



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, but there is more to the Program; it is about the veteran. This year we are going back to the basics, we are going to be their little ray of sunshine. We know what the veteran has done for us, now it is our turn to do for the veteran.

We are the ones who bridge the gap between the family and the veterans. We share of ourselves. Imagine going into their room with a smile and a cheerful "Hello". Before long, you will see a grin on their face. Not everyone can visit a veteran center, but you can participate by making things and sending them to the health facility. Get in touch with your activity director to find out what is needed.

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, Domicilairies 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. Be sure you 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 in MALTA Member 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.

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 volunteers: Monthly sign up sheet for regular events at your meeting, emails and phone calls for special events, and public 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!

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.

For more information about being a volunteer, how to handle a Department Hospital Fund and other topics, download the Hospital Program Guide and VAVS Guide in MALTA Member Resources.

Valentines for Veterans – Share the love we have for our veterans and service members this Valentine’s Day by sending a store-bought or handmade valentines, hosting a party, recognition event or dinner in their honor. Fellow members, individuals and youth groups in your community can use their creativity to show compassion for our veterans and service members.

HONORS ESCORT – This program is an opportunity to honor each veteran in a respectful and open manner. It 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 services 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, 2025.

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 2024 – March 31, 2025. Winners will be announced and citations presented at the 2025 National Convention in Columbus, Ohio.
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 facilities) from July 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025. Winner will be announced and plaque presented at the 2025 National Convention in Columbus, Ohio.
3. Citation to the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in each of the 10 Program Divisions. Winners will be announced and citations presented at the 2025 National Convention in Columbus, Ohio.

NATIONAL AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES – Entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. The Department Chairman must receive completed entry form by March 31, 2025.

1. Most creative ways to interact with and to provide happiness to veteran patients.
 - a. Citation and \$25.00 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that were the most creative in ways to interact with and to provide happiness to veteran patients.

VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to their Department Chairman by March 31, 2025 for judging. Department Hospital Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department winning entry form to the National Hospital Ambassador by April 30, 2025.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited in to the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 National Convention.

DEPARTMENT AWARD

1. Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of Year

A Department Award will be presented at the June Convention 2025 for an Outstanding VFW Auxiliary member who serves as a Hospital Volunteer in any medical facility within the Department of New York. The volunteer must serve from July 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025. VAVS Representatives and Deputies are eligible to be considered as an Outstanding Hospital Volunteer. Volunteer hours for VA and non-VA facilities may be combined for award purposes. Applications must be completed and received by the Department Hospital Chairman no later than **April 1, 2025**. Contact the Department Hospital Chairman to obtain an application.