



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY SUPPORT TOOLS

A collection of resources from National Headquarters to assist and guide members and volunteers in serving veterans, servicemembers and their families.

Volunteer: Engage
Section 10, Page 1 of 2
Last Updated 1/13/14

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN A MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY OF SERVICE

January ____, 20__

History:

In 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act, designating Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (observed on the third Monday of January) as a national day of volunteer service. Instead of a day off from work or school, Congress asked Americans of all backgrounds and ages to celebrate Dr. King's legacy by turning community concern into citizen action.



Participating on This Day:

The intention of the American Legion Auxiliary is to promote patriotic community service activities and to build community partnerships. Our service on this day elevates our presence in the community while focusing on the needs of our national heroes. It is encouraged not to use this day for membership recruitment purposes, but to approach this holiday as an opportunity to serve veterans in accordance with our mission.

Ways to Serve:

Here are six ideas to serve veterans on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day:

1. Help veterans in their home. Examples of these projects include building wheelchair ramps, basic home repairs and yard work.
 - a. See *How to Help Veterans Around Their Home*
2. Organize or participate in a stand down.
 - a. See *How to Plan a One-Day Homeless Veteran Health Fair*
3. Host a job fair for veterans at a post, community center or library.
 - a. See *How to Organize a Job Fair for Veterans*
4. Organize a mid-year school supply drive for military children. To maximize effectiveness, collaboration with other units in your district and/or area is recommended.
 - a. See *How to Organize a School Supply Drive for Military Children*
5. Encourage Juniors to create Hero Packs, in conjunction with Operation: Military Kids, to be given to military kids who have a deployed family member.
 - a. See *How to Partner with Operation: Military Kids*
6. Bring at least one new person (this can be a member that doesn't normally volunteer or a non-member) along as you visit with veterans at VA Medical Centers or state veterans homes.

Resources:

- Official Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service website: www.mlkday.gov
- MLK Day Mobilization provides specific tips and information about making a Day of Service successful. There is a forum to collect ideas, as well, at: www.mlkmobilization.org.



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American Legion Auxiliary Media Release

DEPARTMENT OF [STATE]

Street Address, City, State ZIP Code

www.ALAforVeterans.org (and your unit/department's website if available)

Contact: [PR chairman], [PR chairman's phone number]; [PR chairman's email address]
for [unit/department president's name]

[DATE]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

American Legion Auxiliary Honors Martin Luther King Jr. Day with Service to America

[CITY]– On Jan. 20, local American Legion Auxiliary members joined hundreds of thousands of Americans in making the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday “a day on, not a day off,” by serving in his honor. King used his influence as a civil rights leader to leave a great legacy of community service, and members of the Auxiliary were proud to be a part of that special day.

Auxiliary members concentrated their efforts toward those who gave unselfishly to this country—our veterans. These veterans-centered service projects included job fairs, meal delivery, beautification projects, home improvements and bringing friends along to volunteer at VA Medical Centers.

[Include a brief description of your unit's project along with the number of volunteers helping and a quote about the project as it relates to MLK Day of Service from an Auxiliary officer. Clear, action photos are also encouraged.]

“QUOTE,” said [NAME], [POSITION IN ALA].

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a federal agency that oversees the nation's domestic service initiatives, led the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service in partnership with the King Center and nonprofits, community groups, schools, and businesses across the country. As a partner with CNCS, the Auxiliary found it important to join the efforts.

American Legion Auxiliary members have dedicated themselves for nearly a century to meeting the needs of our nation's veterans, military and their families both here and abroad. They volunteer millions of hours yearly, with a value of nearly \$2 billion. As part of the world's largest women's patriotic service organization, Auxiliary volunteers across the country also step up to honor veterans and military through annual scholarships and with ALA Girls State programs, teaching high school juniors to be leaders grounded in patriotism and Americanism. To learn more about the Auxiliary's mission or to volunteer, donate or join, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

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