

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES™



VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program Guide

Includes the
VAVS Participation Guide

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS of the U.S. AUXILIARY

HOSPITAL PROGRAM GUIDE

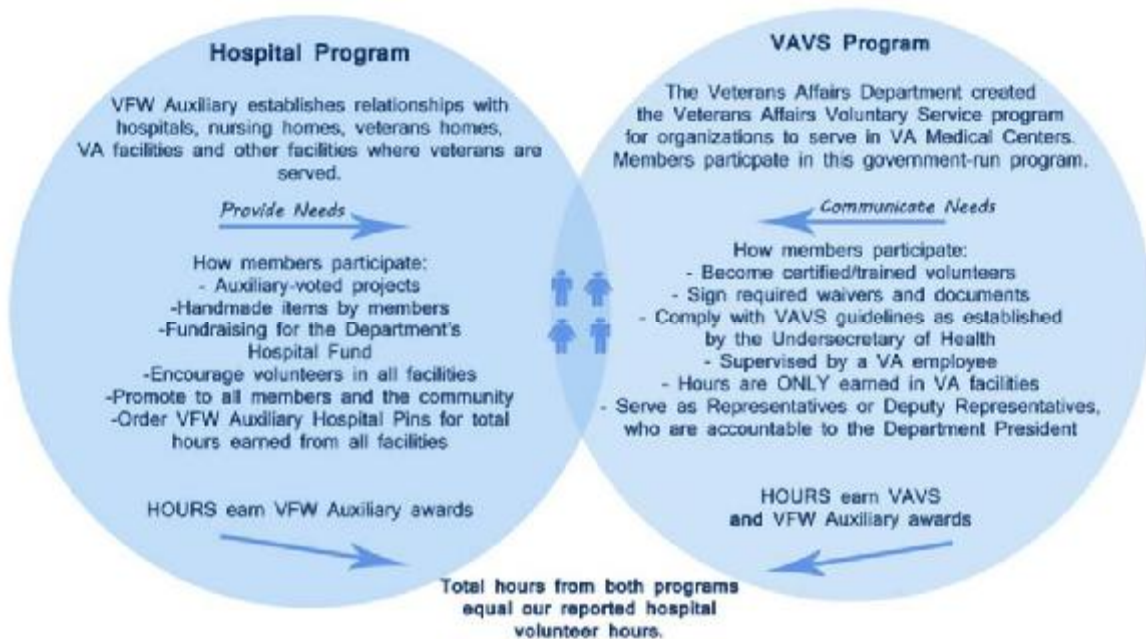
Members of the VFW Auxiliary have been volunteering in hospitals nationwide since World War I. They rolled bandages, served meals and assisted in any way possible. Today, they continue to do that and more in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice programs, veterans' homes and other similar facilities.

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 began 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 to the VFW/VFW Auxiliary who wish to serve under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision 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 and orientation, conduct and supervision.**
- **Cleanliness and neatness in appearance.**
- **Physically be able to perform assigned tasks.**
- **Sense of responsibility, dependability and stability on the job.**
- **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 make the best use of their vocational, hobby skills, interests and physical capabilities.

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

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 get permission from that facility. Be sure to ask what is and is not allowed for the patients. There are some facilities that do not allow home-baked goods due to dietary restrictions. The best thing to do is to ask that facility's volunteer coordinator what they need.

Special note on privacy:

Confidentiality of all information the volunteer may hear, read or see is extremely important; a volunteer must never discuss any confidential information. A volunteer must remember that he/she is in a medical atmosphere where sensitive and personal medical information is transmitted constantly. In accordance with the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996), a volunteer must comply with the total protection of a patient's medical privacy.

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 already have a mandated "official color/uniform". It is the responsibility of the volunteer to be clean and neat, wearing comfortable shoes is suggested.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

All members should help in recruiting new volunteers. Successful recruiting is an art in itself.

