

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) program is committed to promoting, supporting, and providing services that enhance the lives of veterans and their families. It, along with the other of the Four Pillars, is among the premier programs of our organization.

Ways by which this commitment can be met are numerous and are not limited to activities within VA Medical Centers. Acts of service directed toward veterans and their families in the community setting are included under VA&R.

Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Volunteering at VA facilities
- Providing assistance to veterans in the community
- Conducting *Buddy Checks*
- Promoting awareness of the *Be the One* suicide prevention mission
- Donating hygiene, leisure, and comfort items to VA facilities according to their “wish lists”. Be aware of what each VA Medical Center will accept, as it varies.
- Raising awareness about homeless veterans, many of whom have children.
- Participating in *Christmas Gift Shop* and *Christmas wrap* events.
- Support healing through the arts; donate to support the *National Veterans Creative Arts Festival*
- Providing support to caregivers of veterans, family members, and survivors
- Collaborating with organizations that support our mission, such as *Wreaths Across America*, *Honor Flight, Inc.*, and the *Military and Veteran Caregiver Network*.
- Participating in a stand down event
- Sending cards to hospitalized and homebound veterans for holidays
- Contributing to *National Salute to Veterans Week* events

The Department VA&R program has a special project each year. This year’s project concerns donations to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. You can help veterans with healing through arts and also gain recognition for the Department for its support of the program. Make your donation by December 10, 2026 to the Department of Virginia with NVCAF in the memo line.

Reminders:

Members can assist veterans without ever leaving their own homes. Crocheting, knitting, and sewing items for veterans are important contributions. Donations of items should always be handled through the VAMC Center for Development and Community Engagement (CDCE) office, formerly known as the Voluntary Service office, accompanied by a letter from the unit listing the donated items. The letter is important for their record-keeping to demonstrate that we as an organization are active participants in supporting hospitalized veterans. These letters provide important information at VA annual reviews.

Other

Join the ALA VA&R Facebook group and check the National ALA website frequently for updates.

For additional information, download *Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers* available at <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Guides/Volunteer-Guide> and visit <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/VAR/Get-Involved-VAR>

Excerpted from the ALA Unit Guide (2024, pp.89-90), the ALA National Website <https://www.legion-aux.org/> and links provided above.