



SERVICE POLICIES

Revised September 2025

Veterans of Clinton County,

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Clinton County (VACCC) has adopted the following policies to ensure consistent delivery of service. The Superintendent may make exceptions through executive authority, when necessary, as empowered in 330 ILCS 45/45/10(a).

While these policies only address the major lines of service our office provides to the veterans of Cliton County, we make every attempt at providing a service that is easy to use, easy to understand and is as concise as possible. From time to time, and as our operational capacity allows, the VACCC may add or reduce service programs to respond to the needs of our county veterans. All of our services are free of charge. We will never charge you any fees for any of our programs or services.

We look forward to continuing to serve the veterans of Cliton County and are honored to be **YOUR** local, state and federal advocate.

Colbey D. Voss
Superintendent

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Financial Assistance program is temporary and should not be considered an ongoing, financial support program over any considerable length of time. The program is derived in authority from [330 ILCS 45](#). Financial assistance is only available to veterans, surviving spouses and dependents who are residents of Clinton County, Illinois.

APPOINTMENTS

The qualifying primary applicant (veteran, surviving spouse or minor dependent child) must attend all appointments. Applicants observed or believed to be under the influence of any controlled substance (alcohol, drugs of any kind, etc.) will be asked to leave and their appointment rescheduled. Violent or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and future eligibility for assistance may be barred by the Superintendent.

ELIGIBILITY

The veteran under which one is claiming eligibility must have an Honorable Discharge or General - Under Honorable Conditions with no indication of misconduct. A certified copy of a DD-214 or corresponding document will be required. The armed forces veteran must have served for at least one day on active duty for other than training (38 U.S.C. § 101). A veteran that was discharged prior to completion of training for medical reasons must be certified as service connected by the VA and rated for compensation for the same prior to being considered for assistance. Further, the veteran, surviving spouse or dependent children must be residents of Clinton County and be able to provide proof of residency as required in the Residency section to follow.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- **DD214 (Member 4 Copy):** Must reflect honorable or general discharge without misconduct.
- **Photo ID:** Must be included in the initial application.
- **Marriage License:** must be included in the initial application.
- **Birth Certificates for Dependent Children:** Must be included in the initial application.
- **Lease / Mortgage Statement:** Must be current.
- **Most Current Utility Bill:** Bills must be dated within the past 30 days.
- **Last 2 months of bank statements:** If you fail to disclose a bank account, you will not be eligible for any assistance for at least one year from the date of application. Bank account information is required for financial assistance for all accounts, checking and savings.
- **Proof of Income for Entire Household:** This includes anyone over the age of 18 that is living with you and contributing to the household income. Proof of income includes: Pay stubs for the past 60 days, direct deposit on bank statements, Social Security, child support, VA benefits, etc.
 - All items listed above are required when returning the completed financial assistance packet. If the documents listed above are not included, it **will result in automatic denial.**
 - Failure to disclose all income, including VA compensation/pension **will result in automatic denial and you will not be eligible to apply for assistance again for one year from the date of application.**
 - Any false information may be turned over to the State's Attorney for review, which may result in possible prosecution.
- **VA Form 21-22:** This form will allow our Accredited VSO validate VA compensation or alternatively allow our Accredited VSOs assist you with VA benefits

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

All veterans and their claimed household members must be residents of the State of Illinois, County of Clinton, for a minimum of 90 days preceding application to be eligible for financial assistance from this office. If necessary, proof of term of residency will be the current and immediate past two (2) months utility bills, with the veteran's name and the address within Clinton County. If it is determined that the applicant is not a resident of Clinton County, the VAC will refer the applicant to their home county relief agency for financial assistance.

INCOME GUIDLINES

The actual income of the veteran, and all those residing within the household of the veteran must be considered in determining the applicant's need for assistance under this program. If the current or anticipated income exceeds 130% of the current year's Federal Poverty Line as established by the United States Department of Health & Human Services for their family size during the month and the previous month in which they are applying for assistance, the applicant will be determined ineligible for assistance under this program unless proof of emergency expenses or casualty can be determined. The Superintendent may, at their sole discretion, declare an emergency exists for any veteran, surviving spouse or dependent over income guidelines on a one-time basis only. If the income during the previous month (30 days) for which the applicant is applying for assistance is lower than the threshold noted above for their family size, the applicant may be assisted by the VAC.

