

**Post 197 Assistance to
Veteran/Active Military, Veteran/Active Military Family,
and Community in Need**

Policy and Procedures

1. Post 197 Mission: To honor and assist military Veterans and active duty, their families, and the community in need. Post 197 will do its best to assist those in need based on resource availability and member/volunteer capabilities.
2. Post Definitions of Veterans, Active Duty Military, Family, and Community
 - a. Veterans include all those service members who served honorably in any of the current United States service branches.
 - b. Active Duty Military includes all United States service members currently active in any of the service branches.
 - c. Family includes spouses, widows/widowers, and dependent children of Veterans or active duty military as defined above.
 - d. Community includes all the people in Pike County and the surrounding area who are not Veterans, active duty military, and their respective families as defined above.
3. Objective: One of the objectives of Post 197 is to assist active military/Veterans, their families and community members in need of financial, medical or physical, mental, and emotional support.
 - a. Financial Need: Those individuals who lack the funds to survive or need immediate funds to get out of further debt. Post 197 funds can be donated to an individual directly or to another organization hosting a local fundraiser. Unemployment, homelessness, and tax assistance fall into this need.
 - b. Medical/Physical Need: Those individuals who may need medical equipment or a home modification to assist in daily living tasks. Post 197 would advertise the need and request a particular medical equipment, refer individual or family representative to an organization who deals with medical individuals in need, establish a specific fundraiser to purchase required equipment, or fund from the Post general funds the purchase of the required equipment. For home modifications, the Post Executive Committee would evaluate the construction, Volunteer numbers, and current Post funding capabilities to determine how to best support the requirements.
 - c. Mental Need: It has been said that everybody after about 50 years of age is at some level of dementia. Individuals with mental illness or are cognitively impaired are situations that are extremely hard to identify early or treat. Based on the age and

military service of most Post 197 members, the chance of someone having some sort of mental illness to include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is high. Alcohol, smoking (nicotine), or other drug addictions are also mental in their effects to the mind and body. These mental issues can affect the lives of others.

d. Emotional Need: Overwhelming emotions significantly interfere with daily life, relationships, or overall well-being, such as persistent sadness, anxiety, grief or anger. These emotions can affect the lives of others. Boredom, loneliness, or not able to socialize can cause depression. Suicidal tendencies fall into this need category for assistance.

4. Methods of Assistance and Resolving Needs

a. Financial Need: Post 197 will refer the individual to organizations who can assist in establishing a financial recovery plan. Post 197 funds can be donated to an individual directly or to another organization hosting a local fundraiser. Post 197 can refer the individual to organizations that can establish a financial recovery plan to include some financial assistance. The individual can be referred to organizations that provide food, employment assistance for those needing a job, housing solutions, or tax assistance. Post 197 can possibly coordinate with local businesses to help offset the cost of modifying a home for handicap/safety requirements; for example, an electrician may donate labor for electrical work for a home modification.

b. Medical/Physical Need: For most cases, requests for medical or home modifications need to be conducted in a timely manner as it directly affects the care and comfort of the individual. Post 197 would advertise the need and request a particular medical equipment, refer individual or family representative to an organization who deals with medical individuals in need, establish a specific fundraiser to purchase required equipment, or fund from the Post general funds the purchase of the required equipment. For home modifications, the Post Executive Committee would evaluate the construction, Volunteer numbers, and current Post funding capabilities to determine how to best support the requirements.

c. Mental Need: When conversing with another person, Post members may not be aware that the person may be at some level of mental illness. When conversing, the person may exhibit a sudden response or reaction to a question or situation which may be unusual, loud, or obnoxious. By nature, one would immediately have the tendency to counter his response and unintentionally escalate the situation. Everyone needs to quickly determine if this response could be out of character and perhaps due to a potential mental illness. If you detect this is out of character, this may be a sign of mental illness, and quickly rethink your response or direction of your conversation. For potential mental disorders, or drug and alcohol assistance, the Post can help by recommending that the family seek professional help for assessment and/or treatment.

d. Emotional Need: People's emotions are detectable but difficult to resolve. Many people's emotional issues require therapy. The most severe issues are those who consider suicide as a resolution to their problems. This is hard to detect; however, if you suspect a person is contemplating suicide, relay that you care about the person, notify the family. Get the person to call the suicide hot line to talk to the suicide expert on duty. For a grieving family upon the death of a Veteran, the Post can provide a condolence card and note to the family on how important the Veteran is to the nation and to thank the family for their Veteran's honorable and faithful service to our Nation. Post 197 should also provide condolences to Veteran widow/widower who passed away, thanking the family for the widow/widower's support to the Veteran. The Chaplain should be considered in assisting the grieving family and the planning of other activities to help provide comfort. Post 197 should provide a representative to any local Veteran visitation, memorial service, and/or graveside service.

