



ENVSC Welcome Home Kit Guidelines

Many veterans moving from the street or a shelter enter their new homes with nothing. Elks can help by providing Welcome Home Kits of needed supplies to help these veterans establish their homes.

There is no single reason why a veteran is homeless. In addition to the complex set of factors influencing all homelessness – shortage of affordable housing, unemployment or job insecurity, health or family emergencies – a large number of displaced and at-risk veterans live with lingering effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse, which are compounded by a lack of family and social support networks.

Welcome Home Kit Overview

A kit is made up of an array of home supplies provided to a veteran moving into a new home, to help them with day-to-day living.

Generally, a kit will include kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and cleaning supplies, items like bedding, dishes, pots, pans, towels, toiletries, cleaning supplies, laundry baskets & detergent, etc. **However, a kit may not include just one or two items.** Lodges are encouraged to work with individual veterans to coordinate kit supplies. For example, some veterans may prefer a coffee maker to a crockpot, or a toaster oven to a microwave.

If you would like to meet veterans' needs for larger items like refrigerators and furniture, or to serve a veteran who is not exiting homelessness, consider grant funding and local support.

Kits should be well-rounded and contain a variety of supplies; receipts for \$300 worth of several of the same item will not be accepted, even if requested by the VA, as this is not a kit.

All Lodges are eligible to participate in this program! There is currently no limit to the number of kits your Lodge can put together. It's all based on local needs and volunteer capacity.

Budgets

The ENVSC will reimburse up to \$300 per kit and up to \$600 per kit if that kit includes a bed. Here are a few more financial guidelines.

- We recommend that beds not comprise more than \$500 of a single kit.
- Because the additional \$300 for kits with beds is intended to provide beds for veterans who otherwise would not be able to afford them, the maximum amount of reimbursement per kit for non-bed items is \$300.
- Food may not comprise more than \$50 of any kit.
- Gift cards may not comprise more than \$25 of any kit. Please do your best to buy supplies to help ease the veteran's transition.
- Items (such as furniture, appliances, pots/pans) may be used or donated if they are in good condition.
- Lodges will not be reimbursed for the value of donated items.
- Lodges will only be reimbursed for items with receipts.
- Lodges should submit receipts for reimbursement no later than 3 months from the time of purchase.

Application Process

Your Lodge submits a Welcome Home Kit reimbursement form at www.elks.org/vets and includes full receipts. Our office will then review and approve the application and send your Lodge a reimbursement check (dependent on eligible receipts). Checks are made out to the Lodge. Forms must follow all program guidelines. Expect follow-up for applications that do not provide enough information.

For the complete guidelines, visit elks.org/vets or contact the ENVSC Office at vets@elks.org or 773.755.4736.

Finding Local Veterans in Need

We encourage your Lodge to partner with the VA or another veterans organization on this project. Start by contacting a local VA facility and ask about their HUD-VASH department. Or, connect with a local veterans transitional facility or homeless shelter.

[Click here for more finding local veterans in need.](#)