



National Poppy Day® is just around the corner!

2024 National Poppy Day is: Friday, May 24, 2024

Are you unsure about what you can or cannot do with poppy fund money? These questions can be answered by reading the *ALA Poppy Guide Program Guide* at www.ALAforVeterans.org. In accordance with the American Legion Poppy Program and poppy fund rules (revised in 2013 and 2014 by the American Legion National Executive Committee), poppy funds may be used for the following:

1. For the rehabilitation of veterans honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces after April 6, 1917.
2. For the welfare of the families of veterans of the above named period.
3. For the rehabilitation of hospitalized military service personnel returning home and awaiting discharge who require treatment in service hospitals.
4. For the welfare of veterans, active military personnel, and the families of veterans and active military personnel of the above named period where financial and medical need is evident.
5. For the purpose of poppy kits and supplies used to make symbolic poppies and poppy items that will be distributed for donations to the poppy fund.

Scholarships (or funds to aid with higher education) have to be for a veteran or their immediate family member who demonstrates an immediate financial need. For example, if a student meets poppy fund eligibility and demonstrates a financial need (i.e. delay in delivery of post 9/11 GI Bill funding impacting their academics), the unit may decide to use poppy funds to assist the student.

NOTE: When the reference is made to “veterans and their family,” it means immediate family and dependents. Immediate family consists of wife, husband, daughter(s), and son(s) who live with the veteran. If a grandchild lives with the veteran, that child could be considered immediate family. If the veteran is deceased, then poppy funds cannot be used. Poppy money cannot be used for a family member who does not live with the veteran.

If your unit wishes to create their own scholarship(s) as a way to use their poppy funds, please keep in mind the criteria that must be met by recipients in order to stay within the guidelines for proper usage.

Use of poppy funds is allowable for care packages only when it is for a welfare need (such as first aid topical treatment or vital hygiene items) as opposed to a comfort need, and not comfort/leisure items (such as baked goods or books).

This list and other information on the use of poppy funds may be found in the *Poppy Program Guide*, which is available for download on our website at www.ALAforVeterans.org/Programs/Poppy or to purchase a hard copy, contact American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales at (888) 453-4466.

Note: Unless a department imposes restrictions, each unit can decide where they want their poppy funds used, as long as it follows the five criteria listed above. Poppy funds must be used only for the welfare of veterans and their families and active-duty military and their families when a financial or medical necessity exists.

Poppy funds may also be used for a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival, since the purpose of this program is to provide rehabilitative therapy to veterans through various forms of art therapy. Units may also send their poppy money to their department headquarters earmarked for a state Veterans Creative Arts Festival, or units may send their poppy money to the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters earmarked for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Poppy funds *CANNOT* be used for the following:

1. Any general operating fund of a department, unit, or post.
2. Any community service project that does not strictly benefit the welfare of an individual veteran/military servicemember or the welfare of his/her family.
3. General maintenance, beautification, or improvement projects of American Legion or Auxiliary facilities, including adding ramp(s) to a post home.
4. Investments, even those that would bring profit to the unit or post.
5. POW/MIA programs.
6. Memberships, including other veteran support organizations such as Gold Star Mothers.
7. Contributions to, or payouts from, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.
8. ALA Girls State/ALA Girls Nation fees.
9. Flags or flagpoles.
10. Scholarships which do not restrict eligibility solely to military servicemembers or their children, or where financial need is not evident.
11. Mileage, travel, or lodging expenses; registration of conference fees; or costs incurred by a person – including ALA members, volunteers, and staff – to attend any meeting, conference or event, even if is about veterans, military, or any other topic.
12. Attire or uniforms use by volunteers or staff in promoting or conducting ALA program activity or business.

Others sources for information can be found at www.ALAforVeterans.org/Programs/Poppy, or the ALA action plan for the Poppy Program (Members Only section of the website), and Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/ALAPoppy. Facebook is a great way to see how we are promoting our Poppy Program. It is also a wonderful resource for new ideas as well as a way to share all the fantastic ways your department or unit are promoting the poppy.