

Questions & Answers

QUESTION: Is there a law that mandates Muskegon County provide Veterans Benefit Program?

ANSWER: YES! The State of Michigan mandates that all counties will provide "Burial assistance, Government Headstone Placement, and a Soldiers Relief Fund for eligible Veterans and their family members."

QUESTION: Does Muskegon County currently provide these mandated benefit program?

ANSWER: YES! Through the millage originally passed in 1994, then renewed in 1999 and 2009.

QUESTION: How does Muskegon County currently fund these mandated program?

ANSWER: The residents of Muskegon County passed a 1/13th Veterans Assistance millage proposal in 1994, and have voted to continue the millage twice since. The funds generated through this millage may ONLY be used for the Burial Assistance, Headstone Placement, Soldiers Relief Programs, and the administration of the County Department of Veterans' Affairs / Veterans Service Center.

QUESTION: Will this be a tax increase?

ANSWER: NO! We have operated for 25 years without a millage increase while inflation increased by 63.9% (when the millage originally passed, the price of gas was \$1.11 per gallon). We will continue to operate at the 1/13th of a mill along with various grants.

Visit michigan.gov/vote

- View your sample ballot
- Find out if you are registered to vote
- Find your voting location
- Track your absentee ballot

Register to vote and request your Absentee Ballot from your City or Township Clerk

Questions & Answers

QUESTION: How has Muskegon County benefited from the passage of the Veterans Assistance Millage in 1994, 1999, and 2009?

ANSWER: GREATLY! For example, since operating under the Veterans Assistance Millage:

- In excess of \$60 million annually in new Federal Dollars have been brought into Muskegon County. These funds were obtained through new and increased claims filed against the VA by service officers working at the Veterans Service Center. That is a lot of "NEW" money being spent in our community.
- Thousands of Veterans have been transported over 350,000 miles to various VA Medical Facilities throughout the state where they have received in excess of \$24.8 million (VA Medical expenditures in 1996 in Muskegon County were reported as \$0.00 and in 2015 were reported as \$24.887 million).
- Over 90,000 eligible Veterans and / or their spouses have received one or more of the following: Burial Assistance; Placement of Government Headstone/Markers; Emergency Financial Relief; General Assistance and / or use of the Veterans' Food Bank.

Any additional questions about the millage renewal request, please contact:

MICHAEL BAAUW

Muskegon County Veterans Affairs
165 E. Apple Ave, Suite 201
Muskegon, MI 49442
231-724-6121 baauwmi@co.muskegon.mi.us

VOTE ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019



INFORMATION ABOUT THE BALLOT PROPOSAL TO RENEW THE MUSKEGON COUNTY VETERANS MILLAGE

AUGUST 6, 2019



The Veterans Millage is:

- On the ballot for renewal on August 6, 2019
- 1/13th of a mill, passed in 1994 and renewed in 1999 and 2009.
- The sole source of funding for the County Department of Veterans Affairs/ Veterans Service Center.
- Able to ensure the continuance of the State's mandated Veterans Burial, Headstone Placement, and Soldiers' Relief Programs

What services are provided by your Department of Veterans Affairs?

- Administer Soldiers/Sailors Veterans Relief Fund
- Administer / Provide Veterans Burial Expenses
- Administer / Placement of Burial Markers
- Assist Veterans with filing VA Claims (this is how Veterans get awarded medical benefits and disability compensation)
- Provide Housing Assistance for Veterans
- Provide Employment Assistance for Veterans
- Provide Counseling Services for Veterans
- Facilitate peer-to-peer group therapy sessions
- Facilitate PTSD Awareness group sessions for Veterans and their loved ones
- Provide space for non-profits assisting Veterans
- Operate a Veterans' Food Bank through General Assistance funds
- Organize and host the annual Veterans' Jobs Fair
- Provide Services to ALL Veterans—Peacetime era and Wartime-era
- Provide energy programs to eligible residents of Muskegon County
- Conduct in-depth, extensive research in order to enhance Veterans' service-related claims
- Staffing and facilitating community events centered around Veterans

Coordinate and train Volunteer Mentors for the Veterans Treatment Court

- 70+ Veterans have participated in this court
- 17+ Veterans have completed the court process
- 47+ Veterans have entered the VA healthcare system and have been awarded different levels of VA Disability Compensation
- 3 Veterans have continued on as Volunteer Mentors to the Court Participants
- 47+ Veterans became positive and productive members to the community through this amazing, life-changing Veterans' Treatment Court.

This Department Helps Veterans Daily

- **22 Veterans nationwide (.03%) commit suicide every single day.**
- Veterans in Muskegon County make up 7.6% of the population
- Veterans in Muskegon County make up 31% of the suicide rate. *Muskegon County's numbers are staggering!*
- Hopelessness, Isolation of self, Homelessness, Joblessness, Survivors guilt, Nightmares, Illness, Hidden wounds—these are just some of the things that lead a Veteran to make the decision to take his/her own life.

How much is 1/13th of a mill to you?

If you are a resident of Muskegon County and own a home, business, or land, you will pay a tax **not to exceed** 7.69 cents for each \$1,000.00 of Taxable Valuation ANNUALLY.

For Example:

Home Appraisal	Taxable Amount	Annual Property Tax
\$100,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$3.85
\$75,000.00	\$37,500.00	\$2.88
\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$1.92
\$25,000.00	\$12,500.00	\$0.96

1/13th Mill equals 7.69 cents for each \$1,000.00 valuation annually.

This millage allows us to continue serving the 12,500+ Veterans, their widows, and their families in Muskegon County. **Approximately 3,600 Veterans come to our office annually for assistance.**

Putting the millage amount in perspective:

- The cost per \$100,000 home (appraised) is \$3.85 per year
- For less cost than ONE fast food meal per year, OR
- For less cost than TWO gallons of gas, per year, OR
- For less cost than THREE candy bars per year.

YOUR Muskegon County Department of Veterans' Affairs / Veterans Service Center works hard helping OUR Veterans and their families! Please remember to VOTE ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019