Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

"County Veteran Service Office"

Grant Application
Instructions

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities. For this and for other information on disability rights and protections, contact the MDVA Agency ADA Coordinator at: 612-548-5961.

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Request

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) is seeking proposals for grants starting at $1,000 from eligible applicants to provide services with the purpose of supporting and improving the lives of Veterans and their families. Projects/Activities of special interest for this grant cycle include:

Priorities:

- **Veteran homelessness**
- **Suicide prevention programs**
- **New or Innovative Programs**

IMPORTANT: "Veteran" is defined by MN Statute §197.447. Grant Awardees are required to collect and submit to MDVA Veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge (DD214's) to ensure that Projects/Activities funded serve Veterans as defined by this Statute.

This grant opportunity is intended to serve the entire Veteran community in Minnesota. By default, Veterans represent a diverse population and include, but are not limited to, all cultures, races, colors, ethnicities, genders, sexual preferences and both able bodied and differently abled groups.

Projects/Activities that will not be considered are:

- Construction (brick & mortar) and/or maintenance projects
- Building development or structural improvements
- Projects/Activities related to fundraising

To be considered for the current grant period, **ALL SECTIONS** of the Grant Application must be completed and the **REQUIRED** 2-4 page narrative document must be emailed to the grantprogram.mdva@state.mn.us by:

- 4:00 p.m. Central Time on **Friday, December, 11, 2026**

Complete submission instructions are in Section III – Grant Application Process. Required forms are in a separate document – CVSO Competitive Application Forms.

Incomplete applications will be considered non-responsive and not considered.

This RFP does not obligate the State to award a grant or complete the project, and the State reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the Grant Applicant.

B. Eligible Applicants

"Eligible Applicant" must be a Minnesota County Veteran Service Office (CVSO). All funding contained in this RFP will be distributed through a competitive review process. Funding will be awarded based on the applicant's ability to comply with Minn. Stat. 197.608 to provide additional grants on a competitive basis to any county that proposes to provide programs and services that the commissioner determines to be new and innovative in serving veterans and

their families.

Following the Grant Application review process, organizations recommended to receive the CVSO/competitive grant must also be approved by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. Potential awardees will be contacted by phone or email and may be invited to meet in-person at MDVA. Additional Applicant information may be required at that time.

C. Duration of Funding and Period of Performance

Grant Applicants may request a grant period of up to 24 months (2 years). Applicants are encouraged to address the sustainability of their proposal in their Grant Application and should not make the success of their proposed grant Program/Activity dependent upon receiving on-going "CVSO" funding. Though generally discouraged, Grantees, (Grant Applicants selected by MDVA to receive funding) may apply for successive CVSO Grants but may not apply if the Grantee has a current MDVA CVSO/competitive grant in-process.

II. Grant Application Format

The Grant Application is in fillable PDF format. **Data entry fields are intentionally limited.** Grant Applicant responses must conform to the space provided in the forms. The forms must not be modified. Furthermore, the Grant Applicant must follow all instructions, conditions, and requirements identified in the Grant Application. Failure to observe the Grant Application instructions, conditions, and requirements will result in disqualification of the Grant Application for unresponsiveness.

III. Grant Application Process

A. Grant Applicant's Questions (MDVA Website – Grant Page "Q&A Addendum")

All Grant Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the Questions and Answers (Q&A) Addendum page on the MDVA Website – Grant Page.

Questions not addressed in the Q&A Addendum may be submitted directly in writing by email to the MDVA Grant Administrator at: GrantProgram.MDVA@state.mn.us until **Friday, December 4, 2026 (4:00 p.m.).** Grant Applicant's questions and MDVA's responses will periodically be updated throughout the Grant Application submission period until **Monday, December 7, 2026 (4:00 p.m.).**

Note: The only authorized MDVA personnel to discuss this RFP is the MDVA CVSO/competitive Grant Administrator. Contact regarding this RFP with any other State personnel could result in disqualification. The State will not be held responsible for oral responses to Grant Applicants.

B. Grant Application Submission

1. To apply, Applicants must email the **completed CVSO/Competitive Grant Application** to GrantProgram.MDVA@state.mn.us:

   - **Friday, December 11, 2026 (no later than 4:00 pm Central Standard Time)**

   Applicants should use the format as shown below in the email Subject Line:

   Subject: Organization Name – CVSO/competitive Application "Project/Activity Name"

   Note: Applicants assign a "Project/Activity Name" in the Application.

