



American Legion Auxiliary Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Newsletter

February 2022

www.ALAforVeterans.org/member/committees/var

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‘Service to Veterans’ Volunteer Opportunities

Not every community has a Veterans Affairs facility nearby to volunteer as a Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service volunteer. However, all ALA members can help veterans outside those VA facilities; anything done directly for a veteran outside of a Veterans Affairs facility is considered ‘Service to Veterans.’

After a member has made the decision to volunteer outside of a VAMC, his or her first step should be to identify a servicemember, veteran, and/or family member’s needs within the community.

Consider the following when trying to locate where to identify these needs:

- ✓ Start with your own post home. Some Legionnaires are now aged, infirmed, confined due to illness or inability to drive, and spend most of their time at home or in assisted living facilities.
- ✓ Utilize leaders in your community. Contact government officials, religious leaders, and social service offices to ask about different programs in the community serving veterans. Once you have obtained contact information, reach out to the various organizations and ask them to identify their needs.

Once you have identified the needs in your community, brainstorm different ways to meet these needs with your unit or American Legion Family.

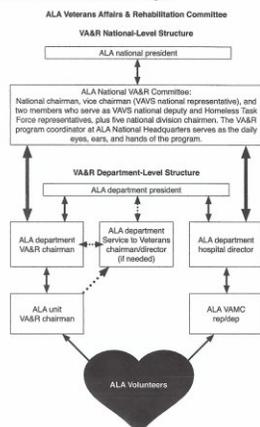
Following is a list of ideas to get your started:

- ✓ Visit with veterans, and remember them on special occasions.
- ✓ Offer to drive veterans to doctor appointments.
- ✓ Offer to stay with a veteran while his/her primary caregiver goes shopping or out for a break.
- ✓ Take a veteran for a Sunday drive, picnic, or maybe to see one of his/her friends.
- ✓ Treat veterans to tickets for sporting events or movies.
- ✓ Transitional housing programs have many needs. Secure donations for staple items such as laundry soap, cleaning supplies, kitchen items, new undergarments, etc.
- ✓ Donate a membership to The American Legion. Arrange an outing to a Legion meeting for special events such as a Veterans Day dinner, memorial service, etc.
- ✓ Furnish a room in transitional housing programs as a special project.
- ✓ Help furnish new living space for a veteran graduating from a transitional housing program. This might include the veteran and his/her family. School supplies for children or meals might be extra touches.

This is only a start of things that we can do to help a veteran in our communities. The ideas are endless.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

The following chart illustrates the national, department, and unit structure of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program.



Service to Veterans Volunteers

Service to Veterans volunteers are American Legion Auxiliary members who provide service to veterans outside a VAMC. Whether organizing a stand down, assembling care packages, tray favors, greeting cards, assisting with a veteran’s burial or gravesite upkeep, sewing, cooking, or shopping for veterans, member volunteers are at the heart of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program structure. For more info, go to: <https://www.legion-aux.org/service-to-veterans-volunteers>

'Service to Veterans' Volunteer Recognition

Anything done directly for a veteran outside of a Veterans Affairs facility is considered 'Service to Veterans.' Hour bars for your Service to Veterans pin can be earned through work done on behalf of veterans in state or community-based nursing homes/soldiers' homes, contracted veterans' homes, daycare centers, foster homes, halfway houses, hospices, homeless shelters, stand downs, Christmas Gift Shops (not at a VAMC), veteran cemeteries or gravesites for any service tasks including but not limited to transportation, snow removal, landscaping/yard mowing, and assisting with tax preparation.

ALA Junior members may also earn hours through services provided while under supervision of a senior volunteer (examples: reading, playing board games, planning activities around special holidays, and upkeep of veteran gravesites).

In-person Mission Training is Back!

Five ALA Mission Trainings and national Junior meetings are planned for 2022. They will be held at the same time and locations throughout the winter and spring.

Mission Development Training 201 will help members overcome common hurdles in mission delivery. The underlying belief in this training is that improving the member engagement experience will also drive membership.

- During this one-day training, learn how to:
- Identify and engage volunteers – members and non-members
- Determine the needs in your community
- Solve roadblocks
- Construct specific volunteer menu opportunities in your community

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Active members looking to welcome and engage other ALA members and supporters in our mission. Attendees should have a basic concept of mission delivery.

Don't forget about ALA Juniors! The national ALA Junior meetings will also be held at the same time.

DATES AND LOCATIONS:

Las Vegas, NV - Jan. 29, 2022

Orlando, FL - Feb. 12, 2022

Indianapolis, IN - Feb. 19, 2022

Baltimore, MD - Mar. 26, 2022

Omaha, NE - Apr. 2, 2022

[Click here](#) to register now.

More information available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

'Service to Veterans' Pin



Hours can be earned through work done in your home for the benefit of homebound, sick or injured servicemembers and veterans. These activities might include sewing, mending, and/or babysitting while the veteran attends medical appointments or rehab sessions, or making quilts or knitting for hospitalized or homeless veterans.

HOURS PINS & BARS

In addition to our volunteers, caregivers can now be awarded "Service to Veterans" hours which may accumulate for hour bars for time spent providing care and assistance to Veterans within their families if they do not receive PROFESSIONAL compensation for doing so. If the caregiver lives with the Veteran, they may be awarded 10 hours a week. If they do NOT live with the Veteran relative then they may be awarded 5 hours a week. The onus is placed upon the caregiver to report these hours through the existing structure within their units and departments.

Only the highest earned hour bar will be awarded. For those departments that track both "hospital" hours as well as "Service to Veterans" hours, these hours would fall under "Service to Veterans".