

Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance Application Information and Instructions

A. General Information

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) is pleased to announce that the next funding opportunity is now open and applications are being accepted for a TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) grant. The Texas Legislature created the FVA to provide grants to address the needs of veterans, their families, and survivors and to enhance veterans' assistance programs, including veterans' representation and counseling. The FVA receives funding from generous individual and corporate donations, the Texas Veterans' lottery scratch-off game, directed contributions from the State Employee Charitable Campaign, and donations from motor vehicle registrations.

1. Cost Reimbursement Grants

The TVC FVA awards grants on a cost reimbursement basis. Under the cost reimbursement method of funding, the grantee is required to finance its operations with its own working capital and grant payments will be made to reimburse the grantee for actual cash disbursements supported by adequate documentation. If applicable, required matching costs must also be incurred before reimbursement takes place.

An initial payment (10% of the total grant amount for organizations required to report monthly or up to 25% of the total grant amount for organizations required to report quarterly) can be made to assist with grant program startup costs. The initial payment can be used for any of the line-items in the approved budget. Start-up funding must be fully expended before TVC will reimburse additional costs.

To be reimbursed for allowable expenses, all grantees are required to submit periodic expenditure reports and supporting documentation. Reimbursements will be made following the submission and FVA review of an accurate expenditure report and complete supporting documentation. Supporting documentation will take the form of an invoice, time sheets, receipt or contract, travel voucher, etc. The expenditure report will record all expenses incurred and matching funds expended.

All expenditures will be reported by budget category. FVA staff may deny any expenditure report as follows: where the grantee is claiming expenditures in a category not budgeted in the approved application, where the amount claimed is in a category that exceeds the allowable budget variation for that category, where the total amount exceeds the total amount of the grant, or where supporting documentation does not match the reimbursement request. Reimbursement for expenses will not be made until both the expenditure report and supporting documentation are correct.

The final expenditure report must be filed within 60 days after the ending date of the grant. Final payment is contingent upon receipt of the final expenditure report and all required programmatic reports or documents. FVA reserves the right to withhold the final payment pending receipt of the required reports. The total project cumulative costs of the grant as provided on the final expenditure report should equal, but shall not exceed the total cumulative expenditures recorded in the financial accounting records of the grantee organization.

If matching costs are listed on the grant budget, the grantee must report the total match expended on the final expenditure report. The grantee will be reimbursed only for that portion or percentage of grant funds that meets match requirements.

If the final expenditure report indicates a refund is due to FVA, within 15 days of notification that a refund is due, the grantee must submit a refund check to the following address:

Texas Veterans Commission Funds for Veterans Assistance
P. O. Box 12277
Austin, TX 78711-2277

Write the name of the grant program and grant number on the refund check.

Allowable expenses are based on the approved budget, the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Fiscal Guidelines, the appropriate OMB Circular, and the State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards:

- Fund for Veterans' Assistance Fiscal Guidelines located can be found at <http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/about/current-grant-process-and-form>.
- OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State and Local Indian Tribal Governments can be found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004.
- OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations can be found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004.
- State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS), promulgated by the Office of the Governor can be found at <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/files/state-grants/UGMS062004.doc>.

For wage and fringe benefit expenses, personnel activity (time and effort) reports are required for nonprofits, and state and local governments. OMB Circular A-122 requires a nonprofit to maintain records of employee time, account for a full day's work, be able to identify the portion devoted to grant projects, be prepared at least monthly, and coincide with one or more pay periods. (State or local governments should see OMB Circular A-87 for specific guidance for preparing personnel activity reports.) Personnel activity reports must be signed by both the employee and the employee's supervisor.

The use of in-kind contributions (e.g., donated services, goods or facilities for which a dollar value can be established) can only be used for matching purposes if they are allowed in the approved budget. FVA reserves the right to disallow any expenditure that is not documented or is in excess of reasonable costs for services, facilities, or goods provided. Detailed information on in-kind contributions is located in OMB Circular A-110, Section 23.

2. Determination of Financial Stability

An applicant must show evidence of financial stability in order to be eligible for a grant award. Certain financial statements are required based on the amount of grant funds requested. Criteria for the determination of financial stability are specified in the FVA Fiscal Guidelines. A grant application

submitted with insufficient financial data to make a determination of financial stability will not be considered for funding.

A determination of financial stability is not required for applicants that are counties or municipalities.

