

## **STATE of MICHIGAN VFW**

### **2025-2026 VMS, MENTAL HEALTH & WELFARE PROGRAM**

This is a combined program that has two primary components that have significant cross-over impact, which is why they have been brought together under one heading.

The classifications for awards in this program will be determined based on the National Membership Report dated June 30, 2025, as follows:

#### **Membership Divisions:**

Division I 10 to 65 members

Division II 66 to 125 members

Division III 126 to 225 members

Division IV 226 members and over

The reporting period for determination of the following awards is May 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026.

### **2025-2026 Mental Health Wellness & Welfare Program**

The Mental Health Wellness & Welfare program seeks to bring attention to the issue of veteran mental health needs to our VFW membership. Bringing awareness through education of the barriers helps remove the stigma often associated with seeking assistance by veterans in chronic or acute crisis. Untreated mental health issues lead to workplace stress, family problems, homelessness, and suicide and other physical ailments that impede quality of life.

Member awareness and education can greatly reduce the number of these tragic results. On this webpage are some tools that can assist you. Additional resources will be added to the webpage as they are identified. Mental Health events should be submitted to the Mental Health Director as soon as possible for proper prior publicity through the MOV, Facebook and other opportunities.

#### **Post Program Participation:**

1. 5 points if your Post submits a nominee to the Mental Health Director before May 1, 2026, for Mental Health Awareness Advocate of the Year. The Mental Health Wellness & Welfare Committee will review all nominees and select one Mental Health Awareness Advocate of the Year who will receive a plaque from the State Commander at the 2026 State Convention.

2. 10 points if your Post holds a Mental Health forum/discussion in your community. The program must include mental health outreach resources and at least one Mental Health Certified Counselor as an Advisor/Moderator, etc. Report of the event must include photos and be submitted to the Director within 48 hours of program completion.

3. 5 points if your Post donates your Post Home for a Mental Health Community Event.

4. 5 points for each member of your Post who volunteers as a panelist at a Department Mental Health Welfare Committee townhall on “Mental Health Wellness for Veterans”. We are planning 4 events with the date and time TBA. Maximum 15 points.

5. 2 points for each member of your Post that attends a Suicide Training Events such as VA’s SAVE Program /QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) or completes mental health first aid for Veterans additionally THRIVE. Attendance by Post members must be reported to the Director before May 1, 2026. Maximum 10 points.

The top Post in each membership division above will be recognized with a plaque from the State Commander at the 2026 State Convention. The second and third place Posts in each Division will receive a citation.

Posts are encouraged to host fundraising events or make Post Relief donations to the Department of Mental Health & Welfare Fund during 2025-2026. This fund assists veterans in emergent need, as determined by Department Officers on a case-by-case basis. Post donations to this fund will be reflected on the Post donation report on the Department website during the period May 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026.

### **2025-2026 Veterans and Military Support Program (VMS)**

Donations to the National VMS Program support the key elements of the National umbrella:

- Military Assistance Program (military unit support and Adopt A Unit) Virtual PINS to support military member telephone calls
- Unmet Needs (emergent financial assistance)
- VFW “Sports Clips Help A Hero Scholarship” Program

Donations to the National VMS for the purpose of All-American Program credit must be made through the OMS dashboard. If for any reason you cannot do that the Department will accept your earmarked donation and make that donation for you on the OMS dashboard, just please communicate with us on that. Do not try and make VMS donations to National using the “DONATE” button on the National website!

Any significant VMS event or program must be submitted to the Department VMS Director for reporting to National by the National VMS Director, Doug Brinker, as soon as possible after it occurs.

### **Post Program Participation:**

1. 10 points if your Post hosts a VMS event such as a Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship Cut A Thon .
2. 2 points for each Post member who attends a VMS fundraiser or awareness event and the Post provides a report to the VMS Director.

3. 5 points if your Post or a Post member purchases a 2025-2026 National VMS Pin for \$20.00 each.

4. 5 points if your Post participates in the VFW ADOPT, a UNIT program, new or continuing, and reports to the VMS Department Director, and what support was being given to that unit by the Post.

5. 2 points if your Post displays VMS program materials at your Post events such as banquets or other public events hosted at the Post and the Post provides evidence via pictures. Program materials must be displayed at your Post. Reports of events with photos must be submitted to the Director. Maximum 10 points.

6. 1 point for each quarter that your Post submits a VMS report to the Director. Maximum 4 points.

The top Post in each membership division above will be recognized with a plaque from the State Commander at the 2026 State Convention. The second and third place Posts in each Division will receive a citation.

#### **District Program Participation:**

The District(s) with the highest percentage of Posts that complete the VMS donation requirement for All American through the National All-American Dashboard in OMS will receive a citation from the State Commander at the 2026 State Convention presented to the District VMS Chairman.

Thank you for the support of these programs and the veterans they assist.

Douglas Brinker, M.A. CPSS, Director  
2547 N Diane St  
Jackson, MI 49201  
517-499-0926  
Douglasbrinker14@gmail.com