



Pod—Family Support

- Americanism
- Education
- Community Service
- National Chaplain

National Chaplain

2011-2012 American Legion Auxiliary Plan of Action

Purpose: To express, by word and action, our founding principle of service to God and Country. Encourage all departments to celebrate diversity among people and faiths. Provide spiritual and emotional guidance when needed or requested, always sending dignity and respect to the occasion.

Committee Contact Information

alahq@ALAforVeterans.org



Note: The National Chaplain is elected at National Convention. Contact information and photo for this position will be posted following National Convention 2011 in Minneapolis.

National Headquarters Contact (Staff Liaison)

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Programs and Activities

It should be the objective of the chaplain to:

1. Reconnect with the heart of God, the master of might and promote our founding fathers' desire to create one nation under God.
2. Act as spiritual ambassador of the organization.

Through bulletins and other means of communication, she should:

- a. Increase awareness of the actual wording of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, with regard to religious expression.
- b. Educate members on awareness of the diversity of all faiths and cultures.
- c. Provide and promote emotional and spiritual support to The American Legion Family by sending e-mails, prayers, etc., to members throughout the administrative year.
- d. The chaplain is responsible for all invocations, benedictions and memorial services for deceased members at official meetings.
- e. Recommend educational materials that promote a spirit of unity and love.
- f. Schedule spiritual fun events throughout the year providing fellowship time and spiritual growth.

All prayers and devotional thoughts must be non-denominational.
(Source: *Guidelines for National Chaplain*)

Non-denominational means "not restricted to or associated with a religious denomination."
(Source: www.answers.com/topic/nondenominational)

National Chaplain

Each Department Chaplain is encouraged to submit a mid-year and end-of-year narrative report to the national chaplain by February 1, 2012, and June 1, 2012, respectively, outlining the activities of the Units and the Department.

Resources

1. Unit Handbook
 2. Guidelines for National Chaplain of the American Legion Auxiliary
 3. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary
 4. Chaplains' Prayer Book of the American Legion Auxiliary
- See program page on www.ALAforVeterans.org for additional resources.



Pod: Family Support

Committees included: Americanism, Education, Community Service, and National Chaplain

Submitted by:

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The American Legion Auxiliary is a hands-on organization to serve veterans, their families, active-duty servicemembers, their families and homeless veterans with their needs, such as:

- meals
- babysitting
- being a sounding board for their concerns
- helping local assistance with needs they might have
- using media of all kinds to help explain their needs and how the public can help assist them

Proposed schedule of activity:

September:

- Gather up team and identify what each members' strengths and weaknesses are.
- Identify the military population in your area with the Family Readiness Group, Post or Base Commander, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Community Based Outreach Clinic or local Service Officer.
- Develop a relationship with the local media by making an appointment to meet with reporters, providing Auxiliary materials at the meeting, determining ways in which the media and local Auxiliary can collaborate, and determining what the media will use vs. what they will not. Be sure to check with the responsible adult in the family before contacting any media. Families may have reasons to protect their privacy, and we don't want to add to their stress during a difficult time.

October:

- Select the veteran's family you will be working with. The selection should be based upon the strengths of Unit members who are involved with the projects (e.g., time restraints, fundraising capabilities to provide financial assistance, and/or cooking ability).
- Don't forget to present a Blue Star Banner if active-duty servicemember.
- Meet with the selected family to identify yourselves and inquire as to their needs and let them know who we are and what we can do to help. Be sure to find out birthdays and anniversary in order to remember them on these days.
- Team meets to discuss one of the needs and their Plan of Action and how they are going to implement it.

November:

- Review progress and add/change needs as appropriate.
- Recognize the family at Veterans Day, and invite them to attend your meeting and ceremonies.
- Make sure family is taken care of on Thanksgiving Day by providing a meal or a food basket for the family. If your Unit is cooking a meal at the Post home, invite the family to attend.

continued



Pod: Family Support and Advocacy continued

December:

- Assist the family with Christmas gifts for each member, store coupons and food basket.
- Ask your local merchants if they will offer merchandise or products for needy families.
- Give the family memberships into the Post, Unit or Squadron.

January:

- Continue with immediate family needs as identified within your demographics, weather and location (e.g., provide shoveling assistance in cold climates or lawnmowing assistance in warmer areas).

February:

- Invite the family to the Post for the Legion birthday celebration honoring all past leadership.
- Offer to take them to a job interview, appointments, doctor appointments, etc.
- Offer to babysit the children and pay for a "Pamper Me Day."

April:

- Offer to provide Easter/Passover meal.
- Sponsor a community egg hunt at your Post and invite your adopted family to participate.

May:

- Invite family to help with poppy distribution during your Unit's Poppy Week.
- Invite your family to the Post for Memorial Day ceremony and celebrations. Offer to pick family up.
- Remember Mother's Day by sending a flower arrangement and card.
- If your Unit is visiting nursing homes or a nearby VAMC, invite the family to join your members.

June:

- Invite your adopted family to help in a flag disposal/retirement ceremony.
- Stay in communication with the family throughout the month to ascertain if they have any special needs.
- Remember to send a Father's Day card.

July:

- Invite the family to your Post and have a BBQ.
- Present an American flag to the family and install pole mount if necessary.
- Don't forget to present a Blue Star Banner if active-duty servicemember.

August:

- Meet with the family to see if you provided the necessary needs and your mission was accomplished.