



VOLUNTEER NEEDS AT TOMAH VAMC

Updated December 2012

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer at the Tomah VA Medical Center. As a VA volunteer, you not only help the Veterans and staff at the Tomah VA, but you'll enjoy many benefits yourself:

- **Making a difference** – no matter what your assignment, you'll be making a difference in the lives of others.
 - **Service/Honor** – our Veterans bravely served our country; now you can “Serve those who served.”
 - **Health benefits for YOU** – research shows that volunteering is actually good for your health! It keeps you active, intellectually stimulated and involved!
 - **Recognition** – the VA has a well-established system of recognizing our valued volunteers!
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Patient Visitors: Veterans are at the Tomah VA “24/7” and always appreciate someone who can spend some one-on-one time with them. Volunteers also take patients to the recreation center, the Canteen store and cafeteria, the library, the pond, bowling alley, etc.

Volunteer Drivers – Drivers in the Disabled American s (DAV) Transportation Network drive donated vans and take outpatients to their VA appointments. There are vans at the following locations: Tomah, La Crosse, Stevens Point, Wausau, Marshfield, and Boscobel. Most appointments are at the Madison VA Hospital or Tomah VAMC. All scheduling is done by DAV. Volunteer drivers are required to have a VA-provided physical.

No Veteran Dies Alone: The Tomah VA offers special end of life care, including two “hospice suites” for Veterans and their spouses/family. Volunteers are needed to provide extended one-on-one care and attention to s during their final days. Volunteers’ names are kept on an “on call” list and will be called when needed; we try to provide volunteer coverage around-the-clock. Training is provided.

Coffee Cart: Volunteers are needed to provide coffee to outpatients in two busy waiting rooms: outpatient clinic in Building 400 and outpatient Pharmacy in Building 407. Ideally, coffee would be available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. until 2 or 3 p.m.

Kiosk Proctors: In early 2013, waiting rooms will be equipped with kiosks where outpatients can check themselves in when they arrive for appointments. The check in process will alert the staff that the Veteran is there, update any contact information, etc. Volunteers will be needed to assist Veterans with this new process.

Scanner: The Fee Basis office is in need of a volunteer to scan and index documents. Computer access will be needed, which means the volunteer would have additional background checks to accomplish and training to complete.

Veterans History Project: The Library of Congress has created the Veterans History Project to encourage Veterans of all wars to share their personal stories of service to our country. Volunteers interview Veterans and record the interviews, which are then forwarded to the Library of Congress. Visit <http://www.loc.gov/vets/> for more information, including sample interview questions.

Pharmacy: Assistance is requested to help mail out medications to outpatients.

Special Projects: Can't commit to a specific assignment or schedule? We'd be happy to place your name on a "Special Projects" list – we'll call you as special needs arise. Examples include: large mailings, special events, projects that require additional helpers. If you can make it, GREAT! If you can't, we understand and we'll call you the next time.

Recreation on the Wards - Playing cards, especially Cribbage and Sheep head; playing any number of Wii Games; take vets to the Canteen-store or restaurant; karaoke a few times a month or weekly. All of the equipment is here, ready for a volunteer to help a Veteran!

Loving Spoonfuls: Many Veterans need assistance at mealtime, either in preparing items to eat (opening milk carton, silverware, buttering bread, etc.) or in eating. Volunteers in the Loving Spoonfuls program receive additional training so they can assist at mealtimes and provide special one-on-one attention to a while he enjoys his meal.

Golf Course Attendant – Volunteers work at the "Pro Shop" at the s Golf Course, assisting patients with equipment (golfing, fishing, bikes, etc.) and accepting money from the paying customers. This assignment is available April – October.

Office Work: Various offices request the assistance of volunteers to answer phones, make copies, file, help with mailings, compile folders, etc. Computer experience is not always necessary.

My HealtheVet: My HealtheVet is the gateway to health benefits and services for Veterans, providing information on various health problems and the opportunity for Veterans to register and journal their medical conditions (blood pressure, weight, blood sugar, etc.) and order prescription refills on-line. Volunteers are needed to provide instruction to Veterans; showing them how the site works and helping them register. The website is www.myhealth.va.gov/.

Tax Preparers: Since 2005, the Tomah VA's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program has assisted Veterans, staff, volunteers, and community members with preparing income tax forms. We are looking for tax preparers to help with the upcoming tax season. Training will be provided by the IRS and the group of volunteers, starting in December.

Telephone Visitor: Many Veterans live alone and are somewhat isolated – few family or friends around. A volunteer can make a phone call to inquire as to how the Veteran is doing, make chit-chat and get to know the Veteran a little. Some Veterans are referred by the provider for this kind of social service.

Library on Weekends/Evenings: The patient library is typically closed on the evenings and weekends, unless volunteers are available to provide coverage. Library services are more limited on the evenings and weekends and training is provided.

Don't see what you're interested in?

Please don't let that stop you! We take great pride in finding assignments to fit the interests of the volunteers.

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