

Ventura Fire Foundation

Benevolent Fund Policy Adopted by the Board of Directors on March 31, 2022



I. Overview

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Benevolent Fund (the “policy”) is to guide the Ventura Fire Foundation (“VFF”) on appropriate grants from the Benevolent Fund to individuals, as obligated in the VFF Mission to support and enhance the lives of firefighters and their families.

B. Why is a policy necessary?

Reasons for adopting this policy include:

- i. To ensure VFF complies with relevant law and regulations regarding grants to individuals.
- ii. To ensure the objective distribution of funds to eliminate an actual, or perceived, conflict of interest.
- iii. To provide guidelines by which VFF can evaluate grant requests.

II. Eligibility

A. Eligible Class.

The following class of persons are eligible to receive grants:

- i. Firefighters. Active and retired firefighters and fire department staff serving in any jurisdiction in the State of California.
- ii. Firefighter families. The immediate family members of the firefighters described above, including spouses or domestic partners, children/step-children, and parents/step-parents. Collectively referred to as the “family unit”.

B. Residency. All grant recipients must residents of the United States.

III. Purposes

A. Grants are awarded to help individuals who, because of a natural disaster, an act of terrorism, job-related injury, or other personal tragedy, have a financial need and are an appropriate recipient of assistance from a charity.

B. An individual does not have to be destitute to qualify for a grant. However, grants cannot be made to individuals merely because they are the victim of a disaster or experienced a personal tragedy.

- C. Examples of grants VFF may provide. This list is not exhaustive, other purposes may also be supported.
- i. Payments for permanent or temporary primary housing and/or necessary repairs in excess of insurance coverage or incurred during a waiting period (incl. rent, mortgage, security deposit).
 - ii. Payments for permanent or temporary primary transportation and/or repairs in excess of insurance coverage, or incurred during a waiting period; or any costs incurred as a result of necessary transportation to/from medical appointments related to the disaster or hardship (incl. train, bus, or airfare costs).
 - iii. Payments for medical or mental health expenses not otherwise covered by other insurance, physical therapy equipment, mental health counseling and outpatient addiction recovery services. Note: experimental medical treatments will not be considered.
 - iv. Payments for basic expenses such as utilities, food, clothing, basic communication tools such as cell phone and basic data plan.
 - v. Payments related to the acquisition and registration of an emotional or physical support animal.
 - vi. Payments related to childcare for young children or to enable a surviving spouse with young children to remain at home with the children.
 - vii. Payments for funeral costs and related travel expenses for immediate family members.
 - viii. Payments to crowdfunding platforms for causes that otherwise fall within this policy.

IV. Amount of Grants

The maximum grant amount is \$5,000. An individual, or family unit, may receive more than one grant. Each request will be evaluated separately. VFF will determine whether to award multiple grants based on all relevant factors, including the individual's need and particular circumstances, the total amount of funds VFF has available for grants, and the needs of other applicants.

V. Grant Process

A. Application.

- i. All grant requests must be submitted electronically or in writing the using VFF application form (attached)
- ii. Applications may be submitted by persons other than the recipient, if the person submitting the application has accurate and appropriate knowledge about the recipient.

B. Consideration.

- i. VFF has the sole discretion as to whether to approval a particular grant. Qualified applicants are not guaranteed to receive a grant.
- ii. Applications are reviewed and decided by the VFF Board of Directors on an ongoing basis. In most cases, the Board will make a decision within two weeks of receiving a completed application.

- iii. VFF may require additional documentation or verification of information provided in the initial application in order to approve a grant.

C. Payment.

- i. All documentation requirements determined to be necessary must be met before a grant will be paid.
- ii. Whenever possible, grants will be paid directly to third parties to pay for specific expenses incurred, rather than to individuals or families directly.

VI. Other

A. Documentation.

VFF is required to maintain adequate records to show that grants it makes to individuals are consistent with relevant laws and regulations governing 501(c)(3) organizations. VFF will maintain the following internal documentation for each grant:

- i. Application and documentation, including the name and address of the recipient, and purpose of the grant.
- ii. Minutes from the Board of Directors meeting where the grant was approved, including acknowledgement of any potential conflict of interest.

B. Confidentiality.

VFF will take appropriate steps to protect the personal information and confidentiality of applications and grantees.

C. Conflicts of Interest.

In the event of a family or business relationship between the potential recipient of a grant and a VFF Board member, staff, or any other person involved in the grant review process, the conflict will be resolved in accordance with the VFF Conflict of Interest Policy.

D. Earmarking.

In accordance with the law and the VFF Gift Acceptance Policy, VFF retains full control of all charitable donations it receives. Donors may not require donations to go to a particular individual or family.

E. Flexibility.

This policy does not restrict VFF from making charitable grants that are outside the scope of this policy but consistent with the VFF Mission.

F. Tax consequences.

Individuals who receive grants from a charity to serve a charitable purpose are often not subject to tax on the assistance they receive. VFF will not provide any personal tax advice to grant recipients and encourages them to consult their personal tax advisor.

Ventura Fire Foundation

Request for Assistance from the VFF Benevolent Fund



Ventura Fire Foundation Benevolent Fund Request

The Ventura Fire Foundation Benevolent Fund provides assistance to individuals who, because of a natural disaster, an act of terrorism, job-related injury, or other personal tragedy, have a financial need and are an appropriate recipient of assistance from a charity.

Eligibility and award. Active or retired California firefighters, and their immediate family members (spouses or domestic partners, children/step-children, and parents/step-parents), who reside in the United States. The maximum possible grant per application is \$5,000.

Please refer to the Ventura Fire Foundation Benevolent Fund Policy for additional information on eligibility and the grant process.

Please submit this application, along with appropriate documentation (bills, receipts, photos, etc.) to support your request to venturafirefoundation@gmail.com. We prefer requests be submitted electronically via our website, www.venturafirefoundation.org.

Personal Information

I am submitting this form (check one):

- For myself, I am an active or retired (circle one) California firefighter

- For myself, I am the immediate family member of an active or retired (circle one) California Firefighter.

- On behalf of an active or retired (circle one) California firefighter.

My name:

My address:

My phone:

My email:

My relationship
to firefighter:

Firefighter's title
and name:

Firefighter's address:

Firefighter's phone:

Firefighter's email:

Firefighter's dept.
(name and city):

Release (check one)

- Ventura Fire Foundation has my permission to use my name, department, and grant amount as a recipient of Benevolent Fund support. I understand VFF will only use this information to encourage more firefighters to apply for support funds, and/or to receive donations for the Benevolent Fund. Details of grant will not be shared.
For example-
Engineer John Smith, Ventura City Fire, \$2,000
Firefighter Steven Jones (retired), Oxnard Fire, \$2,000
Sarah Chen, widow of Ventura County firefighter Joe Chen, \$2,000

- I prefer that my name not be used publicly. Ventura Fire Foundation may only share the firefighter’s department and grant amount.
For example-
Anonymous firefighter, Fed Fire-Ventura, \$2,000
Anonymous, child of Fillmore firefighter (retired), \$2,000

Verification

I attest that the information in this application is true and accurate.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____