

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 09.30.2024

CONTACT:

John Curran, Chief Deputy Clerk/Register of Deeds <u>jbcurr@kalcounty.com</u> (269) 384-8140

Kalamazoo County Clerk Launches Veteran Honor Rewards Program to Support Local Veterans and Businesses

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – The Kalamazoo County Clerk/Register of Deeds Office has partnered with local businesses to launch the Veteran Honor Rewards program, an initiative aimed at providing valuable discounts and benefits to local veterans while supporting Kalamazoo County businesses.

This community-driven program encourages veterans to file their DD-214 military discharge papers with the County Clerk's office in exchange for an Honor Rewards Card, which can be used at participating local retailers, restaurants, and businesses.

With over 10,000 veterans living in Kalamazoo County, this program offers a meaningful way to recognize their service while giving businesses an opportunity to show their appreciation through exclusive discounts. Veteran Honor Rewards is a nationally recognized initiative powered by Fidlar Technologies, the County Clerk's software partner that facilitates the program in counties across the country.

"We are excited to launch this program to benefit Kalamazoo County veterans and grateful to all of the business partners who have signed up to make it possible," said Meredith Place, County Clerk/Register of Deeds. "As the daughter of a Vietnam veteran, I have made it a priority since partnering with Fidlar Technologies to get Veteran Honor Rewards put in place so our county can take advantage of this tool to spread awareness about our office's free DD-214 filing service."

Filing the DD-214 with the Clerk's Office ensures veterans' military records are preserved, helping them easily access benefits, healthcare, and other essential services. The Honor Rewards program adds another layer of incentive by offering discounts and benefits to say thank you.

"Working with veterans every day to establish their benefits with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Service Office knows how critical it is to quickly access a veteran's DD-214," said Lauren King, Veterans Service Office Supervisor. "This document is the most important for any veteran and their families. The VSO is thrilled the Clerk's Office is offering this incentive to register DD-214s. It's a fantastic way to ensure this essential record is easily accessible while showing appreciation for our veterans' service."

The card can be used at 35 participating local businesses offering discounts on everything from dining to retail to automotive services, and more. Filing is fast, free, and helps veterans safeguard their service records for future use.

"This program isn't just for our veterans – it's for their families too," said **Michael Fry, Veterans Affairs Committee Chair**. "All too often, families struggle to locate a veteran's DD-214 to access benefits like compensation claims, survivor benefits, and even burial services. This program will give veterans and their loved ones the peace of mind that this vital document will always be accessible when needed. I'm grateful to the Veterans Service Office, Clerk's Office, and our community partners for making this possible."

Veterans can easily sign up for the program and view participating businesses at https://www.kalcounty.com/clerk/honorrewards. Local businesses and organizations interested in supporting veterans through the Veteran Honor Rewards can also sign up to offer discounts at https://www.kalcounty.com/clerk/honorrewards.php.

###