

INSTAGRANTS

Struggling to figure out what to do? We've made it easy. Consider adapting one of these highly successful Lodge grant projects for your community. Or get inspiration from our 20 project plans to [combat food insecurity](#), [assist individuals living below the poverty line](#), [serve veterans](#) or [benefit youth](#).

Assisting Veterans with Disabilities



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Veterans who have served our country often face unique challenges upon returning to civilian life, particularly those with disabilities. Lodges can provide support and resources to improve the quality of life for veterans facing physical or mental health challenges.



STEP 1

Get Started

According to the [ADA National Network](#), nearly a third of veterans report having a disability, including physical disabilities, traumatic brain injuries and PTSD. Consider initiatives such as providing accessible housing modifications, offering transportation assistance to medical appointments, or organizing recreational activities tailored to veterans with disabilities.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Develop partnerships with organizations and agencies that specialize in serving veterans

with disabilities. Is there a VA facility in your community? Disability advocacy groups? Cognitive therapy organizations? Identify the specific needs of the veterans in your community and contact agencies that meet those needs.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Offer a variety of services and activities, such as peer support groups and weekly meals. Consider hosting workshops on financial literacy, job placement assistance, and VA benefits eligibility.

Create an adaptive sports league at the Lodge or take veterans on an outdoors adventure with fishing, horseback riding, or kayaking.

Community Safety Fairs



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Preventable accidents and emergencies impact families every day, yet many people lack access to basic safety tools and practical knowledge. Lodges can host events that equip community members with the resources and skills they need to stay safe at home.



STEP 1

Get Started

Identify key safety needs in your community by connecting with local fire departments, police departments, schools, senior centers and community organizations. Determine which topics your fair will focus on, such as fire safety, emergency preparedness, first aid or Narcan application. Design interactive stations where Elks volunteers lead hands-on demonstrations, like testing smoke detectors, assembling emergency kits, practicing fire escape planning, or reviewing first aid tips.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Provide safety items such as smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, batteries, grab bars,

first aid kits, or emergency supplies, ensuring Elks members and community partners walk participants through how to use them. Host workshops to get new parents certified in CPR and infant care, or students trained in babysitter safety. Connect with participants and see if any seniors, veterans, or families are facing imminent home safety concerns and address them.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Work with the Antlers or a local Scouts troop to continue the project after the fair. Does your community face harsh winters? Consider helping seniors winterize their homes. Or rake leaves or mow lawns during warmer months. A safe home is the foundation of a healthy life!

Local Gardens



PROJECT OVERVIEW

In addition to increased access to fresh produce, community gardens provide several benefits, such as fostering positive community ties and improving neighborhood safety. By supporting local gardens, Elks help improve the health and well-being of their communities.



STEP 1

Get Started

Determine if there is an opportunity for a garden. Who will the garden support? Examples of groups that may benefit from a partnership include schools, food banks, hunger relief organizations, nonprofits, and churches that prepare meals for people facing food insecurity. Form committees to accomplish tasks such as construction, marketing, hosting youth activities or storing equipment.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Partner with local organizations to assist with daily support of the garden, such as routine garden maintenance, virtual cooking demonstrations and

gardening classes. Consider reaching out to local hardware stores, service organizations, or horticulture programs at colleges for additional support. Connect with youth organizations for volunteers, providing young people a healthy activity and furthering the impact of the garden.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Consider hosting online cooking classes to show how to prepare healthy meals with food from the garden. Or start a free seed library to establish the Lodge as a meeting spot within your community.

Host a monthly garden social for community members to gather during harvest months!

Beyond the Basket



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Many Lodges use the Beacon Grant to prepare Thanksgiving or Christmas food baskets for families facing food insecurity in their communities. The Beyond the Basket project encourages Lodges to participate in this food basket program all year long.



STEP 1

Get Started

People are eager to give back during the holiday season, but the demand for volunteer opportunities often exceeds the need for volunteers during the holiday season. This means that grant funds may be better utilized at different points of the year to avoid waste during the holidays. After all, food and essential needs insecurity exists all year long.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Contact local organizations, such as food pantries, schools, hospitals and nonprofits, that can help identify people facing food insecurity.

Make lists of food that every family needs for a nutritious meal, then have Lodge members purchase items in bulk. Package and distribute the baskets accordingly!



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

For a more personal touch, add handwritten notes from Lodge members with the baskets. Or, consider purchasing food for pets. Pets are family, and they are sometimes overlooked at food pantries.

If your Lodge chooses to continue with a holiday project, we encourage you to consider the information in [this visual](#) to do the most good.