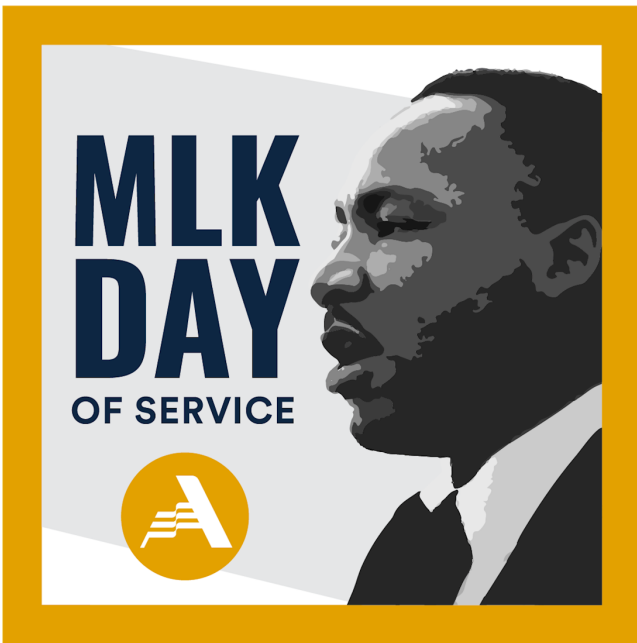


United We Serve



MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage all Americans to volunteer and improve their communities. During the last quarter-century, the MLK Day of Service has grown, and its impact increased as more Americans have embraced the idea that citizenship involves taking an active role in improving communities.

The National Day of Service is a defining moment each year when Americans across the country step up to make communities more equitable and take action to create the Beloved Community of Dr. King's dream.

While Dr. King believed the Beloved Community was possible, he acknowledged and fought for systemic change. His example is our motivation and call to action.

No matter the choice, service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions and moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a beloved community. It breaks down barriers by bringing people from different backgrounds together and it benefits those who choose to serve. Coretta Scott King said, "The greatest birthday gift my husband could receive is if people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds celebrated the holiday by performing individual acts of kindness through service to others."

"Not everybody can be famous but everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service."

— Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is a national day of service that takes place on the third Monday of January each year. The day honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and encourages Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

Here are some ways to participate in MLK Day of Service:

Volunteer at a national park: Many national parks host service projects that people can sign up for.

Work with community leaders: You can work with community leaders to adopt a monument, plant a community garden, or increase safe routes for kids to walk or ride bikes to school

Send care packages: You can send care packages to deployed troops, veterans, and wounded soldiers.

- **Fight childhood diseases** – Work together with your local health department to set up an immunization day or clinic to immunize children against childhood diseases. Help promote the event, pitch in to set up and assist with administrative work.
- **Bring a smile to the homeless** – Fill a pair of new socks with granola bars and bottles of water to give to homeless men and women you pass on the street.
- **Pitch in for the elderly** – Organize your group to rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters, or do housework for elderly neighbors. If you don't have an elderly neighbor, consider a senior citizens neighborhood community or senior citizen centers that allow volunteers.
- **Adopt a park** – Decide on a park to adopt. Grab some trash bags and pick up trash to beautify the park. Getting outside to care for the environment is a great way spend a few hours.
- **Care for furry ones** – Volunteer at an animal shelter to help clean up, play with the animals, groom animals, and walk the dogs. Your time spent here will make the shelter a nicer environment for the furry residents.
- **Donate old linens to an animal shelter** – Linen closets are often overloaded with too many worn out items. Donate old bath towels, blankets, and sheets to your local animal shelter. These household items are used for bedding, clean up and keeping the animals warm.
- **Read to senior citizens** – Aging eyes can make it difficult to read fine print. Volunteer to read letters, newspapers or magazines to residents in a local nursing home.
- **Book collection** – collect used magazines, paperbacks, and novels to donate to prisons, jails and shelters. These places are often overlooked when a group is hosting a book drive, but books are so needed at these community places.
- **Recycle old athletic shoes** – sneakers can be transformed into sports surfaces like running tracks, baseball fields and basketball courts. Nike's [Reuse-a-Shoe](#) program has ground down more than 28 million pairs of shoes turning them into more than 450,000 sports surfaces around the world. Donate collected sneakers at a Nike Store near you.
- **Collect Eyeglasses** – many nonprofit organizations collect old glasses and repurpose them by sending them to people in need. [OneSight](#) and [Lions Clubs International](#) are two organizations helping in this worthy cause. Research online which group has a location closer to you.
- **Stand up against hunger** – People struggle with hunger every day. Collect non-perishable food items from neighbors, family and friends and donate to your local food bank. Before collecting items, check out your local food bank's website to see what items are accepted.
- **Toy drive** – Gather used baby and toddler toys from friends, family and neighbors. Donate these items to a nearby church, synagogue, mosque, or temple for their youngest members.
- **Help a child to read** – become a literacy volunteer to tutor children at your local library or at an afterschool program. It's worthy of your time to help a child learn one of the most essential life skills.
- **Host a bake off** – Hit the kitchen and bake up a pile of goodies. Deliver to local police and fire stations as a way of thanking them for their community service

Please note: The counties listed are the only ones I could find something happening on (or leading up to) MLK Day on the 20th. If you're from areas not listed, you may be able to discover more activities and events going on, on your own.

Blount County

- 1/20 — Line up for march at 12:45pm, which will officially begin at 1pm going from Maryville College Campus with our final event to be held at 2pm.

Hamblen County

- MLK Breakfast—1/20/25 at 9AM: First United Methodist Church — 101 E. 1st North Street, Morristown, TN 37814 (\$20 per seat or \$200 for 8-seat table) For more information and tickets contact—Dr. Alpha Alexander at alphaava@aol.com

Knox County

"King Week" Schedule (Free Admissions) —

- **1/15—12pm:** Interfaith Prayer Service at Church Street United Methodist, 900 Henley Street
- **1/16— 8:30am-11:30am:** Leadership Educational Symposium at the University of Tennessee Student Union, 1502 Cumberland Ave,
- **1/17— 7pm:** Community forum at the Beck Cultural Exchange Center, 1927 Dandridge Avenue
- **1/18 — 9am-1:30pm:** Youth Symposium at Austin East High School, 2800 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue
- **1/19— 6-7pm:** Night with the Arts Tribute at Community Evangelistic Church, 2650 Boyds Bridge Pike
- **1/20 — 12-2pm:** MLK Memorial Tribute Service at Overcoming Believers Church, 211 Harriet Tubman St.



Remember for Participation to be counted, you **MUST** complete the online [survey](#).

<https://forms.gle/BMkABwrG9FejRbgt6>

Participation in at least **ONE** service day is a **REQUIREMENT** for successful term completion.

Please remember if you are doing any of these activities off-site, wear AmeriCorps gear and badge.

As always, get photos with **you** in them!