

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**  
**2019-2021 PUBLIC RELATIONS GUIDE and BRANDING GUIDE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN**

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“PASS ON THE MISSION”

**Public Relations promote who we are, what we do, and why we matter.**

Promoting who we are strengthens our brand (emblem and name) and allows communities to know how we make a difference. It also makes us appealing to potential members who will recognize our goal of helping veterans, service members and their families. Promote a positive image of our American Legion Auxiliary by supporting and promoting our Unit and Department activities.

Relationships with members of the media are the foundation of successful public relations efforts. Whether the media contact is a reporter from the local newspaper, television, or radio they are a valuable asset.

- Compile a list of outlets. Think about those reporters you would like to communicate information about the Auxiliary.
- Identify contacts. Page through your local newspaper or turn on a local television program to determine those reporters, editors or producers that will cover areas of interest for your purpose.
- Compile a list of contacts that includes – phone numbers, email and mailing addresses (Excel or other spreadsheet software works well for management of this information)
- Call or contact prior to sending your news release or Unit event.
- Always include your contact information.
- Say “thank you”. Everyone likes to feel appreciated.

Refer to the “Media Relations Support Tools” for assistance in Media releases, Event Promotion and format under the “Resource” page of [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

**American Legion Auxiliary**

**BRANDING GUIDE**

**Department of Michigan 2019-2021**

Our brand is our identity. It is our reputation and our promise. It is how the public recognizes us. It defines who we are – a community of volunteers serving Veterans, military and their families.

Studies have shown people begin to develop emotional attachments and strong feelings for a brand much as they would for another human being – think Coca-Cola, Disney, etc.

Because the American Legion Auxiliary's units and departments are spread across the United States and its territories, we need to develop a strong and cohesive brand. We might not be aware or even concerned about what others are doing. But, what they do and how they look can affect our reputation. The public should be able to pair the ALA with our core values, mission, and look the same way from State to State.

Everyone has a role in creating and maintain the Auxiliary's brand, but the people who need to utilize this Branding Guide/[www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org) are the volunteers communicating, writing, designing, or producing Auxiliary-related material or guiding vendors to produce material. This Guide will serve as your template. It is your reference for all steps of production. Such as size and color fonts of documents and our emblem and name.

Our Emblem and name are registered with the U.S. Trademark Office. Therefore, by federal law its use is regulated by the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. Permission of its use can be obtained by completing the request form on the National website and submitting to the National Executive Secretary.

The use of the emblem by individual unit members shall be the wearing of authorized jewelry or merchandise bearing the emblem.

**Units** are confined to using the emblem and name on stationary, publications, official websites, social media, notices, posters, placecards or matters of similar character used in the ordinary routine and conduct of legitimate Unit business.

The use of the emblem and name by the Department of Michigan shall be the same as Units.

Any other use of the name "American Legion Auxiliary" or the "emblem" is subject to approval of the National Executive Secretary.

## **NAME**

- Always capitalize the first letter of each word – American Legion Auxiliary
- Never shorten the name. (Exception, internal communication)
- The full name is to be spelled out for the public.

Examples of materials that should include the American Legion Auxiliary emblem include but are not limited to - business cards, envelopes, letterheads and footers forms, brochures, and posters. Internal communications are excluded.

The emblem colors and usages are specifically stated on Page 8 of the Branding Guide.

## **WAVE**

The wave should be used on ALL materials as applicable (Refer to Page 16 of the Branding Guide). It provides our products with a clean, cohesive look. It represents forward movement within our organization and a modern look. The wave graphics are not to be altered.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Photographs created or taken should reflect our mission and organization's values. Try to use photos with smiling, positive members engaging in our mission. (Refer to Page 20-26 Branding Guide.)

Examples of stationery, business cards, flyers, banners brochures, etc. can be found on Pages 27-32 Branding Guide.

## **Public Relations Reporting:**

- **Mid-Year Reports** – Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of our Units and is intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Each department Public Relations chairman is required to submit a narrative

report to the division Public Relations chairman, plus copy the national Public Relations chairman by January 5, 2021.

- **Questions for reporting will be included in the Unit mailing.**
  
- **Year-end Reports** – Annual reports reflect the program work of our Units and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Each department Public Relations chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division Public Relations chairman, plus copy the national Public Relations chairman by May 15, 2021.
- **Questions for reporting will be included in the Unit mailing.**

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social Media includes websites and other applications (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) that increases the visibility of our Units and the American Legion Auxiliary. Each media platform provides a unique way to interact with others and has different user demographics. Here is a short analysis.

### **Facebook**

Facebook is the largest social media network making it a great place for Units to connect with their communities. It has a variety of posting content and is low maintenance. Does not require daily posting.

### **Twitter**

This is a great place to connect with others from all over the world. Short texts with videos, photos and links. This site is popular with 18-29 age group.

