

Budget Detail Request - Fiscal Year 2016-17

Your request will not be officially submitted unless all questions and applicable sub parts are answered.

1. Title of Project: Five Star Veterans Center
2. Date of Submission: 12/10/2015
3. House Member Sponsor(s): Charles McBurney

4. DETAILS OF AMOUNT REQUESTED:

- a. Has funding been provided in a previous state budget for this activity? No
If answer to 4a is ?NO? skip 4b and 4c and proceed to 4d
- b. What is the most recent fiscal year the project was funded?
- c. Were the funds provided in the most recent fiscal year subsequently vetoed? No
- d. Complete the following Project Request Worksheet to develop your request (Note that Column E will be the total of Recurring funds requested and Column F will be the total Nonrecurring funds requested, the sum of which is the Total of the Funds you are requesting in Column G):

FY:	Input Prior Year Appropriation for this project for FY 2015-16 <i>(If appropriated in FY 2015-16 enter the appropriated amount, even if vetoed.)</i>			Develop New Funds Request for FY 2016-17 <i>(If no new Recurring or Nonrecurring funding is requested, enter zeros.)</i>			
	Column: A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Funds Description:	Prior Year Recurring Funds	Prior Year Nonrecurring Funds	Total Funds Appropriated <i>(Recurring plus Nonrecurring: Column A + Column B)</i>	Recurring Base Budget <i>(Will equal non-vetoed amounts provided in Column A)</i>	INCREASED or NEW Recurring Requested	TOTAL Nonrecurring Requested <i>(Nonrecurring is one time funding & must be re-requested every year)</i>	Total Funds Requested Over Base Funding <i>(Recurring plus Nonrecurring: Column E + Column F)</i>
Input Amounts:					595,000	100,000	695,000

- e. New Nonrecurring Funding Requested for FY 16-17 will be used for:
 Operating Expenses Fixed Capital Construction Other one-time costs
- f. New Recurring Funding Requested for FY 16-17 will be used for:
 Operating Expenses Fixed Capital Construction Other one-time costs

5. Requester:

- a. Name: Len Loving
- b. Organization: Five Star Veterans Center
- c. Email: Lenloving@aol.com
- d. Phone #: (904)723-5950

6. Organization or Name of Entity Receiving Funds:

- a. Name: Five Star Veterans Center, Inc.
- b. County (County where funds are to be expended) Duval
- c. Service Area (Counties being served by the service(s) provided with funding) Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Saint Johns

7. Write a project description that will serve as a stand-alone summary of the project for legislative review. The description should summarize the entire project's intended purpose, the purpose of the funds requested (if request is a sub-part of the entire project), and most importantly the detail on how the funds requested will be spent - for example how much will be spent on positions and associated salaries, specifics on capital costs, and detail of operational expenses. The summary must list what local, regional or statewide interests or areas are served. It should also document the need for the funds, the community support and expected results when applicable. Be sure to include the type and amount of services as well as the number of the specific target population that will be served (such as number of home health visits to X, # of elderly, # of school aged children to receive mentoring, # of violent crime victims to receive once a week counseling etc.)

Project Description:

PTSD, TBI, substance abuse, and addiction disorders are more prevalent in returning Veterans than most realize. The result is once loving, law-abiding, bright, confident and caring individuals have difficulty sustaining relationships, conforming to rules, and being able to function normally in public situations. Marriages fall apart, relationships with parents and children are strained, legal issues surface and jobs are lost. Our Veterans are faced with unimaginable personal and financial challenges. They feel hopeless, often become homeless and we've all heard the statistics on returning soldier suicide (22/day). The Five Star Veterans Center exists to give these Veterans a hand up so they can return to the workforce and begin living the life they deserve. This population of Veterans clearly represents an under-served group. Five STAR accepts residents from throughout Florida and the United States.