Tips for recruiting:

- Know the hospital program and be able to answer information regarding the VFW Auxiliary.
- Know your facility. Make certain that any information you give regarding your facility is accurate.
- Be prepared to describe various assignments and what is expected. Explain that volunteers are trained and supervised by facility personnel.
- VFW Auxiliary meetings at all levels and activities beyond our organization should seek out new areas for volunteer recruitment.
- Create incentives that will attract and interest different generational groups.
- Work with the facility to create incentives for volunteers.
- Publicity release about an outstanding volunteer or an interesting hospital/facility project can aid in getting that public attention which can promote recruitment.
- A good reason to volunteer is to gain work experience, learn new skills, meet new people and most importantly to give 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 prepare an estimated budget to be presented to the Department Treasurer for his/her use in preparing the tentative budget. Financial needs should be discussed with the Hospital/Facility Representatives or VAVS Representative, and their views should be brought to the budget meeting by the Department Hospital Chairman. Funds raised and distributed for the Department's Hospital Fund are reported under the Hospital Program.

Because a Department's largest and most active VFW Auxiliaries may not be located near the hospital that cares for the largest number of patients, the funding of a hospital's program should not be the sole responsibility of the nearest VFW Auxiliaries. The cost of all VFW Auxiliary hospital work within a VFW Auxiliary should be shared by the entire Department. In drawing up the budget, consideration should be given to pro-rata distribution of funds based on the needs of individual facilities.

All local VFW Auxiliaries should donate to the Department Hospital Fund to assure continued strong support for this important program. Money donated for hospital work and all funds raised for hospital work should be earmarked "Hospital Projects." **Local Auxiliaries should not make checks payable directly to VAVS and/or Hospital Representatives or Medical Facilities.**

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT

The Department President must give the hospital program his/her continuing support, encouragement and interest. He/she should promote the hospital program by discussing it during his/her visits to Districts and/or VFW Auxiliaries, if applicable. His/her duties and responsibilities include encouraging volunteerism in all hospitals and facilities and making sure VAVS Representatives are communicating the needs of the VA facilities to the Department Hospital Chairman and local Auxiliaries.

DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN

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:

- See that resources of money and volunteer hours are well spent in service to hospital patients.
- Keep the Auxiliaries within his/her Department informed by sending promotional bulletins, with copies of the bulletins to be sent to the National Hospital Director.
- Make sure the Department and local Auxiliaries are providing for the needs of VA facilities by communicating with the VAVS Representatives.
- See that all important information provided by the National Organization VFW Auxiliary is forwarded to the VAVS Representatives, Hospital Representatives, and local Auxiliary Hospital Chairmen.

NATIONAL HOSPITAL AMBASSADOR

The National Hospital Ambassador is appointed by the National President. It is his/her duty to promote and guide the Hospital Program, giving his/her support to every Department Hospital Chairman. He/she will offer his/her ideas and encouragement to further the success of the Hospital Program. His/her duties and responsibilities are:

- Send out promotional material, as directed by National Headquarters.
- Notify any Department President should his/her Department Hospital Chairman not be performing his/her duties by not submitting a copy of his/her promotional material to the National Hospital Ambassador in a timely manner.
- Communicate with the VFW Auxiliary National VAVS Representative (an employee at National Headquarters). The certifying official will also be a National Headquarters employee, who will certify all VAVS Representatives, Deputies, and Associate Representatives at VA Medical Centers.
- Informing the Department Hospital Chairman of requirements for year-end reporting.

NATIONAL PROGRAM CHAIRMEN

The National Program Chairmen are appointed by the National President. One Chairman will be appointed from each Conference. His/her responsibilities are:

- To send out promotional material as directed by National Headquarters. This material should contain new ideas and helpful hints to further the success of the Hospital Program and should not duplicate the material used in the communications of the National Hospital Ambassador.

FACILITY REPRESENTATIVE (MILITARY HOSPITAL/VETERANS' NURSING HOMES)

The Facility Representative serves in much the same capacity as the VAVS Representative, except that his/her duties are performed at non-VA facilities such as military hospitals and veterans' nursing homes. He/she 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. The duties are:

- Recruit, interview and screen new volunteers before recommending them to the facility.
- Report to the Department the needs (monetary and material items) for that particular facility.

- Keep a permanent record of each volunteer's hours. This is necessary for award purposes.
- Keep the Department Hospital Chairman informed of volunteer needs.
- Serve as liaison between the VFW Auxiliary and the non-VA facilities.
- Encourage and assist our organization to plan special events at the facility.
- Must follow the rules and regulations as set by that facility and adhere to the rules in the "Qualifications, Assignments and Orientation" section of the Hospital Handbook.

Follow up on 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. His/her duties and responsibilities are to:

- Assure support for the Hospital Program by communicating to VFW Auxiliary members the importance of hospital work.
- Recruit hospital volunteers.
- Raise funds for hospital work.
- Report to members 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 – AUXILIARY CHAIRMAN

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.**

Members preparing items for a facility party, making lap robes or other items for hospital and patient use, should report their hours and cost of materials used to the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman for reporting purposes.

EXAMPLE: If four (4) people work four (4) hours each making lap robes, the Auxiliary may claim credit for 16 hours spent in preparation of items for hospital and patient use. These hours are not counted toward the National VFW Auxiliary hospital pins.

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

HOSPITAL SERVICE PINS AND RECOGNITION AWARDS

Q: Who orders VFW Auxiliary hospital service pins?

A: 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 Programs Department.

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

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.

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: Programs Department. Include name, address, and Auxiliary Number and Membership ID Number of the member desiring replacement. DO NOT send the request to the National Ambassador.

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: Programs Department. 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 VFW 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: Programs Department.

VFW Auxiliary

VAVS

Participation

Guide

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VFW AUXILIARY

VAVS Participation Guide

The Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) operates one of the largest volunteer programs in the Federal Government, supplementing staff and resources in all areas of patient care and support. The VFW Auxiliary has been a part of this program since its inception in 1946. The mission of the VAVS is to provide a structured volunteer program under the management of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensated employees in cooperation with community resources to serve veterans and their families with dignity and compassion.

The members of the VFW Auxiliary have been providing that extra encouragement, love and spirit to our veterans, often being their only contact with the world beyond the wall of the facility. The supplemental services provided by our VFW Auxiliary Volunteers have made a difference in a patient's response to treatment and contributed substantially to the welfare of the patients and their families. Our VFW Auxiliary Volunteers provide their services to VA, non-VA hospitals, nursing and convalescent homes, outpatient clinics, home-based respite programs, end-of-life programs, outreach centers and satellite facilities where veterans and/or their dependents are patients or residents.

The VFW Auxiliary also provides monetary contributions which assist in providing support services, activities and comfort essentials that may not be fiscal priorities of the VA. It is almost impossible to calculate the amount of caring and sharing our volunteers have given to the veterans and their families.

Our need for volunteers has accelerated. There are more veterans being served in the VA system than ever before. This makes recruiting an increasingly vital part of the VAVS Program. We have an increasing number of aging veterans, younger veterans and female veterans utilizing the VA Medical Centers. To provide these veterans with the quality of care, dignity and compassion of which they are so deserving, we need to focus on recruitment. If the VFW Auxiliary vision of continued excellence in the future is to be a reality, recruitment efforts must increase.



Types of Volunteers

Regularly Scheduled (RS) Volunteers: RS volunteers are individuals who participate in the VAVS Program on a regularly scheduled assignment under VA supervision. Frequency of participation is determined by the local VA facility. RS volunteers are officially authorized to serve when the RS volunteer has:

- (1) Signed the “Wavier of Claims to Remuneration and Appointment Agreement,” as contained in VA Form 10-7055.
- (2) Been approved for assignment by the Voluntary Service Program Manager designee.
- (3) Participated in required screenings, background checks, finger-printing, interviews, orientations and training prescribed by the VA facility.
- (4) Completed a trial period as established by the VA facility.

Occasional Volunteers: Occasional volunteers are those individuals serving under the VAVS Program who do not meet the requirements of RS volunteers. Individuals frequently volunteer with a group or organization on an occasional basis.

Student Volunteers: Student volunteers are under the age of 18 and must have written parental or guardian approval to participate in the VAVS Program. They must also have written authorization for diagnostic and emergency treatment if injured while volunteering. The minimum age for volunteers is determined by the facility management.

