



# STATE OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS STATE BENEFITS DIVISION

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## **COVID-19 DISASTER RELIEF GRANT OVERVIEW**

### **Benefit Provided**

The purpose of the COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant is to mitigate the negative effects and economic impact COVID-19 has had on Veterans and their families by providing a one-time financial relief grant in the amount of \$1,000.

### **Eligibility Period**

Applications for the COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grant must demonstrate a financial loss on or after the date of the Governor's Emergency Executive Order, March 13, 2020. A closing date for the disaster relief grant has yet to be determined and will depend on the length of the peacetime emergency declared by the Governor of the State of Minnesota and the availability of funding. Status updates on the program will be posted on <http://MinnesotaVeteran.org/CovidRelief>.

### **Eligible Applicant**

1. A veteran as defined by [MN Statute 197.447](#), or the surviving spouse (who has not remarried) of a deceased veteran, **and**
2. A Minnesota Resident, **and**
3. Have been negatively financial impacted by COVID-19.

*Note: Two veterans married to each other are each authorized to apply for and receive the disaster relief grant.*

### **COVID-19 Eligibility Criteria and Supporting Documentation**

For the purposes of this section, applicant means a Veteran or surviving spouse.

Eligible applicants must be able to demonstrate a financial loss related to one of the situations listed below:

- 1. The applicant or their legal dependent have/had a confirmed case of COVID-19.**
  - a. Test results showing a positive COVID-19 test **or**;
  - b. A letter from a healthcare provider indicating a COVID-19 diagnosis.
- 2. A healthcare provider has determined the applicant, or their spouse's, presence in the workplace would jeopardize their own health or the health of others because of likely exposure to COVID-19.**
  - a. A letter from a healthcare provider instructing the applicant to quarantine
- 3. A healthcare provider has determined the applicant, or their spouse's, health was jeopardized because of a diagnosed underlying health condition(s) which would have put them at an increased risk if exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.**
  - a. A letter from a healthcare provider stating or recommending that the individual self-quarantine or reduce exposure **and**
  - b. Proof that they did not work for a specific period of time to actually reduce exposure.

4. **An applicant is or was under legal isolation or legal quarantine (Minn. Stat. 144.419) related to a diagnosis of COVID-19 or they are/were caring for a dependent under legal isolation or legal quarantine. (this would be rare)**
5. **The applicant, or their spouse's, employer directs them not to report to work for COVID-19-related reasons**
  - a. A letter or communication from your employer
6. **The applicant, or their spouse's, workplace is closed for COVID-19-related health and safety reasons and they are excused from work duties and cannot be reassigned**
  - a. A letter or communication from their employer that confirms their workplace is closed for COVID-19 related health and safety reasons and the applicant is excused from work duties or the applicant cannot be reassigned.
7. **The applicant is financially impacted by a school or care provider closure due to COVID-19**
  - a. A letter or communication from your child's school or child care provider **and**
  - b. A birth certificate if the child was born outside of Minnesota. Dependents born in Minnesota can be verified by Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs staff **and**
  - c. Supporting documentation showing a financial loss

## Demonstrating a Financial Loss

If your documentation submitted to support your eligibility criteria does not clearly demonstrate a financial loss you must submit additional documentation to demonstrate a financial loss. For the purposes of this section financial loss means a reduction or severance of a household's earned or unearned income.

Examples of supporting documentation may include but is not limited to:

1. A letter from an employer stating a reduction in hours, salary, being furloughed, or laid off.
2. Confirmation of receipt of Unemployment Insurance
3. History of pay stubs showing hours worked prior to 3/13/2020 through application date which demonstrate a reduction in hours

## Self-Employed Individuals

Individuals who are self-employed must prove approval or receipt of Minnesota Unemployment Insurance in order to properly demonstrate a financial loss.

## How to apply

An eligible applicant may download an MDVA-1A (Application for Disaster Relief) from MDVA's website at <http://MinnesotaVeteran.org/CovidRelief>

Complete the application and gather the required supporting documentation.

An eligible applicant can submit their application one of three ways:

1. Self-Submittal: Applications and supporting documentation can be uploaded through our MN GI Bill portal at <https://gibill.mn.gov>. You will first need to create an account or login to an existing

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This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529

account. Then you will upload your application to the State Soldiers Assistance Program (SSAP) component.

2. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO): any applicant may find their CVSO by going to <https://www.macvso.org/find-a-cvso.html>.
3. If your County Veterans Service Office is unable to assist you during this State of Emergency please contact MDVA's Field Operations Team, who can assist you with your application, by contacting [FO.MDVA@state.mn.us](mailto:FO.MDVA@state.mn.us)

**Below is a checklist of items that should be included in your upload packet:**

- Completed MDVA-1A (Disaster Relief Application) to include the Substitute W9 Form
- Copy of the veteran's DD-214 or military discharge papers or equivalent.
- Proof of MN residency (MN Driver's License/ID Card, Voter Registration Card, or Utility Bill).
- Documentation supporting the selected eligibility criteria (i.e. Letter from doctor, letter from employer, letter from daycare/school, etc.)
- Documentation demonstrating a financial loss if not indicated in the supporting documentation of the eligibility criteria (i.e. pay stubs, letter from employer, confirmation of Unemployment Insurance, etc.)
- For Surviving Spouse Applicants:** Copy of the death certificate confirming the veteran's spouse at the time of death if the Veteran passed away somewhere other than Minnesota.
- For eligibility criteria based upon dependents:**
  - Copy of the birth certificate of the affected child showing the parental relationship to the applicant if the child was born outside of Minnesota (staff can independently verify Minnesota born dependents).
  - Copy of the marriage certificate if the marriage took place outside of Minnesota and you are applying because of a spouse affected by COVID-19.

## Questions

If you have any questions regarding the Disaster Relief Grant please contact your County Veterans Service Officer or LinkVet at 1-888-Link-Vet.