

FIDELITY CHECKLIST

Veterans Socials take many forms and should be adapted to local circumstances and attendee needs and preferences. While adaptation is essential to hosting a successful Social, some elements of Socials have proved effective and should be maintained. Over time, as Socials evolve, adherence to some of these essential elements may start to diminish. **The following checklist will help you think through how best to maintain your Social to facilitate its ongoing success and stay true to its central purpose.**

Essential Elements – All of these elements must be present.

- The Social is located at a community location other than a VA facility.
- The Social is open to all Veterans in the community who wish to join.
- Attendance is not entered in the Veterans' medical records.
- The Social is held at least once per month (in-person or virtually).
- The primary objective is to foster social interaction in the community.
- The Social's format and content are shaped by attendees' preferences.
- The host encourages attendees to socialize outside the Social.
- The host is equipped with important information about VA and community services (e.g., Key Contacts Template and the National Resources Form).

Recommended Elements –At least three of these items should be satisfied.

- The Social is open to Veterans' family members and friends.
- The host welcomes first-time attendees as they arrive.
- The host is a Veteran.
- The host regularly solicits feedback from attendees to continually improve the Social.
- The host intentionally and consistently fosters relationships with community partners and Veterans (e.g., by contacting local Veteran organizations) to develop and sustain the Social.
- The host develops and implements strategies to transition hosting duties if needed.
- The host connects attendees with services they need.

Elective Elements – Hosts should attempt to integrate some of these elements into their Social.

- Connect with other hosts and seek out local Veteran-focused coalitions.
- Invite guests to provide information on topics that attendees are interested in.
- Create a newsletter.
- Develop a social media presence (e.g., through an attendee-initiated Facebook group).