



# *Military* UPDATE

FROM STATE SENATOR JAKE CORMAN

*Dear Friend,*

*Pennsylvania is home to thousands of soldiers who bravely defend our country and fight to protect our freedoms. These brave men and women make sacrifices every day for our great nation.*

*Unfortunately, some of these soldiers have difficulty providing basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, medical care and shelter for themselves and their families.*

*To assist struggling service members, I recently voted for legislation to create the Military Family Relief Assistance Program.*

*The Military Family Relief Assistance Program is funded through annual voluntary contributions on Pennsylvania Personal Income Tax Forms. Beginning this year, income tax forms will have a space for individuals to donate money to the fund.*

*Following is more information on this program.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jake Corman".

## **Q – What is the Military Family Relief Assistance Program?**

**A** – The Military Family Relief Assistance Program was created to assist struggling Commonwealth service members and their families by providing financial support for the immediate necessities of life, including food, shelter, clothing, and required medical care.

## **Q – How does a person contribute to this fund?**

**A** – Pennsylvania Personal Income Tax Forms will provide a check-off box giving individuals the opportunity to donate part of their tax return. The donation, which must exceed one dollar, will be deducted directly from the individual's tax return. Donations may also be made by check payable to MFRAP, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and sent to:

Military Family Relief Assistance Program  
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
Bldg S-0-47  
Fort Indiantown Gap  
Annville, PA 17003-5002

The DMVA also plans to establish a web-based program to allow electronic donations in the future.

## **Q – What circumstances qualify an applicant for assistance?**

**A** – Applicants must show a direct and immediate financial need as a result of the military service of the service member. Circumstances that may qualify include:

- A sudden or unexpected loss of income related directly to military service;
- Travel and lodging expenses incurred by a service member due to a death or critical illness of a parent, spouse, sibling or child;
- Travel and lodging expenses incurred by family members while visiting a wounded soldier;
- Natural or man-made disasters resulting in the need for food, shelter or other necessities;
- Emergency need for child care.

## **Q – When and how can a person apply for assistance?**

**A** – It is anticipated that applications will be available after July 1, 2006. Applications can be submitted electronically or through paper copies to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA).

## **Q – Who qualifies as an “eligible service member?”**

**A** – Pennsylvania residents who serve:

- 30 or more consecutive days of active duty with the Army, Navy, Air Force or Marine Corps;
- 30 or more consecutive days of active duty or state active duty in the Pennsylvania Army or Air National Guard; or
- 30 or more consecutive days of active duty or state active duty with the Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve or Marine Corps.

## **Q – Who qualifies as an “eligible relative?”**

**A** – For assistance, an individual must be the dependent spouse or dependent child of an eligible service member. In the event of funds needed to visit a hospitalized service member, eligibility is extended to parents and siblings.

## **Q – Where will donations go?**

**A** – All donations will be paid into a special fund established by the DMVA and used exclusively for the purposes of the program.

## **Q – Are donations tax deductible?**

**A** – Yes. Donations to the Military Family Relief Assistance Program and other state government programs are tax deductible for federal income tax purposes in the same way as charitable donations. Consult with your tax advisor for more details.

## **Q – Are there other check-off boxes on Pennsylvania’s Personal Income Tax Forms?**

**A** – Yes. In addition to the Military Family Relief Fund, there are six other check-off boxes. Contributions can be made to the following funds: (1) breast and cervical cancer research; (2) wild resource conservation; (3) organ and tissue donation awareness; (4) Olympics; (5) Korea/Vietnam Memorial National Education Center; or (6) juvenile diabetes cure research.

## **Q – Do other states have similar programs?**

**A** – Yes. In addition to Pennsylvania, 21 other states signed some form of military relief fund into law. Pending legislation is being considered in 14 states.

## **Q – Where will program updates be posted?**

**A** – For more information and for program updates, visit the DMVA’s website at [www.dmva.state.pa.us](http://www.dmva.state.pa.us).

## **Senator Jake Corman** **34th District**

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