

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

## ***GOALS & OBJECTIVES: (2024-2025)***

- National Veterans Service Suicide Prevention
- Childcare for Active-Duty Service Members
- Veterans and Military Support Programs

### DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S MOTTO & THEME

*"Unity"*

*"One Family! One Voice! One Team!"*

### NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S THEME

*"From Our Roots to Our Branches..."*

*Extending Service to Our Veterans"*

## **VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT (V&FS) PROGRAM SUMMARY AND GOALS**

This year, *From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans*, will be our theme as we execute our mission of supporting our Veterans, their families, and our communities. The Veterans & Family Support (V&FS) Program is the primary mission of why our Auxiliary exists. The goals this year under the V&FS program will focus on: National Veterans Service Suicide Prevention; Childcare for active-duty service members; and sharing information about the Veterans and Military Support Programs. Together, our focus this year is to ***Keep Moving Forward!***

The V&FS Program has a myriad of categories that benefit our Veterans and their families. In addition to our primary mission above, we will share information on UNMET Needs, "Sports Clips" Scholarships for Heroes, Mental Wellness and Support, Women Veterans Health Care, Military Assistance Program, Adopt-a-Unit, and the Family Readiness Group. These broad and wide variety of efforts within the V&FS Program provides essential resources to assist our Veterans and their families.

**Goal #1- National Veterans Suicide Prevention:** Many veterans returning home do so with heavy hearts and minds. It's crucial that we, as an organization, take a stand against the stigma of mental health. Often things we don't think could ever be hurtful cut the deepest. Be mindful of the characteristics associated with thoughts of suicide and be watchful of our veterans' mental health. One veteran lost to suicide, is one veteran too many!

**Goal #2 - Childcare for Active-Duty Service Members:** As we serve diligently toward our mission of serving veterans, we often overlook those the veterans support themselves - their children. A special focus on this year's Veterans & Family Support Program is giving back to these families. Maybe it's babysitting for a few hours each week, providing diapers for the babies and toddlers or maybe just being emotional support for the spouse left behind to take care of the family. By being a confidant for service member's family, our members are providing that much more peace for our active-duty military.

**Goal #3 - Veterans and Military Support Programs:** It is our responsibility to ensure that our Veterans and their family members are aware of the aid available to them in times of need, such as financial assistance with mortgage or rent payments, vehicle expenses, utilities, food or clothing. Now more than ever, we need to guide our veterans and their family members in their efforts to obtain their VA benefits by pairing them with our VFW Accredited service officers. As Auxiliary members, it's important that we educate ourselves about Veterans benefits as well. Auxiliaries are encouraged to meet with VFW accredited service officers to get a better understanding of how they can help, or perhaps even invite one to an Auxiliary meeting. As Auxiliary members, we can help provide the comforts of home when we adopt units and send care packages to our deployed troops. While it's important to remember those serving far away, it is equally important to remember them and their families prior to and post deployment. The VFW has financial grants that are available to help with events held by our Auxiliaries and Posts to support and recognize our troops.

For more information, visit the VFW website at: <https://vfw.org/assistance>

**VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM**  
**V&FS PROGRAM EXECUTION**

- As an Auxiliary member, the Auxiliary V&FS Program Chairman has a very important role in our organization. You are expected to promote all aspects related the V&FS Program. You are to inform your Auxiliary Members of the focus that the National Ambassador and Department Chairman have on your Program. PLEASE become very familiar with your V&FS Program.
- Allow your creative juices and craftiness of your members to plan, execute and report the items listed in the National and/or Department Program Books referring to the V&FS Program. Connect your V&FS effort with other activities at your Post. Use the Department Monthly Promotion V&FS Program pages to inform your members, enhance your knowledge, and plan your efforts.
- Make sure you have all the contact information for your Auxiliary Officers and Chairmen at each level. Send your contact information to your District and Department V&FS Program Chairmen. Read, save and organize all information you receive from every level of the organization for your V&FS Program. As you receive information on your V&FS Program, make notes if there are deadlines, such as award deadlines. Keep a record of all activity, hours spent planning, executing and cleaning up for a project.
- Once you have a project idea and have made contact with the President and your VFW Counterpart, take the project idea for your V&FS Program and communicate this to your Auxiliary members on the meeting floor. Sharing information will be of great assistance when it is time to write your reports. Solicit help from your members by mentioning that you are looking for volunteers to help. Find someone who will get the word out to members and the community.
- Communicate with the District and/or Department Chairman as required. Follow through until the V&FS Program project is completed. A report must be written. If you complete this task as soon as the event is held, your memory, notes and record keeping will make this task a lot easier and faster. Remember to REPORT! REPORT! REPORT!

Bob Kabala  
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## **VETERANS & FAMILY DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES**

1. One Special Award in each Membership Class for the most outstanding activity and/or event to increase the support of veterans, active-duty service members and their families.
2. A Citation will be given to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health. Entry form required and available on the Dept. Website and in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to the Department V&FS Program Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging.

## **NATIONAL AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES**

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of suicide and mental health for veterans, military and their families.
  - Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of suicide and mental health for veterans, military and their families.

Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to their Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman by March 31, 2025 for judging. The Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador by April 30, 2025 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention