



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ERICA JEFFRIES • DIRECTOR

NEWS

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Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Announced new pilot program titled Tiny Boots

(Chicago, IL)... The Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) launched the *Tiny Boots Child Care Program* today at the Hines VA Hospital in Chicago. This program provides temporary childcare for any Illinois Veteran who has a medical, counseling appointment or a job interview. The IDVA contracted with the YWCA Metropolitan Chicago to operate the program. The child care program is funded through a grant from the IDVA Vet Cash program.

“Many of our veterans skip medical appointments or miss out on job interview opportunities because they don’t have childcare. Thanks to the *Tiny Boots Child Care Program*, we can help to reduce the stress for our Illinois Heroes by providing that much needed childcare when they have a medical appointment or job interview. Our veterans can now get the medical treatment they deserve or explore job opportunities with peace of mind, knowing their child is safe while they are receiving medical assistance or interviewing for a job,” said **Erica Jeffries, Director of the IDVA**.

Registration for the program is simple – any eligible Veteran should contact the YWCA at <http://ywcachicago.org/tinybootsveterans> and fill out the Tiny Boots Program Application. To be eligible for this program veterans must be an Illinois veteran, have a verifiable medical appointment or job interview and notify the YWCA of appointments at least 1 week in advance. A completed Tiny Boots Application includes: Application, Emergency Contact Form, Medical Form and a Photo Release form. The Illinois veteran would complete the form including verification of their appointment/job interview and return it to the website mentioned above. The YWCA Veterans’ Specialist will contact the provider and schedule childcare for the date and time of the veteran’s appointment. The veteran and the provider will receive an email confirmation with detailed childcare arrangements.

“As the mother of three children, I know firsthand the hardships parents face when seeking childcare during difficult times. I would like to congratulate the Department of Veterans Affairs for this great initiative to help our veterans,” said **Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti**, who is also chair of the Interagency Military Base Support and Economic Development Committee, which coordinates the State’s activities on issues relating to current and former military bases in the state. “This is a wonderful solution to a difficult problem and it’s my hope that this pilot program is a complete success and continues to grow for many years to come.”

This pilot program will initially cover all Illinois veterans in Cook, Kane and DuPage Counties. The IDVA is working to expand the program throughout the State of Illinois.

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The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, a state agency is dedicated to empowering veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors, to thrive. We do this by helping veterans navigate the complex veteran support system and assisting them in obtaining benefits; by providing long term health care for eligible veterans at our four Veterans' Homes; and by working with other government agencies and non-profits to help veterans address education, mental health, housing, employment, and other challenges.