3. Organizations Eligible for Grant Funding

Organizations eligible to submit an Application are:

- Units of local government;
- IRS Code 501(c)(19) Posts or Organizations of Past or Present Members of the Armed Forces;
- IRS Code 501(c)(3) private nonprofit organizations authorized to do business in Texas; and
- Texas chapters of IRS Code 501(c)(4) veterans service organizations; and
- Nonprofit organizations authorized to do business in Texas with experience in providing services to veterans.

4. Organizations NOT Eligible for Grant Funding

The following are **NOT** eligible to submit a grant application:

- Individuals;
- For-profit entities;
- Units of federal or state government, including state agencies, colleges, and universities; and
- Organizations that have not fulfilled all legal requirements to operate in the State of Texas. Organizations must have a current Certificate of Filing from the Corporations Section of the Texas Secretary of State.

5. Additional Applicant Requirements

Applicants, other than counties or municipalities, must be able to provide proof of liability and/or malpractice insurance.

Nonprofit organizations must provide proof of professional liability and/or malpractice insurance.

Approval of more than one Grant Agreement or overlapping grant period is prohibited.

6. Available Funding

The **minimum** funding amount is \$10,000 per project

The **maximum** funding amount is \$1,000,000 per project.

Administrative costs may not exceed **7%** of requested funding.

7. Grant Period

The grant period is the period of time that grantees may carry out grant activities and expend grant funds. All grant activities and expenditures must occur during this period. The grant period for FVA grants is twelve (12) months. The grant period will begin on July 1, 2011, or the date the contract is fully executed, whichever is later, and terminates on June 30, 2012. If all parties have not signed the Agreement by July 1, 2011, the termination date of April 30, 2012, will not be extended and the grant period will be shortened accordingly. No expenditures may be applied to the grant unless incurred within the Grant period.

8. TVC Option to Renew

The Texas Veterans Commission may, at its discretion, extend the term of the grant for up to three (3) years on a year-by-year basis. When extending the grant agreement, the Texas Veterans Commission reserves the option to award an amount that is less than, equal to, or greater than the original award.

9. Supplement, Not Supplant and Non-Duplication of Services

Grant funds must supplement (increase the level of services) and not supplant (replace) activities programs, activities, and services conducted with state or local funds. FVA funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. Additionally, grant funds may not be used to conduct activities or to provide services that are the same or substantially equivalent to those provided by the Texas Veterans Commission.

10. Fund for Veterans' Assistance Grant Objectives

It is the objective of the FVA grants to meet the needs of veterans, their families, and survivors. Such needs include, ***but are not limited to the following:***

- Limited emergency assistance for veterans and their families.
(Emergency assistance is provided for qualifying veterans, spouses, dependent children, dependent parents and surviving spouses on an emergency basis. Financial assistance is not a pension, wage replacement, or an automatic entitlement program, but a short-term temporary program to assist on an emergency basis to provide the basics of life. For the purpose of determining eligibility to receive financial assistance, an "emergency" is a situation which possesses all of the following characteristics: it arose unexpectedly; created an immediate need for financial assistance; and it was not caused or created by the unreasonable conduct of the applicant.);
- Transportation services;
- Family and/or individual counseling for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI);
- Employment, training, education, and job placement assistance;
- Housing assistance for homeless veterans;
- Family and child services;
- Legal services, excluding criminal defense;
- Development of professional services networks; and
- Enhancement or improvement of veterans' assistance programs, including veterans' representation and counseling.

TVC Commissioners must approve all grant awards.

11. Fund for Veterans' Assistance Guiding Principles

The following principles, adopted by the Texas Veterans Commission, apply to all projects funded through the TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance:

- The intent of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance grants program is to support veterans and their families at no cost or reduced charge and to enhance or improve veterans' assistance programs, including veterans' representation and counseling, to address the needs of both veterans and their families;
- Funds will be disbursed with consideration given to equitable distribution across geographical regions of the state; and

- Funding may be provided at the discretion of the Texas Veterans Commission for other compelling needs and/or emerging issues.

12. Funding Exclusions and Prohibitions on Use of Funds

Organizations submitting a grant application should carefully consider the following funding exclusions.

