

Since its establishment in 1925, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program has awarded cash grants to minor children of veterans who are eligible for American Legion membership. These grants help families in need meet the cost of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses, thereby keeping the child or children in a more stable environment.

Who is eligible for a grant?

TFA is limited to minor children (17 years or younger) whose biological parent, or legal guardian, is a veteran and is, or would have been, eligible for American Legion membership. However, Legion membership is not required. Children 18-20 years old will also be considered if a current disability requires special schooling or indefinite in-home care, or they are enrolled in an approved high school and unmarried. To be eligible for Legion membership, the parent or guardian must have served at least one day of active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during one of the following periods:

- Dec. 7, 1941-Dec. 31, 1946
- June 25, 1950-Jan. 31, 1955
- Feb. 28, 1961-May 7, 1975
- August 24, 1982-July 31, 1984
- Dec. 20, 1989-Jan. 31, 1990
- Aug. 2, 1990-Cessation of hostilities as determined by the U.S. Government.

No child is considered eligible for Temporary Financial Assistance until a complete investigation is conducted at the post or department level; a legitimate family need is determined; and all other available assistance resources have been utilized or exhausted. Additionally, the TFA application must originate and be filled out by someone at the local level.

Application Process

All TFA applications originate at the local or Post level. A local investigator personally visits with the family to determine the needs of the children. A completed application, with supporting documents and proof of military service, is forwarded to the Department Headquarters. The designated Department representative reviews each case, makes a recommendation, and forwards the approved application to the National Headquarters. The Americanism and Children & Youth Division reviews all approved cases, and forwards a recommendation to the National Adjutant. Upon approval by the National Adjutant, a check is drawn and forwarded to the Department Adjutant for delivery to the Post or family. In most cases, checks will be two-party checks payable to the veteran and creditor.

All community organizations must have been exhausted prior to applying for the Temporary Financial Assistance.

Supporting statement from Veteran providing current status and how he or she plans to support the children next month.

Documents required are Marriage Certificate or Divorce Certificate, Birth Certificate(s) of children, DD Form 214 (part 4), DD Form 214 must show type of discharge, SSI documents if receiving Social Security Disability, VA disability pension is income, VA VCAA letter showing monthly income, Active Duty (LES).

Veterans who have custody of their children who are divorced or separated are required to provide court documents that give the veteran full custody of the children. The TFA program does not recognize Common Law Marriages because Washington State does not recognize common law marriages.

Current Utility Bill, Copy of Lease, (late payment statements from landlord should be included, NO EVICTION NOTICES, if in receipt of an eviction notice request an extension from the landlord in writing,

The Veteran is required to complete all three pages and sign the third page. The investigator is required to review the application to ensure all criteria's are met, completes an investigator report, signs the application and submits to Department Headquarters.

Maintenance Grants

Maintenance grants may be used to assist with the basic need expenses such as:

- Shelter and Utilities

Maintenance grants cannot be awarded for previously incurred debt, except to:

1. Prevent disconnection of utilities
2. Prevent eviction or foreclosure.

Medical Grants

Medical grants for a child may be used to assist with healthcare expenses such as:

- Medical Care and Dental Care
- Surgery n Hospitalization
- Medications and Dietary Needs

Medical grants require a written statement from a physician outlining the problem, treatment, and estimated costs. This type of grant must be approved before services are rendered. Medical grants cannot be awarded for previous medical expenses or care.