

197.608 VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE GRANT PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Grant program.** A veterans service office grant program is established to be administered by the commissioner of veterans affairs consisting of grants to counties to enable them to enhance the effectiveness of their veterans service offices.

Subd. 2. **Rule development.** The commissioner shall consult with the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers in formulating rules to implement the grant program.

Subd. 2a. **Grant cycle.** Counties may become eligible to receive grants on a three-year rotating basis according to a schedule to be developed and announced in advance by the commissioner. The schedule must list no more than one-third of the counties in each year of the three-year cycle. A county may be considered for a grant only in the year of its listing in the schedule.

Subd. 3. **Eligibility.** (a) To be eligible for a grant under this program, a county must employ a county veterans service officer as authorized by sections 197.60 and 197.606, who is certified to serve in this position by the commissioner.

(b) A county that employs a newly hired county veterans service officer who is serving an initial probationary period and who has not been certified by the commissioner is eligible to receive a grant under subdivision 2a.

(c) Except for the situation described in paragraph (b), a county whose county veterans service officer does not receive certification during any year of the three-year cycle is not eligible to receive a grant during the remainder of that cycle or the next three-year cycle.

Subd. 4. **Grant process.** (a) The commissioner shall determine the process for awarding grants. A grant may be used only for the purpose of enhancing the operations of the County Veterans Service Office.

(b) The commissioner shall provide a list of qualifying uses for grant expenditures as developed in subdivision 5 and shall approve a grant only for a qualifying use and if there are sufficient funds remaining in the grant program to cover the full amount of the grant.

Subd. 5. **Qualifying uses.** The commissioner shall consult with the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers in developing a list of qualifying uses for grants awarded under this program. The commissioner is authorized to use any unexpended funding for this program to provide training and education for county veterans service officers.

Subd. 6. **Grant amount.** The amount of each grant must be determined by the commissioner and may not exceed:

- (1) \$1,400, if the county's veteran population is less than 1,000;
- (2) \$2,800, if the county's veteran population is 1,000 or more but less than 3,000;
- (3) \$4,200, if the county's veteran population is 3,000 or more but less than 10,000; or
- (4) \$5,600, if the county's veteran population is 10,000 or more.

The veteran population of each county shall be determined by the figure supplied by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, as adopted by the commissioner.

Subd. 7. **Recapture.** If a county fails to use the grant for the qualified use approved by the commissioner, the commissioner shall seek recovery of the grant from the county and the county must repay the grant amount.

History: *1993 c 192 s 79; 1993 c 366 s 5; 1Sp2003 c 1 art 2 s 65; 2005 c 156 art 4 s 8; 2011 c 76 art 1 s 78*