

Key principles

To receive Veterans Relief and Support's assistance:

1. Eligibility will be those who are serving or ex-serving members of the British armed forces and their dependants*, who meet this eligibility criteria provided with this application.

**The definition of dependents is as follows: Spouse, civil partner, living partner, children or children living with the beneficiary.*

2. the Beneficiary should be in a state of actual food poverty (that is, having minimal food and insufficient means to purchase adequate food in the immediate term) or be demonstrably at imminent risk of being in that situation.
3. the Beneficiary's situation should be the result of an identifiable, current crisis.
4. the Beneficiary's circumstances should be known directly to the referring agency, or the agency should be experienced in assessing the needs of members of the public and securing confirmatory evidence (where appropriate)
5. the Beneficiary has not already received Veterans Relief and Support's assistance three times for the specific crisis, unless specific arrangements for further support have been made with the Veterans Relief and Support trustees (please see 'Extent of Support', below).

Qualifying criteria

Each of the following criteria is sufficient eligibility for the Veterans Relief and Support's assistance, provided that the four key principles apply. This list is of examples and is not meant to be exhaustive.

- No access to public funds
- No recourse to public funds
- Benefit delay
- Benefit reduction or suspension (including sanction)
- Significant disruption to earnings due to ill health or hospitalisation

- Loss of earnings due to reduced hours, or budgeting issues caused by erratic hours.
- Loss of one income in a previously two-income household
- Delayed initial wages on starting a new job.
- Exceptional bill or expense for an essential service, e.g.
 - Failure of domestic heating system
 - Exceptional utility bill (for example, related to prolonged severe weather)
 - Major repairs to a vehicle that is essential to employment.
 - Funeral costs
- Major dislocation due to accident or natural disaster, e.g.
 - Major domestic fire
 - Severe flood damage
- Loss of immediate financial means due to external causes, e.g.
 - Victim of robbery, including theft of food supplies
 - Credit card fraud
 - Abandonment by partner
- Increased living costs for a specific period of time, e.g.
 - Taking on unexpected caring responsibilities
 - School holidays requiring additional meals for children usually entitled to free school meals.
- Active engagement in a supported transition to a stable domestic life, but who are challenged by the immediate “start-up” costs; e.g.
 - Ex-offenders or ex-service personnel re-entering civilian life
 - Victims of domestic abuse re-establishing an independent life
 - Beneficiaries attempting a transition from homelessness to settled tenancy.
 - Beneficiaries being rehabilitated after concluding a programme to overcome addiction or dependency.
 - Patients returning home after extended stay in hospital.
- Active participation in a reputable debt-reduction programme, with a personal commitment to escape from debt-dependency and sustain personal solvency.

- Other causes of destitution (as defined by Joseph Rowntree Foundation: a weekly income after housing costs of less than £70, plus £30 per additional adult, plus £20 per child)

Extent of Support

Veterans Relief and Support's assistance is for short-term crisis relief. In most cases, the Beneficiary's immediate crisis will be covered by one, two or three donations. If the Beneficiary's crisis is still not resolved then an additional number of donations, or period of support, may then be agreed as part of the broader support that will resolve the Beneficiary's need. Veterans Relief and Support is not resourced to provide unlimited support, which could encourage dependency, but aim to contribute towards resolving the Beneficiary's underlying problems in partnership with other agencies.

Some situations in which extended Veterans Relief and Support's support may be agreed include:

- continuing benefit delay
- continuing benefit sanction
- continuing destitution
- no recourse to public funds
- awaiting first wage payment
- awaiting settlement of another claim or appeal
- a second distinctly separate crisis (e.g. funeral costs, a second redundancy, or child holiday meal costs on top of an existing qualifying crisis)

Additional support is always at the discretion of Veterans Relief and Support. It is likely to be agreed where circumstances justify but will be refused for Beneficiaries suspected of abusing the system. Veterans Relief and Support's assistance is not usually provided to those simply with long-term financial difficulties, though each Beneficiary's case will be considered separately.