Grant funds **cannot** be used for the following:

- (1) capital expenditures, including capital purchases or capital leases;
- (2) sub-granting of funds to other organizations or agencies;
- (3) distribution of cash or a cash equivalent to veterans and/or their families;
- (4) acquisition or construction of facilities;
- (5) scholarships for education;
- (6) payment of child support;
- (7) any expense that is not consistent with the Grant Agreement;
- (8) contributions to any political party, political association, or the campaign of any candidate for public office, party office, or similar political activities;
- (9) contributions that support or oppose candidates for public or party office, or to support or oppose any ballot propositions;
- (10) any cost that is not allowable under the Grant Agreement, the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance Fiscal Guidelines, State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS), [OMB Circular A-87 \(Cost Principles for State and Local, and Indian Tribal Governments\)](#) or under [OMB Circular A-122 \(Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations\)](#), or
- (11) provision of assistance to dishonorably discharged veterans.

B. Application Submission Information

1. Application Submission Deadline

The completed application and all required attachments must be **received** by TVC no later than **5:00 PM** Central Time, March 28, 2011. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

2. Timeline of Key Events

March 04, 2011	Solicitation for applications released.
March 28, 2011	Completed applications must be received by TVC no later than 5:00 PM Central Time. Email and fax copies are not acceptable.

May 18, 2011	TVC Commissioners make final grant award decisions.
July 1, 2011	Project begin date for Grantees with signed Grant Agreements.

3. Number of Copies

Applicants must submit one (1) complete paper original and one (1) paper copy of the grant application and all required attachments. The grant application must be signed by the party legally responsible to execute contractual agreements. Email or fax copies will **not** be accepted.

4. Application Formatting

Use the following formatting guidelines for the completed application:

- Use “letter size, 8½ x 11” paper;
- No font sizes smaller than 9 points;
- All pages must be typed. Hand-written pages will not be considered;
- All pages must be single-sided; and
- All pages must be consecutively numbered.

Applications must be bound using binder clips. Do not use staples, rubber bands, folders, notebooks or any other binding. Adherence to application submission guidance will be considered during application evaluation.

5. Grant Application Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by the FVA Advisory Committee and scored using criteria and a scoring matrix and presented to Commissioners along with a document that summarizes all applications received. The Commissioners may approve an application in whole or in part, may disapprove an application, or defer action on an application for further review. TVC will notify each applicant in writing of the selection or non-selection for funding.

6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Additional/Clarifying Information, or Errata Notices

Applicants are responsible for periodically checking the TVC website (www.tvc.state.tx.us) for postings of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Additional/Clarifying Information, or Errata Notices that pertain to this solicitation. TVC assumes no responsibility and holds all applicants solely responsible for obtaining all information, errata notices, or changes to applications.

To assure that no prospective applicant may obtain a competitive advantage because of acquisition of information unknown to other prospective applicants, all questions must be submitted in writing to TVC. Questions may be submitted via e-mail to grants@tvc.state.tx.us or by mail to the Texas Veterans Commission, Grants Coordinator, Post Office Box 12277, Austin, TX 78711-2277. Questions must be received at least seven work days prior to the Application submission deadline. The questions and their answers (FAQs) will be posted on the TVC website.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you may obtain a copy of the FAQ by calling 512-463-1157.

7. All Other Questions

Questions concerning the application process or the distribution of grants should be directed to:

Texas Veterans Commission
Fund for Veterans' Assistance
P.O. Box 12277
Austin, Texas 78711-2277
Phone (512) 463-1157
E-mail grants@tvc.state.tx.us

If further information is required, TVC staff will contact the applicant organization. A personal interview with the applicant's representative(s) or a site visit may be required at the discretion of the Commission.

C. How to Apply for Funding

Step 1: Complete the FVA Grant Application. The grant application can be found on the TVC website at <http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/about/current-grant-process-and-form>. Instructions for completing the application follow in the next section of this document.

Step Two: Submit Application Documents

The Grant Application Package must be received 5:00 PM, Central Time on March 28, 2011. Documents must be submitted via one of the following methods:

Delivery Method	Address
U.S. Postal Service	Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance Post Office Box 12277 Austin, Texas 78711-2277
Courier Delivery, including Federal Express, UPS, etc.	Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance 1700 North Congress, Suite 800 Austin, Texas 78701
Hand delivery	Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance 1700 North Congress, Suite 800 Austin, Texas 78701

EMAIL OR FAX COPIES OF THE COMPLETED APPLICATION ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE AND WILL NOT BE EVALUATED.

It is the responsibility of Applicant to ensure application was received.

Fiscal Reference Documents

The Fund for Veterans' Assistance Fiscal Guidelines can be found on the Texas Veterans Commission website at <http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/about/current-grant-process-and-form>.

