



VETERANS NAVIGATION NETWORK

Facilitating Veteran Success

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Subject: Emergency Financial Assistance Funds for Veterans for FY2027

Mr. Mark Morse
Mr. Mike Waters
Mr. Chris White
Board of County Commissioners
Yellowstone County
2825 3rd Ave N.
Billings, MT 59101

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Veterans Navigation Network (VNN) to respectfully request \$40,000 in funding from Yellowstone County's Public Safety Mental Health (PSMH) funds. The funds would support veterans with mental health conditions who are justice-involved and/or at risk of being homeless as they navigate critical challenges integrating into society. The funds could be disbursed in \$10,000 increments on a FY 2027 quarterly basis.

VNN feels we have responsibly administered the funds granted from the County on March and June 2025 and March 2026. We seek to provide targeted assistance to approximately 36-45 more veterans facing crises, offering them the essential resources needed to stabilize their lives and integrate successfully into their communities.

The veterans we seek to assist often grapple with mental health conditions and immediate barriers to housing, transportation, and basic utilities, increasing their risk of recidivism and/or homelessness. Each veteran would be eligible for between \$500 -

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\$1,500 in financial assistance for these critical expenses, enabling them to secure stable housing, maintain utilities, access reliable transportation, and seek necessary treatment. With your continued support, we can provide a lifeline that reduces the likelihood of re-incarceration or homelessness and sets these veterans on a path toward stability and self-sufficiency.

To accomplish this, each veteran receiving aid will benefit from the dedicated support of a VNN Resource Navigator. Over the course of six months, our navigators will provide tailored case management and mentorship, with a goal that at least 90% of participants will avoid reentering the justice system or becoming homeless during this period. By meeting veterans' immediate needs and offering consistent follow-up, we not only mitigate the risk of recidivism but also contribute to healthier, more resilient communities.

Our approach combines financial assistance with comprehensive support services, addressing not only economic challenges but also service-related disabilities, mental health needs, and connections to employment and educational resources. We are committed to honoring our veterans' service and ensuring they have access to the tools and guidance needed to build productive, fulfilling lives.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and would welcome the opportunity to discuss how your support can make a transformative impact on the lives of justice-involved veterans. Thank you for your commitment to our shared mission of fostering stability and hope among those who have served our nation.

Warm regards,

Blake Fuhrman

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