

2018-2019 American Legion Auxiliary Program Action Plan for Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation Hospital Guide

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program calls for us to enhance the lives of veterans, military and their families. These activities fall in line with the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan by providing our members opportunities to serve in volunteer leadership roles within their local Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Hospitals (Goal 3), which broadens our membership pool (Goal 1) among a target population and builds brand loyalty (Goal5) with the veterans themselves.

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

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of veterans, military and their families.

What can you do?

- 1. Provide opportunities for Auxiliary members to serve veterans and their families as volunteers at VA health care facilities through the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS).**

Ideas:

Members

- Become a regular VAVS volunteer.
- Invite others to become VAVS volunteers with you.
- Enter all of your VAVS hours into the VAVS tracking system. Note: VA Healthcare facilities volunteer hour tracking system is different from the tracking utilized for ALA hour bars. Please consult your local VAVS Hospital Representative.

Department (and ALA VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives).

- Work with VAVS directors to create meaningful assignments for every volunteer.

- Work with VAVS directors to identify service projects suitable for Junior members and their friends and adults with time for occasional service only.
- Educate units and community partners about volunteer opportunities available at VA medical centers, state veterans homes, Fisher Houses, and other VA health care locations. Sponsor informational programs and recruitment tables at department meetings, post and unit functions and at community events. Utilize department websites, newsletters and other media.
- Contribute to the VAVS National Advisory Committee by enabling the American Legion Auxiliary national representative to best represent the interest of and exert influence on behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary. Develop a deeper connection with the VAVS national representative and deputy representative.
- Attend the annual VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee Meeting and Conference. All VA facility representatives, deputies and volunteers are eligible to attend at their own expense.
- Share member volunteer concerns and suggestions with ALA National VAVS Representative.
- Inform your Auxiliary hospital VAVS representative of any concerns or suggestions.

(Note: Volunteers in veterans' state homes that have a Memorandum of Understanding with a VA health care system are eligible to be considered VAVS volunteers.)

2. There isn't a VA hospital close to your community? Find opportunities for Auxiliary members to serve veterans in your area. These hours will count toward your Service to Veterans pin and hour bars.

GUIDELINES FOR VAVS HOSPITAL AWARDS

National Award: VAVS Volunteer of the Year Award/ALA NAC nominee.

Type of Award: Citation + \$500 donation to VAVS facility or VCAF of her choice presented by the American Legion Auxiliary.

Presented to: Member

Materials and Guidelines:

- Candidates for VAVS National Advisory Committee Volunteer of the year will be submitted by the Chiefs of Voluntary Services.
- Awarded to the nominee who has given extraordinary service to our nation's veterans through ALA VA&R program and the VAVS program.
- Nominee must serve in an established VA assignment and be defined as a regularly scheduled volunteer.
- Should be actively involved in working with veterans in any one of the following areas: outpatient clinics, nursing homes.. homeless veteran programs, hosted veteran related functions outside the VA, or visited veterans confined to their homes (as assigned by VAVS).
- The American Legion Auxiliary selects the ALA Volunteer of the Year. The name of the ALA Volunteer of the Year is forwarded for consideration as the NAC Volunteer of the Year.

Member Award: 10,000 Hour Volunteer Service Award.

Type of Award: Citation + \$100.00 donation to VAVS facility or VCAF of her choice presented by The American Legion Auxiliary.

Presented to: Member.

Materials and Guidelines::

- Given to volunteers who have reached 10,000 hours of service in a VA facility during this year (April 1, 2018-March 31, 2019).
- Verification of hours must be received at National Headquarters by the first Friday in June.

Individual Recognition Award: Volunteer Recruitment & Service Department Award.

Type of Award: Citation presented by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Presented to: Hospital Representative.

Materials and Guidelines:

- No entry form required.
- Awarded to the hospital rep at every facility that shows an increase in both volunteers and volunteer hours at a VA Medical Center from April 1, 2018-March 31, 2019. The award winner will be determined by the National VAVS representative through verification of hours and number of volunteers as recorded by VAVS.

Individual Recognition

Award: 100% VAVS Meeting Attendance Award.

Type of Award: Attendance Card presented by the Department Veterans Affairs.

Presented to: Hospital Representative and Deputy.

Materials and Guidelines:

- No entry form required
- An “Attendance Card” will be awarded to each representative and deputy who has 100% attendance to VAVS committee meetings at her assigned facility. The National VAVS Representative will verify the winners from VA records.

Welcome Home Celebrations:

Provide assistance to your local VA health care system in supporting returning service members and their families in the community. VA supports this initiative by providing information about the opportunities available to them through the VA. Every VA health care system sponsors welcome home celebration in their facilities and community.

National Salute to Veterans:

This initiative salutes America’s heroes, the more than 98,000 of the U.S.. Armed Services who are cared for every day in VA Medical Centers during the week of February 14 annually.