “indigency” shall include those who affirm they are unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities and transportation because their available funds are insufficient. (Sec. 6, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 4 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 6 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 7 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2008-11-19; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2011-01-22; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2013-07-10; amended by Sec. 7 of Ord. 2014-10-04; amended by Sec. 3 of Ord. 2016-08-01; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2017-12-19; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 2018-06-07)

2.29.060 Burial or cremation assistance.

Burial or cremation assistance through the veterans’ assistance fund shall only be available after death benefits have been paid by any other agency. Such assistance includes, but is not limited to: the Veterans’ Administration, Department of Social Security, fraternal union, personal insurance, or resources in the deceased’s estate used to defray the cost of burial or cremation. Burial or cremation benefits shall be available to eligible veterans and limited to the amount according to the veterans’ assistance fund policies and procedures. (Sec. 7, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 5 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 7 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 8 of Ord. 2004-07-12; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 2008-11-19)

2.29.070 Limitations on relief benefits.

Limitations on assistance shall be prescribed in the Clark County Policies and Procedures Manual for Veterans’ Assistance Fund and shall be reviewed annually by the CCVAB and the recommended changes shall be forwarded to Clark County for approval. (Sec. 8, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 6 of Ord. 1983-06-33; amended by Sec. 6 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 9 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 8 of Ord. 2014-10-04)

2.29.080 Rule 4: Applications for assistance and warrants.

- (1) No applications for assistance will be honored or warrants issued except to cover emergency need. Each application for assistance shall be signed by the applicant that the application is for emergency need and not to supplement any other pensions, insurance compensation, or public assistance received by the veteran or his family.
- (2) The county service officer is authorized to refuse to approve an application for assistance for any purpose where it has been determined after investigation that the person is not entitled to assistance for any of the following reasons:

- (a) Having remained on homeless prevention assistance for three (3) or more consecutive years;
- (b) Misrepresentation in applying for assistance; or
- (c) Having received assistance from more than one (1) county, veterans' post or organization in a single year. (Sec. 9, Res. 1979-01-78; amended by Sec. 2 of Ord. 1983-06-33; amended by Sec. 7 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 9 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 9 of Ord. 2014-10-04; amended by Sec. 4 of Ord. 2016-08-01)

2.29.085 Screening of applicants.

- (1) The county service officer shall screen each applicant applying for assistance to determine if such person is qualified for assistance pursuant to the requirements and restrictions of this chapter and the Policies and Procedures Manual for Veterans' Assistance Fund.
- (2) The county service officer shall determine if each application and voucher are in compliance with the funding limitations outlined in this chapter and the Policies and Procedures Manual for Veterans' Assistance Fund.
- (3) Individuals applying for benefits and subsequently denied the same by the county service officer may appeal such decision, or request a waiver of other than state regulated requirements, by applying in writing, with all supporting documentation, to the Clark County veterans' advisory board appeals committee. Said committee's decision on all appeals, or requests for waivers, will be final. (Sec. 3 of Res. 1981-11-78; amended by Sec. 4 of Ord. 1983-06-33; amended by Sec. 8 of Res. 1991-05-01; amended by Sec. 10 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 10 of Ord. 1997-05-17; amended by Sec. 10 of Ord. 2014-10-04)

2.29.090 Rule 6: Payment of rental of meeting place.

(Sec. 10, Res. 1978-01-79; amended by Sec. 5 of Ord. 1983-06-33; amended by Sec. 11 of Ord. 1997-05-17; repealed by Sec. 11 of Ord. 2014-10-04)