

**GRANTS TO VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAMS
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**



**Pennsylvania
Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs**

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO**

**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
ADJUTANT GENERAL MAJOR GENERAL JOHN R. PIPPY**

WWW.PA.GOV/AGENCIES/DMVA.HTML

APPLICATIONS DUE: FEBRUARY 27, 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY DATES..... 3

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT SUMMARY 4

NOTICE OF FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW 5

APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS 11

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES 12

EVALUATION PROCESS 14

GRANT AWARD ADMINISTRATION 16

CONTACT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES 19



KEY DATES

DATE	DESCRIPTION
January 5, 2026	Notice of Funding Announcement Release Date
January 7, 2026 9:00 AM	<p>Grants to Veterans’ Service Officer Programs Webinar (Attendance required for all applicants)</p> <p>Join the meeting now Meeting ID: 267 747 884 671 1 Passcode: kg6DE9p3</p> <hr/> <p>Dial in by phone +1 267-332-8737,,668892643# United States, Philadelphia Find a local number Phone conference ID: 668 892 643#</p>
February 20, 2026	<p>Questions Due Date Questions must be submitted via email to RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov. Questions received after the due date may not be answered.</p>
February 27, 2026	<p>Application Due Date Applications must be submitted electronically to: RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.</p>
April 1, 2026	<p>Grant Awards Announcement Grantees are informed of the status of their grant application.</p>
July 1, 2026	Grant Activity Period Start Date
June 30, 2027	Grant Activity Period End Date
October 1, 2027	Report Due to Legislative Committees and DMVA Executive Leadership



FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT SUMMARY

Funding Announcement Title: Grants to Veterans Service Officer Programs

Enabling Legislation: 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304, Grants to veterans service officer programs.

Funding – The amount of funds available for fiscal year 2026 for allocation to [eligible veterans service organizations](#), as defined in 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304, has not been finalized and approved.

Grant Activity Period – The grant activity period will be July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 (“Fiscal Year 2026”).

Due Date – All applications must be received by February 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Application Submission – All applications must be signed and submitted digitally to:
RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.

Scoring – Applications received in full and on time will be reviewed, scored, and awards determined by committee.

Administrative Rejection – An application that does not meet all listed requirements may be administratively rejected without review.

Contact Information – Questions should be emailed to Grants Team, Division of Grants, Analysis & Initiatives, at RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.



NOTICE OF FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) announces the Fiscal Year 2026 Grants to Veterans Service Officer (VSO) Programs grant cycle.

CONTEXT

Numerous veterans service organizations advocate on behalf of Pennsylvania's veterans every day. To assist these organizations in improving the lives of veterans, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides grants to designated veterans service organizations. These grants are administered by the Pennsylvania DMVA.

The four Pennsylvania veterans service organizations designated by law to receive the grants are the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign War, American Veterans, and Disabled American Veterans. In addition, DMVA may designate other veterans service organizations to be eligible for grants provided the organization is a member of the Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission, an active participant in the Commission, and abides by the statutory rules and guidelines.

GRANT PURPOSE

Under enabling legislation 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304, the DMVA awards grants to designated veterans service organizations to support veterans service officer programs.

PROGRAM GOALS

In accordance with 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(b), the goals of the VSO grant program are:

- improvement of the coordination and distribution of veterans' benefits;
- maximization of the effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars; and
- increasing veterans' participation in available federal, state, and local benefits programs.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Enabling legislation 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(c) requires veterans service organizations that receive funding under the VSO grant program to use those funds to "improve the administration and delivery of services to Pennsylvania's veterans" and meet [VSO grant program goals](#).

In accordance with 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(c), veterans service organizations may meet the [VSO grant program goals](#) by focusing efforts in the following ways:

- Increasing interaction between the veterans service organizations and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in order to enhance the delivery of services to Pennsylvania veterans.
- Increasing the number of initial claims filed with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of Pennsylvania veterans for service-related disabilities or pension benefits.



- Developing methods to increase rates of recovery paid by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to Pennsylvania veterans.
- Expanding training opportunities for designated veterans service organizations and veterans service officers.
- Increasing either the number or percentage of Pennsylvania veterans enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system.
- Improving coordination among the veterans service organizations and with the department to assure an integrated approach to claims processing.
- Improving outreach services to veterans throughout Pennsylvania and each of its counties.

