

AUXILIARY OUTREACH EXPLAINED: Understanding & Getting Involved

We at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters often receive questions about Programs and reporting within one Program in particular: Auxiliary Outreach. We are hoping to provide all you need to know below, but if you do not see your question answered, please reach out to us at info@vfwauxiliary.org!

What is Auxiliary Outreach?

This Program involves the partnering of your Auxiliary with another organization in order to show Auxiliary presence locally while building and strengthening ties in your community. This Program is not for donations or individual volunteerism; it involves Auxiliary members working together alongside the organization with whom you voted to partner. Show your Auxiliary pride by wearing clothing or gear (ex: uniform shirt, hat, badge, etc.) that tells those in attendance who you are, and be prepared to answer any possible questions about the organization by prospective members and/or local media.



Why and How?

The point of partnership with another organization in your community is to build community ties while getting the VFW Auxiliary's name "out there" and making a positive difference in the world by helping others.

If an individual member of your Auxiliary has an idea for an outreach opportunity, they would not take it upon themselves to participate with a partnering organization, then report the hours with Auxiliary support after. Instead, they would bring up the idea at an Auxiliary meeting for discussion and a vote, then multiple members would work together with that partnering organization.

For example, Post and Auxiliary 5255 in Georgia, pictured above right, participated in Auxiliary

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Outreach earlier this year when they partnered with [Lawrenceville Cooperative Ministry, Inc.](#), which involved working together to stock the shelves at their food and personal care items co-op, which helps local people who are struggling with food insecurity and hunger. (The Post and Auxiliary also donated more than 850 cans and gave a monetary donation, neither of which fall under Outreach, but it is wonderful to be able to do and give more in addition to participating in the actual Outreach partnership!)

Another example is Auxiliary 9960 in North Carolina, pictured above left, which has chosen to partner with Emerald Isle Parrot Heads for the Breast Cancer Diva Walk planned for October, 2023; Auxiliary members will be handling registration and filling in doing "whatever they need" that day.

What Are Some Possible Outreach Ideas?

In addition to the above, here are three possibilities for Auxiliaries to consider:

1. Partner with a local community theatre to staff the "front of house" for a weekend. This may include manning the concessions stand, taking tickets, ushering or helping in the box office. You would be working under the theatre's volunteer coordinator or box office manager and may have to wear specific clothing or badges denoting your position (especially if an usher) but it is also important to show your Auxiliary pride, so ask if it would be best to wear uniform shirts, caps or other gear. You could also ask that VFW Auxiliary information be made available in the lobby; for example, if it is a youth production, ask whether Patriotic Art Contest brochures could be available to entering audience members.
2. Partner with a local soup kitchen to staff specific shifts as a group. Wear your Auxiliary shirts or hats to show unity and serve food on a special day like Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Pearl Harbor Day or Christmas Eve. This also does not have to be a one-time experience! You could serve on Saturday mornings for six weeks or every Tuesday for six months - whatever works best for your Auxiliary and the partnering organization! Bring information with you to share with those who are homeless or food insecure about VFW and Auxiliary Programs and benefits that may help them, especially if they are veterans or related to veterans. This includes Unmet Needs, Veterans & Family Support and the National Home.
3. Partner with the [March of Dimes](#) by being the people on standby to hand out water during the walk or to distribute items like diapers and bottles at a community baby shower. You can find dozens of volunteer opportunities on their website, linked above - scroll through to find ones near you! You may be required to wear March of Dimes Volunteer T-shirts, but it may be permissible to also wear your Auxiliary cap or badge, just ask!

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These are just a few of countless ideas and we at VFW Auxiliary Headquarters are open to more! If you have an Outreach idea you would like to share with another Auxiliary, even if your Auxiliary has not yet participated in an Outreach activity, let us know - it may have Auxiliary SWAP potential! Share online using the hashtags #vfwauxoutreach, #vfwauxiliary and #vfwauxSWAP to reach fellow members.

Where Can I Learn More About Auxiliary Outreach?

Start with the *2023-2024 National Program Book*, available behind MALTA login under Member Resources, then check out the [Programs Blogs](#) on our website!

2023-2024 National Auxiliary Outreach Ambassador Sandra Pinsonault (pictured right) recently shared her tips for a successful outreach and information regarding splitting hours with other Programs (which is not allowed) in her first blog post of the year, [available here](#).



If your Auxiliary has already participated in an Auxiliary Outreach program or event recently, we would love to see and share pictures! Email us at info@vfwauxiliary.org with the subject line Auxiliary Outreach.
