

Hospital/VAVS Program

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***To Care For Those “Who Shall Have Borne the Battle”
and For Their Families, Caregivers and Survivors. -VA Mission Statement 2023***

The first National Home, now the VA’s oldest hospital, was opened in Maine in 1866. They provided medical care and long-term housing for Civil War Veterans. These homes were initially to be room and board for disabled veterans. However, by the late 1920s, these homes were providing a level of care comparable to hospital care and in 1930; President Hoover created the Veterans Administration to consolidate all veteran services. **And we were there!** In 1928, the Hospital Program became the second National Program adopted by the VFW Auxiliary. We as hospital volunteers have spent over 100 years donating millions of hours offering smiles, compassion, aid, comfort, dollars, etc., to our veterans. The way we volunteer today is much different from our beginnings and in some areas we cannot actually enter facilities but by **“Banding Together for Our Veterans”** our Hospital Program will continue to offer hope and encouragement with compassionate care.

2023-2024 Hospital Program Goals

- *Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support**
- * Valentines for Veterans**
- *Women Veterans Health Care**
- * Honors Escort**

Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support

New volunteers are needed every day across our nation to step up and carry on the work that our older members started. California has nine (9) medical centers and over 60 outpatient clinics, CBOCs and ambulatory clinics spread out throughout our state. It is imperative that we get the word out about the need for new volunteers because the need is greater than ever. I have been a regular volunteer for over 16 years and the smiles I get from our veterans makes Tuesday one of the best days of my week! Be confident and share your positive experiences and your joy as working as a hospital volunteer. Your testimony is one of your best recruiting tools. Additionally, do not just share with your fellow members but with family, neighbors, friends, youth groups; reach out into your community to educate them about volunteering for our veterans.

Where can we serve?

Members, non-members and youth can volunteer in many types of facilities under this Program:

1. Local hospitals
2. Veterans homes

3. Nursing homes
4. Adult Day-Care Centers
5. Domiciliaries
6. Fisher Houses
7. Both VA and non-VA medical facilities and clinics

What can we do?

Volunteer opportunities are based on the facility where you are volunteering. Some facilities will have a regular volunteer program in place while others will offer special events and opportunities to participate in. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, not all facilities are open to volunteers and visitors yet so you will need to follow the guidelines given by the CDCE (volunteer services). Contact them regularly to see what they need. Below are a few great ideas:

Food Insecurity: Many veterans and their families today find it hard to spread their budgets to the end of the month. Many facilities have a food locker to assist in this need but many do not have the space to accommodate food storage so grocery store gift cards are really appreciated. The facility's social workers generally manage this program so check with the CDCE Chief for more information. **This would be a great auxiliary fundraiser!**

Compassionate Contact Corps: This is an exciting program that either is in place or planned to roll out at many VA facilities. Volunteers virtually visit with a veteran by phone or virtual communication platform such as Zoom, Skype, etc. **This program provides companionship and socialization for the veteran but the volunteer does not have to leave their home;** the visits last 15 to 60 minutes once or twice a week and the schedule is determined by caretaker/veterans needs and volunteer availability. Contact the CDCE Chief at your facility for more information.

Technology: Did you know that the VA has a YouTube Channel? Are you aware of the Clinical Video Telehealth (CTV) services that provide veterans with better self-management of their health conditions from their own homes? Become familiar with the technologies that the VA offers so you can answer questions that a veteran might have.

Recognition:

Members can earn Hospital Volunteer Service Pins from National Headquarters for their volunteer hours. The information on hours needed and the proper forms to use can be obtained from MALTA Member Resources. Hospital Chairmen should track the total hours (both VA and non-VA) and submit an application for the pins. Members can also be named "Outstanding Volunteer of the Year" in their Program Division. Non-members can also earn a one-time-only volunteer pin for 100 hours.

Department Hospital Pins are a "Thank You" given from our Department President, Diana Russell-Milton, to those hospital volunteers who have donated their time volunteering in VA Hospital, VA clinics, Fisher Houses as well as in other hospitals, clinics, nursing care homes, etc. Please order them and present them with gratitude for their volunteer time; presentation at an auxiliary meeting would be special. Non-members are also eligible to earn a hospital pin so do not forget

those who cook, bake, knit, crochet, etc. for our veterans. A request form must be filled out and should be mailed to:

Marlena Raffety, Hospital Co-Chairman
1711 E. Solar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93720
559-434-0713 (H) 559-960-8225©
miraffety@comcast.net

