



## APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

Hogs For Heroes has a simple mission: we purchase Harley-Davidson motorcycles for Wisconsin Veteran riders who, injured in the course of active duty, now find themselves struggling and financially unable to have a bike in their lives. We believe regaining the freedom of the road, the collegiality of riders and the pride and peace found in ownership can be a life-changing support for those who have enjoyed the passion for riding and now find themselves without means or ability to do so any longer. We gift a motorcycle as the tool to enhance their healing, readjustment and engagement by reconnecting them with the therapeutic benefits of riding.

*At this time, our opportunity is available only to those with a valid motorcycle license as our focus is on restoring a healing passion to current riders.* In advance of Wisconsin's riding season, we will work with state and veterans organizations, social media, mailing lists and contacts to announce our ability to accept applications during specific submission periods. Application materials will be made available on our website during this time only.

We expect that all information provided will accurately reflect your current situation, time in service, achievements and personal history. While we encourage supportive nominator perspectives, we require the Veteran to be involved to assure understanding, factual presentation and completeness. Additionally, there are portions that only the Veteran can respond to. Writing one's story and reliving difficult life moments can be emotionally hard; and, a nominator can be a great support to the Veteran as he/she moves through the demands of the application process.

In the process of reviewing applications, we *may* consult various sources including, but not limited to:

- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Defense
- Veterans Health Administration
- Wisconsin Department of Justice
- Wisconsin Department of Revenue
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Criminal background check/Circuit Court Access Program (CCAP)
- Social Media
- All references, employment and personal contacts provided

Once all qualifying and complete applications are received by the established deadline, and later reviewed by the Hogs For Heroes Advisory Board, candidate recommendation(s) will be made to the Founding Board for final determination. Applicants will be notified electronically of our decisions throughout the season. Applicants not initially selected will be considered for every gifting we can do that calendar year. A second Application Period, when offered, allows new Applicants to be considered alongside those applications previously submitted that calendar year.

We stagger Giftings throughout Wisconsin's riding season and aim to present bikes May through August to assure ample ride time. This individualized process can cause communication and scheduling delays. Each recipient will have an allocated dollar amount from which to select their Harley-Davidson from a local, Wisconsin dealership. Communications and planning for the public gifting ceremony will begin following notification and bike selection. The bike will be publicly presented at a future date and at a regional location. Personal ownership transitions to the Recipient at this time, as do all further responsibilities.

## GOALS OF APPLICATION PROCESS:

The application process is intended to solicit information that establishes an understanding of a candidate's life history and passion, achievements and challenges, struggle and personal need. Information will be respectfully reviewed and confidentially managed by members of both the Founding Board and Advisory Board for the sole purpose of Recipient selection.

Information in the following areas will be assessed and reviewed:

- Demographic Profile, including Wisconsin Residency
- Military Service and Credentials
- Service-Connected Mental and/or Physical Injury/Disability
- Existence of Financial Need
- Motorcycle Enthusiasm and Ownership History
- Community Contributions
- Personal Reflection

Let us be clear: we are not giving an award for meritorious service or achievements; rather, we are working to help change the life of a Veteran who is struggling with their service-connected injuries and in need of therapeutic support. We use a motorcycle as a tool to provide an alternative therapy that allows an injured Veteran to either return to, or continue, their passion for riding and regain its healing benefits.

This is an involved process, purposefully designed to gather as much information as possible. We feel we owe it to our supporters to make the best decision we can. Additionally, we believe in the value of sharing one's story and writing down experiences, and their impacts, as a form of therapeutic release. This application process aims to facilitate such for the Veteran as well as support our selection process. Application responses, and the detail shared with us are the primary way in which we will learn about you, your life, challenges and need during our selection process. We can only know (and decide upon) what is communicated to us.

Every Veteran has a story; and in the course of service, and in the time after discharge, some will have set themselves and their needs apart differently. Our task will be to review the information shared and select the recipient(s) we believe will be most impacted by our therapeutic support.

## CANDIDATES:

We assist injured Wisconsin Veteran riders— someone with a passion and license for motorcycling—who now finds themselves without the means or ability to have a bike in their life.

The Veteran Candidate considering this opportunity must meet the following criteria:

- Have established **Wisconsin residency**;
- Have served on **active duty** in the U.S. Armed Forces, or in forces incorporated as part of the U.S. Armed Forces, for 90 days or more;
- Have been **honorably discharged**, and fully separated, from the U.S. Armed Forces and are not under any current military obligation;
- Have a **service-connected injury/disability** from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (or private medical documentation reflecting such);
- Have a current, valid **WI driver's license with motorcycle endorsement** and an established **history of motorcycle ownership/passion/riding** experience; and
- Demonstrate **established hardships/challenges** (e.g. financial, employment, dependents, etc.) that prevent one from buying and owning their own motorcycle.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Before Wisconsin's riding season, notification of the open application period, along with specified start and closing dates, will be communicated via different media methods.

Veterans meeting our application criteria may either apply themselves or be "nominated" with the involvement of another. The Veteran must be directly involved in either scenario as signatures, factual responses and supportive documentation are required from the Veteran, and personal answers to essay questions are procedurally necessary. We expect all information, regardless of who is contributing, to be honest, accurate and valid.

