



How to Host a LAD Event

Hello and Welcome!

We Are Letters Against Depression.

We are a 100% FREE organization running entirely on volunteers and donations. No one, from our CEO down, is paid a salary. We rely on dedicated individuals, such as yourself, to complete our mission. Our organization does not discriminate on age, race, gender, ability, location, language, or religion. Anyone is free to sign up to receive a letter or to volunteer.

Our Mission

To send hope and support to those battling depression and other mental illnesses through our free handwritten letters. Our letters are packed with the affirming messages "You are not alone" and that "You matter"!

Our History

LAD was founded in October of 2014 by Robert Mason when he was struggling with his own depression. He found that when he wrote letters to himself in his journal, he felt better. From this humble beginning, we have grown to over **6,800** volunteers who come from over 30 countries around the world. On any given month, we have, on average, 100 active volunteers. We have sent over **45,000** letters and cards to over 60 countries, and counting!

Who We Impact

We are an organization that provides hope and support to those battling mental illness from every background and religion. We've sent mail to 70 different countries and we have had 3046 recipients in total. Letters Against Depression has delivered over 40,000 pieces of mail, letters, cards, hugs, and other goodies since 2014. We've delivered to regions in North America, South America, Africa, Australia, Asia, and Europe.

How to Use This Packet

Follow the guidelines we have set out! However, should you have questions, do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Contact Us

Email: LADInnovationComm@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.lettersagainst.org/>

Contact Form: <https://www.lettersagainst.org/contact>

1. Sign-up

You will want to register yourself/your organization at LetterAgainst.org. You can access the link to sign up for an account at the [Volunteer Portal](#).

If you are looking to have a company event with one point person, you may choose to sign up with the company name as either the first or last name and use a shared email. Having one account makes it much easier to track your company's impact, and this is recommended for corporate events.

A group account also allows one person to manage the information and track progress. The account never gets deactivated, even while inactive. Records of your contributions will continue to be attributed to that account. You can use it again and again for multiple events.

However, if you are offering your employees an opportunity to volunteer on their own time, you may wish to have them create their own individual accounts. They may even do so after a corporate event. Providing the option for your employees to track their individual work is more likely to keep them involved with volunteering after the corporate event. We can always confirm hours from individuals and companies upon request.

2. Planning your Event

Congratulations on signing up! There are several factors you might want to take into account if you are planning a group event.

1. Are you planning an in-person or virtual activity?
2. Will you be writing letters, decorating envelopes, or creating hugs?
3. Are you providing the materials?
4. Are you going to introduce the activity before the event or at the event?
5. Is your event going to be holiday-themed?
6. Do you want someone from LAD there?

If you are planning an in-person activity and wish to provide the materials, you may wish to stock up at the Dollar Tree. You will be able to find all the supplies you need there. From envelopes and paper to stencils and stickers, markers and colored pencils, and other art supplies, you can outfit your event on a budget. If you are not providing the materials, we still recommend a stop at the Dollar Tree for your

participants so they can decide which direction they want to go. Another resource is using items you have around your home. Being sustainable is awesome!

If your event is going to be holiday-themed, you may wish to coordinate your event to ensure you will have enough time to complete your activity and ship the materials to our headquarters in Florida. We pick up our mail on Mondays and Fridays. Then Rob sorts the mail, confirms receipt of the mail, and ships it out to our recipient. We ship worldwide, and often send holiday and birthday cards several weeks before the actual date. For example, we start sending Christmas Cards internationally the first week of December. Please plan your dates accordingly. If you have any questions regarding when items should be shipped, please reach out to Kim or Rob to confirm.

Coordinating with Letters Against Depression

After you've signed up and thought about what type of event you are hosting, you can determine whether you would like someone from LAD to attend. Our Founder and CEO, Rob, and Kim, our Innovation Council Chair and Board Member, have both spoken at virtual events. This is an opportunity for them to discuss LAD and mental health. They share personal stories as well as stories from our membership. They can also answer any questions from participants about LAD's history, give tricks and tips for writing letters or creating hugs, and disclose the best way to ship finished products.