5. Assistance Priorities

a. In most cases, Post 197 gains awareness of a need for assistance from a referral from someone within the Post or the community. When responding to a request, inquire about who referred the request to Post 197.

b. Post 197 shall consider all requests regardless of whether the person is a Veteran. Based on funding and Volunteers required, Post 197 will prioritize each request based on Veteran, active military, family member, or the community at large.

c. The individual's identity as a Veteran, active military, or family member will be verified. Their need will also be verified as best possible. Status and need verification is essential when the Post directly assists or when a "Call for Help" is sent out. The EC may identify a member of the Post, more than likely an EC member to verify the persons military and/or Veteran status and validate the need. That person will become the case project officer (PO).

d. The American Legion's top priority of assistance is to Veterans. Identification of a person in need may be from the individual themselves or through a referral. Most Veterans are humble and many do not seek assistance.

e. Most active duty needs can be addressed within the military; however, those who are deployed, and their families reside within the community may need assistance. Their needs will be considered.

f. Veteran family members may also have needs. Assisting a Veteran's family member, in many situations also helps the Veteran.

g. As mentioned, if the Post has the funds and Volunteers available, it will consider individuals from the community who need assistance.

6. Post Service Officer (SO)

a. The Post 197 By-Laws directs that a Service Officer may be appointed who wants to commit their volunteer time in support of the Post's mission. This officer is appointed by the Post Commander, approved by the Post Executive Committee, and would become a member of the Executive Committee as an appointed officer.

b. The responsibilities of the Service Officer as directed in the Post 197 By-Laws are to:

- Advise the Commander, Executive Committee, and General Membership on Veteran support activities
- Provide Veterans Affairs (VA) and State of Georgia Veterans Services awareness to all Veterans and their dependents, the rights and benefits granted to them by law, and any new Veteran legislation initiatives
- Be knowledgeable on how to access and utilize the expert services available through The American Legion, state and federal government agencies, and local community agencies.
- Monitor the Legion, VA, state Veterans, and labor services sites, and provide relevant information to the General Membership.
- Act as chairperson of the Post 197 Veteran Affairs Committee,
- Act as lead for Post Veteran and family assistance programs and projects.
- Work closely with the Finance Officer to help determine potential funding for assistance.

c. The Post Service Officer will keep track of all volunteer hours associated with the Post's assistance of a person in need. This includes activities such as coordination with the individual in need and potential supporting organizations, visits and meetings, related travel, and volunteer projects for example the preparations, planning, and construction of a handicap ramp. Volunteers will report their hours to the Post Service Officer. The Service Officer will turn in volunteer hours in a report to the Post Adjutant. If the Post does not have a primary Service Officer, the Volunteer will report his hours to the Post Adjutant. The Post Adjutant will ultimately consolidate Post volunteer hours for its annual update as part of the Consolidated Post Report to The American Legion National Headquarters.

d. The responsibilities as listed above are challenging and historically, the Post Service Officer is unfilled. As the Post Commander and responsible for everything within the Post, he assumes the title of Service Officer as an additional duty. However, as part of our Post's mission as stated above and being a member of the Post, everyone is a "Service Officer".

7. Post Chaplain: The Post Chaplain can be a great resource for those in need and can provide special assistance. As the EC is evaluating a request for help, the Post Chaplain should be considered as part of resolving the need or if at a minimum helping to provide comfort to those in need.

8. Levels of Assistance:

a. As a minimum, every member should understand Post 197's mission and identify and report any active military or Veteran, a family member, or a member of the community that may have a need as defined above. Post members will be provided with contact information to initially assist the individual. If the Post member determines that the person or organization needs requires elevation, the Post Service Officer or the Commander would be contacted.

b. The Post Service Officer or Commander would call an emergency session of the Executive Committee to approve a plan/action to resolve the issue. This meeting can be by text chat. The Service Officer, Commander, and/or a designated Project Officer would work with the person in need to provide any assistance to help resolve the issue.

c. Due to limited expertise, funds on hand, lack of Volunteers, or Volunteer physical limitations; the Post will not always be able to completely resolve an individual's need. Regrettably, the person in need will be notified that Post 197 does not have the means to directly assist. However, the person in need should be provided with any potential reference contacts that could assist the individual in need.

d. Those members participating in the "Project" will keep track of their volunteer hours (anything over 15 minutes/.25 hours) and will submit to the Service Officer or Adjutant, if no Service Officer.

9. Request for Assistance Procedures (Also, see Request for Assistance Flow Chart in Annex A)

a. If a Post member receives a request for assistance, determine the category of the need (Financial, Medical/Physical, Mental, or Emotional). With the Assistance Points of Contact information (See Annex B), the member will attempt to refer the issue to an appropriate person/organization to resolve the issue. If the issue appears to be funding, volunteer, or emotional related, contact the Post Service Officer (SO) or Post Commander.

b. The Post SO will evaluate the request and either evaluate the issue, and attempt to resolve the issue; or conduct a meeting with the Executive Committee (EC) for a resolution decision. The EC would decide if the issue can be resolved through funding, Volunteer, and/or other form of assistance.

i. For financial assistance the EC would determine how much to finance from Post funds and/or if a Call for Help (donations) is required as financial assistance.

ii. For Volunteer assistance, the EC would determine the number of Volunteers require and if a Call for Help is required to obtain more Volunteers. If the EC believes that the task is too physical and increase numbers are unattainable, the request will be declined due to the safety of the Volunteers. Lack of Volunteer experience is also considered in declining the task.

iii. The EC will consider community expertise to volunteer their services or offset the cost of the task.

c. The EC would also identify a Project Officer (PO) for the request. The EC will do the best it can to resolve or support the request.

d. For emotional request such as a death in the family, a Post condolence card to the next of kin would be sufficient.

e. At no time during the process of assisting a person in need will any information of a personal nature be released without the person or family's approval.

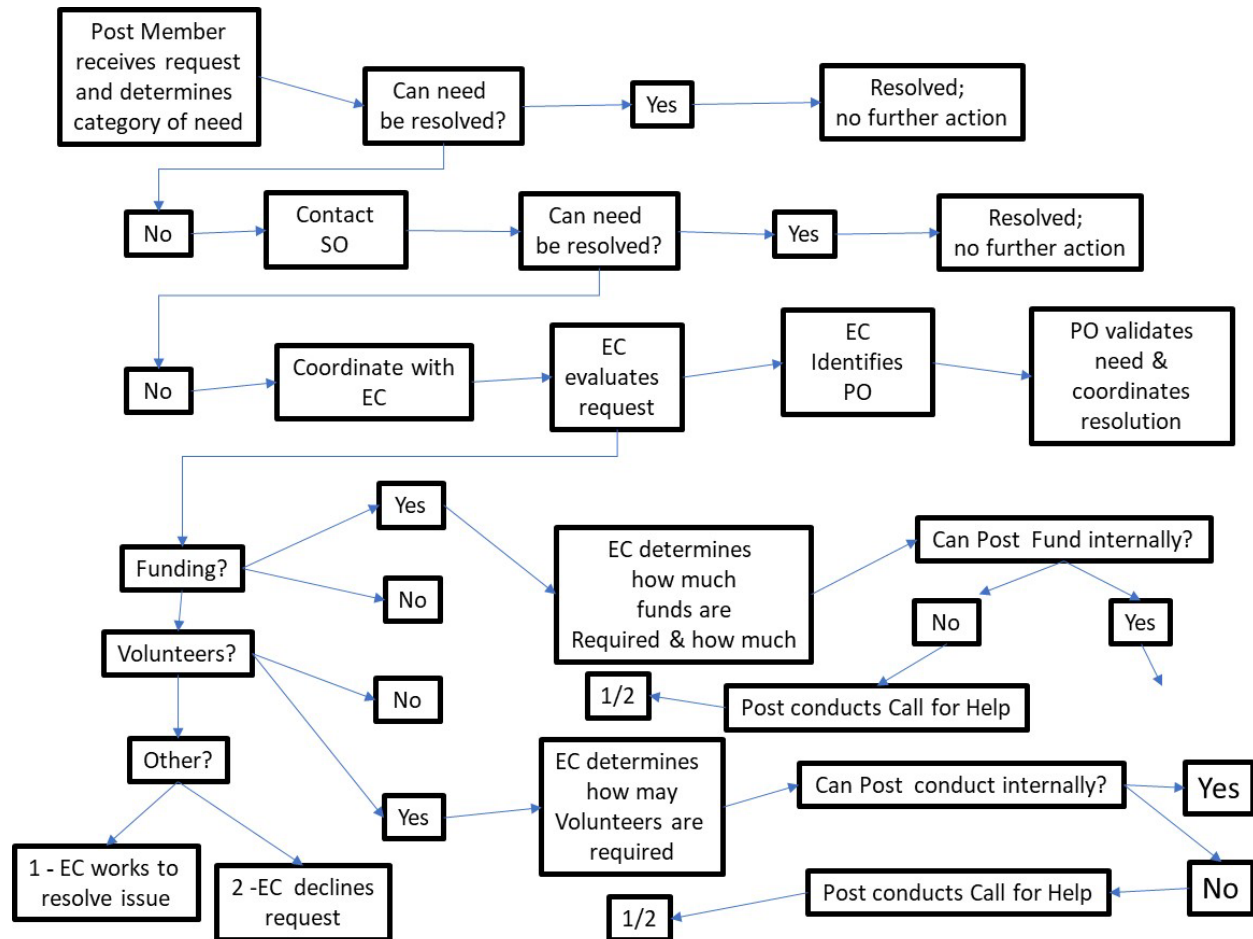
10. This Post 197 policy augments the Post's By-Laws and supersedes any past verbal or written policies or directives on this subject.

