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WDVA Bulletin No. 1043

TO: County Veterans Service Offices

SUBJECT: 2016 County Veterans' Service Grants – Supplement #2

In accordance with the newly revised Wis. Stats. s. 45.82, counties that meet statutory standards and employ a full or part-time County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) are eligible for a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) for the improvement of services to veterans, on a reimbursable basis. The WDVA shall twice yearly reimburse grant recipients for approved and properly documented expenses, subject to the statutory annual reimbursement limits and compliance with department procedures.

As referenced in WDVA Bulletin #1032, with the passage of 2015 Wisconsin Act 55, only the following expense [categories] are eligible for reimbursement this application period:

1. Information technology
2. Transportation for veterans and service to veterans with barriers
3. Special outreach to veterans
4. Training and services provided by the WDVA and the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA)
5. Salary and fringe benefit expenses incurred in 2015; salary and fringe benefit expenses incurred in 2016, except that total reimbursement for such expenses shall not exceed 50 percent of the applicable maximum grant; and salary and fringe benefit expenses incurred in 2017, except that total reimbursement for such expenses shall not exceed 25 percent of the applicable maximum grant.

The WDVA has completed its review of reimbursement grant requests submitted by counties for documented and paid expenses during the first reimbursement grant period of July 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015. During our review we identified several requests for reimbursement for expense items that are not supported by this grant program and in other cases, a counties did not provide sufficient documentation to support reimbursement.

This bulletin is intended to 1) further identify expenses that are not reimbursable under this grant program, 2) address some documentation issues and 3) provide additional guidance for counties requesting reimbursement for documented and paid expenses during the second reimbursement period (January 1, 2016 – June 15, 2016).

Several counties requested reimbursement for one or more of the following expense items which are **not** reimbursable under this grant program:

1. Expense reimbursement requests that exceed the annual statutory reimbursement limit.
2. National / State / Regional CVSO Association fees, registration fees and annual dues.
3. Membership fees and annual dues
4. National CVSO Association Training.
5. Training (including associated travel expenses: mileage, meals, room and board, registration fees) **not** sponsored by the WDVA and/or USDVA. **Note:** WDVA “pre-approved” formal training provided by USDVA and/or WDVA is eligible for reimbursement. If WDVA training occurs during a CVSO conference, travel expenses incurred on the day of training is reimbursable.
6. Salary / Fringe for a CVSO employee not identified on the reimbursement grant application.
7. Employee paid bonuses.
8. Expense items purchased and paid for using a CVSO “personal” or “spouse” credit card.
9. Indirect IT charges (including consumables) or purchases.
10. Local / State / National newspaper subscriptions or publications.
11. Paid advertisement to fill vacant CVSO office positions.
12. Office supplies (excluding IT equipment consumables).
13. Postage
14. Purchase of office paper for copy machines and/or copy print charges.
15. Volunteer driver fees (only mileage at the state rate of \$0.51 is reimbursable). A county must use the Veterans Transportation Mileage Log and Reimbursement Request Form.
16. Mileage reimbursement for general outreach to veterans and/or travel to meetings throughout the county or state.
17. Transportation and meal costs to outreach events in accordance with county reimbursement policy.
18. Purchase of promotional items that did not include documented CVSO contact information (i.e., address, phone number, CVSO website and/or email).
19. Local, state or federal taxes resulting from purchases (excluding meals for approved training).
20. Purchase of flags, holders and grave markers.
21. Registration fees for booths at outreach events

The following are documentation issues discovered during our review:

1. Reimbursement requests for expenses that were incurred prior to July 1, 2015.
2. Salary reimbursement requests that did not include appropriate documentation. One or more of the following was missing from the documentation provided: County name, employee name, paid salary for the period of July 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015.
3. Purchase orders and invoices that did not include “proof of payment” documentation.
4. Invoices and statements missing vendor name and purchaser name.
5. Reimbursement requests for training that did not include a copy of the training agenda or the details and cost of actual training expenses (e.g., mileage, meals, room and board).
6. Veteran Transportation Mileage Log and Reimbursement Request Form used to “record” CVSO travel throughout their county. This form is only to be used to report transportation of veterans.

The WDVA will mail out approved reimbursement grants to counties within the next few weeks. In the grant letter we will identify the grant amount requested by the county, the grant amount approved by WDVA and provide a general explanation as to why certain expense was denied.

Please keep the above and following in mind when you submit reimbursement requests for the 2nd reimbursement period (January 1, 2016 – June 15, 2016):

1. If a specific reimbursement request was denied by WDVA for lack of appropriate documentation, a County can resubmit the expense reimbursement request to WDVA with appropriate documentation.
2. A county can request reimbursement up to the statutory annual reimbursement limits during the 1st

and/or second reimbursement periods. It is not a requirement that a county only request one-half the reimbursement limit each period.

3. When providing documentation for approved expenses, please match up invoices and/or receipts of purchase with appropriate receipt of payments.

For questions regarding the 2016 CVSO Grant, please call 1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387) and ask to speak with Chad McCafferty, or submit an email to VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov.