

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **American Legion and Easterseals Maine Partner to Distribute Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance**

**AUGUSTA, Maine** (May 15, 2019) – The [Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services](#) (MBVS) is pleased to announce that the American Legion and Easterseals Maine will be points of contact for distribution of Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance (VEFA), which is the result of the passage of LD 1736 in the 128th Maine State Legislature, a bill that was originally sponsored by Representative Louis Luchini of Ellsworth and Representative Bradley Farrin of Norridgewock.

VEFA was created to provide assistance for Maine Veterans who suffer an emergency and do not have sufficient savings or access to other financial assistance to resolve the emergency. Examples of assistance needs may include: damage to the Veteran's home due to fire, flood or hurricane that is not covered by insurance; illness of the Veteran or family member that results in hardship; assistance to prevent or resolve the Veteran being homeless; or any other condition that puts the Veteran at risk of not having the basic necessities of food, shelter and safety.

MBVS conducted a Request for Proposal process and has now contracted with two providers, Easterseals Maine and the American Legion of Maine, to process requests for assistance, arrive at an appropriate decision on requests, and issue rapid financial assistance to help with a Maine Veteran's emergency.

MBVS Director David Richmond stated the following:

"We are fortunate to have two proven, capable organizations step up to help us administer this program. Easterseals Maine, which has the capacity and a proven track record of helping veterans in emergency situations, and the American Legion, which was founded 100 years ago with posts and service officers from Eliot to Fort Kent, together will bring local accessibility to this program. I am anxious to begin. We receive requests daily for assistance from Veterans all over the state, and up until today had very limited resources to be able to assist. This program demonstrates the commitment that the State of Maine has made to not leave Veterans without basic necessities. My thanks to the lawmakers, leaders and citizens that made this program a reality."

Applications can be obtained by contacting The [American Legion Department of Maine Headquarters](#) at 207-873-3229 or [Easterseals Maine](#) at 207-828-0754 ext. 1004. Turnaround time for the fund will be 48 hours once the Veteran has submitted a complete application and a decision has been made.

To find the MBVS Veterans' Services Office closest to you, please visit <https://www.maine.gov/veterans/veterans-services-offices/locations/index.html>. You can also call MBVS at 207-430-6035 or visit [www.maine.gov/veterans](http://www.maine.gov/veterans) to learn more about available resources.

### **About Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services**

*The Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services was established in 1947 by the State of Maine and is part of the Maine Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management. Our mission is to help Mainers who served, and their loved ones, understand and navigate the benefits, services, and programs available to them. The Bureau does this by being a responsive, experienced, and dedicated advocate. The Bureau is headquartered at Camp Keyes and has seven field service offices located throughout the state and a claims office located at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Togus, Maine. The Bureau also operates the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery System which includes four veterans' cemeteries. For more information about the Bureau or to request assistance, please visit our website at [www.maine.gov/veterans](http://www.maine.gov/veterans).*



*Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance Fund organizers. L to R (Back Row) – Ed Harmon, American Legion Post #36 Boothbay; David Richmond, MBVS Director; Darren Henry, MBVS Acting Deputy Director; David Patch, Commander American Legion Post #36 Boothbay; Paul L'Heureux, State Adjutant, and Amedeo Lauria, American Legion Department of Maine. L to R (Front Row) Candice Wright, MBVS Business Manager, and Stacey Leet, Easterseals Maine.*

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