HOW TO PERFORM A BUDDY CHECK DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC
BUDDY CHECK: NOW MORE THAN EVER

With the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that is affecting us all, the Buddy Check program is perhaps more important now than ever before. The idea is to connect with veterans who may need assistance but don't know where to go or who to ask.

The American Legion Family already reaches out to fellow Legionnaires at this time of year but now we must do more. It's not enough to simply pick up the phone and call the veterans you know. We need to check on ALL VETERANS in each of our communities to be sure they are safe, feeling OK and have access to health care and services. If we hear of someone in need, we can offer someone a ride, deliver groceries or supplies and, in short, be there for them.

Some people won't ask for help. Encourage members of your post to reach out and offer assistance to other veterans in your area. Please be particularly attentive to seniors, a population that is especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of this virus.

The important part is to let the veterans in your community know you care and can provide assistance. It's what we do for our battle buddies.
HOW DO I ORGANIZE A BUDDY CHECK?

1. Gather up a team to call members, former members and all veterans in your area. If each member in a team of 10 calls just 10 people, 100 veterans can be reached in one sitting.

2. If you don't have a list of current and former members at your fingertips, visit myLegion.org and download the names of current members and those who have let their memberships expire.

3. Save the file of members and those whose memberships have expired onto a spreadsheet or copy and paste into a Word file to distribute among your team members. Send out several copies of the lists via email.

4. Divide up the call list among your team members. Some may have personal connections with the member or veteran and should make that particular Buddy Check.

5. Make a list of local resources and phone numbers of services such as pharmacies with drive through windows, restaurants that are now providing order ahead takeout and meal delivery vendors that may be in your area, such as DoorDash, Grubhub and Uber Eats. Be prepared to educate people on how they can place orders online or by calling. Having these resources prepared ahead of time will be helpful when your team is making calls.

6. Start calling to see how people are doing. Ask if they need anything.

7. Use the spreadsheet to record your calls and identify those who may need a follow up or additional assistance.

8. Leave contact information in case the call doesn't get answered so you can be reached in the future.
The following scripts can help you and your American Legion Family team make Buddy Checks on members and other veterans. Use these, modify them or draft your own before reaching out.

Remember, the most important part of the call is to see if the veteran and family are OK and if the Legion can assist them in any way.

**MEMBER:**

Hi, [MEMBER’S NAME]. This is [YOUR NAME] from your American Legion Post [XYZ]. I want to thank you for your membership and to check in on you and your family.

The coronavirus is a global pandemic that has changed life as we know it. I’m calling to see if there is anything that your American Legion post can assist you or your family with. Remember, your fellow Legionnaires are always here for you. If you, or a member of your family need anything, please let me know and I will do my best to help.

Thanks again for your service and know that you can call me anytime at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Let’s stay in touch.

**VETERAN / NON-MEMBER:**

Hi, [NAME]. This is [YOUR NAME] from American Legion Post [XYZ]. I am calling to check in on you and your family.

The coronavirus is a global pandemic that has changed life as we know it. I’m calling to see if there is anything that American Legion Post [XYZ] can assist you or your family with. And really, just to say that we are here for you. If you, or a member of your family, need anything, please let me know and I will do my best to help.

Thank you for your service and know that you can call me anytime at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Let's stay in touch.
QUICK ANSWERS TO WHAT THE LEGION DOES

NATIONAL

1. Stands as the nation’s largest and most prominent voice for effective VA health care and disability benefits, GI Bill education and career opportunities. More than 3,600 American Legion service officers are handling over 700,000 veterans’ cases at any one time, across the country and around the world. No other organization provides as much free service for veterans and their families.

2. Mentors thousands of children and youth through healthy, educational, competitive and patriotic programs, including Boys Nation, Oratorical Competition, American Legion Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, flag education, Scouting, Junior ROTC and more.

3. Supports our nation’s troops and a strong Department of Defense through innumerable programs and services for active-duty, National Guard and Reserve components, as well as resources for military families and advocacy for military retirees.

DEPARTMENT

1. What the Department does in support of veterans

2. What the Department does in support of children and youth

3. What the Department does in support of troops/national security

POST

1. What the Post does in support of veterans

2. What the Post does in support of children and youth

3. What the Post does in support of troops/national security