Sponsored Volunteers Non-members to the VFW/VFW Auxiliary who wish to serve under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision as volunteers at VA and non-VA facilities or in VA community-based programs. 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.

The appointed Representative of the organization should ensure the recording of the number of hours devoted to hospital service by sponsored volunteers working under the VFW Auxiliary. These volunteers are eligible for VA and other hospital awards. In addition, Representatives should find ways of showing the gratitude to sponsored volunteers who perform outstanding service. Sponsored volunteers are not eligible for VFW Auxiliary Hospital service pins, but shall receive one-time recognition upon completion of 100 hours of service. Local recognition should also be given to sponsored volunteers.

QUALIFICATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND ORIENTATION

A volunteer must:

- **Have a willingness to accept hospital standards and orientation, conduct and supervision.**
- **Cleanliness and neatness in appearance.**
- **Physically be able to perform assigned tasks.**
- **Sense of responsibility, dependability and stability on the job.**
- **Friendly, business-like approach to volunteer work, with honest sentiment and not sentimentality, maintaining the veteran’s dignity and pride.**

What does a volunteer do?

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

An accepted volunteer will be required to complete orientation, which will vary by facility. Each volunteer will be entered into the Voluntary Service System (VSS), this is the volunteers' permanent record of information, which is used to maintain hours recorded. Information will be given concerning liability coverage, assignments, policies and procedures regarding infection control, fire and safety.

A volunteer is never to discuss veterans' benefits eligibility information with a patient. Veterans' benefits counseling is not a VAVS assignment.

Special note on privacy:

Confidentiality of all information the volunteer may hear, read or see is extremely important; a volunteer must never discuss any confidential information. A volunteer must remember that he/she/he is in a medical atmosphere where sensitive and personal medical information is transmitted constantly. In accordance with the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996), a volunteer must comply with the total protection of a patient's medical privacy.

Traditional and Non-traditional Volunteer Assignments

The VA Medical Center is constantly changing, providing expanded medical care to a changing type of veteran. Female veterans are being cared for more than ever in the VA Medical Centers; younger veterans with new and varied problems are being treated. Along with the changing VA Medical Center come new opportunities for our volunteers, both traditional and non-traditional.

Traditional assignments: Patient escort, volunteer driver (parking lot shuttles), clerical positions, information desk, guest relations, patient meal assistance and many more of the positions that have been open for our volunteers for years.

Non-traditional assignments: Writers (newsletters, recruitment ads), respite/hospice volunteers, female-specific clinics that require the female volunteer assistance. Some of the newer opportunities include volunteering in outpatient clinics, rehabilitation and treatment centers and virtual volunteering with homebound veterans, and the Veterans Voices Writing Project.

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER ATTIRE

A facility may already have a mandated "official color/uniform." It is the responsibility of the volunteer to be clean and neat, wearing comfortable shoes is suggested. Each facility will require identification provided by that facility and must be worn at all times during volunteer hours.

Recruiting Volunteers

All members shall help in recruiting new volunteers, but the responsibility rests with the VAVS or facility Representatives. Successful recruiting is an art in itself.

Some tips for recruiting:

- Know the VAVS and be able to answer information regarding the VFW Auxiliary.
- Know your facility. Make certain that any information you give regarding your facility is accurate.
- Be prepared to describe various assignments and what is expected. Explain that volunteers are trained and supervised by facility personnel.
- VFW Auxiliary meetings at all levels and activities beyond our organization should seek out new areas for volunteer recruitment.
- Create incentives that will attract and interest different generational groups.
- With the help of the facility and the Voluntary Service Office develop new and diverse assignments.
- Publicity release about an outstanding volunteer or an interesting hospital/facility project can aid in getting that public attention which can promote recruitment. In any public release always provide the name of a local person and contact information, such as the Supervisor of Voluntary Services, Facility Representative or Deputy Representative.
- A good reason to volunteer is to gain work experience, learn new skills, meet new people and, most importantly, to give something back.

