

PUBLIC LAW 116-107, VETERANS LEGACY GRANT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE/REASON FOR ISSUE: This notice provides information about Public Law 116-107 that is of significance to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA).

2. BACKGROUND: The National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) mission is to honor Veterans and their eligible family members with final resting places and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service and sacrifice to our nation. The Veterans Legacy Program (VLP) within NCA supports this mission by providing engagement and educational tools and opportunities for the public to learn about Veterans' service and sacrifice. In current practice, the program utilizes contracts with academic institutions to conduct cemetery research.

The President's fiscal year 2020 budget recommendations included a proposal for specific statutory authority to establish a grant program for the VLP program to obtain VLP learning products and services. New statutory authority was necessary because the use of grants instead of contracts would be a more appropriate vehicle for NCA to obtain educational tools and services for the VLP in the future. In accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act (31 U.S.C. 6301-6308), NCA deems grants more appropriate because VLP learning products accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation, and the primary beneficiaries of VLP tools and services are individual learners and not the Federal government. Additionally, the use of grants would allow the VLP to adopt an awards cycle that more closely aligns with the academic calendar of universities and other learning institutions, which are largely expected to be the entities to produce VLP learning products.

3. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC LAW 116-67: Public Law 116-107 (enacted January 17, 2020) permits VA to establish a grant program to conduct cemetery research and produce educational materials for the Veterans Legacy Program.

Section 1. Grants for Cemetery Research and The Production of Educational Materials.

Eligible grant recipients include: An institution of higher learning; a local education agency; a non-profit entity that the Secretary determines has a demonstrated history of community engagement; another recipient the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

Grant recipients may use funds to conduct research, produce educational materials, and promote community engagement involving national, State, or Tribal veterans' cemeteries including the histories of interred veterans.

The maximum amount for a grant award may not exceed \$500,000.

No later than 2 years after establishing the grant program, the Secretary of VA will submit a report regarding the financial effectiveness of the program to the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

4. ACTION: In accordance with P.L. 116-107, NCA will draft a regulation related to the evaluation of applications for grants under the program and administration of the program. Additionally, NCA will adhere to the reporting requirements outlined in the statute and include record keeping practices within the regulation to assist with assessing financial effectiveness.

5. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: National Cemetery Administration, Office of Finance and Planning, Legislative and Regulatory Service (42E), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, is responsible for the contents of this notice.

6. EXPIRATION: This notice will be archived on the last day of June 2020.

/s/ Ronald E. Walters
Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

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