### **General Best Practices:**

- Think before you post something that may hurt the image of the American Legion Auxiliary or compromise privacy. Never post confidential or proprietary information. Courts can review postings for legal matters.

- Know the etiquette. In social media there are cultural norms, expectations and conventions that govern user interaction. Failure to observe them may compromise your credibility.
- Talk about the American Legion Auxiliary. Our programs and mission. Provide corresponding photos.
- Celebrate – share good news, celebrate milestones (100 years) and post happy events.
- Adhere to brand and Identity standards – All social media sites should conform to our branding guidelines. Additionally, no beer, cigarettes, offensive material/gestures or otherwise reputation/image-jeopardizing items should be in pictures.
- Be thoughtful – you are representing the American Legion Auxiliary. Never use the Unit social media to endorse a political candidate, service, business, etc.

Name your social media page so it clearly identifies your ALA entity (Unit, Department) including City and State.

Each social media account should be assigned at least two administrators/managers to oversee settings and password management. Allowing for two administrators ensure the account is still accessible by someone in the event of an emergency or departure. Admins should not share login details and passwords without consideration. Keep passwords unique for proper security and should be changed on a regular basis, including following a person's departure or change of duties.

- Include one link to [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org)
- Carefully consider your placement of the ALA emblem
- Include contact information
- Create your site with media friendliness
- Avoid language that contains internal references, acronyms and jargon that may confuse users
- Don't post information that can jeopardize the safety of members
- Don't endorse products, political candidates, services or businesses
- Tailor your message to the people with whom you are communicating.
- In everything produced, our brand promise should be present – *Service not Self*
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## DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN PUBLIC RELATIONS AWARDS:

### Press Books:

**Gladys Lee Citation** – To the Unit with the most publicity in a WEELY newspaper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book. Will be judged based on the word count.

**Alma Viergever Citation** – To the Unit under 75 members with the most publicity in a daily, weekly or monthly paper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book. Will be judged on the word count.

**Leslie F. Kefgan Citation** – To the Unit with the most inches of publicity in a daily newspaper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book.

**Ivy Lee Reinhardt Citation** – To the Unit with the best all-around Press Book.

**Ada Bogart Citation** – For the best Junior publicity Press Book.

### CRITERIA FOR PRESS BOOK ENTRIES:

- Material must be prepared in a Press Book no larger than 12" X 15" on 8-1/2 X 11 pages.
- The first page of the entry must include the name, address and phone number of the Unit Chairman, name of the Unit and the total number of inches and pictures in the Press Book.
- The entry must also include a completed copy of the Unit's Annual Report Form.
- Photostat copies of articles may be used.
- The name of the newspaper, date and page number must be at the top of each article.
- Newspaper articles, bulletins and photography concerning an Auxiliary and/or Legion Family function/program should be included in chronological order.
- Paid articles are not to be included.
- The Press Book should tell the story of how the Programs of the ALA were promoted in the Unit.
- *Do not underline anything!*
- American Legion Auxiliary or American Legion should be included in each article.

**WEBSITE:**

**Marian “Pic” Webster Citation** – Website award to the Unit creating/maintain the best website.

**Criteria:**

- Award is personalized mouse pad and congrats letter.
- Award presented to all Units developing a properly branded website or social media account during the current ALA administrative year.
- information OR name and contact information for the ALA coordinator. If webmaster/administrator is a third party Site/Account must have been created after September 1 of the current ALA administrative year.
- Website/Facebook page must conform to “Website and Social Media Guidelines” in the ALA Branding Guide.

**NEWSLETTERS:**

**Unit “Letter Style” Newsletter** – Award for a Unit unable to publish a larger formal newsletter but sends out a newsletter in a form of a letter to their members.

**District “Letter Style” Newsletter** – Award for a District who prefers not to publish a large formal newsletter but sends out a newsletter in the form of a letter to their members.

**Criteria for “Letter Style” Newsletter Publications:**

- Units to send one copy of each of three (3) issues to be judged (published between April/March) to the District PR Chairman, postmarked no later than the deadline.
- Include a copy of the Unit’s Annual Public Relations Report with entry.
- Entries to be judged as follows:
  - Unit/District name, number, address, editor’s name.....10 points
  - Meeting information (time, place & contact if needed).....10 points
  - Member information (new members, illness, etc.).....15 points
  - Summary of recently completed projects or activities.....10 points

- Upcoming Unit activity(s).....25 points
- Auxiliary programs.....15 points
- General Appearance.....15 points
- Total possible points.....100 points