Termination of Regularly Scheduled Volunteers

The Voluntary Service Program Manager may remove a VAVS volunteer for unsatisfactory performance, inability to perform the assignment, or a violation of established policy or procedures. Detailed documentation must be demonstrated and sufficient cause shown.

When termination of a volunteer is warranted, written notification of termination must be sent to the volunteer and to the VFW Auxiliary VAVS Representative. If the volunteer to be terminated is the VAVS Representative or Deputy Representative, written notification of termination must also be sent to the VFW Auxiliary National VAVS Representative and National Certifying Official of the VFW Auxiliary.

Reporting VAVS Volunteer Hours

The VAVS volunteer system has its own tracking system for hours. 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 is forwarded to the Department Hospital Chairman, who reports TOTAL volunteer hours (both VA and non-VA) to his/her Department President for year-end reporting.

The local Hospital Chairman also orders VFW Auxiliary hospital pins for both VA and non-VA volunteers. A member who does both VA and non-VA volunteering may combine his/her hours for VFW Auxiliary hospital pins. See Page 10 for more details on pins and awards available.

Credit for members volunteering at a VA Medical Center located in another state shall be given to the Auxiliary and Department where the volunteer holds membership.

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

Department President's Role

The Department President must give his/her attention to the VAVS program in his/her state. As a charter member of the VAVS system, it is important for the VFW Auxiliary to maintain its high reputation with this government program by continuing the excellent relationship enjoyed in VA Medical Centers across the country.

His/her duties and responsibilities are to:

- Choose each VAVS Representative, Deputy Representative, Associate Representative and Representatives to other hospitals, where applicable, with great care. He/she shall seek effective, enthusiastic people who work well with people, are capable of enlisting the help of others, and can organize that help to the best advantage. When a Representative, Deputy Representative or Associate Representative is to be named, the Department President may consult with the officers of local Auxiliaries near the hospital for recommendations.
- Submit to the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters his/her recommendations for certification of all VAVS Representatives, Deputies and Associate Representatives for the ensuing year on forms furnished for that purpose. You will be asked to do this in February of your Senior Vice-President year.
- It is the duty of the Department President when, in the best interest of the program, to inform, in writing, (with certified return receipt), the VAVS Representative, Deputy Representative, or Associate Representative, in detail, his/her failure to perform his/her duties. Seven (7) days (from date of postmark) shall be allowed for the Representative to respond to the notice before being removed.
 - a. Should it be necessary for dismissal the Representative or a Deputy Representative will be notified in writing (with certified receipt requested) indicating the official date of his/her removal.
 - b. A letter of recommendation including the name, address, telephone number, Auxiliary number, member ID#, and e-mail address of the new Representative or Deputy Representative shall be submitted to National Headquarters for certification.
 - c. Copies of all correspondence should be sent to the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Department Hospital Chairman and VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.
- To recommend an Honorary VAVS Representative, send a letter of recommendation to the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters Certifying Official who will issue a special certificate of merit to

Representatives and
Deputy Representatives
must be **Regularly
Scheduled Volunteers** in
order to accept the
appointment.

be presented to him/her by the Department. For more information on Honorary Representatives, see Page 25.

- Maintain his/her interest in the work of each Representative, and visit each VA hospital in his/her state where there is a Representative.

NOTE: Local Representatives and Deputy Representatives may represent more than one local VAVS committee if the facility director believes accepting the appointment is in the best interest of the facility.

National VAVS Representative & Certifying Official

An employee of the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters serves as the National VAVS Representative at the VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) annual meeting. He/she is the representing voting member of the NAC Executive Committee.

An employee will be the certifying official for the VAVS Representatives, Deputies and Associate Representatives at the VA Medical Centers. These recommendations will be made by the Department President. The National Headquarters office shall send official certification to the VA Medical Centers. Copies of the certification are sent to the Department President, Department Secretary, Department Treasurer, Department Hospital Chairman, and that Representative, Deputy or Associate Representative.

