



Hospital Program

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VFW Auxiliary members have been volunteering in hospitals and medical facilities since the organization's inception in 1914. The Hospital Program was one of the first nationally adopted for the organization. Hospital volunteers have been putting smiles on veteran's faces for well over a hundred years. This program provides a meaningful way for volunteers to give back to those who have given so much for all of us. The acts of kindness and good deeds shown to others make a positive and lasting impact on many lives.

In today's busy world, some may have only a few hours to devote, while others have ample time to spare. In either case, all volunteers' efforts make a difference. Recent events have changed our Hospital Program in many ways, so we must get creative to complete the work. Let's make volunteerism an actual group event again because we can do so much more by **Banding Together for Our Veterans**.

Where can we serve? Members, non-members, and youth can volunteer in many different types of facilities under this program. Local hospitals, Veterans' homes, Nursing homes, Domiciliaries both VA and non-VA medical facilities and clinics.

Who can serve? Members, non-members, Youth and Families

What can we do? Volunteer opportunities are based on the facility. Some facilities will have a volunteer program in place with specific jobs, events and needs. They will have opportunities to suit different ages and abilities. Follow guidelines of the facility, and ask how you can assist them.

What can we earn? Members can earn Hospital Volunteer Service Pins from National for their hours. Chairmen should track total hours (both VA and non-VA) and submit an application for pins. More information along with forms can be obtained from the Department Chairman or at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Members can also be named an Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in their Program Division. Applications are available from the Department Chairman. Non-members can also earn a one-time volunteer pin for 100 hours.

Join the Challenge to Find Creative Ways to Serve Veterans – While our veterans have come to enjoy special days like Christmas and Valentine's Day for Veterans, shake it up and celebrate the little-known special days for the year. With this innovative way to entertain our hospitalized or long-term care patients, they are sure to have some good times between the traditional holidays. Some examples are: March 4 is National Hug a G. I. Day, June 2 is national Doughnut Day, July 7 is World Chocolate Day. Always be a month ahead on the special days you want to celebrate, and contact the facility to confirm their current protocol. Don't forget about the staff and doctors in all your new celebration plans. A great link for you to start planning: calendar.com/united-states/observances-2023

Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support – New volunteers are needed everyday across the country. Volunteers offset millions of dollars in expenses in health care. A few tips for recruiting and keeping a volunteer: Monthly sign up sheet for regular events at your meeting, emails and phone calls for special events, public

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recognition for current volunteers. Find out how each person best communicates, whether by phone, email, Facebook or texting. If someone says “No” to the first invitation, be sure to ask again!

Valentine’s for Veterans–Share the love we have for our veterans and service members this Valentine’s Day by sending a store-bought or handmade valentine, hosting a party, recognition event, or dinner.

RECRUITING AND ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS – Recruiting both member and non-member community volunteers and engaging them in the work of the Hospital Program is integral to its success. In most medical facilities, an extra hand can help lighten the load for staff and is greatly appreciated. Hospitals and nursing homes are in almost every community and often include veteran residents who do not have spouses or close relatives to assist them.

HONORS ESCORT – This program is an opportunity to honor each veteran in a respectful and open manner and provides an opportunity for a veteran’s family and friends, other veterans, and medical facility staff to participate in a display of high regard and reverence for the individual at the time of death.

WOMENS VETERANS HEALTH CARE – Women have served our nation for generations and are the fastest growing group within the veteran population. Comprehensive health services are available and tailored to the unique needs of women veterans. Learn about the resources and health care service available and help them receive benefits and services they deserve.

NATIONAL AWARDS FOR MEMBERS - Entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. The Department Chairman must receive completed entry form by March 31, 2024

1. Citation to one member in each of the 10 Program Divisions who recruits the most Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities) volunteers from July 2023 – March 31, 2024
2. Hospital Volunteer Recruiter for the Year plaque awarded to one member in the nation who recruits the most Hospital volunteers (VA and non-VA) from July 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.
3. Citation to the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in each of the 10 Program Divisions.

NATIONAL AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES – Entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. The Department Chairman must receive completed entry form by March 31, 2024.

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays. Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.
2. Citation and \$25.00 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event recognizing veterans on non-traditional holidays. Citations will be mailed direct to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN AWARDS

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Hospital Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays at any Hospital (VA or non-VA facilities).
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on criteria listed in the National Program Guide. Winners will be announced at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville KY

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES – Refer to Program Guidebook, Page 5

“Light The Flame Of Hope For Our Veterans,” While “Banding Together For Our Veterans”