 

**Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RVCP)**

**POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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| Subject: **RVCP Flexible Employment Fund** | Policy #: **PY14-05 CHANGE-1** |
| To: **RVCP Partners**  | From: **Richard Freund, Acting Director** **Bureau of Employment Services** |
| Issuance Date:  **March 16, 2015** | Status : **ACTIVE** |
| Review Date:  **March 15, 2016** | Revised: **01-07-16** |
| References: **38 U.S.C. Part 64** |

**Background**:

The Rural Veteran Coordination Pilot (RVCP) program was created when the President signed into law the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Healthy Services Act of 2010.

Section 506(a) of the 2010 Act, codified at 38 U.S.C. 523, requires the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of using community-based organizations and local and State government entities to assist veterans and their families who are transitioning from active military service to civilian life in rural or underserved communities.

The Maine Department of Labor received $2.0 million from the VA, Office of Rural Health (ORH) to establish the **Rural Veteran Coordination Pilot** (RVCP). The RVCP is a program delivered by a partnership of agencies to inform veterans, who have recently transitioned from active military duty to civilian life, about the services and benefits available to them. To qualify for RVCP services the veteran must have separated from active military service on or after August 26, 2012.

**Policy:**

A Flexible Employment Fund (FEF) of $150,000 is established to help transitioning veterans and qualified family members overcome barriers to employment or to access to high-quality medical and mental health services. The FEF funds may be used to assist in the cost of car repairs, transportation, uniforms, and other supports necessary for the transitioning veteran or qualified family member to access jobs or necessary services.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements for requesting, and the processes for approval of, t RVCP Flexible Employment Funds (FEF). The Flexible Employment Fund is intended to provide short-term financial assistance to up to 125 transitioning veterans and qualified family members. The funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Access to the funds will expire when the funds have been depleted or the grant ends, whichever occurs first.

Additional information on permissible uses of these funds can be found at:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2011-title38/pdf/USCODE-2011-title38-partI-chap5-subchapII-sec523.pdf>

**Requests:**

Requests for FEF funds may be made by: RVCP partners, the Labor Program Specialist, Peer Support Workers, Job Developers, CareerCenter Consultants or other RVCP-associated individuals, including the veteran or qualified family member for whom the request is being made.

Each request must identify:

1. The veteran or qualified family member for whom the funds are being requested and his/her address and contact information.
2. The barrier(s) (*to employment or access to high-quality medical or mental health services*) that will be addressed;
3. The specific purpose for which the funds will be used;
4. The vendor (name/address) to whom the funds will be paid;
5. The signature of the veteran or qualified family member.

If the veteran or qualified family member will be receiving the funds directly they must complete a State Vendor Form which can be accessed at: <https://www1.maine.gov/nrsc/forms/vendor.pdf>

In addition, the veteran or qualified family member seeking employment must register, or already be registered, with the Maine Job Bank. Proof of registration must be identified by including the requester’s valid MJB registration number on the Request Form. *If the requester is not seeking employment and requires assistance with non-employment related issues the requirement to register with the Maine Job Bank may be waived.*

By signing the Request Form, veterans or qualified family members agree to provide program staff with information about their employment upon attaining employment and give permission for program staff to contact their prospective employers to validate employment.

**Awards:**

Awards are not to exceed $1,500 per veteran or qualified family member.

A Request Review Team (RRT) will review the need for FEF support. The RRT must include a minimum of two (2) members from among the following positions: the RVCP Program Manager, the Veterans Program Manager, the RVCP Outreach Trainer/Supervisor, or the BES Division Director. The RRT has the ultimate authority to approve or deny FEF support.

Additional information in support of the request may be provided by case managers, RVCP partners and other representatives providing services to the veteran or qualified family member.

The requester will be notified of the RRT decision within three (3) working days. The decision may result in approval of the full amount requested or a modified portion of the request. In most cases the awarding agency will make payments directly to the vendor providing the assistance.

**Appeals:**

Veterans or qualified family members may appeal a decision of denial of their request, in writing, to:

 Division Director, Bureau of Employment Services, 55 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0055.

**Effective Date:** December 22, 2015

**Inquiries can be directed to:**

Auta M. Main

Veteran’s Program Manager

MDOL, BES, SHS 55, Augusta, ME 04333

(207) 623-7975

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