



Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance

Annex B: 2024-2025 Grant Program Requirements

Appendix 3: Veterans Mental Health Grant Program

FUND FOR VETERANS' ASSISTANCE WEBSITE

www.tvc.texas.gov/grants

Veterans Mental Health Grant Program

The Veterans Mental Health (VMH) Grant Program includes three service categories that collectively provide counseling and treatment to veterans and their families who live in Texas in addressing diagnosed conditions to improve their quality of life, relationships, outlook, and successful integration with their communities.

1. Clinical Counseling Services

This service category includes services and treatment that include Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) for diagnosed conditions or co-occurring conditions provided by a Texas Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP).

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans, Dependents, Surviving Spouses

Clinical Counseling Services are intended to treat:

1. Trauma and stress related disorders.
2. Anxiety disorders.
3. Mood disorders.
4. Suicidal ideation and behaviors.
5. Substance use disorders.
6. Concerns related to identity.
7. Adjustment disorders; and
8. Marriage/family/relationship concerns.

Other wellness services may be prescribed in addition to primary clinical counseling to assist with diagnosed condition.

- Beneficiaries must be undergoing clinical counseling using EBP treatment by a Texas Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP)
- Wellness services are supplemental and must be prescribed by the LMHP.
- Service must be supervised by an LMHP.

- a) Initial assessments or Diagnostic Evaluations are allowable.
- b) Prescribed EBP plans must be relevant to treating the veteran's, dependents', and/or surviving spouse's diagnosed condition or co-occurring conditions.
- c) Some acceptable individual, manualized trauma-focused (or trauma-informed) EBP modalities include:
 - a. Prolonged Exposure (PE);
 - b. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR);
 - c. Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT);
 - d. Brief Eclectic Psychotherapy (BEP);
 - e. Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET);
 - f. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT);
 - g. Behavioral Therapy/Behavioral Activation (BT/BA);

- h. Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT); Interpersonal Therapy (IPT);
 - i. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT);
 - j. Problem-Solving therapy (PST);
 - k. Crisis Response Planning; Safety Planning;
 - l. Motivational Interviewing; and
 - m. Other EBP relevant to veterans, dependents, and surviving spouses.
- d) Intervention counseling and mental health treatment (including best practices and wellness services) provided to clients must be essential and provided by or under a Texas Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP), applying Evidence-Based Practice(s) (EBP) who has received adequate training in the applied EBP.
- e) Grant applicants who will provide clinical counseling or peer delivered services will be required to provide proof of mental health provider licensure and certifications if awarded a grant.
- f) In the grant application, organizations will include the EBP modalities used by their licensed/trained staff members and indicate the diagnosed condition(s) included in the grant project.
- g) Client diagnosis, and initial treatment plan development must be performed under the licensure of a Texas LMHP (preferably in person).
- h) Retreats, field trips, off-sites, seminars, and/or similar gatherings cannot exceed 25% of the total grant amount requested and are not allowed unless clinical mental health services are provided in conjunction with the event.
- i) Clinical mental health providers leveraging FVA grants should administer the appropriate mental health assessments such as the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) and the General Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) assessments to all beneficiaries prior to, and after final treatment. This information will be reported at the end of the grant period. This Refer to Section I: Mental Health Outcome Measures.

2. Peer Support Services

This service category is for services provided by a Certified Peer Support Specialist that contribute to the client's rehabilitation and recovery. Peer Support Services are provided in a non-clinical environment consisting of retreats, field trips, off-sites, seminars, and/or similar gatherings.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans

- a) Certified Peer Support Specialist must one of the credentials listed below.
 - Completed Via Hope training and certification per HHSC website within past 3; or
 - Completed certification from Texas Certification Board of Addiction Professionals per HHSC website within past 3 years; or
 - Completed training and certification from any of the TVC Certified Peer Service Coordinators (PSCs) of the Military Veteran peer Network areas within past 2 years.
- b) A Certified Peer Support Specialist shall be an individual who served in the U.S. Armed Forces or be a credential social worker, Texas Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP), credential pastoral counselor that have completed Military Informed Care (MIC)/Military Cultural Competency (MCC) training.
- c) TVC's Veteran Mental Health Department can provide MIC/MCC training free of charge. Contact Dr. Blake Harris at Blake.Harris@tvc.texas.gov or vmhd@tvc.texas.gov for more information or to schedule this training. Additionally, the peer support training and certifications provided by Peer Support Coordinators (PSCs) of the Military Veteran Peer Network catchment areas are provided at no cost to veterans desiring to become a Certified Peer Support Specialists. For more information, visit Veterans Mental Health Department at www.veteransmentalhealth.texas.gov.
- d) Peer support sessions must occur during retreats, field trips, off-sites, seminars, and/or similar gatherings by a Certified Peer Support Specialist that have served in the U.S. Armed Forces or be a credential social worker, Texas Licensed Mental Health Professional (LMHP), credential pastoral counselor that have completed Military Informed Care (MIC)/Military Cultural Competency (MCC) training.

3. Service Dog Pilot Program

This pilot program is for organizations accredited by the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) to provide trained service dogs to veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or military sexual trauma.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans

- a) The commission may not approve a nonprofit unless the organization:
 1. Has demonstrated experience working with veterans who have experienced post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or military sexual trauma.
 2. Is authorized to conduct business in this state.
 3. Can provide follow-up services to a veteran who participates in the pilot program and the veteran's service dog; and
 4. adheres to the standards of Assistance Dogs International (ADI).
- b) A nonprofit that is approved to provide services under the pilot program shall:
 1. Employ professional staff to train dogs to become service dogs for veterans participating in the pilot program.
 2. Provide each veteran participating in the pilot program a fully trained service dog. Complete a training program accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI). Comply with any requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Section 12101 et seq.); and be evaluated by a veterinarian to ensure the dog is medically fit to serve as a service dog.
 3. Instruct each veteran participating in the pilot program on maintaining the service dog's health and training.
 4. While a veteran is participating in the pilot program, ensure that regular mental health and depression assessments are conducted on the veteran.
 5. Be able to provide a veteran participating in the pilot program a new service dog if the veteran's service dog is incompatible with the veteran, dies, or is otherwise unable to fulfill the dog's duty as a service dog before the fourth anniversary of the date the veteran received the service dog under the pilot program.
- c) All goods and services provided to a veteran as part of the pilot program, including a veteran's service dog, must be provided at no cost to the veteran.

SECTION I: MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOME MEASURES

Purpose

The Texas Veterans Commission is required to collect an outcome measure regarding grant funded mental health services. Therefore, Veteran Mental Health grantees who are providing Clinical Counseling, are required to administer the appropriate tools/assessments to their clients before treatment/services begin, and after treatment/services end. This measure will be reported at the beginning and end of the grant period to TVC.

Which grantee organizations must complete these tools before and after services?

1. Grantees Providing Clinical Counseling within the Veterans Mental Health Grant Program

How will grantees report the results of the tools?

Grantees will assess the quantitative differences between the BEFORE and AFTER assessment tool results. This measure will be reported at the end of the grant period to TVC.

1. The total number of beneficiaries served.
2. The total number of beneficiaries who showed an IMPROVEMENT in their cumulative scores from the assessment tools.
3. The total number of beneficiaries who DID NOT SHOW an IMPROVEMENT in their cumulative scores from the assessment tools.
4. The percent of beneficiaries reporting an improvement.