



# SITE COORDINATOR HANDBOOK

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Show Your  
**GR☆TITUDE**  
for Those Who Served

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*“This nation will remain the land of  
the free only so long as it is the  
home of the brave.”*

– Elmer Davis

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*“The willingness of America’s veterans  
to sacrifice for our country has earned  
them our lasting gratitude.”*

– Jeff Miller

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# What is a Site Coordinator (SC)?

SCs are the super volunteers who register to be the main point of contact between the Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) point of contact at the VA site (formerly VAVS), the Soldiers’ Angels (SA) representatives (where present) and the Home of the Brave campaign.

## SCs:

- Coordinate with the CDCE point of contact and the SA point of contact (where present) to help plan a Veterans Day celebration at a VA Medical Center
- Attend Home of the Brave meetings for site coordinators
- Respond to communications
- Submit an Event Detail Form listing specific details about the event
- Help CDCE and SA reps decide how to spend the allotted budget (Veteran shirts, caps, food, prizes)
- Potentially lead a fundraising activity for items not covered in the budget or execute a “drive” for needed items
- May need to create a volunteer activity outside the VA such as tying no-sew blankets if volunteers are not allowed in the facility
- Coordinate volunteers and in some cases recruit volunteers
- Complete and submit an after-action report and photos detailing the celebration, volunteers, volunteer hours and lessons learned

**Site coordinators are key to the success of this Veterans Day campaign and letting Veterans know we remember and appreciate their sacrifices. We are here to help every step of the way!**

## Campaign Overview and History

Soldiers’ Angels Home of the Brave is a campaign that works directly with Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) and corporate partners to provide employees and employers the opportunity to show their gratitude for veterans on or around Veterans Day. The campaign began in 2012 as a corporate social responsibility activity for the employees of Hewlett Packard. The activity provided much-needed items to veterans at VA facilities and to the homeless veteran population with the mission to thank those we owe for our freedom. Since then, the program has evolved into an annual campaign that allows hundreds of employees from some of the country’s largest corporations to participate and show their gratitude.

**Our mission** – To honor and show gratitude to every generation of Veteran for the sacrifices made in service to our country

### Purpose

- Recognize veterans at VA Medical Centers in celebration of Veterans Day through visits and events - including shirts, caps, thank you cards and other needed items
- Engage employees in Veteran community service

# About Soldiers' Angels

## May No Soldier Go Unloved

Soldiers' Angels has a 96.5% Efficiency Rating and has become one of the highest rated nonprofits in the country. Awards include: GuideStar Platinum Participant; 2020 Top-Rated Nonprofit from GreatNonprofits; Four Star Charity from Charity Navigator; and meets all 20 Standards for Accountability from the Better Business Bureau.

## MISSION

The mission of Soldiers' Angels is to provide aid, comfort and resources to the military veterans, and their families

## VISION

The vision of Soldiers' Angels is for military, wounded military, veterans, and their families to have access to needed community resources and support

## VALUES

The Values of Soldiers' Angels: Compassion, Dedication, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Collaborative, Credibility, Responsiveness

"May No Soldier Go Unloved" encapsulates the motivation behind Soldiers' Angels. The volunteers of Soldiers' Angels work tirelessly supporting our nation's veterans, wounded heroes, deployed service members and their families.

***May No Soldier Go Unloved,***

***May No Soldier Walk Alone,***

***May No Soldier Be Forgotten,***

***Until They All Come Home.™***

# Communications

Communications kit including site posters, flyers, letterhead and banners will be available to Site Coordinators (SC). More information is available on the SC portal. The password will be given to all SCs. The overview slides, Impact Report, and other materials will also be posted to the portal.