2. Every effort should be made by the CVSO Office to email one CVSO/competitive Grant Application. However, if the CVSO Office determines that the CVSO/competitive Grant Application requires correction and must be resubmitted a second time, **only the email containing the complete and final Application (and any supporting documentation) with the latest email Sent Date will be considered**.
3. Late Notifications or Grant Applications will not be considered. Faxed, mailed or hand delivered Grant Applications will not be accepted.
4. Counties may submit a maximum of one application.
5. It is the sole responsibility of each Grant Applicant to ensure that the Grant Application is emailed to **GrantProgram.MDVA@state.mn.us** in the specified format prior to the deadline for submission. **Failure to abide by these instructions for submitting Grant Applications will result in disqualification from consideration.**

IV. Grant Application Evaluation and Selection

A. Overview of Grant Application Evaluation Methodology

1. All responsive Grant Applications received by the deadline will be evaluated. Grant Applications evaluation will be conducted in three phases:

   - **Phase I** – Minimum Mandatory Requirements Review (pass/fail)
   - **Phase II** – CVSO District Representatives evaluation of Grant Applications
   - **Phase III** - Selection of the Successful Grant Applicant(s)

2. Grant Applications that are not selected for funding indicates that: 1) the Application did not meet the minimum, mandatory Phase I requirements, 2) another Grant Application(s) was determined to be more advantageous to the State or 3) the State has exercised its right to reject any or all Grant Applications.
3. At its discretion, the State may perform an appropriate cost and pricing analysis of a Grant Applicant's Grant Application, including an audit of the reasonableness of any Grant Application.

B. Evaluation Team "CVSO District Representative"

1. The evaluation team will be assigned by the Minnesota Association of County Veteran Service Offices (MACVSO) President, or his/her designated assignee and will consist of a combination of 3 to 9 CVSO District Representatives based on availability.

2. The MDVA grant team will assist the evaluation team by managing the evaluation process. This assistance will include, but is not limited to, the initial mandatory requirements review and answering technical questions from evaluators. However, CVSO District Representatives alone will evaluate and score the Phase II Grant Applications and make grant award recommendations to the MDVA Commissioner.
3. The State reserves the right to alter the composition of the evaluation team and their specific responsibilities.
4. All final grant award decisions are subject to the approval of the MDVA Commissioner.

C. Grant Application Evaluation Phases (I – III)

At any time during the evaluation phases, the State may submit a list of detailed comments, questions, and concerns to one or more Grant Applicant. The State may require said responses to be written, oral, or both. The State will only use written responses for evaluation purposes. The total scores for those Grant Applicants selected to submit additional information may be revised because of the new information.

Phase I: Minimum Mandatory Requirements Review

The specified documents will be evaluated on a pass or fail basis. Grant Applicants must "pass" each of the requirements specified in Phase I to be evaluated by the CVSO Evaluation Team in Phase II.

The following will be considered on a pass/fail basis:

- Grant Applications must be submitted electronically according to the instructions outlined in Section: III.B. Grant Application Process.
- All information requested in the Grant Application.
- Grant Applications must be received on or before **Friday, December 11, 2026 (4:00 pm).**

Phase II: Evaluation of Grant Applications

Only the Grant Applications found to be compliant under Phase I will be considered in Phase II.

- CVSO Evaluation Team members will review the components of each Phase II Grant Application submitted. Applications will be evaluated based upon the Grant Applicant's understanding of Veterans' need(s), the quality of the Project/Activity proposal and the completeness of the Grant Application.
- After reviewing the Grant Applications, the CVSO Evaluation Team will score each Grant Application.
- CVSO Evaluation Team scores for each Applicant will be combined and divided by the number of Applicants to determine an average score.
- Grant Applicants will be ranked according to their average score.

Phase III: Selection of the Successful Grant Applicant(s)

- After receiving the CVSO Evaluation Team Grant Applicant funding recommendations, the MDVA Commissioner will make the final determination of successful Grant Applicants.

D. Grant Negotiations, Award Notifications and Unsuccessful Grant Applicant Notice

Selected Grant Applicants will be notified by phone of the State's interest in pursuing Grant Agreement Contract negotiations, usually within one month of the Grant Application deadline. However, all submitted Grant Applications remain eligible for selection by the State, until the State successfully completes grant agreement negotiations with the selected Grant Applicant(s).

Time is of the essence. Selected Grant Applicants should be responsive during the Grant Agreement negotiation process to have an executed Grant Agreement on or before June 1, 2025. In the event grant agreement contract negotiations are unsuccessful with the selected Grant Applicant(s), the CVSO Evaluation Team may recommend another Grant Applicant(s).

Final Award decisions will be made by the MDVA Commissioner. MDVA staff will post the County *conditional* Awardees on the MDVA Website – Grant Page.

Consistent with Minnesota Statute 13.591, subdivisions 4, Grant Applications and evaluative data will be available upon request.

E. Grant Applicant – Important Dates To Remember

CVSO/Competitive Grant Cycle BEGINS – Applications Accepted	Monday, November 9th
Grant Applications Questions for the Q&A Addendum **DEADLINE**	Friday, December 4th
MDVA Final Posting of Online Q&A Addendum Update	Monday, December 7th
CVSO/competitive Grant Application DEADLINE	Friday, December 11th

V. Required Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions

Grant Applicants must be familiar with the State's standard Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions and MDVA Grant Program requirements when preparing their Grant Application. Grant Applicants may view a Sample Grant Agreement and the MDVA Grants Manual by visiting the MDVA Website - Grants Webpage at:

https://mn.gov/mdva/resources/federalresources/grants/.

