

CHAPTER MEMBER GUIDEBOOK



THE HISTORY AND MISSION OF USA CARES

In March 2003, the U.S. entered a large-scale military operation overseas in response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. In this action, called Operation Iraqi Freedom, numerous military members suffered a wide range of physical and emotional injuries, and their families faced new challenges. They needed emergency assistance to keep a roof over their heads, the lights on, and food on the table. Although the VA covered medical expenses, it did not cover lost wages and families needed help with essential bills so that service members could access necessary health care to move towards recovery.

In Radcliff, Kentucky, near the Army's base at Fort Knox, a like-minded group of citizens gathered, along with the Army, Kroger, and a local TV station, to make a difference. They decided to raise funds to help military families through the sale of "Support Our Troops" yard signs. They raised \$121,000, but the need was much greater. In October 2003, a new 501(c)(3), national organization known as USA Cares, Inc., was created with a toll-free call center in Radcliff to process the increasing number of requests for assistance. In 2017, USA Cares relocated its Headquarters (aka HQ) to Louisville, Kentucky.



This was the start of USA Cares. Our mission is to provide post-9/11 military veterans, service members, and their families with financial assistance and post-service skills training to create a foundation for long-term stability. Our services improve the quality of life for them and their families and reduce the potential risk factors that contribute to veteran suicide. In 2021, USA Cares launched the Chapters Program to expand our footprint and further our mission throughout the United States.

For additional information, please visit our website at www.usacares.org.



USA CARES VETERAN & FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEM

USA Cares exists to assist military families in crisis. We typically receive hundreds of requests per week and assist these emergencies with an average of \$20,000 weekly. Since inception, we have responded to thousands of requests for financial help with millions of dollars in granted assistance.

USA Cares Mission Statement

USA Cares' mission is to provide post-9/11 military veterans, service members, and their families with financial assistance and post service skills training to create a foundation for long-term stability. Our services improve the quality of life for veterans and their families and reduce potential factors that can contribute to veteran suicide.

USA Cares Vision Statement

Stability for military families in crisis.

The following USA Cares Programs are designed to meet post-9/11 military family needs:

- Our ***Military Assistance Response Program*** assists veterans or service members who are facing temporary financial hardships. We assist in paying essential bills as a result of a military service-related incident. Our goal is to improve the quality of life to create a foundation for long term stability.
 - As part of the application process, USA Cares incorporated ***The Military Housing Financial Education & Empowerment Program*** to provide support to military families who are facing financial difficulty. Our hope is to arm military families with the tools they need to be prepared when the unexpected happens.
- The ***Career Transition Assistance Program*** provides individuals with tools and resources to better prepare them for the hiring process and refers qualified candidates to corporate organizations with open positions of employment specific to their skill sets.
 - The ***Career Readiness Training Program*** is a free web-based service that prepares service members and their spouses for the hiring process, which covers topics such as industry research and skills investigation, resume writing, social media, cover letters, interviewing skills, salary, benefits, and building your network.
 - USA Cares has two Memorandums of Agreement with the United States Army Garrison (USAG) Fort Knox for the purpose of providing the **Senior Leaders Corporate Fellowship Program (SLCFP)**, a **CDL training program**, and the **Transition Leaders Fellowship Program (TLFP)** for Service Members who are either transitioning out of or retiring from military service in the Fort Knox/Louisville area.
- Click [USA Cares Programs](#) to learn more.



How is USA Cares different?

- **48-Hour Response** – When we are contacted to provide assistance, we can respond to the request and make a payment within 48 hours.
- **A Grant, Not a Loan** – While many other military assistance programs provide loans which only compound a bad situation, we provide grants. The military family is never asked to repay the grant.

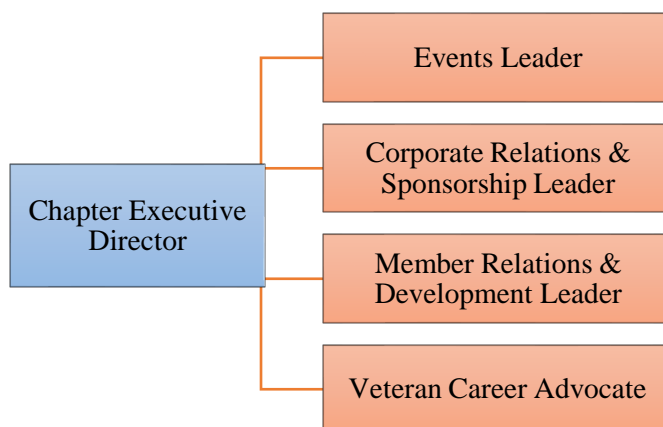
THE USA CARES CHAPTERS PROGRAM

The USA Cares Chapters Program has been developed to expand the mission by serving our communities through:

1. Fundraising
2. Corporate Partnerships
3. Local Veteran Outreach

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Chapter Leadership Team is responsible for managing the Chapter and consists of five (5) active Members who are in good standing with the Chapter and nominated by the Executive Director in the following leadership positions:



The **Chapter Executive Director** serves as the principal liaison with USA Cares and has lead responsibility for the operations of the Chapter as outlined in the Chapter Handbook.



The **Events Leader** will be responsible for organizing and leading Chapter events, fundraisers, and local initiatives, as well as communicating and encouraging participation in nationwide USA Cares' initiatives.

The **Corporate Relations & Sponsorship Leader** will be responsible for establishing mutually beneficial relationships with organizations for the purpose of identifying sponsors, employee giving, in-kind partnerships, and other opportunities.

The **Member Relations & Development Leader** will be responsible for recruiting Chapter Members, initiating individual donors in the community – including Chapter Members, and developing relationships for future giving.

The **Veteran Career Advocate** will be responsible for connecting veterans in their areas with organizations who seek to hire veterans.

Chapter Leaders commit to:

- Attend 8 of 12 monthly Chapter Leadership Meetings
- Attend 3 of 4 Quarterly Events
- Follow, share, and comment on USA Cares' Social Media posts

CHAPTER MEMBERS

Non-profit volunteering is an incredibly rewarding path toward enriching the lives of others and fulfills our innate desire to make a difference in the world. When you join a USA Cares Chapter as a Member, you are at the heart of our Chapter design. What does it mean to be a Chapter Member? Our hope is for you to plug in where your talents will shine – as a Chapter Leader, Committee Member, and/or Donor – to work, attend, and support USA Cares' events.

USA Cares' Chapters Program is a volunteer-giving program. As a Chapter Member, we appreciate your donation of time, as well as your annual monetary gift. Member donations should be contributed through your own Chapter Donation Link to count toward the Chapter annual goal and are to be reported to the Member Relations & Development Leader.

The Chapter Member role is open to any individual committed to the mission, vision, and programs of USA Cares in support of post-9/11 veterans. USA Cares stands firm that its Chapters and the entire organization be diverse and free of any barriers based upon race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic disposition, or any other characteristic protected by law in any of its activities or operations.

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING USA CARES AS YOUR NON-PROFIT OF CHOICE!

If you are interested in a Chapter Leadership role or would like additional information, please email your Chapter Executive Director or [click here](#) to request the USA Cares' Chapter Handbook.