National VAVS Representative's Duties:

- Review the minutes of VAVS Advisory Committee meetings held at each VA Medical Center. He/she will contact the Department President when representation on Advisory Committee is in jeopardy due to poor attendance at meetings.
- Review Annual Joint Reviews (AJR) and acknowledge receipt of AJR to local VAVS Representative.
- Keep the VAVS National Advisory Committee informed of policy and personnel changes within the VFW Auxiliary.
- Monitor all policy and personnel changes within the VA System that may affect the Hospital Program.
- Provide guidance and information to local Representatives and Deputies.
- Communicate with the National Hospital Ambassador.

VAVS National Advisory Committee

The VAVS National Advisory Committee is composed of National Representatives and Deputy Representatives of Veterans Service and Welfare Organizations and Representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This committee meets annually to discuss matters of mutual interest and to consider recommendations to improve the nationwide volunteer hospital program. Sub-committees, composed of members of the National Committee, work during the year to bring forward new ideas for consideration at the annual meeting. The VFW Auxiliary has been a member of the VAVS National Committee since its inception in 1946.

Awards Sponsored by the National Advisory Committee

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) Volunteer of the Year is awarded annually to recognize one male and one female who have given extraordinary service at a VA Medical Center where he/she serves as a regularly scheduled volunteer. Entry forms and guidelines are available from the VA Facility.

The James H. Parke Memorial Youth Scholarship is awarded annually by the VAVS National Advisory Committee to an outstanding student volunteer and could be an excellent incentive or recruiting tool for youth. Information and material may be obtained from the Supervisor of Voluntary Service.

Types of Representatives

VAVS Representatives, Deputies, Associate and Honorary Representatives

Every VA Medical Facility has a Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Program. As a charter member of this program, the VFW Auxiliary has Representatives at every VA Medical Center in the country. They assist in providing a structured Volunteer Program under the management of VA compensated employees in cooperation with community resources.

In order to be a VAVS Representative, Deputy Representative or Associate Representative, you must be a Regularly Scheduled Volunteer.

VAVS Representatives

One VAVS Representative for each VA Medical Center is appointed by the Department President each year. The VAVS Representative for the VFW Auxiliary holds the most prestigious volunteer position representing our organization in that VA Medical Center. A VAVS Representative or Deputy may only be certified to represent one organization at a VA Medical Center.

The VAVS Representative's duties and responsibilities are:

- Contact the VAVS Chief of Voluntary Services or designate upon receiving your certification.
- Make certain that your orientation and information in the VSS (Voluntary Service System) is up-to-date and accurate.
- Assist with improving the VAVS Program.
- Develop goals each year for a successful VFW Auxiliary Program within that VA Medical Center.
- Provide input to the VA staff and the facility VAVS Committee.
- Advise and inform your Department of VAVS and VA issues and concerns.
- Promote recruitment of volunteers. Encourage donations of financial and material resources in accordance with facility needs and VFW Auxiliary guidelines.
- Advise volunteers of the policy and procedures of the organization and the facility.
- Assist VA staff when an affiliated volunteer must be removed for cause.
- Attend and participate in meetings of the VAVS Committee. A minimum of four (4) VAVS meetings must be held in a year.

- Serve as a member of sub-committees or task groups as requested; i.e. special events-Hospitalized Veterans Recognition Week, Veterans Day, Christmas, etc.
- Maintain records and submit reports as required by the organization and VA.
- Coordinate activities of the organization with the facility.
- Delegate responsibility and voting privileges to Deputy Representatives or Associate Representatives as needed.
- Ensure that the Annual Joint Review (AJR) is completed in the month of November (month assigned by the VA to the VFW Auxiliary). It shall be his/her responsibility to schedule an appointment with the Supervisor of Voluntary Service for the completion of this report. He/she must have all information required to complete the data needed on the form.
- Oversee the recording of volunteer hours and ensure recognition of volunteers. All pins must be ordered by the local Auxiliary Chairman, forms available on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org or by contacting VFW Auxiliary Headquarters, ATTN: Programs Department.
- Review the monthly data provided by the VAVS and report any discrepancies to the Supervisor of Voluntary Services. Reviewing the proper recording of hours is very important.
- Give the name and address of the new Department President and Department Hospital Chairman to the Supervisor of Voluntary Service.
- It is the responsibility of the VAVS Representative to mail a copy of the VAVS Advisory Committee meeting minutes to the Department President and the Department Hospital Chairman within 30 days following the meeting.
- Monthly Hospital Fund Report: The form following this section shall be filled out each month by

