

## NAC Membership Categories

**Service Member** – Service member (voting) organizations maintain the provision of volunteers and VA recognized participation on local VAVS Committees at a minimum of thirty VA facilities.

**Associate Service Member** – Associate Service member organizations maintain the same requirements as Service Members, but at a minimum of fifteen VA facilities.

**Donor Member** – Donor Member organizations donate significant funds or materials to assist or benefit veterans at a minimum of thirty VA facilities.

**Associate Donor Member** – Associate Donor Member organizations maintain the same requirements as Donor Members, but at a minimum of fifteen VA facilities.

**Honorary Member** – Honorary Member status recognizes past service of organizations with a minimum of ten consecutive years of VAVS NAC membership, which are no longer able to meet current minimum criteria for active membership.

**Adjunct Member** – Adjunct Member status is available for those youth organizations which maintain the provision of volunteers and VA recognized participation at less than fifteen VA facilities. These organizations (e.g. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, National Honor Society, etc.) must be sponsored by a NAC member organization.

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*Additional specific information relevant to serving as a VAVS National Representative or Deputy Representative is available in VHA Handbook 1620.01 and other VHA Directives, which will be provided to you upon your appointment to the VAVS NAC.*



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## Guidelines for VAVS National Representatives and Deputy Representatives

## History and Purpose

The Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) was the first organizational element of the VAVS Program, which was established in 1946 with eight charter organizations. Today, more than 350 national and local organizations are represented in VAVS nationwide. The purpose of the NAC is to advise the VA Secretary through the Under Secretary for Health, and other Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Central Office staff, about promoting volunteer opportunities within VA facilities, and on issues relating to volunteerism and service to veterans.

## Overview

Membership is open to all national organizations that provide volunteers or donations to VA medical facilities, national VA cemeteries and VA benefits offices. Organizations must meet or exceed the minimum criteria for membership established by the NAC. Each organization designates one National Representative and up to two Deputy National Representatives.

The NAC meets once a year in a place of its own choosing to conduct business and exchange information. All National Representatives and Deputies, as part of their appointed duties, are expected to attend and participate in the NAC Annual Meeting.

Processes for the work of the NAC are detailed in the VAVS NAC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The SOP is established and updated by the VAVS NAC Executive Committee, which is a subcommittee, composed of service member organizations of the NAC.

## VAVS National Representative

VAVS National Representatives are the official liaisons between VHA Central Office and their organizations in all aspects of the VAVS Program.

The National Representative serves as a leader and performs a wide range of duties: Informs their organization's national officials of VAVS needs, opportunities, and accomplishments; serves as, or advises the organization's National Certifying Official; ensures that the organization is represented at important meetings, such as the organization's National Convention and the VAVS NAC Annual Meeting; is always responsible as a team leader; advises and assists with planning and improving the VAVS program; promotes the recruitment of volunteers and students within the organization; communicates with organization officials at local, state, and National levels, and VHA Central Office staff on matters of concern; encourages state and local membership to support the VAVS Program; reviews, distributes, and responds to various reports from the Director, Voluntary Service Office; arranges for VAVS workshops or speakers at the organization's national conventions; reviews and responds to Annual Joint Reviews.



As with any executive position, organizational skills are essential in this role. This means learning what needs to be done early on, putting a team together, coordinating the work of the team, and delegating responsibilities.

It is important that the National Representative takes the initiative to identify available resources, establish goals and priorities, keep good records, and know the policy, procedures, and capabilities of their own organization.

## VAVS Deputy National Representative

The VAVS Deputy National Representative performs duties assigned by, and works closely with the National Representative. Some typical duties may be to: review the minutes and cumulative attendance listings; assist with correspondence; share in troubleshooting or speaking assignments; attend meetings with, or in place of the National Representative; handle specific aspects of the team's work such as publicity, training local Representatives or Deputies, the organization's own award system, writing guidance materials or newsletters.

## Make a Positive Difference

Serving as a key leader for your organization on the VAVS NAC is an important role. Be an active leader who communicates well and enlists the support of an active team. You will have the opportunity to lead others in organizing, promoting, and coordinating your organization's program to support VAVS, and make a positive difference in the lives of our veterans.

*"The only safe ship in a storm is leadership."*

**- Faye Wattleton**