



Holmes County Veteran Service  
75 E. Clinton St. Suite 104  
Millersburg, OH 44654  
*Veterans Serving Veterans*

## HOLMES COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

According to the provision set forth in Section 5901.08 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to receive financial assistance an applicant must have been a resident of Holmes County for a period of no less than three months. The Holmes County Veterans Service Commission (HCVSC) shall adhere to the provisions of ORC, Section 5901.01 through 5901.15. The Commission may authorize Service Officers to make immediate decisions on applications consistent with the policies of the Commission and subject to Commission review.

- (1) Each person requesting financial assistance must complete the standard application form/process upon which the decision shall be made. All documents and statements made in the application for assistance are subject to investigation by the HCVSC. Individuals determined to be providing false information may be barred from further financial aid.
  - a. Each year, (upon first application of the calendar year) the Veteran **must:**
    - i. Sign, accept and acknowledge the Holmes County Veteran Services Financial Policy.
    - ii. Sign, accept, and acknowledge the Release of Information form that allows the HCVSC and its officers to investigate all information provided on the application for financial assistance for validity
    - iii. Sign, accept, and acknowledge the Financial Disclosure statement that requires that all pertinent financial information must be provided, and that failure to disclose may render an applicant ineligible.
  - b. If the financial policy is changed, then the applicant must review changes and re-sign. The changes are in effect immediately.
- (2) An applicant considered for assistance shall be a Veteran, Veteran's widow/widower, or Veteran's dependent children under the age of 18, or 23 if still attending school (if both veteran and spouse are deceased). Any child that is older than the limits, and deemed to be a "special needs" child shall be considered as a dependent for Grocery Order purposes. Only one assistance application shall be accepted per household per 30-day period.
- (3) Each applicant must understand that financial assistance from HCVSC is not a pension program, nor is it an automatic entitlement; it is a short term, temporary program to assist in obtaining the basic needs of life on an occasional basis. These needs are (but not limited to) the following:
  - a. Food

- b. Shelter (rent, mortgage, lot rental)
- c. Utilities (electric, water, heating/cooking fuels)
- d. Clothing (situation dependent)
- e. Specific medical needs that may be urgent in nature
- f. Vehicle repairs (situation dependent)

Bills such as phone (unless required by a Doctor's order), cable/satellite, home equity loans, or credit cards shall not be considered for payment. All bills for payment consideration must be in the Veteran's name. In the case of a deceased Veteran, the HCVSC will allow for the bills to be in the applicant's name.

- (4) The Veterans Service Commission has placed monthly expenditure limits (for accounting purposes toward financial assistance) for the following:
  - a. \$100.00 for a cellular phone bill and \$25.00 per additional dependent line
  - b. \$100.00 for internet services
- (5) The Commission will only consider monthly expenditures of the primary home or property. All rent/mortgage payments or any other bills submitted for consideration of payment must be due by the 5th of the month following the board meeting to be considered for payment. Rent/mortgage must not be more than three months in arrears to be considered for payment. Any additional property, home payment or pet expenses (except for a service animal) will not be considered a monthly expenditure.
- (6) Vehicle repair requests will only be considered for payment if:
  - a. The vehicle is the primary means of transportation for the household
  - b. The vehicle is titled in the name of the Veteran or Veteran's spouse (must show proof)
- (7) Vehicle repairs will NOT be considered for:
  - a. Business/commercial vehicles
  - b. Vehicles used for UBER, LYFT, or other for-profit passenger transport
  - c. Collision, natural disaster or other accident-based damage that owner's insurance would cover
  - d. Vehicles intending to be sold for profit
    - i. The HCVSC does not pay for vehicle repairs on cars/trucks/motorcycles etc. for a Veteran to "flip" the automobile for profit
    - ii. If it is found that a Veteran is using monies received for this purpose, at minimum they will be barred from further financial assistance and may be considered for prosecution for fraud.
- (8) Overdraft Bank fees are considered a personal liability and will not be factored in as a monthly expense. All overdraft fees for the previous 30 days, as of the time of the

application will be added and the total will be subtracted from the maximum amount of assistance. This will be the highest amount that the requestor may be granted.