DURATION AND CAPS OF ASSISTANCE

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Clinton County will use the income guidelines as determined annually by the United States Department of Health & Human Services at 130% of the Monthly Federal Poverty Line.

Financial Assistance is limited to one (1) occurrences within a twelve (12) month rolling period, not to exceed a total disbursement of \$10,000 in that twelve (12) month rolling period per eligible household. An occurrence can include more than one type of assistance (i.e. Food and Rental Assistance or Mortgage Assistance, Utilities ,and Auto repair). The Superintendent is authorized and empowered with sole discretion in disbursement or non-disbursement of financial assistance. If the Superintendent determines the income of any applicant is insufficient to support the basic needs of that person, the Superintendent may authorize assistance.

APPLICATION

Every eligible veteran, spouse or surviving spouse has the right to submit a written application for assistance. Any person requesting assistance from the VAC for financial aid must first produce proof of military service as outlined under eligibility, and any other documentation required by this policy and then complete an application and fulfill the certification requirements.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

All applicants will be notified of the disposition of their application. If an applicant is denied assistance, the applicant will be told of their right to appeal this decision to the Veterans Assistance Commission of Clinton County as shown further under the Appeals section of this policy.

OTHER SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants seeking assistance under this program are required to apply for Veterans Administration benefits, Social Security benefits, Supplemental Social Security, or any other benefits from any government or private agencies which they may be entitled to receive due to age, disabilities, termination of employment or any other qualifying criteria. Applicants who refuse to apply for assistance to which they are determined to be eligible or who arbitrarily terminate such assistance will be ineligible for assistance from the VAC. Any applicants or members of their household who have terminated employment of their own free will, refuse to accept employment when offered or refuse to apply for employment, will be determined ineligible for assistance from the VAC.

Applicants who are receiving assistance from another agency (i.e., Human Services, HUD, any governmental housing authority, Social Security) at the time of application to the VAC will be eligible for assistance on a one-time basis due to restrictions on duplication of assistance (may also be known as “Double Dipping”). Those eligible applicants receiving VA compensation or Social Security Disability Insurance less than the limits specified

herein, may be assisted by the VAC to the extent that their income is deficient in providing for their needs.

Applicants who refuse to release information to the VAC concerning present or anticipated income, or information relating to employment or disability, will be determined ineligible for assistance.

EMPLOYMENT

Applicants without obvious physical or other documented disabilities and/or without a Total Disability Based on Unemployability (TDIU) rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs or a determination of disability through award of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) / Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) from the Social Security Administration indicating an inability to sustain gainful employment, will be required to show a concerted effort to obtain employment. Evidence of this effort will include, but is not limited to, confirmation from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) of continuous utilization of services and registered in the Illinois JobLink program in addition to successful completion of any program the applicant is referred to by the VAC. Each applicant is required to show twenty (20) records of application of employment or interviews for employment (emailed confirmation receipts or signed letter of receipt of application from potential employer are required). These contacts or indications of job search will be logged and attached to the Job Search form issued to each client and/or spouse. Refusal to complete the Job Search form or insufficient completion of the Job Search form by the applicant will result in a determination of ineligibility for assistance.

METHOD OF ASSISTANCE

All assistance granted through the VAC is temporary. Assistance through the VAC is never in the form of cash. All rental and utility payments are paid directly to the person(s) or agency to which payment is due (i.e., the Vendor). Vouchers for food/hygiene are given for use at a specific merchant within this county. Assistance is never paid to a relative or for another member of the family.

