



Elks National Veterans Service Commission

FREEDOM GRANTS

The Elks have a long and impressive history of serving veterans. To continue that tradition, in 2019-20, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission will award \$2,000 Freedom Grants to the first 325 Lodges to hold projects that meet the needs of veterans and/or military members and their families!

HOW TO APPLY:

Grants will be awarded on a rolling basis to the first 325 Lodges that submit qualifying projects. Applications must be detailed, complete and follow all grant guidelines. Expect follow-up for applications that do not provide enough information.

WHAT QUALIFIES:

Freedom Grants should be used for direct service to veterans and/or military members and their families. Grant projects must serve a population in need. Projects must focus on one of these five areas: employment, homelessness and housing, military families, health, and educational support.

Qualifying applications will describe in detail:

- How many Elks will be involved and what they will do
- How the project addresses the needs of veterans and/or military members
- How the Lodge will budget the grant, including three or more expense categories

Restrictions: Meaningful involvement is required. Grants may not be used for appreciations dinners, fundraisers or general community events. Grants may not be used for donations of funds.

Here are some examples of past projects.

- **Billings, MT, Lodge No. 394** partners with the Department of Labor and Industry to provide interview and resume training, and hosts a job fair and Boots to Business training.
- **Raleigh, NC, Lodge No. 735** provides meals and fly fishing supplies for Project Healing Waters. Elks also volunteer during the trips and provide space for veterans to create their own flies.
- **Vista, CA, Lodge No. 1968** partners with Operation Showers of Appreciation to provide cribs, car seats, and other supplies for military families expecting babies.
- **Tucson, AZ, Lodge No. 385** hosts monthly meals for the VA's Blind Rehab Facility and distributes backpacks filled with clothing, food, and blankets to veterans experiencing homelessness.

Application Questions:

- Describe your Lodge's Freedom Grant project. How is your Lodge serving veterans or active duty military personnel with this grant?
- Explain how this project will improve the lives of the individuals you are serving. Which of the five areas of increased need is this grant project addressing? Which of the five areas of increased need is this grant project addressing?
- How will Elks be meaningfully involved in this project? How many Lodge members will participate and what will they do?
- What does the Lodge expect to accomplish with this project?
A budget is also required. No more than 10% (or \$200) of the budget can be dedicated to administrative or publicity expenses, including t-shirts. Budget cannot include cash prizes.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Applications are available online starting April 1, 2019, at 12:01 AM CST!
- Projects must be complete by March 31, 2020.

Visit elks.org/vets for more information. Contact 773.755.4736 or Vets@elks.org with questions.