

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES



VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program Guide

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS of the UNITED STATES AUXILIARY HOSPITAL PROGRAM GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

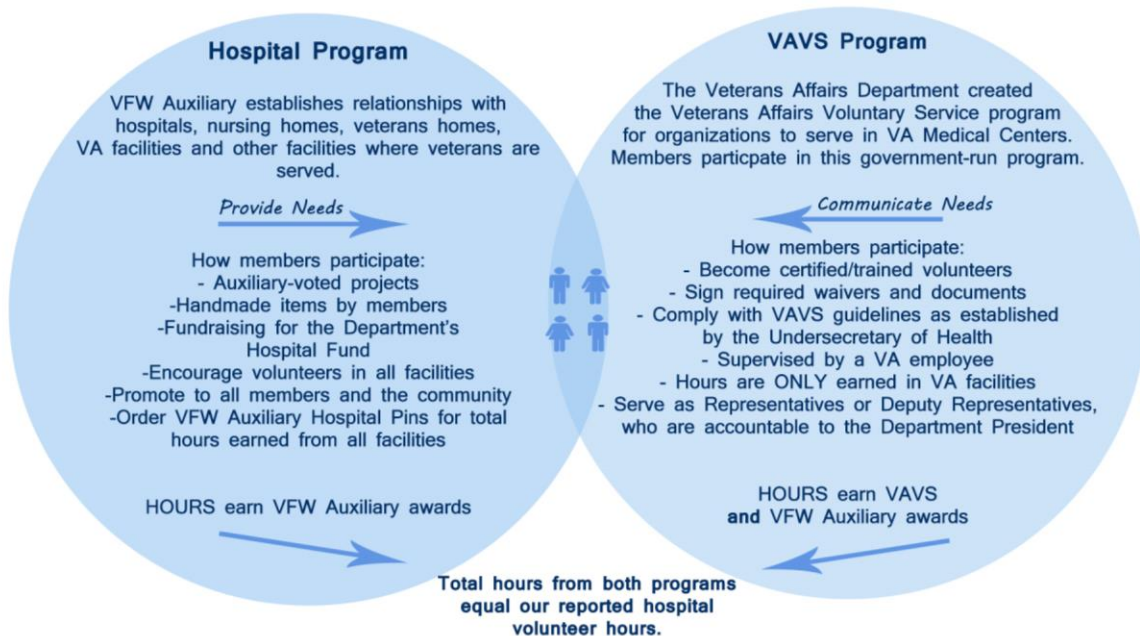
Members of the VFW Auxiliary have been volunteering in hospitals nationwide since World War I. They rolled bandages, served meals and assisted in any way possible. Today, they continue to do that and more in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice programs, veterans' homes and other similar facilities.

VAVS vs. Hospital What's the difference?

This guide serves to assist Department Presidents, Department Chairmen and Auxiliary Chairmen in understanding the scope and responsibilities of the Hospital Program. The second portion of this guide will address the organization's participation in the Veterans Health Administration's Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program.

The VFW Auxiliary participates in the government-run program Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service. Along with the VFW, the VFW Auxiliary is a charter member of this VHA program, which was established in 1946. Members who choose to become a part of the VAVS Program should refer to the *VHA Handbook* and the *VFW Auxiliary VAVS Participation Guide* starting on Page 13.

The Hospital Program encompasses volunteering, fundraising and Auxiliary-voted projects that are not a part of the VAVS program. Though some of these volunteers, funds and projects may involve VA Medical Centers, facilities or patients, these activities are not appointed by or tracked within the VAVS system.



HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

Any member in good standing can volunteer at a facility in the name of the VFW Auxiliary if that member has been approved by the Auxiliary to do so. Members can volunteer alone or with a group of members and non-members.

Sponsored Volunteers: Non-members of the VFW Auxiliary who wish to serve under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision can do so as volunteers at non-VA facilities. They must be interviewed and screened in the same manner as VFW Auxiliary members. Upon acceptance, sponsored volunteers are governed by the same ethics and rules prescribed for members. Sponsored volunteers are not eligible for VFW Auxiliary Hospital service pins, but shall receive a one-time recognition upon completion of 100 hours of service with a Sponsored Hospital Pin. Local recognition should also be given to sponsored volunteers.

QUALIFICATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND ORIENTATION

A volunteer must:

- **Have a willingness to accept hospital standards, orientation, conduct and supervision.**
- **Possess a clean and neat appearance.**
- **Be physically able to perform assigned tasks.**
- **Have a sense of responsibility, dependability and stability on the job.**
- **Demonstrate a friendly, business-like approach to volunteer work, with honest sentiment and not sentimentality, maintaining the veteran's dignity and pride.**

All assignments of volunteers will vary greatly depending on the needs of the facility and the program that the facility has developed. Supervisors try to place volunteers in situations which permit them to best utilize their vocational training, skills, interests and physical capabilities.

Every facility will have its own set of qualifications and rules that members should fully understand and comply.

Special note on privacy:

Confidentiality of all information the volunteer may hear, read or see is imperative; a volunteer must never discuss any confidential information. In accordance with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996), a volunteer must comply with the total protection of a patient's medical privacy.