Applicants must provide written responses to questions in the narrative section of their grant applications. The responses shall include how the [VSO grant program goals](#), [project priorities](#), and [performance goals](#) will be met and must address how the veterans service organization will increase the number of veterans applying for federal, state, and local veteran benefits.

PERFORMANCE METRIC GOALS

For the Fiscal Year 2026 VSO grant cycle, the DMVA seeks applicants to:

- track the number of initial veteran interactions (i.e., first time communicating with the veteran) for 100% of grant-funded VSOs.
- increase the number of total interactions with veterans by 2.5%.
- increase the number of *submitted* service-connected disability compensation and/or benefits claims by 2.5%.
- increase the number of veterans *receiving* service-connected disability compensation benefits and/or pension benefits by 2.5%.
- increase the number of Pennsylvania veterans and family members enrolled in the USDVA health care via VA Form 10-10EZ and CHAMPVA by 25% or 150.
- increase referrals to state veterans programs by an aggregate 10%. These programs include the Amputee and Paralyzed Veteran's Pension (APVP), Blind Veterans Pension (BVP), Educational Gratuity (EG), Veterans Temporary Assistance (VTA), and Disabled Veteran's Real Estate Tax Exemption (RETX).
- track the number of grant-funded VSO staff to complete at least one training conducted by an accredited veterans advocacy staff focused on one of the following areas: behavioral health, justice-involved/incarcerated veterans, housing/transportation, employment/education/economic wellness, or transition assistance/Reserve component affairs.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following organizations are designated to receive funding under this grant program:

- The American Legion



- AMVETS
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
- Disabled American Veterans

In accordance with 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(d)(5), additional Pennsylvania organizations can be designated by the DMVA as eligible to receive grant funding if they:

- are a member of the State Veterans Commission (51 Pa. C.S. § 1702(b));
- serve as an active participant in the State Veterans Commission; and
- abide by the statutory rules and guidelines.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

For Fiscal Year 2026, \$5.02 million in total funding is anticipated to be available and to be allocated to [eligible veterans service organizations](#).

DMVA reserves the right to award grants in an amount less than the applicant's requested funding.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAM EXPENSES

See Fiscal Year 2026 Program Guidelines for specific details regarding eligible expenses.

Per enabling legislation 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304, VSO grant funding may only be used for the following:

- Wages, benefits, other compensation, and any related personnel costs, accounting for no less than 80% of grant funding. Eligible personnel expenditures include:
 - Earnings
 - Retirement
 - Health Insurance
 - Dental Insurance
 - Vision Insurance
 - Prescription Insurance
 - Workers' compensation premiums
 - Federal Insurance Contributions Act
 - Outreach travel per guidance as established by the [Commonwealth Management Directive 230.10 as revised, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#)
 - Meals related to authorized travel per guidance as established by the [Commonwealth Management Directive 230.10 as revised, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#)
 -
- Training provided by accredited veterans service advocacy staff, accounting for no more than 10% of grant funding
 - Attending training at PAVETCon
 - Any training in pursuit of the required 18 Continuing Education Units
 - Conferences only when:
 - Training is provided by accredited veterans service advocacy staff and,



- The veterans service officer needs that training.
- Training travel costs, when VSO staff use personal vehicles per guidance as established by the [Commonwealth Management Directive 230.10 as revised, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#)
- Equipment to be used by accredited VSO staff, accounting for no more than 10% of grant funding. Equipment is durable and long-lasting property owned by the organization. Equipment does not include office supplies, which are consumable and quickly depleted. An organization shall submit a written request to the DMVA grants team to purchase equipment or supplies not listed in the below eligible equipment. If the equipment is purchased before the request is reviewed, the organization should be prepared to cover the cost of unapproved equipment with another source of funding in the event the request is denied. Eligible equipment expenses include:
 - Laptops
 - External card reader for PIV card
 - Work cell phones or a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot
 - Printers, paper, and ink cartridges
 - User license fees for claims management software or essential document-processing software, including Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat
 - Business cards
 - Shredders
 - External memory/storage devices (for records retention)
- Program audit by a certified public accountant detailing an accounting of grant expenditures awarded under this program for the preceding Commonwealth fiscal year.

Note: Any training or travel requiring overnight accommodation must be approved by the DMVA VSO grants team.