Application materials will be found *on our website only during open application periods*, and include three separate components: 1) APPLICATION, 2) CONSENT and 3) WAIVER, each accessed through individual PDF attachments. Candidates are *required to print off each of the three components, manually complete them, and mail them to us along with the required supporting verification materials. We are not set up for electronic completion and your information can be lost in this manner.*

For verification purposes, *photocopies* of the following supporting documents are required to be sent in the application packet:

- All DD 214s, amended DD 215s, discharge papers and separation documents,
- V.A. Disability Compensation Award Letter(s) in their entirety, if applicable, listing your total disability rating and allowance compensation.
- V.A. Rating Decision Letter, listing individual disabilities/diagnoses and their ratings. (In the absence of V.A. connection, private medical documentation of diagnoses, service connection and impairment is required),
- Current and valid Wisconsin drivers license showing motorcycle endorsement,
- Most recent Income Tax Return and/or Retirement Filing filed with the IRS in the previous tax year.

*Failure to provide all components may exclude you from consideration.* To assist in this, our application will contain a checklist. We remind you to block out any social security or routing numbers found in these documents.

You are encouraged to keep a photocopy of your entire packet for your records and/or for reference in applying again in future years. Completed application packets (including all required photocopies) are to be mailed to us and must be received and/or postmarked within the designated time period. *We strongly encourage you to submit your completed application early.* Late arriving applications will not be considered.

We communicate electronically. After our initial review, you will receive an email indicating your application's receipt and standing. Applications will not be returned.

## **SELECTION PROCESS:**

Qualifying applications will be reviewed by the Hogs For Heroes Advisory Board. All information and documentation provided are subject to verification. The Advisory Board will establish a timetable for its determinations and may request additional clarifying information and/or an in-person/telephone interview for its final determinations.

Applicants will be notified electronically of the decision-making process. The application of any Veteran not selected will remain active for the remainder of that calendar year and will be considered for each gifting we are able to do that year. Application materials will not be returned.

There will be time delays in the both the submission and notification processes as we move, one at a time, throughout Wisconsin's riding season to put Veterans on bikes. We are a very small volunteer workforce and apologize upfront for the anxiety and uncertainty our process may cause. *Please, those applicants choosing to withdraw from consideration at any point, or those who have been able to secure their own motorcycle during our gifting season are asked to notify us immediately so as not to take an opportunity away from another Veteran in need.*

Once a Recipient decision has been made, the selected candidate will be notified. We will personally work with each Veteran to choose both their Harley-Davidson model and area dealership. An allotted amount will be available for the organization's purchase of the Veteran's selection, new or preowned. All plans and communications for both the introduction of the Recipient and the motorcycle's gifting event will follow and be controlled by the organization.

The selected candidate(s) will be presented the motorcycle at a public celebratory event. The gifting event may include the possibility of media presence and will both honor the candidate and promote the organization. Attendance and stage presence will be required, as will crowd interaction. It will be the recipient's responsibility to take full ownership of the motorcycle that day and comply with all applicable requirements and regulations.

All points within both the signed CONSENT and WAIVER/RELEASE OF LIABILITIES apply.

### **MISCELLANEOUS:**

For consistency and clarity, definitions for the following terms will be used from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.( [www.dva.state.wi.us](http://www.dva.state.wi.us) or [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) ):

**Wisconsin Military Veteran**  
**Wisconsin State Resident**  
**Discharge Document (DD Form 214)**  
**VA Disability**  
**Honorable Discharge**  
**Defined Active War Time**

If, within the past 5 years, you have received a gift of more than \$5,000 in value as a direct result of your Veteran status from another support organization, we request that you disclose this information in your application.



### (SAMPLE) CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATION:

\_\_\_\_\_ Entire **Application** printed off from the website's PDF attachment, completed manually and legibly, in ink, with signatures on the first and last pages

\_\_\_\_\_ **Required Photocopies** of each of the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ All DD 214s, discharge papers and separation documents to reflect your time in service,
- \_\_\_\_\_ V.A. Disability Compensation Award Letter(s) in their entirety, if applicable, listing your total disability rating and allowance compensation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ V.A. Rating Decision Letter, listing individual disabilities/diagnoses and their ratings. (In the absence of V.A. connection, private medical documentation of diagnoses, service connection and impairment is required),
- \_\_\_\_\_ Current and valid Wisconsin drivers license showing motorcycle endorsement,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Most recent Income Tax Return and/or Retirement Filing filed with the IRS in the previous tax year. Remember to cross out social security and routing numbers on photocopies.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Consent Form** printed off from website's PDF attachment and signed.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Waiver/Release of Liability Form** printed off from website PDF attachment and signed

\_\_\_\_\_ We suggest you make a photocopy of your application packet for your records and/or reference in reapplying in future years.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Add [info@hogsforheroeswi.org](mailto:info@hogsforheroeswi.org) to your email contacts** to help your server recognize and accept our communications. You will receive an email confirming your application's initial review and standing, and an email informing you of our decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Send us an email** to let us know your application packet is being sent to us. This is the only way we know to watch for your mailing.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Send all of the above** in an envelope with sufficient postage addressed to:

**Hogs For Heroes, Inc.  
822 Ondossagon Way  
Madison, Wisconsin 53719**

Mailing must be postmarked before/on the last day of the specified application period to be considered.