If it is determined that there is a necessity of a payment to avert a shut-off or eviction and is sufficiently large as to be beyond the limits of the VAC maximum amount, the Superintendent may require the applicant to obtain other agencies or programs to contribute to the payment. The VAC will not pledge payment in such an event until a contributing agency provides written confirmation of their contribution directly to the Superintendent. If the applicant is unable to secure any other assistance, the VAC will not grant assistance for that bill. However, this does not disqualify assistance with other eligible bills.

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

The utilities eligible for assistance through the VAC are:

- Electric
- Gas
- Water
- Sewer

The VAC does not provide assistance with deposits or reconnection fees for discontinued utility service. Overdue bills and disconnection notices will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Superintendent. Assistance is limited to the most recent month's service. All bills must be in the name of the veteran, spouse or

surviving spouse (using the name listed on their marriage license). If the bill is in the name of the spouse, both the veteran and the spouse must reside together at the address on the bill. Bills in any other name will not be eligible for assistance by the VAC. Only original, current bills or electronically transmitted current bills (i.e. email) to the applicant or VAC by the subject utility are accepted. Utilities must be billed by a recognized utility company or by the community utility agency in the case of city or village utilities.

RENT & MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

The VAC does not provide assistance for security deposits, first and/or last month's rent, or any other deposits and generally only assist with current rent or mortgage due.

Before rent or mortgage assistance is granted, the applicant must be in full time residence at the subject address and meet Clinton County residency requirements for assistance.

The VAC does not have any official partnerships unless noted on our website with any realtors, shelters or landlords, nor does the VAC act as an agent or on behalf of any single landlords, property management companies, or government housing authorities. Contact, negotiations and contractual obligations with a landlord, of any kind, is the sole responsibility of the applicant.

Monthly Rental and Mortgage assistance maximums are established utilizing an average of Clinton County Average Fair Market Rent as reported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the current year in which assistance is requested.

In a case where the gas, electric, water, trash or sewer are included in the rent, \$35.00 per included utility will be added to the appropriate rental payment level if the combined total rent and utilities exceeds the average fair market rent rate.

The applicant is required to produce an original occupancy permit for the subject address in the name of the applicant and must be properly executed by the authorities of the community within which the property is located. Assistance is not authorized to be paid to or for relatives of the veteran or spouse. Should the VAC become aware that rent or mortgage assistance is being paid to any relative or in-law, the applicant will be permanently barred from assistance from the VAC.

FOOD/HYGIENE/HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES ASSISTANCE

Vouchers for food items, personal hygiene and household necessities may be issued. These vouchers are specific to a vendor, i.e., they are redeemable only at the store/locations listed on the voucher. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, pet food and/or related items are prohibited to be purchased with VAC issued vouchers or gift cards. Personal hygiene items include, but are not limited to, soap, shampoo, toilet tissue and laundry detergent. Clients will be issued a voucher for Food Assistance and Personal Hygiene items in the amount of the current year's Illinois Department of Human Services Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Maximum Monthly Amounts guidelines based on the number of eligible people in the household to the nearest whole ten or twenty-five dollar amount at the discretion of the Superintendent (i.e. \$6.00 rounded to \$10.00; \$24.00 rounded to \$25.00; and \$74.00 rounded to \$75.00).

TRANSPORTATION

Currently the VAC does not offer transportation assistance.

TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE OR ELIGIBILITY

Part of eligibility for assistance is based on household income. In the event the household income increases to a sufficient level to exceed the qualifying income guidelines, VAC assistance will be terminated.

If credible evidence of any violations of the guidelines in this document or providing false information on an application for assistance or any other attempts to obtain assistance by fraudulent or deceptive means are received, the VAC will immediately terminate all assistance and any further bar eligibility to obtain future assistance through the VAC. The VAC will contact any other agencies, government or private organizations known to be providing assistance and inform them of the situation. Further, the VAC will forward to the Clinton County State's Attorney any information regarding the situation for investigation and potential prosecution. Those individuals that are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance and/or VA compensation/pension or any other programs that provide them with income of any kind and are suspended from these programs for reason of felony warrants or incarceration, the VAC will assist upon their release from the first incarceration, for the period of application of reinstatement of benefits until disposition of that application by the agency.

