

VFW Vows to Help the Families of Fallen Heroes

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The Veterans of Foreign Wars, America's largest organization of combat veterans, has announced that its official charity, the VFW Foundation, is taking urgent action to help the families of fallen U.S. service members. Because of the federal government shutdown, the Pentagon is withholding a \$100,000 death gratuity payment that is usually given to relatives of the deceased. Such payments stopped effective September 30, 2013 at 11:59 p.m. William A. Thien, VFW Commander-in-Chief, called the delay "disgusting and shameful" and stated that, "It is absolutely appalling and nothing short of a travesty that elected officials continue to receive paychecks and benefits while not providing for those who deserve it most." While imploring the Congress and the President to "immediately resolve this issue" he has directed financial resources be made available from the VFW's Unmet Needs program which is funded through the VFW Foundation to help affected military families.

Established in 2004, Unmet Needs has granted over \$4.7 million to military service personnel and their families for expenses due to rent, mortgage, utilities, vehicle repair, medical expenses and food/basic assistance.

Unmet Needs funds would be made directly available to the families of fallen service members to help with their bills, travel and other pressing financial concerns.

Families are encouraged to call the VFW's Unmet Needs hotline at 1-866-789-6333, option 1 or visit www.unmetneeds.org.

[Take Action Now.](#)

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