

American Legion Auxiliary Department of North Dakota VA&R Program

Tips for starting a 'Troop Care Package' program

If your unit would like to start a program to ship 'care packages' to deployed troops, consider the following.

- Pre-packaged individual sized healthy snack, examples are jerky (review the ingredients because, pork products are prohibited in some countries), trail mixes, granola bars, and fruit snack.
- Drink mix packets, examples are Gatorade, lemonade, iced tea, and powdered drink mixes, Include a few sugar-free options as well.
- Pre-packaged, microwavable foods, examples are dried boxed pasta dishes such as macaroni and cheese, popcorn, dried noodles, canned pastas, oatmeal packets, and other snacks that come in their own bowl. Remember – dinnerware can be scarce in some location, so ask whomever you are sending things to about this.
- Non-perishable, pre-packaged food, examples are canned/packed tuna, fruit cups, peanut butter, soups, and other canned foods.
- Pre-packaged, individually wrapped chocolate candies or bars, *Tip*-wait until the winter months to send chocolate, as it will melt in the mail at other times of the year. Be mindful of the climate at the destination as well.
- Toiletries such as travel-size shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, body wash, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, and other hygiene items. *Tip*-pack these in packages separate from any food items.
- *Tip*-Check the expiration dates on all items and avoid sending items that expire in six months or less that your shipping date. You never know if delays may be encountered when shipping to the destination.

Include a brief note letting the recipient know that your American Legion Auxiliary unit has sent the care package. The note might also briefly explain how someone from your unit can be reached, and whether you would like the recipient to share the package contents with other in his or her military unit.

When mailing your package/s you will need to complete a military overseas form at your local post office.