

HOW TO HOLD A REVITALIZATION EVENT OR PARTICIPATE IN A TAL DISTRICT REVITALIZATION

Committee:

Membership

Contact Information for Questions:

membership@ALAForVeterans.org

Step-by-Step Instructions:

Revitalization is about identifying new and current members with new ideas that breathe life into units that are declining in membership and mission outreach. Revitalization is also about providing mentors for struggling units, providing training for new members and finding leaders to replace longtime chairmen and officers. More importantly, revitalization is about finding, exploring and trying new ways for all members to become more engaged in meaningful opportunities for mission outreach. Outlined below are three revitalization events that your unit may want to consider:

1. Hold an open house for your unit.

- Establish a time and place for your open house.
- Promote your open house by sending flyers/pamphlets/postcards/brochures to your units' current and former members. Work with your American Legion post to obtain a roster of their membership so you can send information to their households.
- Notify your local newspaper of the event and post flyers within your community. Newsletter and news release templates are available at <https://www.ALAForVeterans.org/Resources/Marketing---Promotional-Materials/>
- During the event, have several tables set up and manned by unit members. Tables to include are:
 - Membership: Members can renew/rejoin or sign up as a new member. Make sure to have plenty of membership applications, American Legion Auxiliary At-A-Glance brochures and Legion Family brochures.
 - Program tables: Set up tables for each program in which the unit participates. Include information regarding each program and include pictures of the units' activities if possible.
 - Member benefits: Have a unit member available to answer any questions and highlight all of the member benefits. Display copies of *Auxiliary* magazine and make sure to have plenty of copies of the member benefits flyers and the Auxiliary Emergency Fund brochure.
 - ALA national website: Enlist a member to demonstrate how to navigate the ALA national website and assist members in creating a login and/or paying their dues online.
- Keep a list of those attending the event. Don't forget to follow up afterwards to thank them for coming and to notify them of upcoming unit events.

2. Hold a phone tree night

- Establish a time and place for your phone tree night.
- Obtain a list of expired and former members. If the unit currently has access to ALAMIS they can pull this report themselves or you can request a report from your department.
- Enlist the assistance of unit members to make phone calls to expired and/or former members. *See the sample phone script at the end of this document.*
- Have members offer to drive and pick up dues from members.
- Keep a list of members who renew. Follow up to thank them for their membership and to keep them informed of unit activities.

3. Participate in a TAL District Revitalization

• Preparing for a TAL District Revitalization

- Departments: Contact National Headquarters for a schedule of TAL visit(s) to your state. Assist affected units prepare for revitalization events.
- Units: Contact your department headquarters to see if/when a TAL district revitalization event will be scheduled in an area near you.
 - Identify a revitalization coordinator(s) or point of contact(s) to organize the unit revitalization
 - Solicit ALA members to participate. Contact other units within your district to see if they would like to participate. You may wish to create two groups from your volunteers: One group to stay at the location and make phone calls to former/expired/department headquarters unit members (see attached sample script) and to be available to speak with any walk-ins. Have a display table showing Auxiliary programs. The second group will ride along with TAL teams who are canvassing neighborhoods knocking on doors to make contact with expired/former TAL members and inviting them to rejoin.

Note: ALA members that go door knocking with TAL members may not always have an opportunity to ask each homeowner about women in the home who might be interested in the ALA. TAL members have a short amount of time when talking to someone. If no opportunity is presented to discuss the ALA, politely ask if the homeowner would like an ALA brochure to pass on.

- Make arrangements with the hosting post to have a section of tables and chairs for your needs. Create signs for your table(s).
 - Make arrangements to have ALA information (brochures, applications, etc.) for walk-ins. Have clipboards and writing utensils for both those who stay on site and those who go out knocking on doors with TAL members.
 - Arrange for drinks and food/snacks to be available for all of the participating volunteers.
- ### • Publicity
- Publicize the dates, times and information of the revitalization event in post and/or unit newsletters two months prior to the event so that members are aware that TAL and the ALA will be out in their community. This can also be used as a way to solicit volunteers for the event.