Five Star serves homeless U.S. Military Veterans (most are between the ages of 22 and 55) with honorable and general under honorable discharges. All veteran men and women are welcome, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. While all resident Veterans are qualified for VA insurance benefits, some need help accessing them, as well as their disability and education benefits. The Center has a volunteer Veterans Service Officer on-site to assist them. Five Star also provides housing for men and women in the Veterans' Treatment Court program. It serves as a drug- and alcohol-free environment where program participants live while addressing the VTC's requirements. The VTC program ensures Veterans, charged with criminal offenses go to a supportive mental health program like Five STAR versus staying incarcerated. Therefore, Five STAR helps reduce the number of Veterans in Florida jails. In addition, Five STAR provides work for Community Service opportunities and the Florida Workman's Compensation program.

While providing safe housing, meals, assistance obtaining VA Benefits and medical care, computer labs, wifi, and basic job training is a good start. These veterans can never fully recover until they acknowledge and learn ways to manage their mental injuries. To respond to these needs, Five Star worked with the National

Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), the University of North Florida and the Delores Barr Weaver Fund to secure start-up funding for, and begin delivering on-site mental health counseling to its residents. This on-site program, which began in late 2014, includes daily individual and group therapy sessions delivered by a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and a team of 4 interns under her supervision. Every resident, including Veterans Treatment Court residents, participates in this program, which also focuses on general health and wellness. For example, residents attend Anger Management and Recovery programs, and three times a week have access to a personal trainer in the Center exercise room. They also receive life skill classes and most importantly for their future employment counseling. These programs are made available as an outreach to any Veteran at no cost.

The Five STAR staff and residents volunteer actively to give back to the local community, i.e. four to five times a year in partnership with Feeding NE Florida and other veteran groups. We distribute food at the Center to veterans, active duty military, and neighborhood residents. The Center residents are also on call to assist elderly or disabled veterans with yard work and small construction projects.

State funding would enable the continuation and expansion of this much-needed program through support of resident living expenses, appropriate tools and staffing levels, and well-maintained housing. Over 50 Veterans, a year are kept off the streets while providing them the ability to return successfully to work and become productive members of society. The results of the Center's program places Veterans back in the Workforce, which in turn creates new tax revenue and less stress on State subsidy programs.

The Center and its property are owned by Five STAR, which allows the staff to keep the cost per resident at a minimum. Resident living expenses include the cost of three meals per day, housing, utilities and building upkeep and administration: \$440,000 (\$11,000/year for 40 residents).

The Mental Health Program needs the following: 1) assessment instruments to capture veterans' baseline symptoms and monitor progress in addressing them; 2) sustaining funding for a Licensed Mental Health Professional, a paid masters level mental health intern and a part-time clerical support person. All of which will build greater capacity and capability in the Center's outreach program: \$155,000/year.

Housing Needs: Five Star Veterans Center is located in an aging former nursing home that was converted to house and feed a capacity of 40 previously homeless and at-risk veterans. Volunteers and donated items have refreshed and furnished resident rooms, offices, meeting and dining spaces. However, the roof is old and in very poor shape, and to ensure resident safety it needs to be replaced. Further, the kitchen space and equipment is old and beginning to fail. Both will likely need to be replaced within the next 2 to 3 years: \$100,000 (non-recurring).

Since 2012, Five Star Veterans Center has been a lifeline for more than 130 homeless Veterans, most of whom face the daily challenges associated with mental health issues. 80% of residents who participates in Five Star's Passport to Independence Program successfully regain their ability to live independently and rejoin the Workforce. And while nationally 22 veterans reportedly commit suicide daily, no Five Star graduates are known to have taken their life. A testament to the value of Five Star: Several residents have shared they seriously considered suicide and believe they would not be alive today if not for the Center. The Five Star Veterans Center is saving lives one veteran at a time! Unfortunately, funding is a serious issue and without state support Five Star is at risk of having to curtail or lose its ability to provide the mental health services and improved life skills our veterans so desperately need.

8. Provide the total cost of the project for FY 2016-17 from all sources of funding:

Federal: 36,000

State: 695,000 (Excluding the requested Total Amount in #4d, Column G)

Local: 0

Other: 0

9. Is this a multi-year project requiring funding from the state for more than one year?

Yes