Most of the requirements defined in the Sample Grant Agreement and MDVA Grants Manual is required by Minnesota statute. However, if a Grant Applicant chooses to take exception to any of the terms, conditions, or language in the Sample Grant Agreement or in the MDVA Grants Manual, the Applicant must indicate those exceptions in their Grant Application (Form 5 Section E - Narrative). Grant Applicants should note that certain exceptions may result in the Grant Application being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in the Grant Application will be available for discussion or negotiation.

VI. State's Rights Reserved

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the State reserves the right to:

A. Reject any and all Grant Applications received in response to this RFP.
B. Disqualify any Grant Applicant whose conduct or Grant Application fails to conform to the requirements of this RFP.
C. Have unlimited rights to duplicate all materials submitted for purposes of RFP evaluation, and duplicate information in response to data requests regarding the Grant Application.
D. Select a Grant Application other than that with the highest evaluation score.
E. Consider a late modification of a Grant Application if the Grant Application itself was submitted on time and if the modifications were requested by the State and the modifications make the terms of the Grant Application more favorable to the State and accept such Grant Application as modified.
F. At its sole discretion, waive any non-material deviations from the requirements and procedures of this RFP.
G. Negotiate as to any aspect of the Grant Application with any Grant Applicant and negotiate with more than one Grant Applicant at the same time.
H. The approval committee reserves the right to adjust the amount of grant funding awarded.
I. Extend the grant contract, in increments determined by the State, not to exceed a total contract term of two (2) years.

J. Cancel the RFP at any time and for any reason with no cost or penalty to the State; and
K. Correct or amend the RFP at any time with no cost or penalty to the State. If the State should correct or amend any segment of the RFP after submission of Grant Applications and prior to announcement of the successful Grant Applicant, all Grant Applicants will be afforded ample opportunity to revise their Grant Application to accommodate the RFP amendment and the dates for submission of revised Grant Applications announced at that time. The State will not be liable for any errors in the RFP or other responses related to the RFP.

Table 1 – Required Grant Application Contents	
Instructions – Forms are in fillable PDF format and must be completed in entirety!	
Form 1 – Application Package Cover Page	Organization's demographics
Form 2 – Collaboration, Planning & Approach (General)	Refers to: 1) Organization's external affiliations, 2) other general Project/Activity information
Form 3 – Planning & Approach (Details)	Refers to: Program/Activity specific methods and outcomes
Form 4 – Explanation of Expenses	Refers to: Overall organization.
Form 5 – Program/Activity Budget Narrative	Form 5 (Sections A - F) – Sections A, D – F refers to the Grant Application Program/Activity only. • Section A – Program/Activity Budget • Section B – Statement of Future Sustainability • Section C – MDVA Grant Agreement Terms Review • Section D – Detailed Description of Cost • Section E – Program/Activity Narrative

Table 2 – Grant Application Scoring Components

SCORED CRITERIA

Organizational Assessment (Forms 1, 2 & 3) **(10 points)**

- Organization's demographics, experience serving veterans, number and qualifications of staff/volunteers, and overall capacity to fulfill the purpose the Applicant's grant proposal.
- County's planning and approach to program/activity

Program Design (Forms 3, 4 & 5) **(25 points)**

Workplan & Deliverable Considerations

- Need for Program and Funding
  - Does Program/Activity duplicate existing State, Federal or other Veteran programs?
    - If yes, does proposed Project/Activity address unmet Veteran needs?
  - Does Applicant's grant proposal align with CVSO grant funding priorities as specified in **Minnesota Statute § 197.608**

- Appropriate Services for the proposed Program/Activity **(20 points)**
  - Quality and Clarity of Grant Application – Is the proposed Program/Activity clear?
  - Will the proposed Program/Activity have a significant, measurable positive impact on Veteran's lives?

- Appropriate Outcomes for Target Population **(20 points)**
  - Does Applicant have a well-articulated, measurable "Evaluation Plan"?
  - Will there be tangible, positive Outputs/Outcomes within the requested grant period?
    - Is the Applicant's stated "# of Veterans to be Served" a good value for the grant $ requested?
  - Are the projected Outputs/Outcomes Achievable?

Program Revenue and Budget (Forms 4 & 5) **(15 points)**

- Does the written Narrative effectively describe how the project will be implemented (Who, What, Where, How & When)? Are there any significant unanswered questions?
- Is the proposed Budget reasonable?

Number of Geographic Locations Served (more locations/higher score) **(10 points)**

BONUS

#1 Grant Project/Activity *exclusively* targets Vets representing one or more of the sub-populations listed below **(10 points)**

a) Minority racial and/or ethnic groups, b) differently abled Veterans, c) LGBTQI Veterans, d) Women Veterans, and/or e) Veterans residing solely in greater Minnesota

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#2 Grant Project/Activity specifically addresses this RFP's funding priorities… Veteran Homelessness or Suicide Prevention **(10 points)**