- Two weeks prior to the event obtain newspaper coverage. Display posters/flyers in the area (community bulletin board, grocery stores, church bulletin board, etc.). Let the community know that there will be ALA members available throughout the day at the location of the event to answer questions and talk to people if they are interested in joining and/or rejoining the ALA.
- **Unit and Post Rosters**
 - Obtain a membership roster for local units in the area to be covered as well as the department headquarters unit to identify any of those members that live in the area. Rosters for your individual unit can be pulled from ALAMIS. If your unit does not have access to ALAMIS, you can request a membership roster for local units from your department. Reports that show members who are paid and not paid for the current membership year are also available.
 - Ask the local post if they can provide a TAL membership roster with mailing addresses. This can be used to send mailings to Legionnaires to invite their eligible family members to join the ALA.
- **Letters**
 - Letters/invitations to the event can be sent to current unit and post members who may have family members who are eligible to join the ALA, members of the department headquarters unit in the local area who you may wish to invite to transfer to a local unit, and members who have not yet renewed or that you are asking to rejoin the unit.
 - See sample letters included in this document that can be used to contact current unit members, post members from TAL commander and unit president, and to past Auxiliary members from unit president.
 - Make your own mailing labels or secure mailing labels from department (check with your department to see if this option is available).
 - Letters should be mailed two-three weeks in advance of the revitalization event. This allows time for letters with wrong addresses to be returned. Keep track of any returned mail and update your records that the address currently on file is inaccurate. If the bad address belongs to a member of the ALA (current or former), notify your department headquarters so that they can update that member's record. *If your unit currently has access to ALAMIS, you can update the records yourself.*
- **Brochures**
 - From your department headquarters, order the "American Legion Auxiliary At-A-Glance" brochure and in the space provided on the back, place a label with the name, address and phone number of a contact person. Also include contact information for other participating units.
 - Obtain copies of the "ALA Member Benefits" flyer, fold and insert in the brochure. The Member Benefits flyer can be printed off the national website (found in the "Member's Only" section of the website under "Member Benefits") or ordered from your department.
- **Day of TAL Revitalization Event**
 - Meet at the designated time and event location. Advise participants to bring cell phone chargers for both wall and car.
 - Members who go out door knocking with TAL members: Take several of the "American Legion Auxiliary At-A-Glance" brochures that are stuffed with the

Member Benefits flyer and the local unit's contact information to hand out or leave on doors.

NOTE: Reminders when visiting homes:

- *Wear appropriate ALA-branded clothing; make a good first impression. Smile!*
- *Wear visible name tag with Auxiliary emblem on it if possible.*
- *Keep a list of the names and addresses where ALA information was distributed. Each TAL team will have their list of homes to visit. Ask (in advance of the event date) if the Auxiliary member may have a copy to use during the door knocking session.*
- Members who stay at the event location should set up a table/display of ALA program pamphlets/brochures and membership applications for any walk-ins.
- **Follow-Up**
 - Have a plan for who will follow up at a later date and contact anyone who was a walk-in (and those homes that you handed out ALA information to) and do it SOON after the event! Do not lose the momentum and fresh contacts you just made.
 - Consider writing an article for the unit/post/dept newsletter to “celebrate” the outcome of the event. Include helpful hints that made your event a success and state statistics for the number of new or renewed members. Also thank all of those members who participated and gave of their time.

(LETTER TO UNIT MEMBER CONCERNING REVITALIZATION EVENT)

It is recommended this letter be written on unit stationery.
SAMPLE LETTER

Date

Dear Unit Member,

As you know, the American Legion Auxiliary has a proud heritage of volunteering, and as a volunteer member you understand the importance of our programs and activities and the effect they have on our veterans, service members and their families. The possibilities for us to continue to have an impact in these areas are limited only by our creativity, desires and enthusiasm.

As a member you have been able to volunteer in many capacities in your unit. If you are a member who has not volunteered as much as you would like, now is the time to take another look your options and find new ways for our mission outreach programs to fit into your life. We also ask your help in attracting other women who want to make a difference in the lives of veterans, servicemembers and their families.

We invite you to attend a special revitalization event for Unit _____. This event will be held on *date* _____ at _____ *location* _____ from _____ *Start time* _____ to _____ *End time*.

A team of unit members will be available to answer questions on the Auxiliary's programs and activities to help you decide where your interests best fit and at what level you would like to participate. Please come by and visit us anytime between *Start Time* and *End Time*.

