

STATE of MICHIGAN VFW

2026-2027 VMS, MENTAL HEALTH & WELFARE PROGRAM

This is a combined program that has two primary components that have significant cross-over impact, which is why they have been brought together under one heading.

The classifications for awards in this program will be determined based on the National Membership Report dated June 30, 2026, as follows:

Membership Divisions:

Division I	under 50 members
Division II	51-90 members
Division III	91-139 members
Division IV	140 and over members

The reporting period for determination of the following awards is Jul 1, 2026, through Jun 30, 2027.

2026-2027 Mental Health Wellness & Welfare Program

The Mental Health Wellness & Welfare program aims to bring awareness to the issue of veteran mental health needs to our VFW membership. Bringing awareness through prevention education of the barriers helps remove the stigma often associated with seeking assistance by veterans in chronic or acute crises. Untreated mental health issues lead to workplace stress, family problems, homelessness, poverty, employment, safety and the local economy leading to suicide and or other physical and mental ailments that impede quality of life. Based on the eight dimensions of wellness: Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Spiritual, Vocational, Financial and Environmental.

Member awareness and education can greatly reduce the number of these tragic results. On this webpage are some tools that can assist you. Additional resources will be added to the webpage as they are vetted. Mental Health events should be submitted to the Mental Health Director as soon as possible for proper prior publicity through the MOV, Facebook and other opportunities. Remember if you want your event published in the MOV its imperative to submit 90 days prior to the event and within the MOV deadlines.

Post Program Participation:

1. 5 points if your Post submits a nominee to the Mental Health Director before May 1, 2027, for Mental Health Awareness Advocate of the Year. The Mental Health Wellness & Welfare Committee will review all nominees and select one Mental Health Awareness Advocate of the Year who will receive a plaque from the State Commander at the 2027 Fall Conference.
2. 10 points if your Post holds a Mental Health forum/discussion in your community. The program must include mental health outreach resources and at least one Mental Health Certified Counselor as an Advisor/Moderator, etc. Reports of the event must include photos and be submitted to the Director within 48 hours of program completion.
3. 5 points if your Post donates your Post Home for a Mental Health Community Event.

4. 5 points for each member of your Post who volunteers as a panelist at a Department Mental Health Welfare Committee townhall on “Mental Health Wellness for Veterans”. We are planning 4 events with the date and time TBA. Maximum 15 points.

5. 2 points for each member of your Post that attends a Suicide Training Events such as VA’s SAVE Program /QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) or completes Mental Health First Aid for Veterans additionally THRIVE. (Therapeutic Interventions, Habit-Routine, Relational - Social, Individual Differences, Values and Beliefs and Emotional Factors) Attendance by Post members must be reported to the Director before Jun, 30, 2027. Maximum 10 points.

The top Post in each membership division above will be recognized with a plaque from the State Commander at the 2027 Dept Fall Conference. The second and third place Posts in each Division will receive a citation.

Posts are encouraged to host fundraising events or make Post Relief donations to the Department of Mental Health & Welfare Fund during 2026-2027. This fund assists veterans in emergent need, as determined by Department Officers on a case-by-case basis. Post donations to this fund will be reflected on the Post donation report on the Department website during the period Jul 1, 2026, through Jun 30, 2027.

2026-2027 Veterans and Military Support Program (VMS)

Donations to the National VMS Program support the key elements of the National umbrella:

- Military Assistance Program (military unit support and Adopt A Unit) Virtual PINS to support military member telephone calls
 - New 2026-2027 VMS Key Clips \$20
- Unmet Needs (emergent financial assistance)
- VFW “Sports Clips Help A Hero Scholarship” Foundation Program
 - Student Veterans of America
 - Service Citations
 - Legacy Citations
 - Military Working Dog Citation

Donations to the National VMS program should be made payable to VFW Department of Michigan earmarked for National VFW VMS. Department will accumulate those donations and submit them in a consolidated report to National. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FROM RECENT YEARS.

Any significant VMS event or program must be submitted to the Department VMS Director, Doug Brinker, as soon as possible after it occurs.

Post Program Participation Jul 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027:

1. 10 points if your Post hosts a VMS event such as a Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship Cut A Thon .
2. 2 points for each Post member who attends a VMS fundraiser or awareness event and the Post provides a report to the VMS Director.

3. 5 points if your Post participates in the VFW ADOPT a UNIT program, new or continuing, and reports to the VMS Department Director what support was being given to that unit by the Post. Posts can request up to not exceeding \$1500 from National for a Yellow Ribbon Campaign, Send Off Troops Event working together with the FRG Family Readiness Group.

4. 2 points if your Post displays VMS program materials at your Post events such as banquets or other public events hosted at the Post and the Post provides evidence via pictures. Program materials must be displayed at your Post. Reports of events with photos must be submitted to the Director. Maximum 10 points.

5. 1 point for each quarter that your Post submits a VMS report to the Director. Maximum 4 points.

The top three Posts in each membership division above will be recognized with a citation from the State Commander. Post awards will be presented at the first District meeting following the 2027 State Convention.

District Program Participation July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027:

The District(s) with the highest percentage of Posts that make a donation to the National VMS Program of at least \$100 will receive a citation from the State Commander presented to the District VMS Chairman at the first District meeting following the 2027 State Convention.

Thank you for the support of these programs and the veterans they assist.

Douglas Brinker, M.A. CPSS, Director
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