



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE)
One Veterans Drive (618/135), Minneapolis, MN 55417
612-467-2050 vhaminvol@va.gov



Material Donation Suggestions for Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Thank you for your interest in the needs of the Veteran patients receiving services at the Minneapolis VA Health Care System (MVAHCS). The following is a list of the items most needed as of the date at the bottom of the page. **Please contact us at 612-467-2050 or vhaminvol@va.gov with questions or to make a delivery appointment for donations.**

Clothing and Footwear: **We can only accept NEW items.**

- T-shirts with military, Veteran, or sports team logos
- Men's crew neck or V neck T-shirt undershirts
- Men's boxers or briefs underwear
- Zip-up sweatshirts
- Sweatpants with drawstring waist
- NEW Women's clothing – please contact us for more info
- Slip-on loafers or sneakers – men's sizes 8-14

Men's sizes
Small through
2 XL are
needed for
any of these
clothing items.

Food: **We can only accept pre-packaged, single-serve snacks and beverages.**

- Coffee – regular, ground, any size
- Hot cocoa – boxes of single serve packets, no sugar added is preferred
- Hard candy – regular or sugar free
- Single-serve, pre-packaged snack bars, candy, cookies, or chips
- Bottled juice or water, 6 oz. to 16 oz. bottles



Sewing items:

- Twin Size Quilts in patriotic colors/patterns or red/white/blue fabric
- Heart pillows – please contact us at vhaminvol@va.gov for preferred pattern

Other items: **NEW items only, please.**

- NEW paperback books or magazines.
- Magazine subscriptions for general entertainment, sports, recreation, cars/auto, home, news, Reader's Digest. Address to: MVAHCS, CDCE (135), 1 Veterans Dr., Mpls, MN 55417
- Neck pillows – U-shaped or bow-shaped, any color or filling
- Backpacks, duffle bags, or large tote bags
- Monetary donations and donations of gift cards are also accepted

Please contact us at vhaminvol@va.gov or 612-467-2050 with any questions or if the items you wish to donate are not listed above.

Needs lists with donation suggestions are also available at Amazon.com by choosing Registry & Gifting, and search for Minneapolis VA, Custom Gift List. We do not endorse Amazon, or any specific brand or vendor. Items listed represent things that fulfill patient needs or patient requests to best serve Veterans.





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Material Donation Suggestions for Recreation/Creative Arts Therapy

Please contact us at 612-467-2050 or vhaminvol@va.gov with questions or to make a delivery appointment for donations. We are only able to accept **NEW** items.

The following is a list you can use as a guide for our special needs, program support and/or equipment.

- **Portable Boombox CD Player with AM/FM Radio:** These devices not only help provide music therapy but also help Veteran patients re-learn motor skills and how to operate devices as part of their rehabilitation therapy.
- **White noise sound machines such as *Homedics SoundSpa®* or *SoundSpa® Mini*:** These machines cover the noises of the hospital with natural soothing sounds.
- **Card Games – NEW only:** Card games such as UNO™ or SKIP-BO™ that are playing card-based games are great for use by our short-term and long-term inpatients.
- **25-100 piece Jigsaw Puzzles –** Large or jumbo piece jigsaw puzzles with outdoor, sports, or patriotic themes are used for therapy and entertainment.
- **Large Print Adult Color-by-Number Coloring books:** These provide entertainment and mental stimulation, and can be used as part of a physical therapy or occupational therapy plan.
- **Universal phone and tablet chargers:** Wall chargers and cords for Android and Apple products keep the Veteran patients connected by keeping their phones, tablets, or iPads charged.
- **Baseball hats with logos of branch of service, Veteran, or sports team logos:** Baseball hats are a comfort for the Veteran patient, and can be a necessity if able to go out on facility grounds or into the community for a reintegration outing with Recreation Therapy staff.
- **JOY FOR ALL™ – Ageless Innovations Companion Pets:** These robotic pets (cats and dogs) are used by the Behavioral Recovery Outreach Team to calm and soothe Veterans with dementia, memory loss, or other cognitive difficulties.
- **Monetary donations to GPF 8148 – Patient Recreation Fund:** This fund is used to support a variety of recreation activities, supplies and events, entertainers and community outings.
- **Larger projects or items are available for individuals or groups to sponsor. Please contact us at vhaminvol@va.gov or 612-467-2050 to request more information about these options.**

Please contact us at vhaminvol@va.gov or 612-467-2050 with any questions.