Thank you for being a member and a volunteer with our exceptional organization. We look forward to your continued membership and volunteer work.

Sincerely,

Unit President

Unit Secretary

(LETTER TO LEGIONNAIRE CONCERNING REVITALIZING A UNIT)

It is recommended this letter be written on post stationery.
SAMPLE LETTER

Date

Dear Legionnaire,

When you joined The American Legion, you chose to continue your fellowship with others who have served our country. You also chose to support an organization that stands strong for veterans and their rights as American citizens.

Our American Legion post is very interested in assisting the American Legion Auxiliary in re-organizing our local ALA unit. The American Legion is proud of this unit's past goals and accomplishments. Thanks to these Auxiliary volunteers, many veterans, service members and their families as well as our community have benefited.

To make this unit stronger, we welcome the eligible girls and women you know to join our American Legion Family. There are many different programs and activities for members of all ages to volunteer. Please contact either of us for additional information about the Auxiliary's programs and activities. We can be reached at XXX-XXX-XXXX and XXX-XXX-XXXX respectively.

The revitalization event for both Post _____ and Unit _____ will be held on _____ date _____ at _____ location _____ from *start time* to *end time*. Representatives from the unit will be available to speak to anyone interested in joining the American Legion Auxiliary.

Remember, those eligible for membership are the wife, daughter, mother, granddaughter, great granddaughter, sister and grandmother of a Legionnaire or deceased veteran who served during the eligibility dates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Post Commander

Unit President

(LETTER TO FORMER MEMBER ASKING HER TO REJOIN THE UNIT)

It is recommended this letter be written on unit stationery.
SAMPLE LETTER

Date

Dear Former Member,

When you joined the American Legion Auxiliary, you chose to stand strong for veterans, the military, their families and our communities. You chose an organization that has supported and touched with kindness many veterans and their families.

I know that you cared about the programs and activities of the American Legion Auxiliary. That is why I am inviting you to rejoin Unit _____.

An application for membership is enclosed along with a sheet showing the many benefits available to Auxiliary members. The dues are \$XX.XX for senior members and \$X.XX for Juniors. Please mail completed application and dues to:

Name, Unit Secretary
American Legion Auxiliary Unit XXXX
Street Address
City, State Zip

Or, please come visit us during our revitalization event occurring, Date at location from Start Time to End Time. Members of the unit will be available to answer any questions you may have about the Auxiliary and our programs as well as assist you in rejoining the unit.

If you have any questions, contact one of the individuals at the address and phone number listed below.

We look forward to your participation in the programs and activities of the American Legion Auxiliary!

Sincerely,

Unit President
Unit XXXX
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email

Unit Membership Chairman
Unit XXXX
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email

**SUGGESTED TELEPHONE SCRIPT
FOR
FORMER/EXPIRED MEMBERS**

Hello. This is _____. I am a member of the American Legion Auxiliary in insert city and/or state and I see that you were once an ALA member. I'm calling because we are conducting a membership drive and want to invite you to renew your membership.

If they reply affirmatively:

Great! I'd be happy to email or send you the application. Is this contact information still correct? (Verify address & email). If you aren't sure if you still have your proof of eligibility documents, you may be able to contact your previous unit or your department headquarters to see if they've retained them.

Optional: If there are other women in your family who might be interested in joining, please invite them. I can send additional applications or you can forward my email address to them.

If they object or reply negatively, simply thank them for their time.

If they have any questions that you are unable to answer, you can refer them to the department headquarters:

American Legion Auxiliary Department of XXXXX

Phone: XXX.XXX.XXXX

Name of Department Secretary

If you need to leave a message:

Hello. This is _____. I am a member of the American Legion Auxiliary in insert city and/or state and I see you were once an ALA member. I'm calling because we are conducting a membership drive, and we want to invite you to rejoin our great organization.

If you are interested in rejoining the American Legion Auxiliary, please call the Department of insert state at insert dept secretary/membership chair's phone number and they will be happy to assist you!

****Keep a record of the objections to find a pattern of responses. This indicates changes your unit may need to address to get members to pay their dues and participate in our programs. If your unit is not experiencing growth or renewals, changes should be made.**