

American Legion Auxiliary Department of California Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

March 2023

Bulletin #7

Dear VA&R Chairmen,

I hope your travels on the "All Aboard the Friendship Train" Serving Veterans have gone smoothly and have been rewarding. I am looking forward to your reports describing the tours you have taken so far and to see how they have enabled your volunteer work for veterans.

Before you know it, your End-of-Year reports will be due as well as the Impact Reports. Now is the time (if you haven't done so already) to begin calculating your miles, hours, and the money you have spent while helping veterans and their families whether it be in the Post, their homes, a medical center, veterans' homes, in the homeless community or somewhere else. Hopefully you have kept your calendars and tracking forms pretty much up to date so that you can easily transfer totals to the Impact Report. Members report to their units, units tally the information and report the unit totals to their districts. Units will send their Impact Report to their District President by April 14th. You can find the Impact Reports on the Department website under "Forms".

While filling out the reports, remember that caregiving of veterans is reportable on your Impact reports. If you are caring for your spouse, you can report up to ten (10) hours per week. If you are caring for a veteran outside your home, you can claim up to five (5) hours per week. If you are not sure if you are a caregiver, refer to the following:

- Do you do things for someone who serves or served in the Armed Forces that they can no longer do for themselves?
- Do you help someone who serves or served on the Armed Forces with stress, emotional issues, anger, or depression?
- Do you take someone who serves or served in the Armed Forces to medical appointments or arrange any form of health care for them?
- Do you sometimes feel alone or isolated in your duties because no one around you does the same thing or seems to understand?
- Do you feel you do the care responsibilities for someone who served in the Armed Forces because they are your spouse, son/daughter, friend, sibling, or other family member?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are a caregiver. If you feel you need help or support, reach out to your members and friends, or you can check out these sites:

- Military and Veteran Caregiver Network: www.milvetcaregivernetwork.org
- The American Legion Family at www.ALForVeterans.org and www.legion.org
- Elizabeth Dole Foundation: www.elizabethdolefoundation.org
- Caregivers Advocate Program: www.caregiver.va.gov

I would like to remind you that there are many vacant positions at the various VAMCs and CALVet Homes in our State; District and Unit Presidents and all VA&R Chairmen and committees are responsible for helping to recruit and retain volunteers. Please help us fill the vacancies with unit members who may be or are interested in a worthwhile and rewarding volunteer position. You can also contact me at 661-209-4365 or var@calegionaux.org; or contact a Representative or Deputy from a VA Medical Center near you. If I don't answer, please leave a message.

Are you aware of the V.I.S.T.O. and N.A.V.A. awards? No? I have attached a copy of the award descriptions found in the VA&R Department Code for your information.

Report Deadlines:

- ✓ Unit End-of-Year Reports are due to the District VA&R Chairman by April 14
- ✓ Unit Impact Reports are due to the District Presidents by April 14
- ✓ District End-of-Year Reports are due to the Department Chairman by May 1
- ✓ District Impact Reports are due to the Department Secretary by May 1

**"God Bless This Endeavor. God Speed the Train. God Speed the Peace."
--Rev. Clarence H. Parlous of St. Mark's Episcopal Church regarding
the Friendship Train of 1947**

Yours in Service,

Linda Hayes, VA&R Chairman
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V.I.S.T.O.-- Volunteers In Service To Others

A perpetual plaque to be awarded annually to an outstanding Volunteer Medical Center Worker nominated by the Director of Volunteers or Chief of Voluntary Services in each of the VA Medical Centers and the Veterans Homes. Entries shall be submitted to the Department Chairman by May 10. (1996)

RULES

1. Volunteer must be regularly scheduled.
2. Volunteer may be an American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary member, whose hours are credited to the American Legion Auxiliary.
3. Volunteers should have made some outstanding contribution to the Medical Center in addition to regular service; although number of volunteer hours and continuous service should be considered, the outstanding contribution in addition to regular service will take precedence when selecting a winner for this award. (1994)
4. Volunteer shall have taken the Veterans Affairs orientation course. (1995)
5. Outstanding qualities your candidate may have demonstrated should be stated in the entry. (2017)
6. Plaque will be displayed in the Medical Center of winning candidate until requested by the American Legion Auxiliary Representative or the Department VA & R Chairman. (2021)

N.A.V.A. -- NON-AFFILIATED VOLUNTEER AWARD

A certificate to be awarded annually to an outstanding Non-Affiliated Medical Center worker nominated by the Director of Volunteers or Chief of Voluntary Services in each of the VA Medical Centers and Veterans Homes. Entries shall be submitted to the Department Chairman by May 10th. (1998)

RULES

1. Volunteer must not be eligible for membership in The American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary in order to serve as a Non-Affiliated Volunteer and be considered for this award.
2. Volunteer must be regularly scheduled.
3. Volunteer must have been recruited by an American Legion Auxiliary member.
4. Volunteer must credit his/her hours to the American Legion Auxiliary.
5. Continuous service should be considered.
6. Volunteer should have made some form of outstanding contribution to the Medical Center, in addition to regular service.
7. Number of hours contributed to volunteering should be considered.
8. Volunteer shall have taken the Veterans Affairs orientation course. (1995)
9. Outstanding qualities of the nominee should be stated in the entry.
10. The framed certificate will be displayed in the Medical Center of winning volunteer for one year and then returned to the winner. (1998)