Date: _____

Paul R. Chatterton
Commander

Annex A: Post 197 Request for Assistance Flow Chart
Annex B: Assistance Points of Contact

Annex A: Post 197 Request for Assistance Flow Chart



Annex B: Assistance Points of Contact

(Detach and keep readily available for quick usage and/or referral)

Veteran Assistance/Information

Dept of Veterans Affairs (Atlanta Office) 1-800-827-1000 – [www.va.gov
explore.va.gov](http://www.va.gov/explore.va.gov)

Veteran's Link – U.S. Senate – www.veterans.senate.gov

Veteran's Link – Senator Isakson – www.isakson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-me

Veterans Crisis Hotline/National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 988 or 800-273-8255

Dept of Veterans Service, 837 Memorial Drive, Griffin, GA 30223,

Rob Johnson/Randy Brown: 770-412-4074/770-412-4023

Zebulon VA Clinic: Info: 770-567-7500; DD-214 ext. 592090 or 592009

American Legion Department of Georgia, HQ, 678-289-8446, 678-289-8883

American Legion Department of Georgia Service Officer

Tonjala Moton-Williams, 478-476-8868

Multi-functional Assistance:

VA Disaster Assistance: va.gov/resources/disaster-help, 800-698-2411

Homelessness: 877-424-3838

Georgia Department of Human Resources – Aging and Family & Children
Services, 877-423-4746

Pike County Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS) – 770-567-8427
(Food Stamps, Medicaid, Disabilities)

Spalding County Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS) – 770-228-1386
411 East Solomon St, Griffin (Food Stamps, Medicaid, Disabilities)

Spalding County Senior Center: 843 Memorial Drive, Griffin, 770-467-4750/4384

Pike County Senior Center: 2488 Highway 19 North Zebulon, GA 30295, 770-567-3857

Upson County Senior Center: 302 S. Bethel St, Thomaston, GA 30286, 706-647-1607

Lamar County Senior Center: 106 Veterans Dr, Barnesville, GA 30204, 770-358-5361

Finance Assistance

Three Rivers Regional Commission - Area Agency on Aging

855-407-7433, 886-854-5652, 678-552-2838, 706-675-6721

Food Pantries and Coops

Call 211: This number can connect you with agencies and community organizations that can assist with finding food in an emergency.