To contact the Home of the Brave, reach out to the campaign director, Katie Bowen, [kbowen@soldiersangels.org](mailto:kbowen@soldiersangels.org)

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# CDCE Points of Contact

The Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Development & Civic Engagement (CDCE) was, "founded in 1946 to provide for our nation's Veterans while they are cared for by VA health care facilities" (<https://www.volunteer.va.gov/AboutVAVS.asp>). CDCE coordinates everything from (community assistance) volunteers, programs, and events to (contributions) gifts and donations in support of our Veterans.

To learn more about CDCE, please visit: [www.volunteer.va.gov](http://www.volunteer.va.gov). Chiefs of CDCE, CDCE Coordinators and Specialists are our primary points of contact at the VA medical facilities for Home of the Brave events.

CDCE points of contact (POCs) were provided the opportunity to register their facility for this year's Home of the Brave campaign. The information they submit consists of their contact information, contact information for a backup, as well as the basic information for their facility such as number of beds. You can access the information submitted by the CDCE POC for your location on the SC portal.

# Contacting Your CDCE

The site coordinator is responsible for collaborating with the local CDCE leader to organize and plan their event, but first, contact your local SA representative (where present). In cases where there is more than one site coordinator, it is important the coordinators assign a CDCE Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

## Specific actions:

- Contact the Soldiers' Angels Representative (where present)
- Contact the CDCE Point of Contact
- Determine the date for the Veterans Day celebration
- Find out what the current COVID-19 restrictions are and if they believe restrictions will be lifted before November
- Each site will be assigned a budget to be spent on t-shirts, caps, food, prizes, etc.
- In the initial meeting, introduce yourself. Let them know if you have been a site coordinator in the past
- Complete the shirt, cap order form available in the portal
- Confirm the best way to stay in touch and a cadence for communication
- Confirm the back-up contact information and division of responsibilities

## Key information to confirm and review with the CDCE POC:

- Complete the Event Form
  - o Date, time and location of the HOB event(s)
  - o Type of event
  - o Has this event been done before?
  - o What role will HOB volunteers play?
  - o How many volunteers are needed?
  - o What time should volunteers report and where?
  - o Will there be any other volunteers participating that are not with Home of the Brave?
- Is there a maximum # of volunteers?
- Are there any restrictions, i.e., minimum age for volunteers?

# Coordinating Home of the Brave Site Events

Site Coordinators collaborate with the CDCE to plan and manage Veterans Day celebrations. Events are generally held the first two weeks in November. Keep in mind the t-shirts, caps, banners, thank you cards and other items ordered for your site may not arrive before **October 29, 2021**.

## Events vary by location. Past site activities, include:

- Bingo
- Barbecues
- Concerts
- Donation drives
- Football watch parties
- Parades
- Patient luncheons
- Baby showers
- Patient visits

Traditionally, Home of the Brave has provided t-shirts or caps and thank you cards for all Veterans at the facility based on the bed count. Soldiers' Angels will assign a budget for each site to be used on shirts, caps, food and/or prizes. Items for Veterans are sent directly to the CDCE and/or the Soldiers' Angels office (where present).

## What if there is more than one Veterans Day event at the site I support?

- Dependent upon volunteer availability, HOB has supported more than one event for each site.
- An example may include patient visits and supporting a ceremony
- It is important to capture logistics and what is needed for each event so that it can be shared with employees at our partner companies.

## Do I recruit Volunteers?

- Home of the Brave Campaign partners will advertise for volunteers within companies
- Volunteers register on the HOB site
- The first shipment of volunteer shirts will be received by 29 October.
- Volunteers need to register by the deadline to be guaranteed a shirt – we will try to send an additional shipment to cover those who register late but no guarantees as shirts are ordered in advance

## Catering - food

- If your event includes food, please ensure you understand dietary restrictions of the patients. Check with the CDCE
- Before going to a local vendor for food donations, reach out to Amy Palmer, [apalmer@soldiersangels.org](mailto:apalmer@soldiersangels.org)

## What to do if you receive no or little response from your CDCE POC

We recommend a recurring meeting with each CDCE POC and Soldiers' Angels representatives (where present). It also helps to add calendar reminders for key deliverables.

