

Legislative News

This has been a very productive year for our Legislative team. Many of the items on the 116th Congressional agenda have been passed into law and went in effect January 1, 2020. You played a big part in this by responding to the Legislative Alerts by writing and calling your Senators and Representatives. The new agenda for the 117th Congressional Agenda will come out March 1 before the Washington D.C. Conference. All of our Departments will have a legislative team going to Washington to advocate for our veterans. Your continued commitment to letting Congress know how you feel about this agenda will insure that we have another good year in 2020.

The Legion Act – It opened up membership to all veterans with an honorable discharge who served at any point since Dec. 7 1941. The only change is that Congress has reduced the number of eligibility periods from seven to two. They are April 6, 1917 to Nov 11, 1918 and Dec. 8, 1941 and continuing. No other restrictions are changed. This will continue until the time that Congress decides the U.S. is no longer in a state of war.

How does this affect the SAL and the Auxiliary? Our eligibility criteria changed along with the American Legion's. This is opening our doors to many veterans who were previously not eligible, so that opens both the Auxiliary and the SAL up to more eligible family members.

National Defense Authorization Act 2020 –

- 1. Service members who have been victims of negligent medical care will be able to hold the government accountable - A provision in the National Defense Authorization Act 2020 will allow active duty military or their surviving families to seek compensation for personal injury or death caused by malpractice by military doctors or dentist. The provision stops short of letting service members sue the federal government in malpractice tort claims. Victims or survivors can file a claim with the Defense Department for cases of medical negligence or malpractice by military health providers in medical facilities outside combat zones. If a claim is substantiated by the Department of Defense and determined to deserve less than \$100,000.00, DOD would pay the claim directly to the member or survivor. If the Defense Secretary decides that a sum larger than \$100,000.00 is warranted, the claim would be forwarded to the Treasury Department for payment.**
- 2. Repeal of the Widows Tax – This has been in the works for 40 years and has been affecting over 65,000 military survivors. When a service member dies while on active duty or from a military-related illness their families may be eligible for both the Survivor Benefit Plan and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Because of concurrent receipt laws (provisions to avoid double dipping in government benefits), for every dollar paid out via the Dependency Indemnity Compensation, one dollar was deducted or “offset” from the Survivor Benefit Plan insurance payment. This offset cost families roughly \$11,000.00 annually. Not only have families lived through the nightmare of losing a spouse or loved one, they have had to fight to stay afloat both emotionally and financially. The Repeal has a phased in approach to repeal the taxing. It will have a delayed start and it can take up to three years to reach the full elimination in 2023. This is a start, but there is still work to be done.**

3. **Military Spouse Reimbursement** – Many military spouses spend time and money getting re credentialed in their field when they move to a new state, costing money for exams and other fees as well as lost pay potential as they go through the process. Now Military spouses can get reimbursed up to \$1000.00 for re licensing and recertification cost each time they relocate with their service member.
4. **Military Pay Raise** – Our military will be receiving a 3.1% pay raise. The new pay rates went into effect January 1, 2020 and will be reflected on the paychecks that are issued on January 15, 2020.

Blue Water Navy Act of 2019

Starting Jan. 1, 2020 this act extends the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange to Blue Water Veterans who served as far as 12 nautical miles from the shore of Vietnam and have since developed 14 conditions related to the exposure. Some of these conditions include ...Type 1 Diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and many forms of cancer. If you are a veteran who served in Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between September 1, 1967 and August 31, 1971, you may also qualify for compensation and benefits for you and your family members.

POW/MIA Flag Act

The National POW/MIA Flag Act will ensure that the POW/MIA Flag is displayed whenever the US Flag is displayed, effectively ensuring that both flags are displayed concurrently every day at federal locations already designed under existing law.

Department of Alabama
American Legion Auxiliary
Legislative Report Form
2019-2020

1. Did your Unit educate members on upcoming legislation topics?
Yes ___ No ___ If yes, please list the ways that you got the information out to your members.

2. Did your Unit host a Town Hall Meeting? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, please explain and give details.

3. Did your Unit's Members contact their Representatives or Senators?
Yes ___ No ___ How did they contact them? Call ___ Email ___

4. Did you post The American Legion's legislative priorities on social media?
Yes ___ No ___

5. Did you let your members know that they can sign up for The American Legion's Legislative Action Alerts at www.apwiz.com/legio/mim/signup
Yes ___ No ___

6. Did you let members know about The American Legion's Legislative website? www.legion.org/legislative Yes ___ No ___

7. Did you let members know about the ALA Legislative Guide or give one to your members? www.alaforveterans.org Yes ___ No ___

8. How many Hours did your Unit have in promoting legislative priorities? ___
How many Veterans did you include in promoting legislative priorities? ___

Please use additional sheets if needed for you explanations. If you do a narrative report please include pictures and the National Report and Cover sheet.



**American Legion Auxiliary
National Report and Award Cover Sheet**

**PLEASE BE AWARE THE AWARDS AND REPORTING PROCESSES HAVE
CHANGED. READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CLOSELY TO ENSURE
THAT YOU HAVE SUPPLIED ALL NEEDED INFORMATION.**

Member: The National Report and Award Cover Sheet should be attached if you are reporting. Submission may make you or your unit/department eligible for a national award.

Department Chairman and Unit Chairman: This cover sheet should be attached to each narrative submitted as a year-end report or if you are applying for a department or unit national award.

- Send all award entries/year-end narrative reports to the appropriate program's division chairman unless otherwise noted in the Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan.
- All year-end narratives will be judged as award entries.
- Award winners are announced in the respective committee "pre-con" meeting prior to the start of ALA National Convention. All awards will be mailed to the winners' department headquarters at the close of ALA National Convention.

To all submitting this form:

Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. Through submission of reports and award entries, the submitter grants nonexclusive reproduction and publication rights to the materials submitted, and agrees to have their names and submission published for ALA use or commercial use without additional compensation or permission.

Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible. Award certificates will be completed using the information given on this sheet, so please be sure to complete the form in its entirety. For your convenience, a fillable version of this form is available online at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

For the award for which you wish to be considered, please refer to the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan at www.ALAforVeterans.org for the specific criteria such as photographs, narrative length, submission deadline, and point of contact. Please include all required documentation along with your submission of the National Report and Award Cover Sheet. All awards will be mailed to the department office after ALA National Convention. Department presidents may wish to recognize award recipients by presenting them with the award at a department function.



**American Legion Auxiliary
National Report and Award Cover Sheet**

Please note, your report will also be viewed as an award entry.

Complete the following if you are applying for a member award. Be sure to give the complete name of the member. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Name of state where you are a member: _____

Member Name: _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Nominating Member (if different from above): _____

Nominator's Phone number: () _____

Nominator's Email address: _____

National committee sponsoring award: _____

Type of Award: Department Unit Member

Name of the award you are applying for: _____

For a unit award or to submit a year-end unit narrative report, please complete this section.
Be sure to give the complete name of your unit. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Name of department: _____

Unit president/chairman (circle one) name: _____

Above listed person's ALA member ID#: _____ Phone number: () _____

Email address: _____

For a department award or to submit a year-end department narrative report, please complete this section:

Name of department: _____

Name of department chairman: _____

Chairman's phone number: () _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Chairman's email address: _____

Please see your committee's Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan to determine where to send this form.

