

American Legion Auxiliary Department Of  
West Virginia  
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation  
Program Action Plan 2018-2019  
Carla Wilfong, Chairman

What is this Program and why do we have it?

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of Veterans, Military, and their Families.

As a Member of the American Legion Auxiliary, what can we do?

1. Provide opportunities for Auxiliary members to serve Veterans and their families as a volunteer at the VA health care facilities.

Members:

Become regular VAVS Volunteers

Invite others to become a VAVS Volunteer with you.

Enter all your VAVS hours into the VAVS tracking systems or fill our VAVS donation papers, available at the Volunteer office.

VAVS Representative and Deputies:

Work with VAVS directors to identify service projects suitable for Junior members, friends, and adults with time for occasional service only.

Educate units and community partners about volunteer opportunities available at VA Medical Centers, State Veteran Homes, Fisher Houses, and other VA Health care locations.

Share member volunteer concerns and suggestions with ALA National VAVS Representatives.

2. If there isn't a VA Hospital close to your community there are several ways you can serve the Veterans in your area. These hours will count toward your Service to Veterans Pin and Hour Bars.

**SERVICE TO VETERANS**

This recognizes volunteers who provide service to Veterans, Service Members, and

to their Families outside a VAMC. Volunteers conduct projects and work for Military/Veterans and/or their Families from their homes and in their Communities. Service to Veterans Volunteers maintain their own record/keeping and dollars spent.

The pin has been designed to reflect the work of those who volunteer in their communities and at home for Veterans. The Hour bar, which attaches to the pin, are also available to ear.

#### Suggestions: Members

Sew quilts for the Quilts of Valor Foundation. Also Veterans in the VA Hospital and Nursing Homes appreciate quilts and afghans.

Help a Veteran to use the Internet. There are many that do not know how to.

Supply postage for local Veterans in rest homes or assisted living facilities. There are many that still like to write a letter and receive one.

Help with transportation for Veterans for their essential errands. The hours do not count for related Veterans.

Find out what is needed and Volunteer to help in any way you can.

REPORT your Service hours to your Unit VA&R Chairman. This way they can report it to your State Chairman.

#### Suggestions: for Unit

Become a catalyst to find needs and encourage members to help Veterans in their Community.

Contact members and those who occasionally attend meetings and events, invite them to participate for specific limited duration projects that would help area Veterans.

Compile and record hours provided by your members.

Work with your PR Chairman to tell the Community what work your Unit members are doing for our Veterans.

3. Work with the Local American Legion Post Service Officer to assist Veterans with accessing VA Benefits.
4. Assist in activities for the Homeless Veterans.

#### Suggestions for Members and Units:

Crochet hats, scarves, or mittens to be distributed to the Homeless Veterans. Participate in the VA Project CHALENG organized by the VA Health care system nearest to you. {Project CHALENG for Veterans enhances the care for the Homeless Veterans provided by your local VA and surrounding Community Service Agencies.}

Raise funds for Local American Legion Posts to help Veterans and their Families through Family Support Network for Veterans at risk of losing their housing or homeless Veterans going into permanent housing.

Host or Volunteer at Homeless Veterans Stand Downs events where Veterans receive free food and services. Such as hair cuts and medical exams. Also they can be job fairs for the Veterans.

You can purchase cleaning supplies for the Veterans using Emergency shelters or going into permanent housing projects. You can also assemble hygiene kits and Buddy Baskets.

Compile "Blessing Bags" to be given to the local Police department or other organizations that deal with the homeless Veterans population.

Create a "Tree of Warmth" by collecting hats, scarves, and mittens and attaching them to a tree in a location the homeless frequent. Include sign "Free if Needed" or "Please take if Needed."

#### 5. Support Rehabilitation and Healing of Veterans through arts, crafts, and hobbies.

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is the national annual competition and Festival that recognizes the progress and recovery made through recreation therapy and raises Visibility of this creativity achievements of our nations Veterans after disease, disability, or life crisis.

#### Suggestions Members and Units:

Obtain and become familiar with the ALA Guide for Volunteers.

Donate to the Creative Arts Festival.

Donate Supplies to help supplement visual Veteran artists needs for projects.

Contact local VA Hospital and Nursing Homes for a list of items needed.

Donate through Department Funds that help local Veterans attend state, national wheel chair games, Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Para Olympics and etc.

#### 6. Help to organize a job fair for Veterans and their Families, whether in your community

or in your Post.

7. Assist Support Care givers of Veterans.

Suggestions for Members and Unit:

Familiarize yourself with the service of the VA care give support program.  
Familiarize yourself with the Military and Veteran Care giver Peer Support Network.  
Become a veteran care giver peep support trainer and volunteer.  
Become a Legacy Corps AmeriCorps member if the Legacy Corps project is offered in a state or locality near you.  
Volunteer as a VA Voluntary service volunteer support care giver if the VA health care system closest to your offers such volunteer opportunity.

Familiarize your unit and community with the services of the VA care giver support program  
Invite the VA care giver support coordinator in the VA healthcare system closest to you to make a presentation to your unit, district, or community-wide meeting.

VA&R Reporting

Mid Year Reports

Mid year reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each department VA&R chairman in required to submit a narrative report by January 5, 2018, to the division VA&R chairman, plus copy the national VA&R chairman.