If you are unable to reach your POC, please let [Katie Bowen](#) know and she will collaborate with you to reach your CDCE lead.

# Volunteers

Home of the Brave Site Coordinators manage the volunteers for their CDCE location.

## Recommendations:

- Email calendar invite to volunteers and include details for the volunteer activity.
- Set up a logistics meeting with volunteers before the event.
  - o Review volunteer activities and where help is needed. Delegate who is doing what
  - o Send directions and parking information to volunteers
  - o Have a meeting spot pre-determined
  - o Provide guidance on do's and don'ts for patient visits this may include what to say, what to wear, what rooms you can go into and which you can't, the age requirement of volunteers, and facility restrictions

## Volunteer Criteria

Each VA facility has regulations about volunteers. Always check with your point of contact (POC) at the facility on the criteria that their volunteers must meet. If you are a returning Site Coordinator and are working with the same point of contact that you have in previous years, it is still a good idea to request the volunteer criteria for their facility, as this can change from year-to-year based on situations and circumstances.

## Preparing for Volunteers

The Home of the Brave committee will support you in preparing for and managing your volunteers. On or around August 9, 2021, the Home of the Brave committee will release to all employees and our partner companies a communication directing volunteers to register on the website beginning October 1st.

It is also recommended that after the announcement is sent, the Site Coordinator send out volunteer requests to peers at their work location to generate more local support.

## Volunteer Sign-up

Volunteers will have the opportunity to sign up for their local Home of the Brave event(s) on October 1st via the Volunteer Sign-Up button option and corresponding form on the Home of the Brave website. We need all volunteers – even friends and family – to register. A spreadsheet of registered volunteers will be posted to the SC portal 2-3 times a week.



# Volunteers (Cont'd)

## Meeting Your Volunteer Numbers or Quota

Your POCs at the VA Medical Center will provide you with a maximum number or number range for how many volunteers they would like to support their event. In some instances, CDCE POCs will request only 1-2 volunteers, while in others, will request 50+. The number of volunteers needed by a medical facility in support of their Veterans Day related event will vary based on the type of event, the facility, and the type and number of Veterans attending or participating in the event.

If there are a number of volunteers registered and your numbers are full, see if it is possible to accommodate more people such as, creating more than one shift of volunteers or planning an additional opportunity. Once you have met your volunteer numbers or quota, please inform [Katie](#). She will then reach out to our webmaster who will remove your location from the volunteer sign-up form. Our webmaster will also place verbiage on your Event Site Detail webpage notifying prospective volunteers that volunteer numbers for your event have been met.

In some locations, meeting your volunteer numbers can prove to be difficult. While priority for volunteer spots goes to sponsor company employees and Soldiers' Angels volunteers, family members and members of your community may be considered for volunteer spots, only if you are unable to meet your volunteer numbers. If you need to supplement your volunteer numbers with family members and members of your community, please let us know in advance of that recruitment and ensure that all volunteers fill out the volunteer sign-up form. Additionally, ensure that these individuals meet the volunteer criteria defined by your VA.

## Communicating with Your Volunteers

The Home of the Brave committee asks that Site Coordinators determine the best frequency and manner in which to communicate with their volunteers based on their judgement and the type of activity the volunteers are expected to support. However, the Home of the Brave committee expects that Site Coordinators provide their volunteers with, at minimum, the following information:

### ***Specific details related to their event and how they're expected to support, including:***

- Event date and time
- Event location
- Volunteer meeting date and time
- Volunteer meeting location
- Detailed description of the activities they tasked with performing or supporting
- The attire specified for the event
- The specific time the volunteers are expected to support (*i.e. some events may last all day, which can allow volunteers to support the event in shifts.*)

## Volunteer T-Shirts

We will provide Home of the Brave t-shirts for volunteers who support the Veterans Day related event at your VA medical facility – only guaranteed if they meet the deadline for registration. We will collect volunteer t-shirt sizes from the data the volunteers provided in the volunteer sign-up form. Volunteer shirts are sent to each SC for distribution. Extra shirts should be donated back to the VA. Home of the Brave caps can be purchased on the Soldiers' Angels store online.

