



American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Minnesota
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VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION Sept/Oct 2018

The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of Veterans, military and their families.

As members of the American Legion Auxiliary there are many areas we can volunteer to accomplish our mission.

If you live near a VA Facility, either a healthcare center or MN Veterans Home, become a regularly scheduled VAVS Volunteer (Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service). Your hours of service are entered into the VAVS tracking system each day you volunteer. Invite others to join you in regular voluntary service to our veterans. For more information, you may contact the Voluntary Services Coordinator at your local facility.

Please familiarize yourself with the *ALA Guide for Volunteers* this can be downloaded directly from our National website: www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/Veterans-Affairs---Rehabilitation, to purchase a printed copy, visit www.emblem.legion.org

Veteran's homelessness is at our forefront right now. The numbers are growing at a dramatic pace. Regardless of the reason for their situation, we need to help our veterans. Connect with Minnesota's Homeless Veterans Coordinators at the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VAHCS (find them at www.va.gov) to find out where your assistance is needed.

Participate in the VA Project CHALENG for Veterans (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups) which was organized to enhance the care for homeless veterans provided by your local VA and its surrounding community service organizations. The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) is a resource not only for homelessness, but they also provide assistance for those who are in jeopardy of losing their homes and can assist with temporary financial assistance for rent, utilities and such. MACV also sponsors many Standdowns throughout Minnesota offering services for legal issues, personal hygiene, employment opportunities, food, clothing and medical exams. Volunteer at one of these events. Many hands make light work. (www.mac-v.org)

Explore the program at the Eagles Healing Nest and make referrals if needed. It is a serene place where veterans can go to heal the invisible wounds of war. They believe that by embracing our veterans, service members and their families, they can help them reintegrate back into the civilian world and their families. The Eagles Healing Nest is not a homeless shelter. Each veteran must actively participate in their program of healing and contribute to the nest family as you would contribute in a regular family situation. (www.eagleshealingnest.org)

Be sure your Unit is in contact with your local Post homeless veteran's coordinator, this may be your Veterans Service Officer.

“Our Veterans Are Our Stars” so be ready to help when asked for assistance or see there is need in your veteran community.

Patti Coleman
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman
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