

NATIONAL SECURITY OBJECTIVES



The objective of the National Security program is to support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve, and transitioning military servicemembers and their families along with Law Enforcement, Fire, and First Responders.

Listed below are various ways for you to share your voice of support as a member and/or as a unit. [Review the End of Year Report and Remittance Form as you create your program for the year.](#)

How can I “Ring Your Bells” as a Member: Be the One to...

- Let your unit know of any military families or businesses that should receive a Blue Star or Gold Star Banner in recognition of a servicemember's service.
- Provide support on a spouse-to-spouse or family-to-family basis, such as to a family member, neighbor or another military family. Refer to the ALA Military Family Readiness Action Guide for specific suggestions of the type of support military families may value.
- Provide assistance to servicemembers and their families directly affected by current conflicts. Get to know your local Legion Service Officer, they may be able to help you in your efforts.
- Become more informed about issues affecting a military family's home life and the resources available to help, such as PTSD, TBI, domestic violence, financial literacy and other issues.
- Refer servicemembers with financial assistance needs to the American Red Cross Armed Forces Call Center at 1 (877) 272-7337.
- Complete a Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) course.
- Build and/or help a neighbor build an emergency preparedness kit and plan.
- Sign up for the Legion's Legislative Action Alerts, and be sure to act on the ones regarding a strong national defense and affecting current and transitioning servicemembers and their families.
- Donate blood

How can we “Ring your Bells” as an Unit: Be the One to...

- Support active-duty military families by working with an installation Family Readiness Group (FRG). Contact the Family Readiness Center on your nearby military installation for more information.
- Support reserve and transitioning servicemembers and families by working with a returning National Guard or Reserve unit or an individual transitioning servicemember or family.
- Greet servicemembers and families as they deploy and/or return from a deployment.
- Thank a hero: Bring cards, gift baskets, food, or letters of appreciation to our heroes. Or invite them for a meal at your Unit/Post.
- Don't forget Active Duty that are away from home and may not have anywhere to go on a holiday.
- Troop Care Boxes
- Celebrate various military dates & holidays by posting on Social Media or writing thank you cards.
- Work with a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program office of a local military unit (Reserve or National Guard) or a state National Guard Joint Force Headquarters to show patriotic and moral support at Yellow Ribbon events.
- Organize school supplies for our military families through the USO or Operation Homefront
- Organize a Welcome To Our Hometown event to welcome military families that are moving or transitioning out of the military to your community.
- Coordinate community donations and assemble servicemember care packages and family member support packages.
- Work with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and refer a survivor or caregiver for specialized support. Refer to How to Collaborate with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors for information and specific steps.
- Collect supplies for emergency preparedness kits and distribute them in your community.
- Remember: new military families in your community may not be familiar with the types of emergencies that affect your area. As needed, help them update their emergency preparedness kit and plan.
- Have a training exercise in your post home to give training in first aid, CPR or other types of emergency skills.

- Join with your Legion post to host a POW/MIA ceremony on National POW/MIA Recognition Day, commemorated annually on the third Friday of September.
- Work with Legion posts to honor ROTC and JROTC cadets by having dinners and recognizing their accomplishments.
- Support and promote The Month of the Military Child by setting up a table at your Post or local school, "Purple Up" during the month of April, and/or invite military children and their families to a special event.
- Organize "Support Our Troops Night" at local sporting events
- Line the streets with U.S. flags, Blue Star Banners, yellow ribbons, and yard signs
- Arrange speaking engagements for servicemembers at schools
- Present returning troops with certificates of recognition

[How can I do this? What are some resources to help “ring your bells” in National Security?](#)

Remember: You DON'T have to do everything!! Choose a way to support that drives your mission. Not everyone lives close to a base or even has active duty families in their community. These resources provide many different ways to support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve, and transitioning military servicemembers and their families along with Law Enforcement, Fire, and First Responders.

[Gold Star Moms](#)

[Troupons](#)

[Blue Star Banner | The American Legion](#)

[Blue Star Mothers](#)

[POW/MIA Advocacy | The American Legion](#)

[TAPS \(Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors\)](#)

[Operation Homefront](#)

[Florida National Guard Family Programs](#)

[The USO](#)

[Yellow Ribbon Integration Program](#)

[Community Emergency Response Training \(CERT\)](#)

[Important Military Dates and Holidays](#)

[Where do I find support? Here are some media links to help guide you.](#)

National Security Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/915563745139663>

ALAFL National Security Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/888644168305953>

Monthly Zoom Meetings:

Third Monday of every month @ 6pm

Aug. 21, Sep. 18, Oct. 16, Nov. 20, Jan. 15, Feb. 19, Mar. 18, Apr. 15, May 20

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71337009649?pwd=AHFybpS7KV4Jzlwfr9z0FIIEJIZN46.1>

Click [here](#) to learn more about “Be the One” or click the link below to watch the video

[Be The One Video](#)

NATIONAL SECURITY AWARDS

How did you BE THE ONE to #thankahero?



CHAIRMEN AWARD: DEADLINE MAY 1ST

Salute with Bells Award: This trophy will be given to the Unit that creates the best Salute with Bells Storybook. Instructions for creating your book are online along with the Salute with Bells Template. You'll find these resources at alafl.org/programs/national-security/

DEPARTMENT AWARDS: DEADLINE MAY 15TH

- **Cathy Larkins-Richards “Back the Badge” Award:** (expires in 2031). Awarded annually to the Unit that had the “greatest impact” in supporting local law enforcement. Please follow instructions in the Unit Guide.
- **Margaret “Peggy” Cone Award:** (expires in 2030). Awarded annually to the Unit that reports “Best All Around” program in National Security activities. Please follow instructions outlined in the Unit Guide.
- **Rosemary Hamblin Award** (expires in 2034). Awards annually to the Unit that works with and supported the Gold Star Mother(s) and/or the American Gold Star Mothers Chapter. Please follow instructions outlined in the Unit Guide.

NATIONAL UNIT AWARD: DEADLINE MAY 1ST

Most Outstanding Unit National Security Program

Your narrative should typewritten and highlight each part of your program and what your Unit did to “ring the bells” for the National Security Program. Take the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone in your unit had on our mission to “ring the bells” to support the emotional and social needs of active, reserve, and transitioning military servicemembers and their families along with Law Enforcement, Fire, and First Responders. Please include up to five digital pictures when submitting report. Each report should have a cover page with the logo and include the Unit Name & Number, District #, President’s Name, and Chairman’s name.

Must be submitted digitally in an electronic file no later than **May 1st, 2024**, to Department National Security Chairman.