If an organization is not represented at three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled quarterly meetings, the names of the Representative and Deputies will be dropped from the VAVS Advisory Committee roster and the organization will not be represented on the committee until new Representatives can be certified by the National Certifying Official (this is a designated employee of the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters). A Representative or Deputy will only be excused from a meeting if the date conflicts when their presence is required at their affiliated organization's State or National Convention.

the VAVS Representative and mailed to the Department Treasurer. This report provides a running account of how funds allocated from the Department Hospital Fund are being spent. Such frequent accounting for funds offers greater protection for VAVS Representatives when handling department money, as well as, greater protection for the money contributed to benefit hospital patients.

- No separate bank account should be kept for hospital funds. See the National Bylaws Article VIII, Section 813C.
- Keep an account of all hospital funds received and expended. He/she MUST submit his/her books for audit at the time of the audit of the books of the Department Treasurer.

Change of Address?

All Hospital Representatives, VAVS Representatives, Deputies and Associate Representatives must notify their Department President, Department Hospital Chairman, VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and the facility where they are assigned of a change of address, email or phone number.

VAVS Deputy Representative

The VAVS Deputy Representative is appointed by the Department President. The Deputy Representative serves as a full working partner of the VAVS Representative.

The Deputy Representative duties are:

- Act on behalf of the Representative in his/her absence.
- Attend all meetings of the VAVS Advisory Committee.
- Participate in committee discussions.
- Assist in the Annual Joint Review (AJR).
- Serve on sub-committees as requested by the Chairman of the VAVS Advisory Committee.

The Deputy Representative does not have a vote on the Advisory Committee unless he/she is acting for and in the absence of the VAVS Representative who has the vote.

Additional Deputy Representatives may be appointed if the Department President sees a demonstrated need for this additional help. Total number of Deputy Representatives may not exceed three for an organization at one medical center. Satellite outpatient facilities without a VAVS Advisory Committee shall be allowed one Deputy Representative.

VAVS Associate Representative

VAVS Associate Representatives may be appointed at VA Medical Centers where Auxiliaries and members from one or more neighboring states participate in the VAVS Program. The Department President of each neighboring state involved may appoint an Associate Representative and one Deputy Associate Representative to assist the VFW Auxiliary's Representative by developing and coordinating the VFW Auxiliary's part of the program within his/her state. The Associate Representative does not serve on the VAVS Advisory Committee. Only in the absence of the Representative or Deputy Representative, if delegated by the Representative, does he/she have voting privileges. He/she is under the supervision of the VAVS Representative at the Medical Center in which he/she serves. He/she cannot order hospital pins. The Associate and Deputy Associate VAVS Representative must be a member in good standing in the organization in the adjacent state.

Honorary VAVS Representative

An Honorary VAVS Representative is an individual who has given ten or more years of service as a VAVS Representative or Deputy Representative (At the time of recommendation, the applicant must be a certified Representative, Deputy Representative, Associate Representative or Deputy Associate Representative).

He/she must be designated as Honorary VAVS Representative by the Department President and certified by the National Certifying Official at the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. He/she serves as advisor and consultant to the VAVS Advisory Committee without benefit of vote. He/she may attend VAVS Advisory Committee meetings and participate in deliberations, serve on sub-committees and take special assignments as deemed advisable.

An Honorary Representative cannot be reappointed as Representative or Deputy Representative for the VFW Auxiliary.

Termination of Any Representative

Any Representative or Deputy Representative may be terminated for not performing their assignments as described. Inadequate performance may warrant dismissal for:

- Poor attendance at VAVS meetings, thereby jeopardizing the Organization's status on the VAVS Advisory Committee at that facility.
- No sub-committee involvement.
- Non-completion of the Annual Joint Review (AJR).
- Has not established goals and displays no initiative or evidence of leadership.
- Failure to perform any one or more of the duties and responsibilities as defined under their position description.

