

TITLE 17: CONSERVATION
CHAPTER I: DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCHAPTER g: GRANTS

PART 3080
ILLINOIS VETERAN RECREATION CORPS GRANT PROGRAM

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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 7.5 of the Illinois Veteran, Youth, and Young Adult Conservation Jobs Act [525 ILCS 50/7.5].

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Section 3080.10 Definitions

Department – The Department of Natural Resources.

Hourly Rate –

The rate of payment to veteran employees hired under a grant issued under this Part shall not be lower than the current minimum wage rate established by the Minimum Wage Law [820 ILCS 105].

The rate of payment to managing supervisors shall not be lower than the current minimum wage rate established by the Minimum Wage Law plus \$2.00 per hour.

The hourly rates established in this definition may be adjusted higher, as determined by the Department, if funds are available. Any adjustment beyond the minimum wage rate shall be identified by the Department in the grant application and grant agreement.

Local Sponsor – Any unit of local government or not-for-profit entity that can make available for a conservation or recreational program park lands, conservation or recreational lands or facilities, equipment, materials, administration, supervisory personnel, etc.

Managing Supervisor – An enrollee in the Illinois Veteran Recreation Corps who is selected by the local sponsor to supervise the activities of the veteran employee enrollees working on the conservation or recreational program. Managing supervisors are required to be veterans.

Not-for-Profit Entities – Entities eligible for participation in this grant program must be recognized and/or incorporated in Illinois as not-for-profit under the provisions of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986 [805 ILCS 105] and must possess current status as exempt from taxation under section 501(c) or 501(d) of the United States Internal Revenue Code (26 USC 501). Not-for-profit entities without current tax-exempt status are not eligible.

Term of the Grant Program – The 6 month period identified by the local sponsor in his/her grant application as the period of time in which veterans may be employed by the local sponsor under this grant program. The term of the grant program does not have to be a consecutive 6 month period, but must end no later than 12 months after the grant execution date.

Veteran – An Illinois resident who has served or is currently serving as a member of the United States Armed Forces, a member of the Illinois National Guard, or a member of a Reserve Component of the United States Armed Forces.

Wages – Only the hourly rate for personal services paid to the employed veterans (from which applicable taxes shall be withheld). "Wages" does not include the employer's contribution or portion of any tax.

Section 3080.20 Grant Program Objective

- a) The Illinois Veteran Recreation Corps grant program provides grants to be disbursed by the Department to eligible local sponsors to provide wages to veterans working, operating and instructing in conservation or recreational programs.
- b) The conservation or recreational programs shall include, but are not limited to, the coordination and teaching of natural resource conservation and management, physical activities, and learning activities directly related to natural resource conservation management or recreation.

- c) Local sponsors may charge a user fee for participation in the conservation or recreational program, as long as those fees are designed to promote as much community involvement as possible.

Section 3080.30 Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for this grant program, local sponsors must have the ability to provide suitable facilities, materials and management staff for conservation or recreational programs within the local community.

Section 3080.40 Eligible Project Costs, Payments and Compliance Requirements

- a) Grant assistance is available to provide wages for managing supervisors and eligible veterans hired by the local sponsor to conduct conservation or recreational programs. Local sponsors may fill or replace any Department approved managing supervisor or veteran position during the grant program with a new or different managing supervisor or veteran employee.
- b) Payments will be provided to the local sponsor upon completion of a grant agreement with the Department in a lump sum determined by the Department, but not to exceed 1040 hours (40 hours per week multiplied by 26 weeks) multiplied by the hourly rate for each approved managing supervisor and eligible veteran position to be hired by the local sponsor.
- c) Pursuant to this program, grant payments may only be used to pay wages for managing supervisors and eligible veterans hired by local sponsors. Further, the ratio of veteran employees to a managing supervisor must not be less than 10 to 1 for any local sponsor with a total number of veteran employees of 10 or more. Any local sponsor program with a total number of veteran employees of less than 10 must be limited to one managing supervisor.
- d) Any grant funds provided to the local sponsor that are not expended on wages for managing supervisors or eligible veterans shall be returned to the Department on or before the last day of the second month after the term of the grant program has ended. The Department will identify this date in the grant agreement with the local sponsor.
- e) By the last day of the second month after the term the grant program has ended, the local sponsor shall provide the Department with a report fully documenting the wages paid to all managing supervisors and eligible veterans pursuant to the program grant. The Department will identify this date in the grant agreement with the local sponsor.