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Greeting Cards and Holiday Cards for Veteran patients

Cards, letters, and special greetings are distributed to our Veteran patients by Volunteers or staff. General cards or letters (Thank you for your service, thinking of you, thank you) are accepted any time of year.

All donated greetings are held for a minimum of 7 days after receipt before distribution to patients, for infection prevention precautions. Please consider this when sending greetings for specific holidays such as Veterans Day or Valentine's Day. All cards, letters, children's artwork and other greetings are reviewed for content before delivery to Veteran patients.

Card and letter writing tips:

- Fold a piece of paper in half and make your own card. We encourage schools, organizations, or groups and individuals to spend a few minutes making cards. Children's artwork on cards is encouraged.
- Use Thinking of You or holiday cards and write a note of encouragement.
- Start the greeting with Dear Veteran or Dear Friend.
- Be positive and upbeat, be thankful.
- Sign with your first name only – *no last names, for donor privacy.*
- Include your group or organization name, if applicable.
- Do not put a date on them; they will be distributed throughout the year.
- If mailing multiple greetings, we do not need the envelopes, only the cards.
- Please note: greetings received with religious content are given to Chaplain Service for distribution.

For privacy and safety reasons, the following items are not allowed on cards or items to be distributed to Veteran patients:

- No scented markers or perfume, no confetti or glitter.
- No candy or other items inserted or taped in the cards.
- No personal contact information such as last name, address, phone, email, or website.
- No photographs of people.

Cards can be mailed to:

MVAHCS
CDCE (135)
One Veterans Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55417

Questions? Please contact the Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) at vhaminvol@va.gov or 612-467-2050.

ATTENTION ALL VETERANS

2023 Minneapolis VA Health Care System Creative Arts Competition

PURPOSE

The key purpose of the Veterans Creative Arts Competition and Festival is to recognize Veterans for their creative accomplishments and to educate and demonstrate to our community the therapeutic benefits of the arts! All Minneapolis first, second and third place entries will be submitted to the national level of the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition.

ELIGIBILITY

Participants must be enrolled in the Minneapolis VA Health Care System before entering the competition.

CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION – Creative Writing entries will be mailed to the VA and must be typed and double-spaced. Personal Essay, Short Script, Humor (Prose), and Military Experience (Non-Poetry) entries: maximum 850 words. Short, Short Story: maximum 1000 words and must contain a beginning, middle, and end. Poetry: maximum 48 lines.



Creative Writing categories include: Poetry, Essay, Military Experience, Short Story, Short Script, Group Creative Writing and Special Recognition. All entries must be typed, double-spaced, with upper and lower case letters. Each entry **must** include the name of the eligible Veteran and title of the submission.

PERFORMING ARTS COMPETITION – All Dance, Drama, and Music entries must be **3 (three) minutes or less** in length. These entries will be filmed in June by VA staff via a virtual platform while you are at home (on a smartphone, tablet, or computer).



Music sub-divisions include: Instrumental and Vocal. Each includes Solo or Group, Original Compositions and Special Recognition. Each sub-division has multiple categories, such as rock, jazz, classical, etc.



Drama categories include: Solo and Group; Prose and Poetry; Dramatic, Patriotic, Inspirational, Comedy, Interpretive Performance, Mime, Juggling, Magic, Puppetry/Ventriloquism, Multimedia Video, and Special Recognition.



Dance categories include: Solo and Group, Ambulatory, Wheelchair, Assistive Devices, Novelty, County/Western/Folk/Ethnic, Interpretive Movement, Freestyle/Hip-Hop, Tap/Jazz/Ballet, and Special Recognition.

For a complete list of all categories, entry forms, competition guidelines, and to schedule an appointment, **contact staff in early May 2023 for June submission.**

Creative Writing: Missi Wendt, Recreation Therapist: 612-467-1536

Dance, Drama, Music: Kathryn Larson, Creative Arts Therapist: 612-467-3622

ATTENTION ALL VETERANS
2023 Minneapolis VA Health Care System
Creative Arts Competition

VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION



Fine Art categories include: Acrylic Painting, Oil Painting, Watercolor, Monochromatic Drawing, Colored Drawing, Pastels, Sculpture, Original Design in Pyrography, Printmaking, Pottery, Black and White Photography, Color Photography, Digital Art, Military Combat Experience.



