Introduction

About the Poppy Support Handbook

The Poppy Support Handbook has been produced as a guide for members and volunteers for the delivery of support services by The Royal British Legion (“the Legion”).

It covers eligibility for Legion support, details about the range of Poppy Support services, relevant policies and procedures for the delivery of welfare and other useful information relating to welfare.

Please note that the information in this Handbook and any other information sent to volunteers from the Legion are not intended to form a contract between the volunteer and the Legion. There is no intent that an employment relationship has been created, now, or at any time in the future.

Using the Poppy Support Handbook

The Poppy Support Handbook has been set out in Chapters that can be updated individually as required. Members, Caseworkers and Visitors should feel free to remove sections that they do not feel are needed all the time and to only carry the sections that they feel are relevant or needed when carrying out volunteer welfare activities.

If information is of particular importance, the paragraph has been boxed to illustrate that particular attention should be given; as illustrated here.
The Chapters of the Poppy Support Handbook are set out as follows:

Chapter 1 – Getting Started

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the Legion and how welfare and Poppy Support services are funded and delivered.

The Chapter also provides details of how the Legion funds welfare delivery and governance, such as County/District and Branch Welfare Committees. Overarching Legion policies are also included here such as health and safety, insurance, data protection and confidentiality.

Chapter 2 – Supporting our Poppy People

Chapter 2 outlines what the Legion does to support welfare Poppy People, specifically Caseworkers and Visitors. It also includes the steps necessary to become a Caseworker or Visitor, such as training, screening and holding identity cards.

This Chapter also provides details on the expenses that can be claimed by volunteers and welfare committee members. The complaints procedure for Caseworkers and Visitors is also included.

Chapter 3 – Eligibility for Poppy Support

Chapter 3 provides details of who is eligible for assistance from the Legion. It includes definitions of beneficiaries, children, spouses and partners, other dependants and carers.
Chapter 4 – Poppy Support Services

Chapter 4 outlines the complete range of welfare services available from the Legion and Poppy Support services. The Chapter provides a short summary of what each service is able to provide and guidance on how to access the service.

Chapter 5 – State Support

Chapter 5 provides details of the support that is available from the UK Government and its agencies.

The Chapter includes information regarding the state benefits system and other health and welfare services that can be accessed by Legion clients.

Chapter 6 – Carrying out Casework

Chapter 6 provides guidance for Caseworkers on the conducting of visits and relationships with clients. Also included is detailed guidance on completing the “Form A – Application for Financial Assistance”, the form used for the delivery of the Legion’s grants programme.

Chapter 7 – Delivery of Welfare Abroad

Chapter 7 is for use by those delivering welfare through Branches and Districts outside of England, Wales, Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.

It provides details on how welfare is organised, state benefits that can be transferred across the European Union, the Poppy Support services that are available and where people can go for further advice and assistance.
Chapter 8 – Publications

Chapter 8 provides details on all of the Poppy Support and welfare literature available from the Legion; it includes details on how to order.

Chapter 9 – Useful Contacts

Chapter 9 lists contact information that will be useful for those involved in Legion welfare activities. Importantly it includes details of the first point of contact for most people – the county office.

Chapter 10 – Development Record

Chapter 10 provides space to keep a development record. This section is for new Caseworkers and Visitors to keep notes about what was learnt during initial cases and visits; particularly where these have been carried out with a volunteer coach.

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary – for the purposes of Legion casework, a beneficiary is anyone who is eligible for Legion support, this includes all categories of dependants and carers.

It should be noted that the Legion’s governing document, the Royal Charter, defines “beneficiary” as the person who served in the Armed Forces and then separately defines dependants and carers. However, throughout the Legion the term “beneficiary” is normally used to describe all these people as a single group.
**Case** – this term relates to a request for support. Requests for assistance normally start being referred to as a case once a Caseworker has been asked to make a visit.

**Case Manager** – is the staff member whose role it is to make the final welfare assessment of needs and is authorised to release Legion funds.

**Casework** – refers to all the activities relating to providing assistance to clients; it includes visiting individuals in need of assistance, verifying eligibility, gathering information, writing reports, making assessments and providing Poppy Support services. It includes most activities carried out by Caseworkers and Case Managers.

**Caseworkers** – are volunteers (and can sometimes be staff members) who carry out casework; they must be authorised, trained, hold a Legion ID card and must have completed a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance (UK only).

**Client** – a beneficiary who has applied for assistance and whose eligibility has been verified.

**Coach** – refers to volunteers who have completed specific training to enable them to assist new Caseworkers and Visitors.

**Collectors** – are Poppy People who fundraise for the Legion, normally, but not exclusively for the Poppy Appeal.

**County/District** – where the term “County” is used in reference to a Legion formation or body, this should be taken to include Districts throughout this Handbook.
**Visitors** – are volunteers who visit clients who are either housebound, in hospital or hospice, or in nursing/care homes. Visitors provide comradeship and support to those who are vulnerable, isolated or suffering from an illness or injury. They must be authorised, trained, hold a Legion ID card and must have completed a CRB clearance (UK only).