WORKING WITH FACILITIES

Many hospitals, medical buildings, nursing homes, hospice programs and veterans' homes have volunteer programs in place. Members should do their best to adhere to the guidelines given to them.

Before hosting an event at or with a facility, the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman, should acquire permission from the facility. Be sure to ask what is and what is not allowed. There are some facilities that do not allow home-baked goods due to dietary restrictions. The best thing to do is to ask the facility's staff what is needed.

All projects done by a VFW Auxiliary should be voted on at a regular meeting and recorded in the minutes. Documentation should be kept on funds expended, the number of volunteers and the hours volunteered.

NOTE: No separate bank account should be kept for hospital funds in a volunteer's name. See the National Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 813C.

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER ATTIRE

A facility may have a mandated "official uniform". It is the responsibility of the volunteer to be clean and neat; wearing comfortable shoes is suggested.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

All members should help to recruit new volunteers. Successful recruiting is key to a successful program.

Recruiting tips:

- Know the hospital program and be able to answer questions about the VFW Auxiliary.
- Know the policies and needs of your facility.
- Be prepared to describe various assignments and what is expected. Explain that volunteers are trained and supervised by facility personnel.
- Attend VFW Auxiliary meetings at all levels and engage in activities beyond our organization to seek out new volunteers.
- Work with your facility to create incentives for a wide variety of volunteers.
- Submitting stories and press releases to local media highlighting an outstanding volunteer or an interesting hospital/facility project can gain public attention and promote recruitment.
- Share the benefits of volunteering: gaining work experience, learning new skills, meeting new people and most importantly, giving something back.

DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL PROGRAM

Department Officers should meet at the beginning of the year to discuss and formulate plans for the Hospital Program and to prepare an estimated budget for the Department Treasurer to use in preparing the tentative budget. Financial needs should be discussed with the Hospital/Facility Representatives or VAVS Representative. Their views should be presented at the budget meeting by the Department Hospital Chairman. Funds raised and distributed for Department Hospital Funds are reported under the Hospital Program.

In drawing up the budget, consideration should be given to pro-rata distribution of funds based on the needs of individual facilities. Funding the Hospital Program should not be the sole responsibility of the nearest Auxiliaries. The cost should be shared by the entire Department. Local VFW Auxiliaries should donate to the Department Hospital Fund to assure continued strong support. All donations and funds raised for hospital work should be earmarked "Hospital Projects." **Auxiliaries should not make checks payable directly to VAVS, Hospital Representatives or Medical Facilities.**

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT DUTIES

Department Presidents must give the hospital program continuing support and encouragement. Promoting the hospital program by discussing it during visits to Districts and Auxiliaries will increase interest and volunteerism. Duties and responsibilities also include encouraging volunteerism in all hospitals and facilities, and instructing VAVS Representatives to communicate the needs of VA facilities to the Department Hospital Chairman and local Auxiliaries.

DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN DUTIES

The Department Hospital Chairman is appointed by the Department President and is responsible for coordinating all VFW Auxiliary hospital work. His/her duties and responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that funding and volunteer hours are well spent in service to hospital patients.
- Keep the Auxiliaries within his/her Department informed by sending promotional bulletins.
- Confirm that Department and local Auxiliaries are providing for the needs of VA facilities by communicating with the VAVS Representatives.
- Provide information and updates from National Headquarters to the VAVS Representatives, Hospital Representatives, and local Auxiliary Hospital Chairmen.

NATIONAL HOSPITAL AMBASSADOR DUTIES

The National Hospital Ambassador is appointed by the National President and is tasked with promoting and guiding the Hospital Program. The Hospital Ambassador provides support to every Department Hospital Chairman, offering ideas and encouragement to further the success of the Hospital Program.

- Send out promotional material.
- Notify Department President should the Department Hospital be remiss in completing the duties assigned.
- Communicate with the VFW Auxiliary National VAVS Representative (an employee at National Headquarters) and the Certifying Official. The Certifying Official will also be a National Headquarters employee and will certify all VAVS Representatives, Deputies, and Associate Representatives at VA Medical Centers.
- Inform the Department Hospital Chairman of requirements for year-end reporting.

FACILITY REPRESENTATIVE (MILITARY HOSPITAL/VETERANS NURSING HOMES)

The Facility Representative serves in much the same capacity as the VAVS Representative, except at non-VA facilities such as military hospitals and veterans nursing homes. The Representative is appointed by the Department President for an indefinite period, but not certified by the National Certifying Official. Those certifications are only for VAVS Representatives, Deputies and Associates.

- Recruit, interview and screen new volunteers before recommending them to the facility.
- Report facility needs to the Department (monetary and material items).
- Keep a permanent record of each volunteer's hours. This is necessary for award purposes.
- Inform the Department Hospital Chairman about volunteer needs.
- Serve as liaison between the VFW Auxiliary and the non-VA facilities.
- Encourage and assist our organization in planning special events at the facility.
- Follow the rules and regulations as set by the facility and adhere to the rules in the "Qualifications, Assignments and Orientation" section of the Hospital Handbook.
- Follow up with volunteers who have become inactive, find out why they are not serving and attempt to rectify the problem so they will return to volunteering.