Valentines for Veterans

Every year all VA Medical Centers host “**National Salute to Veterans**” the week of February 14. This week gives us the opportunity to say thank you to our veterans. Share the love we have for this special group of men and women this Valentine’s Day by sending valentines, hosting a party at a CLC or Rehabilitation Center, recognition event or a dinner in their honor. Invite fellow members, individuals and community groups to participate in this annual event. Check with your CDCE Chief to find out what activities you might be able to participate in at the VA hospital. **BUT, how about Honoring Veterans on other holidays and special days as well:** Easter, Memorial Day, Flag Day, 4th of July, Military Branch Service Birthdays, National Donut Day-June 2, World Chocolate Day-July 7. Think out-side the box and have fun. Here is a link for you to start planning: calendar.com/united-states/observances-2003

Women Veterans Health Care

The VA is dedicated to meeting the health care needs of our nation’s women veterans, which is the fastest growing group of the veteran population. Comprehensive health services are available and tailored to the unique needs of women veterans. Check with your CDCE Chief for special events that are being planned and what you can do to help.

June 12 is Women Veterans Day: *She Serves, She Sacrificed, She Deserves.*

Honors Escort

The Honors Escort Program in VA facilities is part of the end-of-life protocol for veterans who pass away while in their care. The Honors Escort is an opportunity to honor each veteran in a respectful and open manner. It provides a way for a veteran’s family and friends, other veterans and facility staff to participate in a display of reverence to the veteran at the time of death. Check with your facility to find out if they have an Escort Program and how you can help. If no program exists, introduce the idea to them and be sure to include your VFW members.

Department of California Medical Insurance

This special assistance is available to all auxiliary members who find themselves in need of help with their hospital expenses not covered by their insurance company. You must have been a member for one (1) year to qualify and this assistance does not cover cancer because of our Cancer Grant program. **Out of your Hospital Quota of \$1.00 per member, \$.25 goes to fund this special assistance.** You can find the application on the vfeauxca.org website under Member login.

Awards for Members

1. Citations to one VFW Auxiliary member in each of the 10 Program Divisions who recruits the most Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities) volunteers from July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Entry form required available on MALTA Member Resources. Citations will be mailed directly to winners after National Convention.
2. "Hospital Volunteer Recruiter of the Year" plaque awarded to one Auxiliary member in the nation who recruits the most Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities) volunteers from July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Entry form required available in MALTA Member Resources. Plaque to be mailed directly to winner after National Convention.
3. Citation to the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in each of the 10 Program Divisions. Entry form required available on MALTA Member Resources. Citations to be mailed directly to winners after National Convention.

Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event that recognized veterans on non-traditional holiday.
2. Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Hospital Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.
The Department Hospital Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at info@vfwauxiliary.org a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.
3. Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the Four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event recognizing veterans on non-traditional holidays.
The Department Hospital Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Hospital Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging. Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

Awards for Department and Department Chairman

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 and non-VA facilities). Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky,
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page XX and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page XX. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

Department Legacy Awards

A Legacy Award will be awarded to one Outstanding Auxiliary Chairman for best Performance in the Hospital Program.



Application for Medical Assistance Grant

VFW AUXILIARY – DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

Complete and mail one copy directly to the Department President Diana Russell-Milton, c/o CA-Dept. Office, 9136 Elk Grove Blvd., Suite 101, Elk Grove, CA 95624.

AUXILIARY NAME _____ # _____ DISTRICT _____

NAME OF AUXILIARY MEMBER _____

Date joined auxiliary _____ Date current year's dues paid _____

Date previous year's dues paid _____ Marital Status _____

Does Member (or Spouse) have hospitalization insurance? _____

OR Medicare? _____

Name of Insurance Company _____

Name of Hospital and length of Hospital
Stay _____

Percentage of Hospital bills paid by insurance _____ (copy of hospital
showing what insurance does not pay)

Member has ____ has not ____ received a previous hospital grant (if so, give date)

Please advise (in detail) why you feel this Member needs assistance.

Approved by Auxiliary Treasurer

_____ Date _____

Address:

_____ Zip _____

(Approved assistance will be mailed and paid directly to the member at the address on record in MALTA).

PHYSICIAN'S STATEMENT

Name and location of Hospital (if hospitalized)

Date confined from _____ to _____

Diagnosis _____

Prognosis: _____

Signed:

Physician's Signature

Date

Physician's Address

.....

Application Granted [☐] Denied [☐] Date _____ Amount \$ _____

If Grant was denied, please explain reason for denial:
