

National Security

2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Action Plan

The National Security Program and the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan - Maintaining and promoting a strong national defense by supporting service members and their families helps us build brand loyalty (Goal %) among a target membership population (Goal 1) while keeping us focused on our mission.



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What is this program, and why do we have it?

The National Security Program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military servicemembers and their families.

What can you do?

1. Support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve and transitioning military servicemembers and their families.

Ideas:

Member

- Let your unit know of any military families or businesses that should receive a Blue Star or Gold Star Banner in recognition of a servicemember's service.
- Wear red on Fridays to "Remember Everyone Deployed."
- As a gesture of appreciation for local servicemembers' military service, decorate your community with yellow ribbons. Encourage others to do the same.
- Provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family. Refer to the *ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide* for specific suggestions of the type of support military families may value.
- Provide assistance to servicemembers and their families directly affected by current conflicts.
- Become more informed about issues affecting a military family's home life, such as PTSD, TBI, domestic violence, financial literacy and other issues.
- Refer servicemembers with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at 1-877-272-7337.

Unit

- Support active-duty military families by working with an installation Family Readiness Group or an individual military family.
- Support reserve and transitioning servicemembers and families by working with a returning National Guard or Reserve unit or an individual transitioning service member or family.
 - *Note:* Units may find servicemembers and families independently or by working with the servicemember transition programs of the U.S. Department of Defense, the military service branches, or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Members may provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family to which they come in contact. Refer to the *ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide* for additional information and specific steps.
- Follow-up periodically with the servicemember and/or military family your unit may be supporting to see if additional assistance is needed.
- When a servicemember or military family you're working with is relocating to a different community, help identify an ALA unit in the new community and make introductions.
- Work to identify recipients and present Blue Star and Gold Star commemorative materials to individuals and businesses.

- Greet service members and families as they deploy and/or return from a deployment.
- Work with a Yellow Ribbon program office of a local military unit (Reserve or National Guard) or a state National Guard Joint Force Headquarters to show patriotic and moral support at Yellow Ribbon events; offering hospitality, refreshments, or children and youth activities; or making presentations on Auxiliary resources and services to family members of returning servicemembers.
- If you're near a military installation, a new Department of Defense policy makes it easier for you to get and provide information about our services and programs to servicemembers and military families. Refer to the *How to Support Troops and their Families on Military Installations* for additional information and specific steps.
- Organize a Welcome To Our Hometown event to welcome military families that are moving or transitioning out of the military to your community. Refer to the *Welcome To Our Hometown Action Guide* for additional information and specific steps.
- Equip the post/unit home with computer hardware and software to serve as workstations for family members with deployed servicemembers so they can communicate with them. Set regular days and hours when this service would be available.
 - Provide assistance to those who may need help with email or other online computer related assistance.
- Refer service members with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at 1-877-272-7337.
- Co-host or participate in a Holiday Mail for Heroes event with your local American Red Cross chapter.
- Partner with an Operation Homefront field office for assembly of servicemember care packages and family member support packages; providing hospitality, refreshments or children and youth activities at Operation Homefront spouse support and welcome home events. Refer to the *ALA-Operation Homefront Action Guide* for additional information and specific steps.
- Work with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and refer a survivor or caregiver for specialized support. Refer to *How to Collaborate with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors* for information and specific steps.
- Contact a USO (United Service Organization) Center and partner with a service project that will lift the spirits of America's troops and their families. See the *ALA-USO Action Guide* for who to contact, how to volunteer and various activities.

Department

- Host a department workshop on how to use the *ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide*. Training materials can be found on the National Security page of www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- The *ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide* focuses on services available to servicemembers and families nationally. Identify state-specific resources to benefit those in your state.
- Assist units and members with specific idea plans outlined above.

2. Assist military spouses in getting and maintaining employment.

Ideas:

Member

- Serve as a mentor in the career e-mentoring network through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Employment Program and Academy Women. Current military spouses will be virtually paired with more experienced spouses and/or corporate and career mentors for guidance and support.
- Promote military spouse job fairs in your community.
- Help man an information booth about the ALA at a job fair for military spouses.

Unit

- Support military spouse job fairs organized by U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation or The American Legion, or host one in your own community.
- Help to implement a Legion-sponsored job fair and/or co-host a Legion Family information table at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation-sponsored job fair.

Department

- If your Legion department has a job fair in conjunction with a department meeting, ensure military spouses are included (or a special track is offered for them), assist in promoting the job fair and man an information table at the job fair.
- Assist units and members with specific idea plans outlined above.

3. Support the National Security programs of The American Legion.

Ideas:

Member

- Complete a Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) course. Refer to *How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams* for information and specific steps.
- Build and/or help a neighbor build an emergency preparedness kit and plan.
 - Remember, new military families in your community may not be familiar with the types of emergencies that affect your area. As needed, help them update their emergency kit and plan.
 - You can help little ones be prepared by using resources available through Sesame Street's website: www.sesamestreet.org.
- Junior members may be good candidates to participate in FEMA's National Youth Preparedness Council.
- Sign up for the Legion's Legislative Action Alerts, and be sure to act on the ones regarding a strong national defense and affecting current and transitioning service members and their families.
- Donate blood.
- Assist at a blood drive in your community.
- Help identify candidates for The American Legion's National Firefighter of the Year Award given to a firefighter who has exceeded the requirements expected of his/her position and has shown a distinct pattern of National Security and professional achievement. Share the candidates(s) with your unit National Security chairman and post National Security chairman and/or adjutant.

- Help identify local candidates for The American Legion's National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award given to a well-rounded law enforcement officer who has exceeded the duty requirements expected of his or her position and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of National Security coupled with professional achievement. Share the candidate(s) with your unit National Security chairman and post National Security chairman and/or adjutant.

Unit

- Get involved in the Citizen Corps Council to ensure citizens are prepared to respond to natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, blizzards and manmade disasters and emergencies.
 - Junior members can get involved in and/or start a Youth Preparedness Program in their community.
- Collect supplies for emergency preparedness kits and distribute them in your community.
 - Remember: new military families in your community may not be familiar with the types of emergencies that affect your area. As needed, help them update their emergency preparedness kit and plan.
- Encourage members to complete Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). Refer to *How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams* for information and specific steps.
- Have a training exercise in your post home to give training in first aid, CPR or other types of emergency skills.
- Join with your Legion post to host a POW/MIA ceremony on National POW/MIA Recognition Day, commemorated annually on the third Friday of September.
- Follow the Legion's POW/MIA Empty Chair Resolution 288 for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings.
- Host a remembrance event for any MIA service members who have been identified from your area.
- Work with Legion posts to honor ROTC and JROTC cadets by having dinners and recognizing their accomplishments.
- Support future military by presenting ROTC and JROTC recognition awards.
- Invite ROTCs and JROTCs to post colors or even volunteer at unit events.
- Coordinate with local/regional chapters or blood banks to assist with blood drives.
- Work with your unit and post legislative committees to advocate for a strong national defense and topics affecting current and transitioning service members and their families.

Department

- Support your Legion department and posts to raise funds for Operation Comfort Warriors to provide supplies to wounded service members.
- Encourage members to complete Community Emergency Response Training (CERT). Refer to *How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams* for information and specific steps.
- Follow the Legion's POW/MIA Empty Chair Resolution 288 for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings.
- Work with your ALA and Legion department legislative committees around topics that ensure a strong national defense and support current and transitioning servicemembers and their families.
- Assist units and members with specific idea plans outlined above.

DEPARTMENT AWARDS:

Agnes Dunn Citation: This citation is presented to the Unit promoting the best all around report on National Security work.

Imogene Cowgill Citation: This citation is presented to the Unit promoting the best crime prevention program or honoring a local officer.

Phyllis VanHill Citation: This citation is presented to the Unit promoting the best fire prevention program or honoring a firefighter.

All entries for Department Awards must be double spaced, typewritten, and in narrative form. The first page must contain Department, District Number and Unit name and number, and the Title of award you are entering. Please do not include pictures, scrapbook or newspaper articles, as these items are not returnable if sent to National. The reports being submitted for National Awards will not be returned.

