

Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Policy Bulletin: Guidance Pertaining to Fire and Emergency Medical Services Grant

Date of Origin: April 9, 2024	Policy Bulletin No.: 24-101
Last Revision: April 9, 2024	Page: 1 of 4
Last Review: April 9, 2024	Maintained By: Office of Legal Counsel
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I. Policy Statement:

Wisconsin statute § 45.58 authorizes the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) to award grants for fire districts, cities, villages, and towns (hereinafter “Local Government Entities”) that provide fire and emergency medical services to veterans homes and other veterans facilities. The purpose of this Policy Bulletin is to define the term “other veterans facilities” and provide transparency, objective standards, and fairness in award allocations.

II. Purpose:

This Policy Bulletin provides guidance on the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Grant that WDVA awards pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 45.58. This Policy Bulletin clarifies the following issues:

- A. Defines the Local Government Entity facilities that are eligible for these grants.
- B. Specifies the formula used to determine award amounts.

III. Effect as to Previous WDVA Interpretations:

This Policy Bulletin supersedes any prior WDVA legal opinions or internal procedures for the grants WDVA annually provides for fire and emergency medical services.

IV. Issue:

Wis. Stat. § 45.58 authorizes WDVA to annually award individual grants to Local Government Entities out of a biennial appropriated amount of \$600,000. Eligibility criteria require that a Local Government Entity provide fire and emergency medical services to veterans homes and other facilities for veterans. The statute does not (1) define the phrase “other facilities for veterans” or (2) require specific allocation criteria.

V. Background:

WDVA awards various grants as part of its mission to serve Wisconsin veterans and their families. Transparency, fairness, and compliance with legal requirements govern WDVA’s grant awards.

The Fire and Emergency Medical Services Grant awards annual grants to Local Government Entities for fire and emergency medical services outlined above.ⁱ These grants underscore the government partnership to ensure service, care, and safety to veterans within WDVA facilities.

A. Legal construction of the statutory language “other facilities for veterans.”

Chapter 45 of the Wisconsin statutes defines “veterans homes” but does not define the term “other facilities for veterans.”ⁱⁱ Since the term “other facilities for veterans” is undefined, rules of statutory construction dictate that “when general words follow specific words in a statutory enumeration, the general words are construed to embrace objects similar in nature to those objects enumerated by the preceding specific words.”ⁱⁱⁱ

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Chapter 45 of the Wisconsin statutes defines veterans homes to include the Wisconsin Veterans Homes at Chippewa Falls, King, and Union Grove.^{iv} These facilities share common characteristics and must meet the following criteria:

1. The facility is located on state-owned or leased property.^v
2. The facility is operated by or under the supervision of WDVA.^{vi}
3. The facility is designed to serve and house multiple veterans.
4. The facility is authorized under Wis. Stat. Chapter 45.^{vii}

Applying the rule of statutory construction, for a facility to fall within the statutory language of “other facilities for veterans,” each eligible facility should share these characteristics. These WDVA facilities include Veteran Housing and Recovery Program (VHRP) facilities and state Veterans Cemeteries under Wis. Stat. §§ 45.43 and 45.61, respectively.

Therefore, this statutory construction informs grant eligibility for those Local Government Entities providing fire and emergency medical services to any of the following WDVA facilities:

1. The Wisconsin Veterans Homes at Chippewa Falls, King, or Union Grove.
2. WDVA VHRP facilities.
3. Wisconsin Veterans Cemeteries at King, Spooner, or Union Grove.

B. Grant Formula Criteria.

WDVA determines grant apportionment based objectively on the percentage of each Local Government Entity's burden in relation to the total burden of protecting the veteran facilities that WDVA operates and the veterans therein. From a total annually appropriated amount of \$300,000, WDVA allocates these grants to eligible Local Government Entities using the following formula:

1. 66% (\$200,000/\$300,000) of the annual grant total is allocated based on each Local Government Entity's pro rata share of the total number of veterans in WDVA Veterans Homes and other facilities for veterans.