The Chief of Voluntary Services may recommend to the organization the termination or not being considered for re-certification of a Representative or Deputy Representative who is not performing his/her duties. The Department President or VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters may terminate or not re-certify a Representative for not performing his/her duties at any time. This also applies to any other type of Representative.

Annual Joint Review of Participation in VAVS

VAVS Representatives meet with their Medical Center's Supervisor of Voluntary Service for an Annual Joint Review in November of each year. **The VAVS Representative, Deputy, and Associate Representatives shall participate.** The Department Hospital Chairman may also be invited.

Reviews are conducted in November and must be received by VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters no later than January 15.

The purpose of the Review is to make a joint annual inventory of the VFW Auxiliary's participation in the Medical Center's volunteer program during the previous year and to develop goals for the coming year. **It is the responsibility of the VAVS Representative to assure the completion and accuracy of the Annual Joint Review.** Any concerns shall be discussed at this time. The Annual Joint Review shall be signed by the Supervisor of Voluntary Service and the VAVS Representative.

Each AJR should be an open discussion of the goals and accomplishments of the participating organization of the past year, as well as setting goals for the coming year. **Each AJR should be a unique document about that year's participation.**

The VAVS Representative should keep a copy of the Annual Joint Review for his/her files and shall see that copies are also sent to the Department Hospital Chairman. The designated National Headquarters Employee will acknowledge receipt of the Annual Joint Review to the VAVS Representative. Since the Review is of importance to the VFW Auxiliary, as well as the VA, the Representative should feel free to remind the Supervisor of Voluntary Service about scheduling an appointment in November.

TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND POSTAGE

Travel expenses (mileage) of the VAVS Hospital Representatives, Deputies, Associate and Deputy Associate Representatives may be taken from the Department Hospital Fund, when they are performing official duties at their medical facilities. All postage and office supplies necessary to handle the hospital program should be provided by the Department.

Hospital Service Pins and Recognition Awards

The VAVS system has many types of pins and awards available to volunteers. See the *VHA Handbook* for details. These awards are tracked, ordered and presented by Voluntary Services Supervisors. If you have questions about pins or awards offered by the VAVS program, please speak to the Voluntary Services Supervisor.

Volunteer hours at a VA and non-VA facility may be combined for awards offered by the VFW Auxiliary.

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 Pin in addition to any awards offered by the VAVS program.

Q: Who orders VFW Auxiliary pins?

A: Local VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairmen.

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 Programs Department.

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.

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 thereafter, 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: Programs Department. Include name, address, and Auxiliary Number and Membership ID Number of the member desiring replacement. DO NOT send the request to the National Ambassador.

Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award (VFW Auxiliary)

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 (VFW Auxiliary)

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 for both non-VA facilities and VA hours. Application forms are available on the VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org or by contacting VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, ATTN: Programs Department. Only one award may be ordered for each sponsored volunteer, per lifetime.

Recruiter Awards for VFW Auxiliary Members and Student Volunteers (VFW Auxiliary)

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: Programs Department.

SAMPLE VAVS REPRESENTATIVE HOSPITAL FUND REPORT

Funds Allocated for VAVS Hospital Program from the Department Treasury

Monthly Report

Fill out in Triplicate:

- Mail one copy to Dept. Treasurer
- Mail one copy to Dept. Hospital Chairman
- File one copy

Name of Hospital _____
 No. of Veterans _____
 Representative _____
 Date _____

Monthly/Quarterly allowance from Department
 Date Given: _____ \$ _____
 Special funds received from Department \$ _____
Total \$ _____

Expenditures \$ _____

Balance on hand end of month \$ _____

	No. of Visits	Hours
Representative		
Deputy-1		
Deputy-2		
Deputy-3		

Items purchased (List in detail and enclose receipts with report.)

Total Department credit for month \$ _____

***ALL FUNDS SHALL GO THROUGH THE
DEPARTMENT TREASURER***

**DO NOT KEEP ANY SEPARATE ACCOUNTS FOR HOPITAL FUNDS.
ONLY THE DEPARTMENT TREASURER IS BONDED FOR THOSE FUNDS.
SEE BYLAWS ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 813C.**