

## **UPDATED: Supporting Veterans' Mental Health During COVID-19 Through the CARES Act**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Steering Committee has approved a proposal by the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services (DAABHS) to fund mental health services, outreach and education, and crisis intervention through December 2020 for veterans experiencing mental health issues during the public health emergency. The pandemic has caused many Arkansans to experience negative mental and behavioral health outcomes. The winter holiday season often causes an increase in the need for suicide prevention and crisis interventions. This proposal aims to make sure there are targeted efforts underway to support Arkansas veterans and connect them to services in their communities.

### **Funding Veteran Service Organizations to Offer Direct Supports**

- Non-profit veteran service organizations may submit proposals for equipment costs and delivering direct services to veterans experiencing mental health conditions through December 30, 2020.
  - \$3.4 million will be dedicated to fund direct support for veterans and their families.
  - To be eligible organizations must have:
    - Mission and vision that align with addressing the needs of Arkansas veterans;
    - Demonstrated history of service to Arkansas veterans;
    - Leadership and staff that are representative of Arkansas veterans;
    - Demonstrated history of clear strategies for engaging Arkansas veterans; and
    - Been in operation since March 1, 2019.
- Eligible services and expenditures may include:
  - First Aid & Trauma Supplies
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Naloxone
  - Training & Professional Development
  - Hosting Seminars, Support Groups
  - Food Assistance for Veterans and Families
  - Housing Expenses for Veterans Who are Homeless
  - Outreach & Education Campaigns about Available Services
  - Information Technology Support & Equipment
- Organizations must apply detailing their requested needs and proposed budget for eligible costs by Nov. 22 at 11:59 P.M. Applications are available at: <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/procurement/details/cares-act-supports-for-veterans-with-behavioral-health-needs-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>.
  - Organizations may submit applications for up to the following amounts:
    - Organizations with 0 to 4 employees may submit for up to \$15,000
    - Organizations with 5 to 15 employees may submit for up to \$30,000
    - Organizations with 15 to 30 employees may submit for up to \$60,000
    - Organizations with 30 or more employees may submit for up to \$100,000

**All recipients will be subject to weekly monitoring on activities and services provided to ensure accountability with CARES Act funds and activities.**