



National Security

Department Guide

2021-2022 American Legion Auxiliary Action Plan

The National Security Program maintains and promotes a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting military service members and their families as we focus on our mission.

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

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 "**R**emember **E**veryone **D**eployed".
- As a gesture of appreciation for local servicemember's 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. Get to know your local Legion Service Officer.
- 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 (FRG) 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 servicemember 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 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.
- 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.
- Greet servicemembers and families as they deploy and/or return from a deployment.
- Work with a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration 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 U.S. 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.
- Refer service members with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at 1-877-272-7337.
- 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-Operations 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.

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 job fairs in your community and volunteer to help.
- Help staff an information booth about the ALA at a job fair for military spouses.
- Write an editorial about why military spouses make good employees.
- Contact school guidance counselors in local area and offer to be "on call" for assistance with military children.

Unit

- Support military 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.
- Seek grant funds to help military spouses start small businesses. Promote participation among military spouses at www.theveteranmarket.com.
- Create a scholarship fund for military spouses learning a new skill.

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 as 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.
- Donate blood.
- Assist in a blood drive in your community.

Unit

- Get involved in the Citizen Corps Council (www.ready.gov) 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 the 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.
- Present red/white/blue honor cords to graduating high school seniors who will be entering the military after graduation.
- Work with your unit and post legislative committees to advocate for a strong national defense and topics affecting current and transitioning servicemembers and their families.
- Support your Legion post to raise funds for Operation Comfort Warriors to provide supplies to wounded servicemembers.
- Either alone or with your Legion Post, give recognition in some manner to our local law enforcement, fire fighters, first responders and other essential workers who have given of themselves this year as in no other year in the past. Recognition could be as simple as thank you cards, cookies, pizza, or going as far as a recognition dinner in your community with coverage in your local media.

REPORTING:

Mid-Year Reports – are due from the Units to the Department Chairman by **December 15, 2021** and should report, in narrative form, the program work that the units have done thus far. Please give any of the activities your unit members and/or your unit has done since last year's reporting. Reports should be mailed directly from the unit to the Department Chairman at the address given on page 1.

Year-End Reports

Unit reports are due to your **District Chairman AND District President** by **March 30, 2022**. Please include not only the questions/answers on the reporting form,

but also any narratives describing your wonderful activities and participation in this program. Any award submissions for **Department awards** should also be sent to your District Chairman by this time.

District reports are due to the **Department Chairman** by **April 15, 2022**. Please include not only the questions/answers on the reporting form, but also any narratives submitted to you by the Units on their wonderful activities and participation in this program. Please submit only 1 entry from your District for each of the Department awards (Agnes Dunn Citation, Imogene Cowgill Citation, and the Phyllis VanHill Citation) submitted by your Units. Be sure to include a completed and signed green slip.

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 know that the winning award that qualifies for a National Award submission will not be returned, so do not include any pictures, scrapbook or newspaper articles that you want to keep. As part of your report, please include answers to the following questions when applicable to the award for which you are applying:

- ❖ How were Blue Star and Gold Star Banners presented?
- ❖ How were MIA families recognized following notification of remains?
- ❖ How were servicemembers honored during “Welcome Home” events?
- ❖ How were military families connected to other Auxiliary units when moving?
- ❖ Did members organize “Welcome to Our Hometown” events? If so, what was most successful? Did they have any challenges?

- ❖ What type of National Security activities and/or projects were done at units and in your department? Those that weren't near a military installation?

NATIONAL AWARDS:

There are 2 National Awards in the National Security Program (1 that Units can enter and 1 for Departments to enter):

Unit Award: Most outstanding Unit National Security Program

- Award: Citation Plaque
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Entries must be typewritten in narrative form
 - Include pictures and newspaper articles
 - As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:
 - ✓ Did members organize Welcome to Our Hometown events? If so, what was most successful? Did your unit have any challenges?
 - ✓ What type of national security activities and/or projects were done at your unit if you weren't near a military installation?
 - ✓ How were military families connected to other Auxiliary units when moving?

Taking the time to share a favorite story about a positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

Send to Department Chairman by **May 15, 2022*** for judging at the Department level.

*Please note: If you choose to enter this for the Department Award (Agnes Dunn Citation) and wish it to **also** be considered for the National Award, your entry must be sent to your District Chairman by **March 30, 2022**; your District Chairman must send to the Department Chairman by **April 15, 2022**. If you only wish it to be considered for the National Unit Award,

please send directly to the Department Chairman by **May 15, 2022** and indicate such.

Department Award: Dorothy Pearl Best Department National Security Program

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The Department of Michigan will be working on and applying for this award in honor of Michigan native Dorothy Pearl, Past National President (1946-1947) and Past Department of Michigan President (1940-1941).

National Security Special 100th Anniversary History Program Facts: In 1924, Mrs. O.D. Oliphant (New Jersey) was elected National President. Under her leadership, the first Women’s Patriotic Conference on National Defense was held in Washington, D.C. in February 1925. While in 1942, Mrs. Alfred J. Mathebat (California) was elected National President. Wartime rationing and travel restrictions continued to affect every American, including Auxiliary members, forcing cancellation of the Women’s Patriotic Conference on National Defense. National President, Mrs. Rae Ashton (Utah), chaired the first Women’s Forum on National Security, in January 1953, in Washington D.C. First Lady Mamie Eisenhower and Mrs. Pat Nixon, wife of the vice president, hosted the forum at the White House. In 1973, with the still active Vietnam War, two Resolutions were passed by the delegates to the National Convention. One to continue support of the National League of Families and one to declare Memorial Day 1974 as a day to shout to Congress to “Get Our Men Home”. In 1981, the American Legion Auxiliary Awareness Assembly held in Washington, D.C., replaces the Women’s Forum on National Security. In 1988, the National Security Committee Chairman, Linda Boone, reported that units and departments efforts raised and donated a total of \$108,400 for National President Alice Galka’s special project, the USO. The National Security Committee has remained continuous with the program. In 2015, the new ALA Military Readiness Action Guide was launched and provided members with a valuable online resource to assist in locating services for active-duty, reservists, and National Guard members.

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

- 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

[www.legion.org/documents/pdf/talarc disaster preparedness.pdf](http://www.legion.org/documents/pdf/talarc%20disaster%20preparedness.pdf)

- Family Support Network: www.legion.org/familysupport
 - Operation Comfort Warriors: www.legion.org/troops/operationcomfort
 - POW/MIA: www.legion.org/powmia
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
 - 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>
- 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/ALANatISec or search for ALA National Security