

Frequently Asked Questions and Tips for Nominating Your Star Volunteers.

Q. Do I have to be a member to nominate a volunteer?

A. The nominator must be an employee of a NHPCO member hospice and/or palliative care program in good standing and volunteer nominee must be a volunteer at that same member hospice and/or palliative care organization as the nominator. To nominate, your organization must be an active current NHPCO member now and for your nominee to be awarded your organization must be renewed for 2024. To access the forms to submit a nominee, the nominator must log-in with their email and password. If you have questions about your organization's member status or log-in for member access, please contact solutions@nhpco.org.

Q. Does our program need to be an active participant of the We Honor Veterans program to submit a nomination to the We Honor Veterans Volunteer Service category, and must the nominee be a veteran?

A. Nominees to the We Honor Veterans Volunteer Service category must be a Veteran of or currently enlisted in a branch of the US Military AND the nominee's organization must be at least a Level 1 We Honor Veterans (WHV) partner to participate. If you have a question about your organization's WHV status, please contact solutions@nhpco.org.

Q. Can someone who doesn't work for our program nominate a volunteer from our program?

No, consultants, family members of patients, vendors, suppliers or other non-employees cannot nominate volunteers and will not be accepted. Please only have employees of your program submit nominations.

Q. Can I submit a nomination via email, mail or fax?

A. Sorry, but ALL nominations must be submitted via the online form alone. We cannot accept nominations or additional attachments to go with nominations (i.e. resumes, audio, video, photos, or newspaper clippings) via fax, mail or email

Q. If I cannot send additional materials or electronic attachments with my nomination, can I link to other webpages?

A. No, you must be able to relay the exceptional quality of your volunteer within the online form submission. Do not add links to outside websites in your submission as judges will not consider materials posted on other sites or media. Judges will only review what is submitted within the online form.

Q. My organization has multiple locations. Can each location submit volunteer award nominations?

A. Yes, each location can nominate volunteers.

Q. Can a single location submit multiple nominations for a single category?

A. No, but if you must absolutely do so please be sure that those nominees submitted are truly, truly exceptional. Realize that by nominating more than one volunteer in the same category from the same location, it can dilute the prestige of the other nominations in that category you submit and can give the impression that if you must submit multiple people in the same category, they are not truly exceptional in themselves. Therefore, it is strongly discouraged for one location to submit more than one nomination in the same category.

Q. Can I include multiple people (a couple, group or team) on a single nomination?

A. The volunteer awards are generally intended to honor the outstanding efforts of an individual volunteer as opposed to a group.

Q. Can I nominate non-volunteers?

A. No, these awards are intended for volunteers-only and therefore nominees cannot be employees, vendors or suppliers of your organization. These awards are not for people paid or compensated for caregiving, supplying or consulting for end-of-life care.

Q. How many words am I allowed to use in responding to questions on the nomination form?

A. Given the average length of a word is 7 characters per word, we have set caps on amount of characters one can enter into the entry fields. This helps focus nominations and foster, clear concise narratives to share your star volunteer's story. Talk to your volunteer nominees for more substance!

- Demonstrated Commitment - 175-425 words
- Made a Notable Impact - 350-450 words
- Realized Significant Personal Growth - 120-450 words
- Served as an Inspiration to others - 150-270 words

Q. Do the nominee and nominator need to be affiliated with the same member hospice and/or palliative care program?

A. The nominee must be a volunteer with the same member hospice and/or palliative care organization as the nominator.

Q. *Can a volunteer self-nominate themselves?*

A. No, they must be nominated by an employee of an NHPCO member organization.

Tips for Writing an Effective Volunteer Award Nomination

We know it is a little daunting to compose a compelling nomination for your wonderful volunteer nominee. To help you make the best case for your volunteer, past MyNHPCO Awards judges offer the following tips on writing an effective nomination that will stand out above the rest. You are sharing the story of your nominee's exceptional service. In composing the story, take care to clearly show how the volunteer met the criteria requested on the nomination form. The judges evaluate nominees based on the information requested, be sure your story speaks to the criteria.

- **Use quotes** - from staff, patients, and families that this volunteer has touched. Consider using anecdotes describing how the volunteer excelled or created a fulfilling experience for patients, staff, families, or the organization.
- **Use data** – Use reports and numbers to bolster your point on how your star nominee deserves award.
- **Be sure you are nominating in the correct category** – Be sure you have read the category description to be able to place your star nominee with the correct volunteer award.
- **Maintain focus on their work with your program** - Remember, you have a limited window through which to make your pitch for your volunteer to the judges, so avoid giving their entire life's story. You can certainly highlight an aspect of their life outside of volunteering at your program, but keep that brief and be sure it is germane to their work with your organization. Focus on the characteristics of *Commitment, Impact, Personal Growth, and Inspiration to Others*.
- **Talk to your volunteer** - Your nominee can offer more material you can use and this is especially helpful for the "Personal Growth" question.
- **Avoid clichés and over-generalizations in drafting your submission.** - Saying someone may "always have a smile" does not convey how they helped your program... If you are tempted to say they "have a hospice heart," choose instead to describe why and how they have a hospice heart.
- **Give yourself enough time to compose and edit your submission before you hit submit.**
- **Walk away from the computer for a bit or start a different task if you feel blocked while writing.**
- **Please be sure to thoroughly edit** - (which also may mean saving and waiting to look at it with fresh eyes the next day). Remember that your application tells your nominee's story – how they are the best volunteer and why they should win this award. You want to give the best impression possible.
- **Be sure to answer every question!** - Thank you so much for participating and sharing your volunteer's story!
- **Every nominee is a valued volunteer** – So take this opportunity to illustrate to the judges, who have never met your volunteer before, why this person is so fantastic and stands out from any other.