2024 Calculation

Total veterans served – 536

$200,000/536 = \$373.13$ per veteran

Chippewa Falls - 120 veterans x 373.13 = \$44,776

Union Grove – 111 veterans x 373.13 = \$41,418

King/Waupaca Area Fire District – 288 veterans x 373.13 = \$107,463

Green Bay - 17 veterans x 373.13 = \$6,343

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2. 27% (\$80,000/\$300,000) of the annual grant total is allocated based on each Local Government Entity's pro rata share of the total square footage of Veterans Homes and other facilities for veterans buildings.

2024 Calculation

Total Square Footage – Homes, VHRP, and Cemeteries – 765,815

$80,000 / 765,815 = \$0.104$ per acre

Chippewa Falls – $83,342 + 31,280 + 0 = 114,622 \times .104 = \$11,974$

Union Grove – $200,974 + 29,991 + 6,166 = 237,131 \times .104 = \$24,772$

King/Waupaca Area Fire District – $393,500 + 0 + 4,400 = 397,900 \times .104 = \$41,566$

Town of Beaver Brook – $0 + 0 + 9,400 = 9,400 \times .104 = \982

Green Bay – $0 + 6,762 + 0 = 6,762 \times .104 = \706

3. 7% (\$20,000/\$300,000) of the annual grant total is allocated based on each Local Government Entity's pro rata share of acreage that WDVA owns or leases at eligible sites that may require fire and emergency medical services.

2024 Calculation

Total Acres – Cemeteries and Homes – 311

$20,000 / 311 = \$64.31$ per acre

Chippewa Falls – $0 + 2 = 2 \times 64.31 = \129

Union Grove - $105 + 2 = 107 \times 64.31 = \$6,881$

King/Waupaca Area Fire District – $63 + 42 = 105 \times 64.31 = \$6,752$

Town of Beaver Brook – $97 + 0 = 97 \times 64.31 = \$6,238$

This formula equitably apportions the grant among Local Government Entities consistent with their share of the burden of providing fire and emergency medical services to veterans at eligible sites.

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VI. Endnotes:

ⁱ [Wis. Stat. § 45.58](#) provides: Grants for fire and emergency medical services. From the appropriation under s. 20.485 (1) (kj), the department may make in each fiscal biennium up to \$600,000 in grants to fire districts, cities, villages, and towns that provide fire and emergency medical services to veterans homes and other facilities for veterans. A fire district, city, village, or town may not expend grant funds it receives under this section for any purpose other than providing fire and emergency medical services to veterans homes and other facilities for veterans.

ⁱⁱ Wis. Stat. § 45.01(12m) defines “veterans home” as “the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove, the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, and the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls.” [Wis. Stat. § 45.01\(12m\)](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ [State v. Peters](#), 263 Wis. 2d 475, 491, 665 N.W.2d 171, 2003 WI 88 (Wis. 2003) (Abrahamson concurrence) (“Ejusdem generis is Latin for ‘of the same kind,’ and means that when general words follow specific in a statutory enumeration, the general words are construed to embrace objects similar in nature to those objects enumerated by the preceding specific words.”)

^{iv} [Wis. Stat. § 45.01\(12m\)](#).

^v See [38 USC § 8137](#); [Wis. Stat. §§ 45.50\(1\), \(2b\) & \(2d\)](#).

^{vi} See *id.* For the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Chippewa Falls, WDVA may enter into an agreement with a private entity to operate it. [Wis. Stat. § 45.50\(2m\)\(c\)](#). WDVA has exercised this option. Still, federal regulations provide that “[i]f a facility is operated by an entity contracting with the State, the State must assign a State employee to monitor the operations of the facility on a full-time onsite basis.” [38 CFR § 51.210\(e\)](#).

^{vii} See Wis. Stat. §§ [45.50](#) – [45.51](#).