USDA National Hunger Hotline:

You can call 1-866-348-6479) or 1-877-842-6273) for help

Food Finders, US, 770-254-4510

Pike County:

Pike County Assembly of God, 4990 Hwy 19S, Zebulon, 770-567-1594

Serves meals

Zebulon First Baptist Church, 15922 Concord St, Zebulon, 706-977-9402

Food pantry

Little Manna – Molena – Food Coop, 170 Depot St, Molena, 404-918-1993

Griffin:

Manna From Above, 110 N. Expressway, Griffin, 678-472-2197

Five Loaves & Two Fish Food Pantry: 412 W. Slaton Ave, Griffin, 678-603-1238

Salvation Army Food Bank, 725 Meriwether St, Griffin, 770-412-6561

Job Searching Assistance

Georgia Department of Labor – Local Veterans Employment Representative

Benny Collier – 770-229-3450 – benny.collier@gdol.ga.gov

Georgia Department of Labor – Disabled Veterans Outreach Program

Fredrick Thomas – 770-202-5586 – Frederick.thomas@gdol.ga.gov

Legal Advice

Georgia Senior Legal Aide, 404-389-9992

Atlanta Legal Aide Service, 404-524-5811, www.atlantalegalaide.com/apply

Atlanta Bar Association, 404-521-0777

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, 703-563-9504

Family Law Information Center, 404-612-2789

University of Georgia Veterans Legal Clinic, 706-542-6439

Fort Moore (Ft Benning) Legal Assistance, 706-545-3281

Medical Equipment

Orthopedic Equipment (Free) – House of Care, Thomaston First Baptist Church,

BG Blakely: W-678-488-7707, C-706-611-6882; Randy Rames: 706-995-9271

Three Rivers Regional Commission - Area Agency on Aging,

886-854-5652, 678-552-2838, 706-675-6721

Labor Support (Contractors who have donated labor and/or material)

Electrical work: Ken Davis: 770-364-0369/678-972-3295

Roof work: Stanley Pittman: 404-567-1627

Tax – IRS Assistance: AARP Foundation Tax-Aide, taxaide@aarp.org, 888-227-7669

Transportation

In Pike County

Pike County Christian Outreach Center, must reside in Pike County, Ann Zrinsky: 678-642-9800

Pike County Senior Center (Must be a member (\$30), 770-567-3857 (May be a low fee of \$4 round trip within the county))

In Spalding County

Spalding County Senior Center 855-407-7433/678-588-9430 (Must be a member (\$50) (May be a low fee of \$4 round trip within the county))

For rides for medical appointments: An Email Post 197 "Call for Help" can be distributed to the Post General Membership and other community organizations; hopefully, someone can help

Potential Veteran Related Manpower and/or Funding Resource Organizations

GA State Defense Force: <https://gsdf.georgia.gov>

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (CVMA) 1420 Hat Rd, Box Springs, GA 31801
Steve Thillen, Cdr, 706-325-6778

GA National Guard (Griffin) Contact: SGT Natasha Alleyne, C:404-450-1025,
email: natasha.k.alleyune.mil@mail.mil, 1015 S. Hill St, Griffin, GA 30224

Marine Corps League MAJ Stephen W. Pless (MOH), Det 1196, P.O. Box 1897, Griffin, GA 30224 www.mcleague1196.org, Larry Heard: 770-310-4358,
heardla@bellsouth.net Frank Golan: 404-790-8800 / frankgolan@hotmail.com

Pike County Community Defense, Tyler Swenson, 678-544-7357

U.S. Army Recruiting Command: Griffin Station: O: 770-233-1176

VFW 6542 Barnesville: Richard Wright: 770-584-4608 arichwright@gmail.com

VFW (Griffin – Post 5448/8480): 770-228-8200, 770-227-1545; Cdr Harry Ray;
email: jon.goolsby@vfw-8480@bellsouth.net

Non-Profit Organizations for Potential Manpower and/or Funding Resources

Churches

Christ Chapel: Ricky Shepard, 678-972-8295; Todd Riley (Vet Coord) 678-822-2784

Mt Gilead Baptist Church: 770-228-8075; pastor@mgbc.org

NAACP, President Patricia Beckham, 770-468-4937, 770-567-3147
patriciabeckham73@gmail.com

Pike County Kiwanis – P.O. Box 1204, Zebulon, GA 30295

Operation Home Front – Erica Quinson, 1678 US Hwy 19, Meansville, GA