## Capturing Volunteer Feedback and Hours

Capturing volunteer feedback/stories and photos, as well as the names of volunteers and hours spent supporting and participating in the Home of the Brave campaign provides us with the information we need to develop the business case for continuing the program.

Immediately following your event or as soon as possible, please complete a post event form. We will let you know where to post all the details after your event. A total listing of volunteers, volunteer hours, and items donated to your VA will be sent to the VA to be recorded under Home of the Brave.

# Donations

Donations are a great way to thank and honor our Veterans and support our VA Medical Centers.

- **Local fundraising and community support**

- We encourage our Site Coordinators and volunteers to engage their employee base and local communities in supporting Veterans through Soldiers' Angels and the Home of the Brave Campaign. Donations to Soldiers' Angels are tax deductible and can be made directly from the Home of the Brave website or deposited at your local Wells Fargo branch. Site Coordinators should connect with Amy Palmer at [apalmer@soldiersangels.org](mailto:apalmer@soldiersangels.org) to discuss plans to solicit **IN ADVANCE** of that solicitation taking place. Please ensure we know in advance when soliciting national companies or local offices of national companies.

- **Do a Drive**

- Each VA medical facility has a needs list prepared by CDCE. (i.e. hygiene items, under garments, robes, sweat shirt and pants)
- Your CDCE point of contact can provide you with the needs list
- Please ensure that you provide the list of items donated during the drive to Home of the Brave including the item, quantity and estimated value

- **Amazon Smile**

- Register for a percentage of purchases made with Amazon to be donated to Soldiers' Angels
- Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) to register

- **Company gift match**

- Ensure Soldiers' Angels is listed on your company donation gift match and volunteer hours match program
- In most cases, companies with these programs double monetary gifts and give funds for the number of hours donated to nonprofit organizations

# Fundraising

Depending on the Veterans Day celebration chosen for your site, you may need to do some local fundraising or reach out to vendors for support. In the past, SCs have raised funds by recycling, putting out jars for donations, selling pizza lunches, etc. They have asked local restaurants to donate food and NFL teams to donate prizes. **FIRST**—reach out to Amy Palmer, [apalmer@soldiersangels.org](mailto:apalmer@soldiersangels.org) in advance to let her know what you are looking for before soliciting. SA can provide gift cards to Veterans Canteen Service and national chains like Walmart. While we want you to be able to fundraise, we want to ensure it does not compete or conflict with any other Soldiers’ Angels fundraising activities.

# Thank you

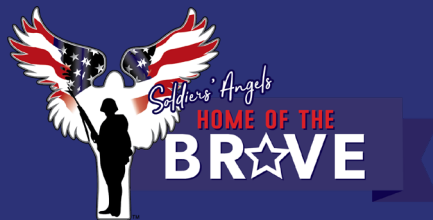
To help Home of the Brave show appreciation to individual volunteers, we ask that Site Coordinators send an email to all those that volunteered at your event on behalf of the campaign. We will provide a template on the SC portal.

**Please send any questions you may have to:**  
[kbowen@soldiersangels.org](mailto:kbowen@soldiersangels.org)

# Acronym List

- **CDCE** – Center for Development & Civic Engagement
- **HOB** – Home of the Brave
- **POC** – Point of Contact
- **SA** – Soldiers’ Angels
- **SC** – Site Coordinator
- **SPOC** – Single Point of Contact





Thank You!



[kbowen@soldiersangels.org](mailto:kbowen@soldiersangels.org)



[SoldiersAngels.org/HomeoftheBrave](https://SoldiersAngels.org/HomeoftheBrave)



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