AUXILIARY HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN

The Auxiliary Hospital Chairman is appointed by the Auxiliary President.

- Assure support for the Hospital Program by communicating to VFW Auxiliary members the importance of hospital work.
- Recruit hospital volunteers.
- Raise funds for hospital needs and programs.
- Report needed items for the hospital and work with members in making those items.
- Plan activities/projects for VA and non-VA facilities to be approved by the VFW Auxiliary.
- Work closely with the VAVS Representative or other facility Representative and report any pertinent information to them.
- Work closely with any non-VA facility and report any pertinent information to your VFW Auxiliary.
- Order service pins for ALL VFW Auxiliary volunteers in both VA and non-VA facilities, found on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org, or by contacting VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.
- Request the number of members working and the number of hours worked from the VAVS Representative in order to complete an annual report to reflect information required on the Department Report Form.
- Request the number of members and hours worked from the Supervisor of Volunteers at non-VA medical facilities.

REPORTING HOSPITAL WORK

VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman may be required to complete the hospital report forms as directed by the Department Hospital Chairman.

- 1) **VA MEDICAL CENTERS:** The local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman should obtain from the VAVS Representative the information concerning the number of members from his/her VFW Auxiliary who volunteer at the VA Medical Center and the total number of hours volunteered. This information may be used for reporting purposes. Credit for members volunteering at a VA Medical Center located in another state shall be given to the VFW Auxiliary and Department where the volunteer holds membership.

- 2) **NON-VA FACILITIES:** The local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman should obtain from the Hospital Representative the information concerning the number of members from his/her VFW Auxiliary who volunteer at local non-VA facilities and the total number of hours volunteered. This information may be used for reporting purposes.

AN INDIVIDUAL WHO VOLUNTEERS IS COUNTED AS ONE VOLUNTEER FOR REPORTING PURPOSES, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES HE/SHE VOLUNTEERS.

NOTE: Members may only represent one organization at a time per facility.

HOSPITAL SERVICE PINS AND RECOGNITION AWARDS

The local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman orders pins for ALL members.

Pins bearing the VFW Auxiliary emblem and designating the number of hours a volunteer has devoted to hospital work will be awarded to members meeting the eligibility requirements noted below. Pins earned in all non-VA facilities must be ordered by the local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman. Forms for ordering pins and recognition awards are available on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org or by contacting the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: Program Awards Administrator.

Volunteer hours at a VA and non-VA facility may be combined for award purposes.

EXAMPLE: Member Linda is a Regularly Scheduled Volunteer in a VA facility, where he/she volunteers 75 hours. He/she then volunteers at a non-VA hospital with another 75 hours. He/she may combine those hours for the 150 Hour VFW Auxiliary VFW Pin in addition to any awards offered by the VAVS program.

Eligibility:

A VFW Auxiliary member in good standing who has volunteered a minimum of 150 hours under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship in any hospital is eligible to receive a pin as a gift of the VFW Auxiliary National Organization. ONLY the pin or bar indicating the highest number of accumulated hours, per request will be awarded and should be worn. Non-members serving under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship are not eligible for this pin. There is a special "Sponsored Hospital Volunteer Award" available for these volunteers.

Pins are available for volunteers who have served:

- 150 hours**
- 300 hours**
- 500 hours**
- 1,000 hours**
- 1,500 hours**
- 2,000 hours**
- 2,500 hours**
- 3,000 hours**
- 4,000 hours**

A 5,000 hour pin is triangular

Pins between 6,000 and 9,000 hours are triangular with an additional pearl for each 1,000 earned. A bar guard signifying 10,000 hours may be attached to this pin, and this/hereafter, bar guards are available for each additional 1,000 hours.

If pins are to be presented on some special occasion, be sure to allow enough time for the request to be processed and the pins shipped.

Lost hospital service pins may be replaced. Requests for replacement pins must go directly to the National Headquarters, ATTN: Program Awards Administrator. Include name, address, and Auxiliary Number and Membership ID Number of the member desiring replacement. DO NOT send the request to the National Ambassador.

Allow four weeks for delivery of pins from the date the request is made. DO NOT wait until the end of the year to request these pins. Request them as they are earned.

OUTSTANDING HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

VFW Auxiliary members who volunteer in both VA and non-VA facilities are eligible to be nominated as an Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in their Membership Group. For details on this award, see your current Department Hospital Chairman.

SPONSORED HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER /STUDENT VOLUNTEER AWARD

The sponsored hospital volunteer/student volunteer, who volunteers a minimum of 100 hours under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship in any facility is eligible to receive a special award from the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. The award must be requested through the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman. Application forms are available on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org or by contacting VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: Program Awards Administrator. Only one award may be ordered for each sponsored volunteer, per lifetime.

RECRUITER AWARDS FOR VFW AUXILIARY MEMBERS AND STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

A charm from the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters will be awarded to each member recruiting one or more volunteers between June 1 and May 15. These awards are available for VFW Auxiliary members and Student Volunteers. Application forms are available on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org or by contacting the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: Program Awards Administrator.