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**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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WDVA Bulletin No. 1032

TO: County Veterans Service Offices

SUBJECT: 2016 County Veterans' Service Grants

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, on a reimbursable basis. The WDVA shall twice yearly reimburse grant recipients for documented expenses, subject to the statutory annual reimbursement limits.

To apply for a grant, the County shall do the following by October 30, 2015:

1. File a grant application (WDVA 0055B) with WDVA for the current fiscal year (7/1/15 – 6/30/16).
2. File a federal benefits service delivery report (WDVA 0055D) with WDVA for the preceding fiscal year (7/1/14 – 6/30/15), not "calendar" year as requested in previous years.
3. A letter is required from your county's county executive, administrator, or administrative coordinator to certify that it employs a CVSO, appointed under civil service procedures in accordance with Wis. Stats. s. 45.82(2) to qualify for this grant. This letter shall state the specific date on which the current CVSO was appointed.

If the county employs a CVSO appointed on or after April, 15, 2015, the county shall also provide the following supplemental information along with the application:

1. Copy of the civil service exam completed by the current CVSO.
2. Description of each media venue utilized and documentation of the advertisements used to ensure that the county veteran service officer position was advertised for competitive application as required by law.
3. A copy of the formal position appointment letter from the county to the CVSO.
4. Documentation of the process and communications regarding the recruitment and hire between the county and the Wisconsin Office of State Employment Relations (OSER), or if OSER was not used, documentation supporting that the specific recruitment and hire of the current CVSO was conducted in compliance with s. 59.52 (8) or ch. 63 of the Wisconsin Statutes, including but not limited to copies of the list of all applicants for the position, copies of the examinations completed by the applicants, copies of the advertisements and media outlets used to advertise the position and the number of

interviews held for the position.

5. If your county utilizes a separate civil service system, please describe the specific system and detail how it was utilized (from exam and advertisement to scoring/validating scores, interviewing and hiring determination). Provide documentation supporting this detailed description.

The application packet for the **2016** County Veterans' Service Grants, [WDVA 0055](http://dva.state.wi.us/Documents/newsMediaDocuments/WDVA%20Toolkit/WDVA_0055_CVSO_Grant_Packet.docx), is now available online at http://dva.state.wi.us/Documents/newsMediaDocuments/WDVA%20Toolkit/WDVA_0055_CVSO_Grant_Packet.docx. Completed application materials referenced above must be mailed or faxed to the address/fax no. listed above, no later than **Friday, October 30, 2015**. Indicate in transmittal envelope or cover sheet that it is the **2016** CVSO Grant. Applications may also be scanned and emailed to VetsBenefitsGrants@dva.wisconsin.gov. Please use "**2016 CVSO Grant**" in the subject line.

With the passage of 2015 Wisconsin Act 55, as referenced above, the WDVA shall provide CVSO grants on a reimbursable basis. Only the following expense [categories], as defined by WDVA and subject to change in subsequent years by rule, are eligible for reimbursement this application period:

1. **Information technology**: means computer equipment and/or database infrastructure to assist Counties with the processing of USDVA Disability Claims).
2. **Transportation for veterans** (e.g., senior centers, VA hospitals, veterans homes, veteran and military organizations, etc..) **and service to veterans with barriers** (e.g., economic, health, limited transportation services in county). **NOTE:** Transportation expenses claimed by a County under Wis. Stats. s. 45.83(1) are not eligible for reimbursement under this grant program.
3. **Special outreach to veterans**: means outreach efforts to veterans regarding state and federal veterans' benefit programs and services (e.g., marketing, advertisement, promotional materials, news letters).
4. **Training and services provided by the department and the federal department of veterans affairs**: means formal training/conferences (including associated travel expenses: mileage, meals, room and board, registration fees), sponsored by the department and federal department of veterans affairs for training in processing USDVA Veterans disability claims and applications for state benefits.
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.**

To request reimbursement for documented expenses, a County must complete **WDVA FORM #0055G** (County Veterans Service Reimbursement Grant Worksheet) and submit to WDVA as follows:

1st Reimbursement Grant Period: **WDVA FORM #0055G** must be provided to WDVA by January 15, 2016 for documented expenses incurred July 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015.

2nd Reimbursement Grant Period: **WDVA FORM #0055G** must be provided to WDVA by June 15, 2016 for documented expenses incurred January 1, 2016 – May 31, 2016.

WDVA FORM #0055G can be completed and submitted to WDVA as many times as a County deems necessary throughout the fiscal year. However, the WDVA will only reimburse a County for documented and allowable expenses, twice yearly in accordance with Wis. Stats. 45.82(2) and following each of the two reimbursement grant periods reference above. The county's county executive, administrator, administrative coordinator or finance director, must certify that the completed County Veterans Service Reimbursement Grant Worksheet is complete and accurate.

A letter announcing the availability of the CVSO Grant is also being sent to the County Administrators/Executives of each of the 72 counties.

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*