

# Veterans and Family Support Department of Missouri

Darla Nebel  
4736 Gorrell  
Bland, MO 65014  
[Shebe6787@gmail.com](mailto:Shebe6787@gmail.com)

## Program Book 2024-2025

(573) 205-3454

Our Department President Amy Jo has chosen the theme” **HELPING OUR VETERANS BY BRIDGING THE GAP!!**” and Brenda Bryant, our National President, picked “**FROM OUR ROOTS TO OUR BRANCHES EXTENDING SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS.**” as her theme. I think the two themes work beautifully together and express how all the hard work we do is for our veterans. Veterans & Family Support is the core of everything that our organization stands for. Almost anything and everything that our membership does can fall under this program.

This year the Veterans & Family Support program will have three primary points of focus:

1. Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness
2. Childcare for active-duty service members
3. Veterans and Military Support Programs

### **Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness**

Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention is our president’s special project this year. Every day in the United States, 22 veterans succumb to suicide — losing their personal battle to invisible wounds of war. We need to stand up to do something to help veterans struggling with PTSD. We as an auxiliary need to help our veterans and their families to find the tools to help themselves. We need to help our Veterans bridge the gap to help with their suicide/mental health awareness. Be mindful of the characteristics associated with thoughts of suicide and be watchful of our veterans' mental health. One veteran lost to suicide is one veteran too many!

What will you do for our veterans, service members and their families this year?

The Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can:

- Call 988 and Press 1.
- Call 1-800-MyVA4 1 to access all VA departments.
- Chat online at [veteranscrisisline.net](https://veteranscrisisline.net).
- Send a text message to 838255.

Confidential support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Tip: Add the Veterans Crisis Line number as a contact in your cell phone for easy referral.

Here are some great resources for Mental Wellness Support:

- **VFW Mental Wellness Campaign:** [vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness](http://vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness)
- **The Campaign to Change Direction:** [ChangeDirection.org](http://ChangeDirection.org)
- **Give An Hour:** [GiveAnHour.org](http://GiveAnHour.org)
- **Patients Like Me:** [PatientsLikeMe.com/join/vfw](http://PatientsLikeMe.com/join/vfw)
- **One Mind:** [OneMind.org](http://OneMind.org)
- **The Elizabeth Dole Foundation:** [ElizabethDoleFoundation.org](http://ElizabethDoleFoundation.org)
- **Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits):** [HealVets.org](http://HealVets.org)
- **Veterans Voices Writing Project:** [VeteransVoices.org](http://VeteransVoices.org)

## **Childcare for Active-Duty Service Members**

As we serve diligently toward our mission of serving veterans, we often overlook those the veterans support themselves -their children. A special focus on this year's Veterans & Family Support Program is giving back to these families. Maybe it's babysitting for a few hours a week, providing for the babies and toddlers or maybe just being emotional support for the spouse left behind to take care of the family. By being a confidant for service member's family, our members are providing that much more peace for our active-duty military.

## **National and Missouri Veterans Service Programs**

The VFW's National and Missouri Veterans Service helps veterans, service members and their families obtain the benefits they deserve - at no cost to the veteran. NVS/MSV provides a nationwide network of nearly 300 VFW Service Officers who help veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs system. Those VFW Service Officers recover more than \$1 billion annually in VA benefits for veterans and their dependents.

These highly skilled professionals assist all veterans, whether they are VFW members or not, in filing claims for:

- Disability compensation.
- Rehabilitation and educational programs.
- Pension and death benefits.
- Employment and training programs.

NVS/MVS also works to ensure veterans receive quality, timely and accessible VA health care, including:

- Hospital care.
- Outpatient care.
- Specialized health care for female veterans.
- Alcohol and drug dependency treatment.
- Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation or other environmental hazards.

## **VFW Veterans & Military Support Program**

Veterans & Military Support contains programs initiated by the VFW: Military Assistance Program (MAP), Unmet Needs and the VFW "Sport Clips® Help A Hero Scholarship." These programs serve active-duty and recently discharged military.

### **Military Assistance Program**

The Military Assistance Program (MAP) helps VFW and Auxiliary members give more to their local military units by providing funds to connect with troops. It helps forge and nurture bonds with those units by providing financial assistance for Posts, Districts and Departments to sponsor morale-boosting send-offs, homecomings, and casual get-togethers.

Post and Auxiliaries participating in Adopt-a-Unit and Family Readiness Group events can also receive assistance. MAP keeps care packages circulating by covering postage costs.

For guidelines to apply for MAP funds, contact the VFW Veterans & Military Support office at (816) 756-3390.

### **Unmet Needs Can Help in a Crisis**

Veterans, service members and military families face many unique challenges – financial difficulties should not be one of them. Unmet Needs is there to help America's military families who have run into unexpected financial difficulties because of deployment or other military-related activity or injury. Grants of up to \$1,500 payable to a creditor can bridge the gap to make a mortgage or rent payment or to fund home and auto repairs, insurance, utility costs, food and clothing. To learn more, visit [vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants](http://vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants).

### **VFW "Sport Clips® Help A Hero Scholarship" Program**

The VFW and Sport Clips are giving the gift of scholarships to our nation's heroes as a way of thanking them for their dedicated service to our nation. The VFW "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members to help them complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt. To learn more, visit [vfw.org/student-veterans-support](http://vfw.org/student-veterans-support).

### **Monetary Donations**

Donations to these wonderful support programs can be made online or by mail. To donate online go to [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help) and select the program you wish to donate to, then click the Contribute button. Donate by mail by sending funds to the VFW. Be sure to earmark which program or programs you are donating to (Veterans & Military Support, National Veterans Service, Unmet Needs, Military Assistance Program, or VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"). Mail checks to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, 11th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111

## Department Awards for Auxiliaries

### Department of Missouri Building Bridges Awards for Auxiliaries:

First place - \$20 (subject to approval by the council) and a citation to one Auxiliary in each of the membership groups with the most outstanding program/project including teamwork within the Auxiliary and including the VFW members.

Second place: A citation to one Auxiliary in each of the membership groups with the most outstanding program/project including teamwork within the Auxiliary and including the VFW members.

## National Awards for Auxiliaries

Most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health.

- Citation to every auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health.
- Citation and \$25 to one auxiliary in each of the four conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health.

Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources and the Department website. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to their Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

### HELPING OUR VETERANS BY BRIDGING THE GAP!!

