2017-2022 American Legion Auxiliary Programs Action Plan

Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund provides temporary financial assistance to eligible members during times of financial crises or weather-related emergencies and natural disasters and promotes awareness and knowledge of the program.

Committee Contact Information
aef@ALAforsVeterans.org

What Can You Do?

1. Familiarize each unit and department with what AEF can and cannot do, where to locate the current application and how to apply.

Ideas:

Member
• Distribute the “Before you Begin – Frequently Asked Questions” sheet and AEF brochure found at www.ALAforVeterans.org to eligible members. Promote as a benefit to new members.

Unit
• Have printed applications and AEF brochures available during unit meetings and at the local post.

Department
• Educate each unit and department AEF chairman on Auxiliary Emergency Fund roles and responsibilities. Encourage AEF chairman to procure brochures for their eligible members. This can be at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

2. Help the National Auxiliary Emergency Fund obtain donations by supporting department and unit fundraisers.

Ideas:

Member
• Support fundraisers sponsored by your department and unit.
• Make a personal donation to the AEF. Donations of $50 or more will receive a pin requested by your department from National Headquarters.

Unit
• Put an AEF donation can in your local post (visit www.ALAforVeterans.org for a free, downloadable can label). Solicit local businesses for monetary or in-kind donations to your unit for AEF.
• Schedule an annual “Members Helping Members” night at your local post. Not only is this a great time for an AEF fundraiser, but it gives you the opportunity to share information about what makes a member eligible to receive help from the AEF. Have membership applications available, and sign up new members during an event. Legion members might sign up eligible relatives in order to provide this protection for them. Prior to the event, be sure all unit members have read and are familiar with the AEF frequently asked questions as well as the criteria for assistance.

**Department**

- Share fundraising ideas on all levels through newsletters, bulletins and stories, and circulate at every meeting. Along with the brochures, inform members that any donation of $50 or more will receive a pin. AEF Donation Pin Order Forms are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org or by contacting National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500, or by emailing your request to aef@ALAforVeterans.org. Departments track and distribute pins to individual members.

**Programs and Activities**

1. The AEF brochure is available through departments and also online at www.ALAforVeterans.org

2. Please use the current form and follow directions to ensure that evaluation and processing are completed in a timely fashion. Incomplete applications can delay the application process. The current application and expedited application are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

3. Forms are available to order pins for individuals who donate $50 or more. AEF Donation Pin Order Forms are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org, by contacting National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500, or by emailing your request to aef@ALAforVeterans.org. Departments track and distribute pins to individual members.

4. AEF frequently asked questions and additional AEF information are available on the AEF page at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

5. The following core rules apply to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund:
   a. Temporary assistance to eligible members during:
      • A time of financial crisis when no other source of aid is readily available to pay for shelter, food and utilities.
      • Weather-related emergencies and natural disasters, for food and shelter.
      • Educational training for eligible members who lack the necessary skills for employment or to upgrade competitive workforce skills.
   b. Assistance will not be granted to pay accumulated debts or medical expenses. The intent is to help members who have suffered a financial setback and is meant to be a bridge offering a helping hand until financial stability is re-established. Incomplete applications and missing documentation will significantly slow processing the case file.
   c. Eligibility: Persons who have been members of the American Legion Auxiliary for at least the immediate past two consecutive years and whose current
membership dues are paid at the time the emergency occurs (three consecutive years’ dues) may apply for assistance.

d. Assistance provided: The maximum grant amount is $2,400, disbursed as the Auxiliary Emergency Fund Grant Committee determines.

AEF Reporting*

Mid-Year Reports
Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and are intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Each department AEF chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division AEF chairman, plus copy the national AEF chairman.

Year-End Reports
Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Each department AEF chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division AEF chairman, plus copy the national AEF chairman. Members and units should follow their department’s protocol and deadlines.

*For deadlines and contact information, please consult the Annual Supplement to the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan or visit the AEF Committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.

AEF Awards

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps to add your part to our national success story:

1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet found in the awards section of the Programs Action Plan.
2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award’s materials and guidelines section.
3) Submit as indicated in the Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan.

National Report and Awards Cover Sheet, deadlines, and AEF committee contact information may be found on the AEF committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.

A. Department Award: Largest Contribution
   • Award: Citation
   • Presented to: One department per division contributing the largest donations (per capita) to the AEF as of June 1.

B. Member Award: Individual Contribution of $50 or More
   • Award: Citation and Lapel Pin Recognition
   • Presented to: Individual contributor donating $50 or more
   • Materials and guidelines:
The citation form is available at www.ALAforVeterans.org. Citations may be printed by the unit or department.

C. **Unit Award**: Largest Contribution by a Unit
   - **Award**: Citation Plaque and special recognition at national convention
   - **Presented to**: One unit contributing the largest amount (per capita)
   - **Materials and guidelines**:
     - Total donations per unit will be tracked by National Headquarters and will be divided by the units’ current membership totals as of June 1 to determine the per capita donation amount

D. **Department Award**: Largest Contribution by a Department
   - **Award**: Citation Plaque and special recognition at national convention
   - **Presented to**: One department contributing the largest amount (per capita)
   - **Materials and guidelines**:
     - Total donations per unit will be tracked by National Headquarters and will be divided by the units’ current membership totals as of June 1 to determine the per capita donation amount.

**How To Sheets**

- How to Implement a Successful Water Bottle Coin Collection

**Additional Resources You Can Use**

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org (for additional resources and descriptions)
2. www.legion.org
3. www.operationhomefront.net (general financial assistance for military families)
4. www.211.org (referral program for local help with food, housing and employment)
5. www.fema.gov (disaster assistance)
6. www.redcross.org (disaster assistance)
7. www.fns.usda.gov/snap/ (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
8. www.liheap.ncat.org (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)
9. The AEF Committee Facebook group, search “Aux Emergency Fund”
10. Your national Auxiliary Emergency Fund committee members (see AEF program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information)
HOW TO HOLD WATER BOTTLE COIN COLLECTION DONATIONS TO THE AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

Committee:
Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF)

Contact Information for Questions: aef@ALAforVeterans.org

Water Bottle Coin Collection:

Hand out a free 20 oz. bottle of water at a meeting to all members in attendance and ask them to return the bottle filled with coins to the next meeting. A 20 oz. water bottle filled with dimes adds up to almost $100!

Unit: Offer a prize to the member donating the largest amount.
Department: Offer an award for the unit that collected the largest amount the previous year.

Suggested label for bottles:

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS FILL WITH COINS FOR AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND UNIT #xxxxxxxx
Other AEF Fundraising Ideas:

*It's a Wrap* - Offer gift-wrapping services at Christmas time for families along with babysitting services for a small donation. Other ideas include: show a holiday movie, make cards for veterans and military or assemble Pocket Flags. A lot of activities could be rolled into one night! Imagine how this wonderful service would help families in your community deal with stress during the holidays.

*Buy a Meal* - Volunteers donate homemade meals to sell. Could be in conjunction with a bake sale. Or sell food and baked goods at local sports games or dances.

*Eat for a Cause* - Contact local restaurants and ask them to set aside a night where a percentage of the sales would be donated to AEF.

*Talent Show* - Hold a talent show and charge for admission. Sell light fare and refreshments. Note: A Delaware unit held a talent show, charged $5 per person, sold food and 50/50 and raised almost $2,000 for the USO!

*Otterbox* - Sign up and request product donations for your raffles and/or silent auctions at http://www.otterbox.com/en-us/product-donations.html. Requests can take up to 6 weeks to be processed.