



2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Program Action Plan Homeless Women Veterans

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What is this program and why do have it? The Homeless Women Veterans Program provides assistance in the form of grants to homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless women veterans and their families. Keep Auxiliary Units and the American Legion /family members informed of the needs of all homeless or at-risk of being homeless veterans and their families.

What can you do?

- **Assist in activities that help homeless or at-risk women veterans.**

Ideas:

Members and Units

- Give a helping hand to the Legion's homeless veteran coordinator in your department and offer to assist that coordinator in responding to requests for assistance from homeless or at-risk women veterans or homeless veteran service providers.
- Crochet hats, scarves or mittens to be distributed to homeless or at-risk women veterans.
- Use information provided by your department chairman to contact the homeless veteran coordinator at the VA health care system nearest you to explore what the unit or you can do to help homeless women veterans in your community.
- Participate in the VA Project CHALENG organized by the VA health care system nearest to you. (Project CHALENG for Veterans enhances the care for homeless veterans provided by your local VA and its surrounding community service agencies.)
- Contact your local post chairman and offer your assistance if requests for help come through the Legion's Family Support Network (FSN).
- Raise funds for local American Legion posts/units to help women veterans and their families through the Family Support Network for veterans at risk of losing their housing or homeless veterans transitioning to permanent housing.
- Make payments of overdue rent, utility payments or deposits and security deposits.
- Host a stand down for Women Veterans

- Contact homeless veteran emergency shelters, transitional housing projects and permanent housing projects in your community and identify the organization's volunteer and in-kind contribution needs, including:
 - Meal preparation and serving
 - Clothes collection and distribution
 - Assembly and delivery of hygiene kits, buddy baskets and purchasing or securing household items or furniture
- Reach out to specific homeless women veterans, such as residents of projects mentioned above to provide her practical, social and moral support.
- Compile “Blessing Bags” to be given to local police department or other organizations that deal with the homeless women veterans population.
- Create a “Tree of Warmth” by collecting scarves, mittens, hats and attaching them to a tree in a location the homeless frequent. Include a sign that says “Please Take if Needed,” “Free if Needed” or something similar.
- Develop a fund raising plan. These funds can be used for emergency housing, supporting local shelters, supplying veterans with basic needs. Contact local businesses, churches and civic groups for item and monetary donations. Ask to receive a portion of the proceeds raised at a community event. Involve media to ensure donors are recognized for their support of America’s veterans.
- Support the Department Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund

Department

- Educate Unit members about homeless women veterans.
- Identify methods of helping homeless women veterans in local communities by identifying VA homeless coordinators, state VA coordinators or attending Homeless Roundtables.
- Identify The American Legion’s homeless veterans’ coordinator in your department.
- Contact the homeless veteran coordinator at the VA health care system nearest you to explore what the unit or you can do to help homeless women veterans in your community.
- Develop a Grant Application with guidelines.
- Encourage Units to financially support the Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund
- Inform all Veteran Benefit Representatives of the Homeless Women Veterans Grant Fund and Guidelines
- Continue the “Making Connections Women to Women” reference manual.
- Contact the homeless women veteran at the VA Health Care Systems to explore what the Unit or individual member can do to help homeless women veterans. Coordinate and encourage participation in the following programs: VA Project CHALENG (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups) for Veterans, which enhances the care for homeless veterans, provided by the local VA and its surrounding community service agencies www.va.gov/homeless/chaleng.asp.
- Promote Units to host Stand Downs for Women Veterans.
- Process grant requests and submit to committee for approval/denial

Homeless Women Veterans Program Reporting

Mid Year Reports

Each Unit is to submit a mid-year narrative report to the Department Homeless Women Veterans Chairman by **December 15, 2016**. Each department Homeless Women Veterans chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **January 5, 2017**, to the division VA&R chairman, plus copy the national VA&R chairman.

Year End Reports*

Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department. It is requested that these reports are accompanied by photos of select unit projects. Members and Units should follow your department's protocol and deadlines. **Each unit** is to submit a narrative report to the Department Homeless Women Veteran chairman by **May 1, 2017**. Each Department chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **May 15, 2017**, to the division VA&R chairman, plus copy the national VA&R chairman. Members and units should follow your department's protocol and deadlines.

As part of the narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How did the units participate in the caregiver support program?
- Describe how members earned the Service to Veterans hours.
- What assistance did units give at a stand down in your department? What did units learn about hosting a stand down? What went well; what could they do differently?

Unit Award: Best Overall Homeless Women Veteran Program Award

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: One unit per department

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in the program Plan.
- Must demonstrate how working the mission of the VA&R Homeless Women Veterans made a difference in the lives of homeless or at-risk women veterans
- The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
- Include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc.
- Due to Department Homeless Women Veterans Chairman by May 15, 2017.

Department Award: Department VA&R Program Award

Type of award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One department chairman per division (5 awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this Plan.
- Awarded to a department chairman in each division who conducted the best overall promotion of the VA&R program.
- The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
- Include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc.
- All entries sent by the department chairman to their national division chairman must be postmarked by June 1, 2017 or emailed by 5pm EDT June 1, 2017. (see addresses located at the front of this program Plan for specific division contact information)

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. Homeless Veterans Coalition: www.nchv.org
2. How To Sheet: How to raise awareness in your communities about the ever-increasing number of homeless veterans. www.ALAforVeterans.org
- 3.. Other How To Sheets can be found at ALAforVeterans.org.
4. Quilts of Valor - www.qovf.org
5. VA Homeless Programs –www.va.gov/homeless/index.asp
6. HUD Homeless Assistance Programs – www.onecpd.info/homelessness-assistance/
7. On-Call: Handbook for Homeless Veterans and Service Providers
www.legion.org/homelessveterans/handbook
8. The American Legion Family Support Network: www.legion.org/familysupport



American Legion Auxiliary 2016-2017 National Award Cover Sheet

This cover sheet should be attached to each narrative submitted for a national award. Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible.

Award certificates will be completed using the information given on this sheet, so please write carefully. All awards will be mailed to the Department office after National Convention. Department Presidents may wish to recognize award recipients by presenting them at a Department function.

Name of the award you are applying for: _____

Complete the following if you are applying for a Department award:

Name of Department: _____ Name of Department Chairman: _____

Chairman's phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Chairman's email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a National Committee sponsoring award:

Type of Award: ___ Department ___ Unit ___ Member

are applying for a unit award. Be sure to give the complete name of

your unit. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Unit President/Chairman (circle one) name: _____

Phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a member award. Be sure to give the complete name of the member. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Member Name: _____ ALA member ID# _____

Nominating Member (if different from above): _____

Nominator's Phone number: (____) _____

Nominator's Email address _____

Please see your committee Program Action Plan to determine where to send the form