



Department of North Carolina

Poppy National Action Plan

Bambi Riggsbee-Smith
919-225-4847 (text/cell)
107 E Markham Avenue
Durham, NC 27701
ncalahq@nclegion.org

Using the image and story of the Flanders Field poppy to educate people about the sacrifices of our military service members helps us raise awareness of The Legion Family and link us to our mission in the eyes of the public.

What can you do?

1. **Promote the Poppy program and increase poppy revenue.**

Ideas:

Member

- Contact local businesses for permission to distribute poppies on their premises. Make sure you have permission for liability purposes; in some instances, permits are required.
- Send a thank you to businesses that allow distribution. Consider using the Poppy Poster thank you cards, available through Emblem Sales, for your communication.
- Help local schools organize poppy drives. Make the drive competitive. Give a citation to the class raising the most money during their poppy drive.
- Wear a poppy to promote conversation and interest.

Unit

- Educate your community about how funds collected help veterans.
- Contact local legislative offices to announce poppy distribution days, and request proclamations declaring Poppy Days in your community.
- Deliver poppies to local media outlets (television, newspaper and radio) along with facts about where and when poppies will be distributed in your community. Even if they are not visible "on air," these people tend to be influencers in the community.

Department

- Distribute material and make it available to members. Poppy tools are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- Organize a department poppy drive with The American Legion Family. Encourage The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, Riders, and Junior members to make poppy distribution rules that are available at your department headquarters for members.
- Publish material for units in your department to send to organizations and businesses to foster positive relationships and encourage their owners to promote the poppy.
- Have your department leaders promote the Poppy program by writing letters to community leaders and hold a Poppy Making Day. Teach your leaders about the poppy's symbolism



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and how the poppy can build positive relationships. Consider using the Poppy Poster thank you cards, available through Emblem Sales, for your communication.

2. **Increase the number of poppy makers in your department.**

Ideas:

Member

- Set up meetings with recreational and occupational therapists at local Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers (VAMCs), Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) or community hospitals to incorporate poppy-making into their therapy programs.

Unit

- Distribute “*How to Recruit New Poppy Makers*” promotion information. See resource section in this program Plan for information.
- Partner with The American Legion to recruit poppy makers within their post homes and departments.
- Post information on “*How Veterans Can Make Money by Making Poppies*” in local VA homes, medical centers, clinics, nursing homes and other community organizations that house and care for veterans.

Department

- Inform veterans that those enrolled in department poppy production will be paid for each poppy completed, as outlined in department agreement with the facility (if applicable).

3. Celebrate National Poppy Day and educate your community on the meaning and the history of the poppy.

Ideas:

Member

- Search Pinterest.com for ideas of items you could distribute alongside red crepe paper poppies, like Spritz cookies.
- Send a bouquet of poppies and bookmarks to school with your child.
- Make a poppy wreath for the door of your home, office, or school.
- Collect donations at your workplace/hair salon/doctor’s office to donate to the Poppy program.
- Tell your story on Facebook of who your poppy represents or remembers on National Poppy Day. Don’t forget to tag with #PoppyDay #LegionFamily.

Unit

- Talk to leaders of nearby post and units to make sure key areas in your community are covered, and organize a poppy distribution at local Memorial Day ceremonies. Make sure to wear your Auxiliary branded apparel.
- Invite a local dignitary to lay a poppy wreath at a memorial in your community and invite unit members to be present. Consider singing patriotic songs or other ways to involve your unit member.