

Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans' Child Welfare Service
Operating Guide and Procedures

I. AUTHORITY:

This rule is created pursuant to the authority granted to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs by the Arkansas Legislature through the adoption of Act No. 910, § 6327 of 2019 (codified at Ark. Code Ann. §25-43-1603).

II. PURPOSE:

The Arkansas Veterans' Child Welfare Service (hereafter referred to as the Fund) is established to assist eligible minor children, of honorably discharged veterans residing in the state of Arkansas who are medically incapacitated (30% or greater) or deceased, with basic living expenses.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 25-43-1603(3)(b), The Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs is authorized to develop and promulgate all rules necessary for the enforcement and implementation of the provisions of the Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 and all applicable federal rules and regulations.

IV. ELIGIBILITY:

Child dependents of honorably discharged Veterans residing in the state of Arkansas are eligible to request assistance. Eligibility for assistance shall be based upon receipt and review of the following information, including:

1. A completed Arkansas Veterans Child Welfare Service application.
2. A copy of the Veteran's DD214 if the Veteran is not receiving benefits through the Veterans Administration.
3. A copy of a birth certificate or other military/VA identification for all eligible children
5. Copy of death certificate for deceased veteran (when applicable).
6. Proof of child custody (when applicable).

Additional documentation may be required as determined by the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs.

V. DESIGNATED AGENT

The Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs has designated the Director of Veterans Services or his or her designee to serve as his agent for the administration and operations of the program, and for approving applications made to the Fund. The Fund will receive state-appropriated funds from the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs annual budget appropriation and will distribute those funds in accordance with guidance provided by the Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs. The Fund may also accept appropriate grants and shall distribute all funds in accordance with published guidance for accepting grant requests and evaluation of eligibility for assistance. If the Veterans Child Welfare Fund denies an application for assistance, there shall be written notification to the applicant and a right of appeal in accordance with the guidance below. The Fund shall maintain records of all grant requests and their decisions on those requests.

VI. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The Veteran or Veteran's family member's first step will normally be to contact the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Service Officer or contact the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs directly. Anyone who can act on behalf of the family member (child) may apply for assistance if they have appropriate documentation confirming custody of the child. The application may be completed electronically or in person. The completed application will be forwarded to the Assistant Director of Veteran's Services for review and approval.

VI. APPEALS:

Applicants may appeal an unfavorable decision. All documentation relating to the Fund request and a statement of reasons for its decision to deny assistance shall be forwarded to the Director of Veteran's Services for additional review. In the event of a second denial of assistance, the applicant may make a final appeal to the Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs. The decision of the Secretary shall be final, with no further appeal options.

IX. CONTACT INFORMATION:

Veterans or family members with questions regarding eligibility or application for financial assistance may contact the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs in Little Rock at 501-683-2382.