INELIGIBLE PROGRAM EXPENSES

Ineligible uses of VSO grant funding include, but are not limited to:

- Construction projects
- Property maintenance and upkeep
- Property rent
- Property insurance
- Purchase or lease of vehicle(s)
- Vehicle maintenance and upkeep
- Advertising and marketing
- Training provided by unaccredited staff
- General and administrative expenses, excluding items needed for accredited VSO staff
- Subscriptions, excluding user license subscriptions for claims management software or essential document-processing software
- Equipment insurance



- Utilities
- Meals unrelated to authorized travel, per guidance as established by the [Commonwealth Management Directive 230.10 as revised, Commonwealth Travel Procedures Manual](#)
- Bonuses
- Stipends
- Penalties, late fees, and fines

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Grantees shall complete and submit monthly reports using the report template provided by DMVA. Monthly reports will include budget, progress, and activity updates. Reporting may include, but not be limited to:

- Activities
- Financial expenditures
- Production report from automated claims management system
- Goal progress measurements
- Additional performance information

Grantees shall complete and submit quarterly reports using the report template provided by DMVA. Quarterly reports will be narrative analyses of the monthly reports from that quarter. Reporting may include, but not be limited to:

- Summaries of grant activities
- Issues, barriers, or areas of concern
- Success stories or goal achievements

Grantees shall document each outreach event that they participate in or conduct with an After-Action Review (AAR). AARs must be maintained for seven years and are subject to DMVA audit and request. AAR tracking may include, but not be limited to:

- Attendance information
- Referrals made
- Registrations completed
- Successes and opportunities for improvement

All reports must be submitted via email to RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.

GRANT ACTIVITY PERIOD

The grant activity period begins July 1, 2026. The grant activity period ends June 30, 2027.

Applicants should base proposals on projects beginning July 1, 2026. Expenses incurred prior to this date are not payable or reimbursable with funds from this grant. Grant funding must be used by June 30, 2027.



Unspent funds remaining after the grant activity period ends shall be returned to the DMVA. VSO grants are not eligible for extensions or renewals.

APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

All applications must be digitally signed by an authorized representative of the applying veterans service organization.

All applications must be submitted digitally to RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.

All completed applications must be received by February 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

NOTIFICATION AND RELEASE OF FUNDS

Applicants should be notified of award status in Spring 2026. Funds are scheduled for disbursement as outlined in the grant agreement upon full execution of the grant agreement, which all organizations are required to sign. This process may take up to two months to complete. Receipt of payment should occur approximately 15-30 days following. All payments and funds disbursement timelines are contingent on passage of the Commonwealth budget.



APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(d), the following organizations are designated to receive grants under this program:

- The American Legion
- AMVETS
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
- Disabled American Veterans

In accordance with 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(d)(5), additional Pennsylvania organizations can be designated by DMVA as eligible to receive grants if they:

- are a member of the State Veterans Commission (51 Pa. C.S. § 1702(b));
- serve as an active participant in the State Veterans Commission; and
- abide by the statutory rules and guidelines.

APPLICATION FOR GRANTS

Eligible veterans service organizations may apply for grants under the VSO grant program by submitting a VSO Grant Application Form to DMVA, which is available online:

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dmva/pennsylvania-veterans/programs-and-services/financial-assistance/veterans-service-office-grant-program>.

Previous grant recipients must also submit a copy of the veterans service organization's project audit for the preceding grant activity period, which includes an audit performed by a certified public accountant of all expenditures of grant funds received under the VSO grant agreement.

Grant applications must be signed by an authorized representative of the applying organization. Grant applications must be fully completed and contain all requested information and documentation. Incomplete and/or unsigned applications will not be reviewed or scored and will be returned to the submitting organization.

Detailed instructions for how to complete the VSO Grant Application Form are available on pages 1 and 2 of the VSO Grant Application Form.

FUNDING

The total amount of grants awarded under the VSO grant program will not exceed the amount appropriated to the VSO grant program.



APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All applications must be signed by authorized representatives of the applying veterans service organization.

All applications must be submitted digitally to RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.

All completed applications must be received by February 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Incomplete applications, paper applications, and late submissions may not be accepted and may be administratively rejected without review.

REQUIRED APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applicants should be prepared to provide:

- Organization information
- Requested funding amount
- Spending plan and program budget
- Program narrative

To award funding, enough detail should be provided for evaluators to determine the organization's experience and ability to successfully carry out the grant's purpose. The application form is available online at: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dmva/pennsylvania-veterans/programs-and-services/financial-assistance/veterans-service-office-grant-program/>.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

In addition to completing the application, applicants must supply additional documentation to demonstrate eligibility for grant funding. The application form details required supporting documentation.

