



## Elks National Veterans Service Commission

# **FREEDOM GRANTS**

The Elks have a long and impressive history of serving veterans. With an increase in the number of \$2,000 Freedom Grants available to Lodges in 2015-16, that tradition can grow even stronger! This year, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission will award 180 Freedom Grants to Elks Lodges to hold projects that serve veterans and active-duty military members.

Freedom Grant applications become available online July 1, 2015, and are due August 17, 2015 at 12 p.m. (noon) Central Time. Recipients will be announced in September. Freedom Grants are available for use between September 21, 2015, and July 31, 2016.

Freedom Grants are competitive and will be awarded to Lodges whose projects are judged to best serve the needs of veterans and/ or active-duty military members. Meaningful Elk involvement is strongly encouraged. Here are some examples of past projects.

**Freedom Grants should focus on one of these five areas of increased need.**

- **Employment**
- **Homelessness and Housing**
- **Military Families**
- **Health**
- **Educational Support**

- Salisbury, N.C., Lodge No. 699 partnered with the local VA to hold a Stand Down for homeless veterans. Elks help to run the event, and provide food, clothing, hygiene supplies and support for the veterans.
- Catalina Mountain, Ariz., Lodge No. 2815 partnered with the Arizona National Guard to hold support events for soldiers and their families. Elks provide school supplies and gifts for children, and help families with car repairs, employment searches, job training and more.
- Bishop, Calif., Lodge No. 1603 partnered with the local VA hospital to organize fishing trips and support events for residents and local Wounded Warriors.
- Virginia Beach, Va., Lodge No. 2268 partnered with a nearby Naval base to welcome soldiers home. Elks greet military members returning from combat as they return to the barracks, and offer each person a welcome bag of essentials like hygiene supplies, warm clothes and snacks.

### **Application Questions:**

- Describe your Lodge's Freedom Grant project. How is your Lodge serving veterans or active duty military personnel with this grant? (*Do not list current Lodge programs unless this grant expands those programs.*)
- Which of the five areas of increased need is this grant project addressing? Please choose one of the following five categories; employment; homelessness and housing; military families; health; or educational support.
- How will Elks be meaningfully involved in this project?
- What does the Lodge expect to accomplish with this project?

A budget is required. Freedom Grant applications are online only. Paper applications will not be accepted.

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