Applied Art categories include: Glazed Ceramics, Stained or Painted Ceramics, Woodworking, Carving, Jewelry (not beads), Crocheting/Knitting, Mosaic, Collage, Assemblage, Original Design in Needlework, Original Design in Fiber Arts, Knotting, Leather Stamping, Leather Carving/Tooling, Metalwork, Glasswork, Beadwork, Scroll Saw/Fretwork, Mixed Media, Group Art Category, Special Recognition Physical Disability, Special Recognition Mental Health Challenges.



Kit categories include: Leather Kit, Wood Building Kit, Model Building (Plastic/Wood/Metal) Kit, String Art Kit, Latch Hook Kit, Craft Coloring Kit, Figurine Painting Kit, Paint-by-Number Kit, Sun Catcher/Sand Art Kit, Fabric Art Kit, Needlework Kit, Transfer/Engraving Art Kit, Mosaic Kit, Combined Kit.

All art must have been **completed/photographed after October 1, 2022**, except Military Combat Experience entries.

Flat art must be mounted, framed, **and have hardware attached for hanging.** **Artwork Size Restrictions:** Each National Art entry must be able to fit into **one box**. The **box** can be up to 150 pounds, up to 165 inches in length and girth, combined. Length cannot exceed 108 inches. To measure packages, use the following formula: **length + 2x width – 2x height**

Girth (all the way around the object, either going from top-to-bottom and then all the way around the object or side-to-side and then all the way around the object (whichever is smallest) + (Added to) **Length** (the distance from top-to-bottom or side-to-side, whichever is greatest) = NO MORE THAN 165 inches.

For more information about guidelines and how to submit entries, contact:
Joleen Peterson, Recreation Therapist: 612-467-5883

Visual Art entry deadline is Friday, June 30, 2023

All artwork, writing and the filmed performances will be available for public viewing at the VA
Medical Center

1st floor Auditorium, July 11th- July 13th, 2023

First, Second and Third place entries in all divisions from the Minneapolis VA Health Care System competition will have the opportunity to compete in the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition.



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CDCE

Volunteer Opportunities with MVAHCS

The Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE), formerly Voluntary Service, has many volunteer opportunities available. **All open opportunities are listed on [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org) by searching for Minneapolis VA.** To become a Volunteer, please contact our office at 612-467-2050 to schedule an appointment.

Minneapolis VA Medical Center:

- Clinic Office Clerical Support
- Compassionate Contact Corps (*virtual volunteer*)
- First Impression – Curbside Assistant
- First Impression – Greeting/Wayfinding
- First Impression – Emergency Department
- First Impression – Blood Draw
- Inpatient Pharmacy Volunteer
- MyHealthVet Volunteer
- Patient Escort Volunteer
- Patient Escort Volunteer – Client Assistance Service
- Patient Satisfaction Survey Volunteer
- Front Desk Volunteer – Prosthetics Department
- Social Work Office Assistant
- Telehealth Volunteer
- Travel Pay Office Volunteer
- Voluntary Service Office Assistant
- Media and Communications Volunteer
- Inpatient Wards Supply Runner
- Palliative Care Unit Volunteer – Last Watch
- Palliative Care Unit Volunteer – Hospice
- Companion Rider



Other Twin Cities area opportunities:

- Anoka Vet Center or St. Paul Vet Center – Office Volunteer
- Homeless Programs Volunteer – CRRC, Harmon Place, Minneapolis

Patient Transportation Drivers:

- Anoka Co., MN; Blue Earth Co./Nicollet Co., MN; Ely, MN; Hibbing, MN; Steele Co., MN; Virginia, MN; Winona Co., MN; Eau Claire Co., WI,

Community Based Outpatient Clinics – Ambassador Volunteer, Rochester, MN

Group Volunteer Opportunities at Fisher House, Minneapolis VA:

- Contact the Fisher House Manager at 612-467-5602