**Best Unit Newsletter:** To the Unit with the best newsletter publication.

**Best Unit/Post Joint Newsletter** – To the Unit with the best joint newsletter publication.

**Best District Newsletter** – To the District with the best newsletter publication.

**Criteria for Newsletter Publications:**

- Send one copy each of three (3) issues to be judged. Published between April-March to the District PR Chairman, postmarked no later than the deadline.
- Include a copy of the Unit’s Annual Public Relations Report.
- Entries will be judged as follows:
  - Masthead (emblem, name of newsletter, date & editors name....10 points
  - Meeting information (time, place & contact if needed).....10 points
  - Unit Officers & Chairmen (list or names by articles).....5 points
  - Member information (new members, illness, birthday, etc.).....10 points
  - Summary of Unit activity/projects recently completed.....10 points
  - Unit Activity/projects coming up.....15 points
  - Auxiliary Program Reports.....15 points
  - Calendar of Events (incl. Dist. & Dept. Mtg. and Events.....10 points
  - General Appearance.....15 points

- Total Possible Points.....100 points
- NOTE – Items listed as Unit should include Legion/Sal if joint publication.

**Broadcast:**

**Kanaby Broadcast Citation:** For the best script for either radio or TV program by a Unit. Script verification from Radio and/or TV with written confirmation from said radio and/or TV.

**Unit effort/event narrative:**

**Viola Starkey Citation:** To the Unit with the best narrative describing their outstanding effort/event that positively projects our image or programs.

**Criteria:**

- Article must be written in a narrative form, not to exceed 300 words.
- Articles must be of some outstanding activity pertaining to the American Legion Auxiliary or some special community event that involved the Auxiliary. Activity must have taken place in the current Auxiliary year (April-March)
- Unit may submit more than one entry in any given year.
- Articles must be signed by Unit President and Secretary or PR Chairman.

**NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AWARDS:**

- Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet found in the awards section of the Programs Action Plan.
- Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award’s materials and guidelines section.
- Submit as indicated in the Annual Supplement to the Program Action Plan.

National Report and Awards Cover Sheet, deadlines and Public Relations committee contact information may be found on the Public Relations committee page on the national website [www.ALforVeterans.org](http://www.ALforVeterans.org).

**Member Award:** ALA Brand Ambassador

- Award: Lapel Pin
- Presented to: One member in each department who achieves excellence in promotion of the American Legion Auxiliary with her/his use of Social Media, her/his appearance in public wearing ALA-branded apparel, and other activities that showcase the Auxiliary's unique branding through visual identity.
  - Document with action photographs, screen shots, and other evidence of brand promotion activities
  - Activity must occur between May 1 prior to the start of the current admin year and May 1 before the end of the current admin year
  - Be familiar with Auxiliary public service announcements, brochures, and other ALA publications. Educate units on Materials available and how to obtain them. View the compilation of resources in the *ALA Marketing Resource Guide*, available in the PR/Marketing Resources in the Members Only section at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

**Unit Award:** New Website or Social Media Account Launch

- Award – Personalized mouse pad and congrats letter
- Presented to: One member in each department who achieves excellence in promotion of the American Legion Auxiliary with her /his use of social media, her/his appearance in public wearing ALA-branded apparel, and other activities that showcase the Auxiliary's unique branding through visual identity.
- Material and guidelines:
  - Web address/URL
  - Site/Account must have been created after September 1 of the current ALA admin year.
  - Website/Facebook page must conform to “Website and Social Media Guidelines” in the ALA Branding Guide.
  - Attach an award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name of contact information for the Department and Unit Public Relations chairman.
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**Unit Award:** Most Outstanding Unit Public Relations Program

- Create or improve and actively maintain a unit website that adheres to brand standards (for tips, see *ALA Branding Guide*) or platforms that you are comfortable with.

- Award: Citation Plaque
- Presented to: One unit in each division (5)
- Materials and guidelines:
  - Include three different media placements/coverage highlighting different ALA programs, featured in three different months (September 1 – May 1) of the current ALA administrative year.
  - Acceptable media publications must support the Auxiliary's mission and goals.

**Department Award:** Best Department Public Relations Program

- Award: Citation
- Presented to: One Department in each division (5).
- Materials and guidelines:
  - Articles, newsletters, pictures of displays, ALA events, speeches, website address, social media activity, etc.
  - Narrative not to exceed 500 words

**Additional Resources You Can Use**

- *American Legion Auxiliary Branding Guide*, available under PR Marketing
- Resources in the "Members Only" area at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)
- "Photography Guidelines", see *ALA Branding Guide*, Pages 20-21
- *ALA Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment* toolkit
- *ALA Style Guide*: Available by emailing publicrelations@ALAforVeterans.org; and the *AP Stylebook* @ [www.apstylebook.com/](http://www.apstylebook.com/)
- [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org): For submissions to national ALA media, templates for posters, flyers, news releases and other marketing material
- The national Public Relations Committee Facebook group, search ALA Public Relations

- Your national Public Relations committee members (see Public Relations program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information)
  - New family website: [www.TheAmericanLegionFamily.org](http://www.TheAmericanLegionFamily.org)
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