- Program narrative describing how the organization will use grant funds (spend plan) to accomplish the [program goals](#), [project priorities](#), and [performance goals](#)
- Past performance description on how the organization accomplished VSO program functions.
- A copy of the veterans service organization's project audit for the preceding grant activity period
- IRS Form W-9

SIGNATURES

Grant applications must contain the signature, printed name, and title of the most senior authorized official representing the organization (e.g., the Adjutant, Executive Director).



CONTACT INFORMATION

Applications must include telephone numbers and email addresses for the organization.



EVALUATION PROCESS

SUBMISSIONS

The application must contain sufficient detail for evaluators to determine the organization's experience and ability to successfully carry out the grant's purpose, if awarded funding.

To be considered, applications must include all required documentation. Applications submitted without all information may be administratively rejected without competitive review.

GRANT REVIEWS

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by a committee. The Deputy Adjutant General of Veterans Affairs will appoint a chair for a Review Committee consisting of DMVA staff appointed by the Adjutant General to review grant applications.

No officer, director, or designee of an organization or county shall participate in the review or scoring of a grant application for any grant in which that organization or county is an applicant.

An organization's ability to execute funding and comply with grant requirements, as demonstrated during prior VSO grant awards, may be considered when evaluating applications. Less favorable consideration may be given when the following examples exist:

- Delinquent reporting or audit submissions
- Inadequate planning or coordination
- Requests for multiple project period extensions or major budget revisions
- Lack of administrative oversight resulting in the return of unspent funds

SCORING

Grant proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following components based on the [project priorities](#) and [performance goals](#). The evaluation criteria and their point values are as follows:

- Program Narrative (70 points) – Criteria include quality of strategic plan for the grant activity period and quarterly operational plan, quality of grant management plan, quality of budget adjustment and contingency plan, quality of planning to meet grant goals, quality of training plan, and quality of internal controls.
- Past Performance (30 points) – Criteria include reflection on past challenges and integration into future plans, reflection on past successes and integration into future plans, and programmatic goal achievement.



EVALUATION

DMVA will conduct an initial administrative review of applications to ensure all required application components are submitted. Next, the Review Committee will conduct a preliminary review, in which the reviewing committee will identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and request clarification from applicants, if needed. Then, the Review Committee will meet, review all complete and eligible applications, and determine tentative grant award amounts based on the tentative state budget. After the state budget for the fiscal year has been enacted, tentative award amounts may be adjusted to reflect changes in the state budget. DMVA will send final recommendations to the Adjutant General for final approval of grant awards.

The reviewing committee will evaluate all complete and signed applications received by DMVA in accordance with the criteria set forth in 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304(c). The criterion of evaluation is based on the stated [project priorities](#) and [performance goals](#), and their [scores](#) will be weighted as outlined above.

Apportionment of available funds will be determined by the Review Committee and DMVA staff before being approved by the Adjutant General and will be based on the application submission and the applicant's past performance.



GRANT AWARD ADMINISTRATION

AWARD SIZE

The total grant amount awarded is contingent upon review of the submitted application and determined by the reviewing committee.

DMVA reserves the right to award grants in an amount less than the applicants requested.

GRANT ACTIVITY PERIOD

The grant activity period will begin on July 1, 2026, and will run for a period of 12 months, ending on June 30, 2027.

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

The anticipated announcement of grant awards should occur in Spring 2026. All applicants will receive written notice of their application status following the awards announcement.

GRANT AGREEMENT

Written grant agreements will be issued for signature and approval by the Commonwealth and awarded organizations (grantees). All agreements shall include the Commonwealth's standard terms and conditions.

A grant agreement will be fully executed when both parties and all required Commonwealth signatories have signed the document. The effective date of the grant agreement will be the date the last signature is affixed by the Commonwealth.

The grant agreement will provide directions for returning any unspent VSO funds to DMVA at the end of the grant activity period.

Costs incurred by the grantee after the grant activity period begins on July 1, 2026 but before the full execution of the grant agreement are incurred at the sole risk of the grantee in the event the grant agreement is not fully executed.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS DISBURSEMENT

The Commonwealth requires payees to participate in the Pennsylvania Electronic Payment Program. Banking information must be entered into the secure vendor portal to issue payments via electronic funds transfer. This expedites payments disbursed in full upon completion of a fully executed grant agreement.