- (9) The HCVSC shall establish a written schedule of maximum income guidelines based upon family size and consistent with the allowances of the current budget. (These guidelines may be substituted with the guidelines used by local Job and Family services.) These income guidelines should be adhered to whenever possible but will also be flexible enough to allow the commission to respond to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances faced by the applicant. All sources of income to the applicant shall be considered in deciding the question of granting or denying the assistance, and in determining the amount of assistance that can be granted. Considered as income are:
- a. Wages, interest, **ALL** bank account(s) balance(s), stocks, bonds, IRAs, certificates of deposit, cash on hand
  - b. VA Compensation
  - c. Child Support
  - d. Worker's Compensation, Unemployment Compensation
  - e. SSI, Social Security
  - f. Assistance from Social Support Agencies
  - g. Retirement Pay, Pension
  - h. Sick Leave Pay
  - i. Annuities
  - j. Inheritance, life insurance payments
  - k. Gambling Earnings
  - l. Rent/payments from investment properties
  - m. Commissions received upon sales/investment ventures
  - n. **ALL** income from any other source
- (10) Countable income for purposes of assistance may be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the applicant providing proof of out-of-pocket medical expenses.
- (11) An applicant who shares a residence with another person(s) may be considered for assistance after also counting the income of the co-habitant(s).
- (12) No applicant will be approved for bill assistance more than **four (4) times in a twelve (12) month period**. There must be at least 30 days between assistance requests. Grocery orders (food vouchers) may be issued **six (6) times in a twelve (12) month period**. Each request for assistance must have a new application completed to establish need.
- (13) Because Financial Assistance is a program designed for short-term, temporary, or emergency financial assistance, a lifetime cap is established to prevent creating

financial dependency upon this program as well as abuse. The Lifetime Cap is set at \$20,000. Once a Veteran (or authorized family member) has reached this cap, said individual must present their case *in-person* to the HCVSC. Only true emergencies will be considered for assistance once the Lifetime Cap has been reached.

- (14) Veterans and other appropriate applicants must understand that Financial Assistance does not take the place of sound financial management and budgeting. As stated previously, Financial Assistance with the HCVSC is not a long-term solution. There are situations where it may be more appropriate for individuals to apply for assistance through Job and Family Services, or through the Social Security Administration.
- (15) Mismanagement of personal finances in most instances does not constitute a reasonable justification for receiving financial assistance. Excessive purchases/gifting, credit card debt, luxury vehicles, vacation expenses and business start-ups are choices, and will not be subsidized by HCVSC funds.
- (16) In extreme, long-term financial hardship the HCVSC may CONSIDER establishing a monthly allowance to support indigent Veterans and their immediate family if other resources are not available through other government agencies. This amount, if authorized, will be determined on a case-by-case basis and requires a unanimous vote of approval from all board members. To be considered for this program, a Veteran or Widow, must be permanently and totally disabled as defined by the Social Security Administration, or of an age that prohibits obtaining and maintaining gainful employment. All means of obtaining other long-term financial solutions shall be sought prior to authorizing this allowance. (e.g. pension programs.) The HCVSC retains the right to decrease, increase or cancel this allowance with a 30-day written notice to the recipient IAW ORC 5901.14. Income guidelines for this program will be based on current-year VA non service-connected pension.
- (17) Only one (1) Application for Assistance will be taken per household in any 30-day period. In this 30-day period, the total amount of assistance granted shall not exceed \$1,000.00 (not including food voucher). The HCVSC may authorize a larger amount in unusual circumstances. Only one (1) Food Voucher (grocery order) shall be issued per application per 30-day period unless otherwise authorized by the HCVSC. The monetary allotment for a Grocery order will be as follows:
  - a. \$325.00 for single applicant
  - b. \$100.00 for each additional dependent with a cap of \$725.00
  - c. Under certain circumstances a stand-alone voucher for personal hygiene items may be provided for \$50.00

- (18) All applicants who are employable must be registered with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Individuals may be required to show proof of attempts to obtain employment or be subject to denial of their request for assistance.
- (19) Applicants will be assisted by the County Veteran's Service Officer to identify and contact other public and private human service agencies for possible additional assistance. Applicants will be required to apply for all possible Local, State and Federal benefits.
- (20) In the granting of assistance from this commission, care shall be taken not to jeopardize the client's position with other human service agencies, such as increasing the client's cash income status.
- (21) The HCVSC is the agency of first resort for Veterans, Veterans' widows, and Veteran's dependents; and encourages other agencies to refer such cases to this commission for short term assistance.
- (22) A client/applicant who voluntarily ends employment may be denied financial assistance from the HCVSC.
- (23) An applicant who is denied assistance shall be informed that he/she has the right of appeal. The appeal must be presented in writing within (10) working days of the post mark of the denial letter.
- (24) All Financial Assistance Applications must be received in the Veterans Service Office by noon the Friday prior to monthly HCVSC meetings.
- (25) HCVSC members and employees will treat all financial assistance applicants equally and with dignity and respect. Financial assistance requests will be reviewed, and decisions will be made based upon the contents of the application without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, social associations within the county, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

//approved 6-27-22//

WESLEY OLNEY  
President

//approved 6-27-22//

CHARLES MCCLELAND  
Vice-President

//approved 6-27-22//

LINDA FRENETTE  
Secretary

//approved 6-27-22//

JASON PENNELL  
Board Member

//approved 6-27-22//

ROBERT WENGERD  
Board Member