



1st LT Alexander Bonnyman Jr. VFW Post 12135, Tellico Village TN

Standard Operating Procedure #1

Title:

Relief Committee

Author:

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Purpose:

A Post Relief Committee shall be established as a standing committee of the Post to investigate the needs of veterans in distress, aid in those needs, or recommend to the Post actions for relief of a veteran's distress.

Scope:

- The Commander shall appoint the committee Chairman and three committee members. The relief committee shall consist of the Chairman, three appointed members, the Chaplin, and the Service Officer.
- The relief committee operates under the guidance of the Post Executive Committee. All relief committee recommendations for veteran's support are presented to the EXCOM for consideration. Upon their approval, the request is presented to the Post at the monthly membership meeting.
- A relief fund shall be established and maintained by the Post for aiding veterans in need. In accordance with section 219 of the VFW By-Laws and Manual of Procedure, all proceeds from the distribution of Buddy Poppies and such other monies that may be solicited or donated for veteran's relief purposes, shall be placed in this fund. This fund shall be administered by the Post Quartermaster.
- The Relief Fund shall be administered as directed by section 704 of the National By-Laws and sections 219 & 704 of the Manual of Procedure of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Committee Chairman: Shall lead and organize the committee and its actions to aid veterans in need. The Chairman will determine the validity of each case and investigate the particulars, with the assistance of the committee members, and make a recommendation to the EXCOM regarding the disposition of the request.
- Committee Members: Aid the Chairman in the investigation and gathering of information pertinent to each case. Make recommendations to the Chairman regarding the particulars of each request.
- Chaplin: Provide spiritual and moral advice and assistance to the chairman in the adjudication of each request. Assist the chairman in supporting veterans in need as required.
- Service Officer: Assist the Chairman in the identification and, if required, application for veteran entitlements from the state and federal governments.

Standard Procedure:

- The Post Relief Committee shall meet on the call of any member of the Committee who has personal knowledge or been informed by an external organization of a veteran in need, or upon application directly by a veteran in distress.

- The committee will endeavor to understand the veteran's situation, the circumstances that led to the current situation, how our assistance will help them and, if the post can help, will this assistance correct the situation and enable the veteran to get "back on their feet." The Veteran's Assistance Qualification Form provides the committee with the necessary information to decide further action.

- Actions:

1. Conduct an initial interview (either by phone or in person) to gather information to include: name, address, phone number, veteran's status, type of discharge, what assistance the veteran is asking for, has the veteran applied to other organizations for help, can they provide a copy of their DD-214, and is this an emergency request. An emergency request is defined as the resolution of the situation is required before the next general membership meeting. Emergency request procedures will be outlined separately.

2. If the request is to pay an obligation (rent, water, electricity, car repair, food, apartment application, or similar), the committee will obtain a copy of the bills/letters and contact the organization/person to whom the debt is owed to verify the validity of the obligation.

3. Once the committee confirms the obligation and with concurrence of the EXCOM and approval of the post membership, the Quartermaster will provide funds directly to the organization or person who holds the debt. No funds will be given directly to the veteran except for gas or food cards.

4. If the request is for other types of assistance for example, wheelchair ramps, furniture, bicycle to get to work, funeral expenses, or similar, the committee will carefully investigate the need and determine what assistance the post can provide. The committee will personally guide the veteran through the process of getting the necessary assistance.

- Any request for funds to support a veteran in need shall be presented to the post membership for approval by a majority vote of members present at the monthly general meeting. An exception to this policy will be made for Emergency Actions and explained further below.

- The Post will procure debit cards in values of \$25. These cards will be held by the Committee and distributed to veterans in need, as determined by the Chairman, without requiring further approval.

Emergency Action Procedure:

- At times the relief committee will receive a request for assistance with a short time to act. This situation can occur, especially with utilities and rent issues, where a utility shut off or eviction notice has been issued and payment is required before the details can be brought before the post at the next general meeting. In this case, the Post By-Laws provide for the elected EXCOM members to authorize the expenditure of funds before the next general membership meeting.

- When the Chairman has determined that assistance is an Emergency Action and must be addressed before the next general membership meeting, The following steps will be followed:

1. After a detailed investigation as outlined in the standard procedures, the Relief Committee will inform the elected EXCOM members via email or phone of the details of the assistance requested and why this is an Emergency Action.

2. The elected EXCOM members will provide concurrence or non-concurrence with the proposed emergency action. After discussion and majority vote of the EXCOM, the Commander will authorize release of funds for this action. Only the Commander can authorize funds for an Emergency Action. The elected "voting" members of the EXCOM are CDR, SVC, JVC. QM, and the 3 Trustees.

Reporting:

- The Relief Committee Chairman or his representative, shall report at the monthly general membership meeting on the status of any current or continuing investigation or any beneficial action taken by the Committee.
- The Relief Committee Chairman or his representative, shall present to the membership at the monthly general membership meeting all Emergency Actions approved by the EXCOM since the last general meeting for a vote of concurrence by the Post membership.

References:

- Veterans of Foreign Wars By-Laws section 704.
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Manual of Procedure Sections 219 and 704
- VFW Post 12135 Tellico Village, TN By-Laws Article VI Section 4.

Attachments:

- VFW Post 12135 Veteran's Assistance Qualification Form.

Approval:

- Richard T. Creange, Commander VFW Post 12135, 1 July 2025