- f) All financial records on approved grants must be maintained and retained in accordance with the Grant Funds Recovery Act [30 ILCS 705] and the State Records Act [5 ILCS 160] by the local sponsor for possible State audit after final grant payment is made by the Department.
- g) The local sponsor shall indemnify, protect, defend and hold harmless the Department from any and all liability, costs, damages, expenses or claims arising under, through, or by virtue of the administration of this program.

Section 3080.50 General Procedures for Grant Applications and Awards

- a) Applications for assistance under this grant program will be due no later than 30 days after the public announcement by the Department that applications are to be accepted. Failure to submit a completed application to the Department by the specified application deadline will result in rejection of an application for that grant cycle.
- b) Necessary application materials and instructions are available through the Department (see Section 3080.80). Awarding of grants will be on a competitive basis and will be made under authority of the Director of the Department of Natural Resources.
- c) Grant applicants are required to use the Department's Grant Application Form and will consist of the following basic components, at a minimum:
 - 1) applicant's name, address and telephone number;
 - 2) the name, address and telephone number of an individual representative of the applicant who is personally responsible for the grant administration by the applicant, including compliance with the requirements of this Part and the terms of the grant agreement;
 - 3) a detailed description of the proposed conservation or recreational program and the role of eligible veterans in the program, including the number of veteran and managing supervisor positions requested;
 - 4) program location;
 - 5) a statement of the need for the program in the local community;
 - 6) a description of the local resources available to successfully operate the program, including but not limited to facilities, materials and management; and

- 7) information on employment levels in the local community.

Section 3080.60 Project Evaluation Priorities

Applications for grants will be evaluated on the basis of conservation or recreational program content, location, need, minority percentage of population served, Equalized Assessed Valuation amount for property values in the local applicant's service area, local commitment of resources, acres managed by applicant and consistency with the veteran employment purpose of the Act.

Section 3080.70 Employment Criteria

- a) The local sponsor shall make public notification of the availability of jobs for managing supervisors and eligible veterans in the Illinois Veteran Recreation Corps by means of newspapers, electronic media, educational facilities, units of local government, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs offices and Department of Employment Security offices.
- b) Employment applications shall be submitted directly to the local sponsor. The local sponsor shall make all employment decisions.
- c) Employment is limited to:
 - 1) citizens of the State of Illinois;
 - 2) those who, at the time of enrollment, are veterans and unemployed;
 - 3) those who, for veteran employees, have skills that can be utilized in the summer conservation or recreational program;
 - 4) those who, for managing supervisors, have skills that can be utilized in supervising the activities of the veteran employees working on the conservation or recreation program;
 - 5) the length of the program specified each year by the Department, but in no case longer than 6 total months nor greater than the maximum number of hours as determined by the Department; and
 - 6) the total number of approved managing supervisor and veterans positions at all times.
- d) Managing supervisors and veterans hired by the local sponsor shall be paid the hourly rate as defined in Section 3080.10.

- e) Pursuant to this program, the local sponsor is responsible for any and all legal requirements pertaining to the employment of managing supervisors and eligible veterans. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, employer's share of any taxes arising from the employment of managing supervisors and eligible veterans.
- f) Managing supervisors and veterans hired by the local sponsor pursuant to this program are not classified as employees of the State or the local sponsor for purposes of contributions to the State Employees' Retirement System or any other public employee retirement system.
- g) Local sponsors must hire all managing supervisors and veterans as employees. Managing supervisors and veterans cannot be hired as independent contractors.
- h) Local sponsors must pay all managing supervisors and veteran employees through a payroll system that produces documentation showing all payments. Cash payments do not meet this requirement for documentation.

Section 3080.80 Program Information/Contact

For information on the Illinois Veteran Recreation Corps Grant Program, contact:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Grant Administration
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield IL 62702-1271

Telephone: 217/782-7481
FAX: 217/782-9599
www.dnr.illinois.gov