The Veterans Multi-Service Center (VMC) is committed to assisting U.S. Military Veterans and their families in their time of need and will continue to serve those who served during this unprecedented pandemic. While much of the Nation practices social distancing and shelters in place, VMC staff remain diligent in providing essential services, including food, shelter and overall mental and physical health care. VMC operates on the front lines. Outreach efforts continue and facilities remain open and active as VMC continues to provide aid to vulnerable Veterans in Philadelphia and the surrounding communities.

Located in the Old City section of Philadelphia, VMC was founded in 1980 to provide critical aid to homeless and at-risk Veterans and operates as the essential intake point for homeless Veterans in Philadelphia and surrounding counties. For forty years, VMC has helped our most vulnerable Veterans to survive and improve their lives. VMC’s clients experience various problems, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), behavioral health and medical issues, homelessness, substance abuse, unemployment, and a need for vocational training and support.

Today, VMC’s services can be divided into three major programs; Homeless Veteran Services, Veterans Benefits and Veteran Employment and Training. These services are provided in concert with The Philadelphia and Coatesville VA Medical Centers to address medical and mental health needs. Each of the VMC’s programs coordinates a comprehensive approach that develops individualized assistance to Veterans in need. In addition to the programs, counseling, referrals, and Veteran Benefits assistance, VMC also offers related support services and referrals for Veteran families.

Transitional Housing – LZII and Mary Walker House – Chester County

Though headquartered in Philadelphia, VMC operates two transitional housing programs located on the grounds of the VA Medical Center in Coatesville, PA; LZII for male Veterans (95 Beds) and The Mary E. Walker House for Women Veterans (30 Beds, specializing in Military Sexual Trauma). These facilities provide on average 250 meals per day ($8,000 per week) to our Veterans in need as well as other important services to work towards permanent housing upon completion of the program. Due to mandated government restrictions from our lessor, the Coatesville VA Medical Center, VMC’s transitional housing facilities are unable to admit Veterans outside the grounds of the Medical Center due to policies initiated to decrease to spread of the virus. VMC’s LZII and Mary E. Walker Housing Transitional Housing Facilities are funded by the VA Grant and Per Diem program, where VMC is paid per Veteran housed per day. These necessary policies during this time greatly limit our capability of filling our beds with eligible Veterans, therefore lowering our earned revenue. At present these facilities house 103 Veterans, which is 22 less than capacity. This translates to a loss of approximately $32,000 in operating revenue (the grant per diem rate is $48.50 per day per Veteran) VMC, however, has continued to retain all staff and is meeting all costs still associated with running the facilities. All 29 employees running these facilities are Chester County residents.

Like similar organizations that address the issues surrounding the most at risk and highly vulnerable populations of this city and close communities, this crisis has raised many questions and brought a new critical thinking to how we can continue to provide life essential services to those in need while protecting staff and essential workers and ensuring we may continue
operations. While these issues are significant, The Veterans Multi-Service Center remains compassionately focused on serving those who served. The Center seeks funding of $5,000 to augment costs associated with operating the Coatesville facilities, mainly for food and other associated costs. Use of funds expected immediately.

Please email grants@chescocf.org

- This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
- Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
- 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources. Grants will be processed a few times monthly. We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescocf.org. Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.