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org resources on the National Security page:

- American Legion Auxiliary Military Family Readiness Action Guide
- A training package is also online for departments and units. It includes an instruction sheet, PowerPoint presentation and script, sample agenda, learning exercises, pre- and post-session survey, satisfaction survey and sample marketing text.
- How to Mobilize Community Support for Those Who Serve
- How to Welcome Home Separating Service members
- How to Support Troops and their Families on Military Installations
- How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams
- Planning a Powerful POW/MIA Remembrance Service: Let Us Never Forget
- How to Collaborate with the American Red Cross' Service to the Armed Forces
- ALA-Operation Homefront Action Guide
- ALA-USO Action Guide
- How to Collaborate with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

- How to Collaborate with the Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse eMentor Program
- How to Support Hiring Events for Veterans and Military & Veteran Spouses

2. Legion Resources:

- Blue Star and Gold Star Banner: www.legion.org/troops/bluestar
- Disaster Preparedness and Response for American Legion Posts: www.legion.org/documents/pdf/talarc_disaster_preparedness.pdf
- Family Support Network: www.legion.org/familysupport
- Operation Comfort Warriors: www.legion.org/troops/operationcomfort
- POW/MIA: www.legion.org/powmia

3. Military OneSource: www.militaryonesource.mil

4. VA-sponsored welcome-home events: www.volunteer.va.gov/Welcome_Home_Events.asp

5. Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program: www.yellowribbon.mil, www.jointservicessupport.org/YRRP

6. American Red Cross: www.redcross.org

7. Operation Homefront: www.operationhomefront.net

8. USO: www.uso.org

9. Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS): www.taps.org

10. ROTC and JROTC Information:

- Army ROTC: www.goarmy.com/rotc
- Army JROTC: www.usarmyjrotc.com/
- Air Force ROTC: www.afrotc.com
- Air Force JROTC: www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/AFJROTC
- Naval ROTC (includes Marine Corps): www.nrotc.navy.mil
- Naval JROTC: www.njrotc.navy.mil
- Marine Corps JROTC: www.mcjrotc.org

- Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI):
<http://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officeropportunities/programs/college-student-pre-commissioning-initiative>
- Coast Guard JROTC: No website, but there are two nationally (Miami, FL and Camden County, NC).

11. Emergency Preparedness Information

- www.Ready.gov
- Citizen Corps: <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps>
- Youth-Focused Preparedness: www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness#
- Youth Preparedness Council: www.ready.gov/youth-preparednesscouncil
- CERT Program: www.fema.gov/community-emergency-responseteams
- Sesame Street's Preparedness Info for Young Children:
www.sesamestreet.org/ready
- Preparedness Considerations for Military Families:
www.ready.gov/considerations/military-family-preparedness

12. Follow Us on Facebook:

- American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters:
www.facebook.com/ALAforVeterans
- ALA National Security Facebook group:
www.facebook.com/groups/915563745139663/ or search for "ALA National Security"

National Security Reporting

Mid-Year Report

Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each unit National Security chairman is asked to submit a narrative report by **December 2, 2016**, to the Department National Security chairman at her address found on the front page of this program Plan.

Year-End Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department. It is requested that these reports are accompanied by photos of select unit projects. Each District National Security chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **April 15, 2017**, to the Department National Security chairman at her address found on the front page of this program Plan. Also include submitted photos.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How were Blue Star and Gold Star Banners presented?
- How were MIA families recognized following notification of remains?
- How were service members honored during welcome-home events?
- How were military families connected to other units when moving?

National Security Awards (for Department Chairman)

Each award application must include a cover sheet. All awards will be announced at National Convention during the National Security pre-convention meeting.

Department Award: Department National Security Program Award

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: One department in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program Plan.
- For the most outstanding overall National Security program in the division.
- Each entry must be typewritten in narrative form.
- Include pictures and newspapers articles.
- Entries must be sent by the department National Security chairman to your National Security division chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or by email sent by 5 p.m. EDT on June 1, 2017. Her address can be found on the front page of this program Plan.

Department Award: Dorothy Pearl Civil Preparedness (CERT) Plaque

Type of Award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One department

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program Plan.
- For the department having the highest percentage of units participating in civil preparedness.
- Each entry must either be a narrative report or spreadsheet of participating units, CERT training dates, the number of participants registering for the program and number of participants completing the program.
- Entries must be sent by the department National Security chairman to national committee member postmarked by May 28, 2017, or by email sent by 5 p.m. EDT on May 30, 2017.

