

Be the One: Frequently Asked Questions

The American Legion is changing lives and saving lives through its [Be the One mission](#). By raising awareness through national campaigns and local events coordinated at the post level, the American Legion Family is directly saving lives of veterans.

American Legion departments, districts and posts have thrown their support behind Be the One. American Legion Family members have hosted symposiums, conducted awareness hikes and 5Ks, and helped connect at-risk veterans with vital resources in their communities.

On the national level, highlights include a partnership with Columbia University on training, the creation of resource materials, launch of a monthly [Be the One podcast](#) in September 2023 and more.

But those achievements only signal the beginning. Here are some common questions and answers about Be the One.

Question: How can my post best support Be the One?

Answer: There are many ways to lend support. Like other sanctioned American Legion initiatives, it is best to take the concept for Be the One and incorporate it into the needs of your community. For example, a large post in a populous area might want to consider a symposium or similar event where VA staff members, mental-health experts and community agencies that support mental health and similar topics could present their information to veterans, their families and others. A smaller post in a rural area might want to conduct Buddy Checks as a way to educate local veterans about Be the One and the assistance the post and other community groups can provide.

Question: Is there a preferred time to conduct a Be the One event?

Answer: Through resolution, The American Legion has declared the first day of each month as a Be the One day so that is ideal. But there is such a critical need to spread the word about preventing veteran suicide, really any day, anytime, anywhere is appropriate.

Question: What promotional materials are available for posts to use for their Be the One events?

Answer: There are videos, brochures, pop-up banners, wallet-sized cards and other resources available at bethene.org/resources. The web page was updated with more resources in early 2024, and additional resources will be added throughout the year.

Question: Be the One is a great way to promote other initiatives like growing membership, supporting other causes, etc. Can we incorporate “Be the One” to draw attention to other priorities?

Answer: No. The American Legion’s Be the One mission is the organization’s highest priority and using those words to promote another initiative would create confusion and detract from the brand.

Question: I’ve seen Be the One incorporated into membership drives that include Be the One panels or other activities. What’s the difference?

Answer: There have been departments, districts and posts that have put together multi-pronged events featuring Be the One and other initiatives like a membership drive. It is completely fine to showcase Be the One as part of a larger effort that incorporates other

aspects. Just be sure to use Be the One only when highlighting suicide awareness and outreach, and not for other topics.

Question: What is covered in the training by Columbia University?

Answer: All American Legion Family members are encouraged to take The American Legion-Columbia University training that walks them through the steps to interact with and respond to veterans who may be in crisis. After the training, participants will be able to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to determine at-risk individuals.
- Identify risk factors and warning signs.
- Outline the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk.
- Communicate effectively with an individual who may be at risk of hurting themselves.

Question: Where can I learn about upcoming sessions and sign up for the training?

Answer: There will be multiple monthly virtual sessions, as well as in-person ones at national meetings, some department events and at other times. For updates on training dates and times, and to register, visit **betheone.org/training**.

Question: Our post wants to make a donation to Be the One. How do we do that?

Answer: Right now, you can [make a donation here](#) to American Legion Charities and select or note that the funds should be directed to Be the One. You can also mail a check made payable to “American Legion Charities, Note: Be the One.”

Mail to:

American Legion Charities

Be the One

P.O. Box 361210

Indianapolis, IN 46236-1210

Question: Where can I find out more about Be the One?

Answer: The Be the One webpage, betheone.org, is regularly updated with stories, videos, resources and more.