Both Rob and Kim are located on the United States East Coast (EST). Since no one at LAD is paid, Rob and Kim both work full-time day jobs, but hours can be flexible. Kim and Rob can provide information and coordinate with the event lead, show up to part of your event, or stay the entire time. Rob and Kim can attend virtual and in-person events depending on location. Details about requesting a LAD spokesperson to attend the event can be discussed further by contacting either Rob or Kim at their emails below:

Rob: robert@lettersagainst.org

Kim: ladinnovationcomm@gmail.com

3. During the Event




Ok, so you've signed up, planned your event, and now the event is here! Here are some resources you can use to aid in your event.

First, set the mood and use our Spotify playlist, [found here](#):

Advice for Writing a Letter

The best advice is simple: "write it like you're writing to a friend".

Resources:

1. Attached is a detailed lettering writing guide created by one of our interns
 - a. [Letter Writing : Su's Toolkit](#)
2.  LAD- Decorating Envelopes Resources
 - a. This slideshow is helpful to present during the event. It contains QR codes with links to different videos and inspiration for your group members to write the letters. Below are each of the individual links of the QR code:
 - i. Calligraphy Writing Tutorial for Beginners:
 [How To: Calligraphy & Hand Lettering for Beginners! Tutorial + ...](#)
 - ii. Letter Decorating Inspiration:
 [Decorating Envelopes DIY: The Basics](#)
 - iii. [Letter Decorating Ideas \(Article\)](#):
 - iv. [Letter Decorating Ideas \(Article\) 2](#):
 - v. [Short Quotes to Include](#):
 - vi. [Other Ways to Volunteer at LAD](#):
3. You can also go to our [Youtube Page](#) and see our series on calligraphy, decorating envelopes, and making hugs, or click below.
 - i. [Janet's Introduction to Cursive](#)
 - ii. [Janet's Calligraphy Brushwork](#)
 - iii. [Janet's Calligraphy Structure](#)
 - iv. [Janet's Decorated Envelope](#)

Advice for taking the perfect group photo!

In Person:

Gather together and hold your letters up for the photo! You can choose to take pictures of all the letters stacked together in a pile to show how many letters you've written.

Virtually:

Have everyone hold up their finished product to the screen and take a screenshot!

Don't forget to take pics for your own social media and ours! We are happy to tag you and shout out your hard work!

4. After the Event

Congratulations on hosting a community service event with LAD!

Next, gather all your finished products. If you haven't taken any pics yet, this is a great time to do so!

Ship your finished products to the following address:

**Letters Against Depression
3211 Vineland Rd. #320
Kissimmee, FL 34746**

Afterward, **ensure you go back to the portal and mark as mailed so we know you sent the letters!**

Send your pics to LAD (LADInnovationComm@gmail.com) or tag us on the social media of your choice (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn), and we can tag you back! Just search "Letters Against Depression" to find us!

Some reminders: pay attention to how long the mail service you're sending through takes and plan accordingly when you're having your event. If you're trying to send cards for a specific holiday, then make sure to send them to LAD early enough to arrive before the holiday.

Checklist

- Sign up at Lettersagainst.org
- Reach out to Kim or Rob if you need further information or guidance
- Plan your event! If hosting a themed event for a holiday, plan with enough notice to ship your finished products with enough time to get processed.
- Determine whether you would like Rob or Kim to speak at your event
- Gather any needed materials for your event (paper, pens, stencils, stickers, etc.)
- Host your event
- Take pictures during the event!
- Collect the materials to ship
- Ship your final products to our home office
- Go to the portal and mark your letters/hugs as shipped
- Send any pics you took to Kim at LADInnovationComm@gmail.com
- Do you need any confirmation from us for hours? Please let us know!

Thank You

It is truly heartwarming to witness the power of unity and compassion displayed through this event. By organizing such an impactful gathering, you have created a safe space for individuals to share their experiences, find solace, and gain a renewed sense of hope.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the volunteers who selflessly devoted their time and energy to ensure the event's success. It is through your selfless acts of kindness that you have shown the true spirit of community and the profound impact we can collectively have on the lives of others. By helping LAD, you ignite a ray of hope for a brighter future, where individuals are not defined by their struggles but rather embraced with empathy and understanding.

Thanks for your and your company's invaluable contribution to Letters Against Depression and the well-being of our community. Together, we can create a society that nurtures compassion and offers unwavering support to those who need it most.

Sincerely,

Kim and Rob