Grantees must keep VSO funding in a separate, interest-bearing account in a bank or other insured financial institution. Verification of this account must be provided by the organizations.



As a prerequisite to funding/payment approval, organizations must register and obtain a free Vendor Number from the Commonwealth. Applicants are encouraged to obtain this prior to when awards are announced by registering here: <https://pasupplierportal.state.pa.us/irj/portal/anonymous>.

REPORTING

The grant agreement will include provisions for required monthly reporting. This includes a monthly budget, progress, and activity report to DMVA for each month of the grant activity period. Grantees must submit their monthly reports no later than the 20th calendar day after the end of the applicable month. Grantees will be given a reporting template to complete and submit, along with supporting documentation including, but not limited to, receipts, time sheets, and bank statements. Incomplete monthly reports will be returned for completion.

The grant agreement will include provisions to complete required After-Action Review (AAR) at the conclusion of each outreach event that the organization participates in or conducts. Grantees will be given an AAR template to complete. AARs do not need to be submitted with monthly or quarterly reports; however, they should be retained for a period of seven years. AARs are subject to audit by the DMVA.

The grant agreement will include provisions for required quarterly reporting. This includes completing a narrative report. Grantees must submit their quarterly reports by the last weekday of the month after the quarter closes. Grantees will be given a reporting template to complete and submit. Incomplete monthly reports will be returned for completion. In accordance with the grant agreement, the process to disburse funds will commence upon the Department's receipt, review, and approval of the quarterly report. The process to disburse funds can take up to 30 days.

The grant agreement will include provisions for required participation in calls on an as-needed basis to address programmatic concerns and quarterly meetings with DMVA staff to review grant progression, share best practices, ensure integration within DMVA's PA VETConnect program, and receive technical support.

DMVA Grants Team will monitor the performance of grantees. At its discretion, DMVA may conduct on-site visits and/or review documentation of grant-funded programs, purchases, and events. Performance monitoring may include, but is not limited to, financial audits, performance audits, additional data collection, and additional reporting requirements.

CLOSE-OUT PROCESS

Per enabling legislation 51 Pa. C.S. § 9304, grantees are required to complete an annual report containing:

- A description of all veterans service officer activities, an accounting of recoveries and a listing of volunteer hours for the preceding Commonwealth fiscal year;



- A proposed budget and spending plan for the Commonwealth fiscal year beginning on July 1 of the year following the filing of the report; and
- An accounting of its expenditures from grants awarded under this program, audited by a certified public accountant for the preceding Commonwealth fiscal year.

The grantee is responsible for submitting the annual report and program audit no later than October 1, 2027, to each of the following parties:

- The Adjutant General;
- The Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs;
- The chairperson and minority chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the Senate;
- The chairperson and minority chairperson of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the House of Representatives; and
- The State Veterans Commission.

Interim or post-award audits may be conducted by DMVA, the Office of State Inspector General, the Auditor General, or the Attorney General of Pennsylvania. Any audits by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, its agencies, or assigns, will be conducted at no cost to the grantee.

STATE LABOR LAW AND WORKFORCE SAFETY LAW COMPLIANCE

The grantee must comply, and maintain compliance, with all applicable Pennsylvania state labor and workforce safety laws and execute a corresponding certification. The laws include, but are not limited to:

- Construction Workplace Misclassification Act
- Employment of Minors Child Labor Act
- Minimum Wage Act
- Prevailing Wage Act
- Equal Pay Law
- Employer to Pay Employment Medical Examination Fee Act
- Seasonal Farm Labor Act
- Wage Payment and Collection Law
- Industrial Homework Law
- Construction Industry Employee Verification Act



CONTACT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions concerning the VSO Grant Program shall be addressed to RA-MVDMVAGrants@pa.gov.

To report suspected fraud, waste, and/or abuse, contact the Office of the State Inspector General online at <https://www.pa.gov/en/agencies/osig/report-fraud-or-misconduct.html>.

RESOURCES

- [Department of Military and Veterans Affairs](#) – Learn more about DMVA.
- [Commonwealth Travel Policy](#) Manual – Learn more about the Commonwealth’s travel rules and regulations.