



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

LFIR # 1579

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

K9s For Warriors provides lifelong care and wrap around support to Warriors suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and/or Military Sexual Trauma as a result of military service during any era of service. Our program is centered around pairing veterans with certified Service Dogs, which are rescued from local shelters and trained by us. The pair participate in a 3-week residential training program that focuses on daily living skills, community integration, peer-to-peer interaction, coping skills, and veteran-dog bonding. This training is enhanced by our dedicated, wrap-around service support to the Warrior for the rest of their life. We assist them with issues ranging from difficulties with accessing VA benefits to crisis intervention & support. Finally, we provide wrap around support for the Caregivers, including training, peer support groups, and dedicated staff focusing solely on their needs. The entire program is provided at no cost to the veteran.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	750,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	750,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	750,000	37%
Matching Funds		
Federal	996,788	50%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	250,000	13%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2022-2023	1,996,788	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2021-22	0	750,000	567A	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? Yes

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

Insufficient federal funding for PTSD Service Dogs creates a necessity for funding at the state level. In addition to state funding, K9s For Warriors receives support from foundations and private donors.



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10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

K9s For Warriors received federal funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the amount of \$901,624.82 on May 11, 2020. These funds were used for salary expenses.

11. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Salaries and benefits for: Warrior Operations & Caregiver Staff - \$250,000 K9 Training, Veterinary, & Kennel Staff - \$300,000	550,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Service Dogs: acquisition, veterinarian care, canine health insurance, transportation, food & supplies, off-site training; Warrior Training Program: trainers' gear, screening/processing, meals, warriors' gear, supplies, transportation, office and facilities; Caregiver Training Program: equipment, facilities, utilities, office supplies, outreach materials - \$200,000	200,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		750,000

12. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

K9s For Warriors works to end veteran suicide and return warriors to a life of dignity and independence. This funding will be used to provide wrap around services, support, and training for the 104 active Florida Warriors; a trained service dog, housing, meals, equipment, veterinary care, and 120 hours of on-site training to an additional 12 new Warriors; and development of a Caregiver Support Program for the spouses, children, or other family and friends who are the direct support-givers to the Warriors.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

As a response to the stress veterans experience from PTSD, TBI, or MST, K9s provides lifelong peer-to-peer support, suicide intervention, crisis intervention, family and spousal support, and assistance with any other issues that a veteran may need assistance with to maintain stability in their life. This may include placement in an in-patient or out-patient mental health program; connection to financial aid and resources, such as rent, utility, or emergency financial assistance; legal support for cases of discrimination or denial of services; and assistance navigating federal VA benefits and resources, including assistance with applying for benefits and services and appealing denial of service or benefits. Finally K9s provides training and support focused on the unique needs of spouses, children, and other family members serving as Caregivers for our Warriors.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?



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We provide direct peer support, suicide intervention, crisis intervention, and family/spousal support. Additionally, we train and prepare veterans to use a service dog. This includes pre-screening of both veterans and dogs for suitability, training for the dog as an ADI-certified service animal, an in-person 120 hour training course for the Warrior with the dog at a K9s For Warriors facility, and ongoing follow up and monitoring for the veteran and their service dog. The 3 week on site training includes disability and public access law education, daily living and coping skills, human and animal bonding, community re-integration, and 3 weeks of housing and meals during on-site training. Finally, Caregivers of the Warriors will receive dedicated staff support and training on focused on their needs as spouses facing a unique set of experiences and challenges and how to support their veterans in seeking help.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

We serve male and female veterans of all eras of service who have been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Military Sexual Trauma. We have learned that these veterans are not the only ones that benefit from what we do. Spouses and caregivers, children, other family members, and entire communities all benefit, because veterans, with the help of their Service Dog and the lifelong support from the K9s For Warriors family, are no longer solely focused on the invisible wounds of war. We have over 100 veterans who will receive ongoing support during the project period.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

K9s For Warriors has partnered with Purdue University to conduct studies which scientifically evaluate the therapeutic efficacy of K9s For Warriors' Service Dogs on the mental health and wellness of military veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These studies measured the physiological response to stress and arousal using the hormone Cortisol, as well as the baseline following receipt of a Service Dog, but not while receiving usual care alone. Those with a K9s' Service Dog had Cortisol levels returning to normal. Both studies showed a direct link between having a K9s Service Dog and a reduction in PTSD symptoms. Please see attached studies published in the Psychoneuroendocrinology Journal and Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. Additional studies are forthcoming.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

In the event K9s For Warriors fails to meet the contractual deliverables, the financial consequences would be that FDVA recover its actual administrative costs attributable to the failure or delay. In fiscal year 2020-2021 the FDVA estimated the daily costs of the financial consequences to be \$71.83.

13. The owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

Not applicable.



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14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

15. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number