Department Award: Military Spouse eMentor Award

Type of Award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One department

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program Plan.
- For the department having the highest percentage of members actively participating in military spouse e-mentoring and connected to military spouses.
- Each entry must have a list/spreadsheet of participating members.

- Entries must be sent by the department National Security chairman to the National Chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or by email sent by 5 p.m. EDT on June 1, 2017.
- Each department's participation percentage will be determined by the National Chairman. The percentage will be calculated based on the number of reported participating members who are serving as an e-mentor as of June 8, 2017, as reported by the e-mentoring program staff, divided by the department's membership number as of June 8, 2017. (For example, if 250 of the 300 members listed on the department's submitted spreadsheet were connected to military spouses, in a department with 5,000 members, the percentage would be 5 percent).

Unit Award: Military Support Unit Award

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: One unit in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program Plan.
- For demonstrating the most outstanding overall program serving and supporting military families, with special emphasis on helping military families through times of deployment and/or injury (severely wounded).
- Each entry must be typewritten in narrative form.
- Include pictures and newspaper articles.
- Entries must be sent by the unit National Security chairman to her National Security division chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or by email sent by 5 p.m. EDT on June 1, 2017. Her address can be found on the front page of this program Plan.

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org resources on the National Security page:
 - *American Legion Auxiliary Military Family Readiness Action Guide*
 - A training package is also online for departments and units. It includes an instruction sheet, PowerPoint presentation and script, sample agenda, learning exercises, pre- and post-session survey, satisfaction survey and sample marketing text.
 - How to Welcome Home Separating Service members
 - How to Support Troops and their Families on Military Installations
 - *Welcome To Our Hometown Action Guide* and participant feedback survey
 - How to Train for FEMA's Community Emergency Response Teams
 - Planning a Powerful POW/MIA Remembrance Service: *Let Us Never Forget*
 - How to Collaborate with the American Red Cross' Service to the Armed Forces
 - *ALA-Operation Homefront Action Guide*
 - *ALA-USO Action Guide*
 - How to Collaborate with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
 - How to Collaborate with the Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse eMentor Program
 - How to Support Hiring Events for Veterans and Military & Veteran Spouses

2. Legion Resources:
 - Blue Star and Gold Star Banner: www.legion.org/troops/bluestar
 - Disaster Preparedness and Response for American Legion Posts: www.legion.org/documents/pdf/talarc_disaster_preparedness.pdf
 - Family Support Network: www.legion.org/familysupport
 - Operation Comfort Warriors: www.legion.org/troops/operationcomfort
 - POW/MIA: www.legion.org/powmia
 - Legislative Action Alerts:
3. Military OneSource: www.militaryonesource.mil
4. Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program: www.yellowribbon.mil, www.jointservicesupport.org/YRRP
5. American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
6. Operation Homefront: www.operationhomefront.net
7. USO: www.uso.org
8. Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS): www.taps.org
9. ROTC and JROTC Information:
 - Army ROTC: www.goarmy.com/rotc
 - Army JROTC: www.usarmyjrotc.com/
 - Air Force ROTC: www.afrotc.com
 - Air Force JROTC: www.au.af.mil/au/holmcenter/AFJROTC
 - Naval ROTC (includes Marine Corps): www.nrotc.navy.mil
 - Naval JROTC: www.njrotc.navy.mil
 - Marine Corps JROTC: www.mcjrotc.org
 - Coast Guard College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI): <http://www.gocoastguard.com/active-duty-careers/officer-opportunities/programs/college-student-pre-commissioning-initiative>
 - Coast Guard JROTC: No website, but there are two nationally (Miami, FL and Camden County, NC).
10. Emergency Preparedness Information
 - www.Ready.gov
 - Citizen Corps: <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps>
 - Youth-Focused Preparedness: www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness#
 - Youth Preparedness Council: www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council
 - CERT Program: www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams
 - Sesame Street's Preparedness Info for Young Children: www.sesamestreet.org/ready
 - Preparedness Considerations for Military Families: www.ready.gov/considerations/military-family-preparedness
11. Follow Us on Facebook:
 - American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters: www.facebook.com/ALAforVeterans
 - ALA National Security Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/ALANatlSec/ or search for "ALA National Security"