APPEALS

All applicants who are dissatisfied with the decision of the Superintendent have the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Board of the Veterans Assistance Commission

of Clinton County. Applicants must file a **written** notice of appeal and mail the appeal to the address below within **30 days** from the date of the Superintendent's written or expressed decision.

The appeal will be considered at the next regular meeting of the Executive Board following the receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent and/or staff of the VAC will forward all appeals filed in the proper manner to the President of the Commission, unopened. The President shall present the appeal at the next meeting of the Executive Board. The Superintendent will provide the applicant's case file and pertinent documents of the application in question for review. If the Executive Board determines there is a need for further review, including the attendance of the client, the President will inform the Superintendent of this decision. The Superintendent will, by written notice, inform the applicant of the location, date and time of the next Executive Board meeting at which this further review will be held. If the Executive Board determines that the appeal does not merit further review and that the original action taken is upheld, the President will give written notice to the applicant of that decision. If the Executive Board finds that the appeal has merit and finds that the applicant should receive assistance or further consideration, the Board will inform the Superintendent of the remedy directed by the Executive Board.

Appeals should be addressed to:

Veterans Assistance Commission of Clinton County
ATTN: Executive Board (APPEAL)
850 Fairfax St.
Carlyle, IL 62231

Appeals should include a statement of all reasons why you feel your request was wrongly denied.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

REPRESENTATION

The VAC office, as part of the services offered, provides **pro bono (no cost)** U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSO) for the purpose of prosecuting disability and compensation claims or securing other entitlements on behalf of veterans and surviving spouses of veterans of the armed forces of the United States. These claims can range from obtaining headstones and burial services to complex claims for compensation for service-connected conditions for veterans and/or their surviving spouses.

The VSOs of the VAC are trained by the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) and accredited with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Each accredited VSO additionally completed 16 hours of annual continuing education every year to maintain this accreditation. This rigorous training and commitment to continuing education provides the best possible opportunity for outcomes for Clinton County veterans in their pursuit of VA compensation, pensions and survivors benefits.

To ensure the best possible outcome for each client, this representation must be considered as a partnership between the Veteran and the VSO. Veterans are expected to keep their VSO informed of any communication received by the VA or its contractors. A VSO may withdraw their association with the veteran and the veteran's case at any time,

with permission of the Superintendent. Instances that may initiate this action include but are not limited to:

- the VSO involved indicates in the claim file a veteran's pattern of non-compliance with requests for items and actions initiated by the VSO
- If the VSO, after an initial review of the facts and evidence available from the veteran, determines that the claim is of a frivolous nature (not service-connected or no evidence that a condition started or was aggravated by service in military) or of a fraudulent nature
- Inappropriate physical contact or inappropriate verbal interactions with any VAC staff, volunteer or Commissioner
- Or any other situation the Superintendent determines to irreparably harm the VSO/Veteran partnership

When initiating claim with the VA, the VSO will counsel the veteran on the need for a Veteran Service Organization as a Power of Attorney (POA). The VAC will only utilize NACVSO POA authority unless a veteran is referred by a partnering VA accredited veterans service organization to which the VAC has a cross-accreditation agreement.

It is imperative that the client notify their VSO of any decision received or requests for additional information from the VA or its contractors as soon as practicable. If deadlines are missed due to the VSO not being notified by the client, there is currently no process in which to seek extensions or exceptions.

MAXIMUM ALLOCATION GUIDELINES

Rent/Mortgage Assistance Limit:

Single Veteran: \$800.00
Married Couple: \$900.00
More Than Two: \$1000.00

Utility Assistance Limit:

Propane \$200.00
Electricity \$200.00
Water/sewer \$200.00

Food:

(1)Household \$150.00
(2)Household \$200.00
*(3+) add per person \$30.00

Personal Needs:

(1)Household \$50.00
(2)Household \$100.00
*(3+) add per person \$20.00

Auto:

Gas \$50.00
Repairs \$300.00

Medical Bills:

co-pays, prescriptions, patient responsibility balance
\$100.00