Applicable OMB Circulars for the following grantee types can be found below:

Grantee Type	Applicable OMB Circular
Government entities, e.g. state agencies, counties, cities, public school districts, etc.	OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State and Local, and Indian Tribal Governments
Nonprofit organizations, e.g. community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.	OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations

Additionally, all grantees must comply with the State of Texas [Uniform Grant Management Standards \(UGMS\)](#), promulgated by the Office of the Governor.

Application Instructions

Please follow all instructions. Responses are limited to front side of the page only, with a font no smaller than 9 point.

Page 1, Cover Page

- Complete the Applicant Organization Name.

Page 3, Applicant Information

- Complete this page.

Page 4, Checklist of Required Attachments

- Ensure that the documents on the checklist are included with the completed application package. If a required attachment is not included, the application will not be considered complete. (Not required of counties and municipalities.)

Page 5, Grant Assurances

- Applicants must agree with all assurances.
- Enter the Applicant Name in the space provided.
- The Assurances page must be signed and dated by the Authorized Representative who can obligate the organization in a contractual agreement.

Pages 6-7, Part 1: Organization Information, Sections 1.1 – 1.4

Follow the instructions provided in each section of the grant application form.

Page 8, Part 2: Grant Project Information, Sections 2.1 – 2.3

Follow the instructions provided in each section of the grant application form.

Page 9, Part 3, Section 3.1 Performance Measures

- Performance measures describe how success in achieving the project goals will be measured and tracked. Organizations receiving grant funds will calculate performance by counting each veteran, their dependents, and survivors that receive grant-funded services. The aggregate number of veterans, dependents, and survivors will be reported periodically to TVC using the Performance report form. Projected outcomes should reflect the total number of veterans, dependents, and survivors that the applicant anticipates serving throughout the grant term. All performance measures and/or proposed deliverables must be SMART:
 - **Specific** - Performance measures/deliverables must be definite and precise. Do not use acronyms, abbreviations, or wording that may not be relevant to someone from outside your organization;
 - **Measurable** – Performance measures/deliverables must be quantifiable;
 - **Achievable** - Performance measures/deliverables must relate directly to the proposed project;
 - **Realistic** - Performance measures/deliverables must be reasonably achieved; and

- **Time-limited** - Performance measures/deliverables must have a specific begin date and a specific end date. These dates usually coincide with the grant period.
- Use the table in this section to:
 - List performance measures and/or deliverables for the proposed project;
 - List the tools that will be used to measure performance; and
 - List the projected number for each performance measure or deliverable.
- Additionally, there are three required outcome measures. Those are listed in rows 1 – 3 in the performance measures table. Complete the first three rows. If a required performance measure is not applicable to the proposed project, enter “NA” into each cell of that row. **Do not leave a cell in the first three rows blank.**
- Other measures, appropriate to the proposed project, should be added as well. Add additional rows as necessary.

Page 10, Part 3: Performance Reporting, Section 3.2

Follow the instructions provided in this section of the grant application.

Page 10, Part 3: Fiscal Reporting, Section 3.3

Follow the instructions provided in this section of the grant application.

Page 11, Part 3: Sustainability, Section 3.4

Follow the instructions provided in this section of the grant application.

Page 12, Part 4: Budget, Section 4.1

- List program period.
- Provide the amount of grant funds requested in the space provided.
- List Administrative Cost Percentage.
- List Direct Cost Rate and provide cost allocation plan with Indirect Cost Rate, if applicable.
- Complete the budget tables.
- When developing the budget, note the following definitions of **Administrative Costs, Program Costs, and Matching Funds**.
 - **Administrative costs** refer to central executive functions that do not directly support a specific project or service, as distinguished from program administration or management expenditures that qualify as direct program costs. Administrative costs are incurred for common objectives that benefit multiple programs administered by the grantee organization, or the organization as a whole, and as such are not readily assignable to a particular program funding stream. Administrative costs relate to the general management of the grantee organization.
 - Administrative costs must be budgeted by line-item and detailed in the Budget Narrative.
 - Administrative costs cannot exceed 7% of the amount requested.

Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to:

- Accounting, audit, budgeting, financial management, payroll, and procurement functions;
 - Personnel management functions;
 - Costs of goods and services required for administrative functions; and
 - If, based on funds requested, your organization is responsible for providing a financial audit, a portion of that cost may be included in administrative funds budgeted.
- **Project costs** can be specifically identified with delivery of a particular project, service, or activity undertaken by a grantee to achieve an outcome intended by the funding program. Direct program costs are incurred for the service delivery and management components within a particular program or project. Therefore, direct program costs include expenditures on some activities with administrative qualities, including salaries and benefits of program staff and managers, equipment, training, conferences, travel, and contracts that expressly relate to the delivery of an individual program or service funded by a specific grant source.
- **Matching Funds**, for the purpose of this grant, is defined as cash, the value of in-kind goods, or the value of in-kind services that the organization will dedicate specifically to supplement the FVA grant project. In the Matching column (Column D) on the budget forms, list the additional resources, both in-kind and financial, that the organization will dedicate to the grant project.

Page 14, Part 4: Budget Narrative, Section 4.2

- The Budget Narrative describes each budget line-item, provides complete detail that clearly explains each line-item, and shows how the amount of each line-item is calculated. In your budget narrative, you must include a description of each line-item in Budget Table 1 and a calculation showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for each line-item. **If both of these items are not included, the application will not be considered for funding.** Note: The person evaluating the grant budget may not be familiar with your program. It is very important to be clear and thorough in your budget narrative.
- The Budget Narrative must include a description of each line-item in Budget Table 1 and must also include a calculation showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for each line-item. The Budget Narrative must also include descriptions and calculations for Matching Funds.
 - **A.1. Salaries and Wages** – identify all personnel by job title and provide calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **A.2. Employee Benefits** - Identify employee benefits and costs. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.1. Client Services** – Provide a brief description of the services provided to clients. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.2. Client Support** – Provide a brief description of the support provided to clients or on behalf of clients. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.

- **B.3. – Client Transportation** – Provide a brief description of the transportation services provided to clients. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.4. Contracted Services for Clients** – Provide a brief explanation of each contracted client service. Include contract personnel who provide services to clients in this category. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.5. Equipment** – not capitalized – Provide a brief description of the equipment to be purchased and why the equipment is necessary for the program. Technology purchase, e.g. computers, printers, software, etc. should be budgeted in this line-item. All technology purchases must be approved by TVC. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.6. Repairs and Maintenance** – Provide a brief description of the repair and maintenance costs. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.7. Rental of Space/Facilities** – Provide a brief description of all rental costs. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.8. Supplies and Materials** – Provide a brief description of supplies and materials costs, including the supplies and materials to be purchased. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.9. Utilities** – Itemize all utilities costs. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.10. Employee Travel** – Describe all anticipated travel and how this travel relates to the delivery of program services. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
 - **B.11. Other** – Itemize and briefly describe all costs in this category. Include calculations showing how you arrived at the budgeted amount for this category.
- Additionally, an example budget narrative can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/admins/grants/apply/techassist/resource_pg8.html. (This example is provided only as an example of how a budget narrative can be structured. Specific costs in this example budget narrative may not be allowable under this grant program. Allowable costs must follow the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance Fiscal Guidelines document.)

Page 16, Part 5: Statement of Work

Provide a detailed description of the project including services to be provided and goals of the project. Statement MUST include:

- 1) How the organization determined/assessed the need(s) for the project within the geographic area of service.
 - a. Provide a description of:
 - Any research conducted to determine the needs of the veterans within your area of service. This may include surveys conducted by your agency, research data provided by the VA or other agency/entity (please cite), etc.
 - b. Explain how the project:
 - Expands access to hard-to-reach veterans – for example, expand access through collaboration with other organizations serving the target population;

- Serves especially vulnerable veteran population segments – for example, services to veterans with disabilities, homeless veterans, etc.;
 - Addresses well-documented, high-priority needs NOT being adequately met by other providers – for example, women veterans;
 - Applies creative and innovative methods/approaches that could significantly enhance access, increase efficiency, improve service quality, and/or addresses new and emerging issues;
 - Leverages the investment of FVA grant funds by attracting non-TVC funds or other resources – for example, securing private foundation grants, corporate gifts, etc.;
 - Results in improvements in the lives of Texas veterans and/or their families.
- 2) How the project meets the determined need(s).
- a. Describe how the goals of the project aim to meet/address the determined need of veterans within your area of service.
- 3) How the organization will target/reach veterans to provide the services of the project.
- a. Specifically describe all ways in which your organization will reach/contact veterans to provide project services. This may include marketing materials like brochures or email campaigns, attending veterans events, press releases, partnering with other agencies, word of mouth, etc.