

2026 Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Hometown Hero Banner Application

Veteran Information (Person to appear on banner)	
First and Last Name (as it will appear on banner)	
Branch of Military:	Years Active (e.g. 1955-1961):
Veteran is: <input type="checkbox"/> Alive <input type="checkbox"/> Deceased <input type="checkbox"/> POW/MIA	
Applicant Information (Person paying for banner)	
Either a phone number or an email address is required	
Contact Name	Relationship to Veteran
Phone number	Email address
Address	
<i>Photo Release: I hereby grant the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce permission to use the submitted photo, which includes a likeness of myself or a deceased veteran, in the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Hometown Hero Banner Program. The Chamber may use images of the banner in promotional material without notification or additional permission. I take full responsibility that all information provided about the veteran being honored is accurate.</i>	
Signature of Veteran*	Printed Name Date
Signature of Applicant	Printed Name Date
<i>*Must be signed by veteran if living. No exceptions can be made. Must be signed for every application even if a banner was purchased in the past. Surprise banners are not permitted.</i>	
Rules & Guidelines	
<u>Applicant must complete the requirements checklist on back of application</u>	
Payment (\$150)	
Please make checks payable to Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and reference "Hometown Heroes" on the check.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have included a check	<input type="checkbox"/> I want to pay by credit or debit card <small>The Chamber will contact you if your application is accepted</small>

Mail or drop off your application only to one of:

Wilmington Chamber of Commerce
Hometown Heroes Program
616 Davy Ln
Wilmington, IL 60481

Spins & Needles
614 Davy Ln
Wilmington, IL 60481

Requirements Checklist

Applicant must initial acknowledgement of each line below

- _____ Veteran served in the United States Armed Forces
- _____ Veteran is a current or former resident of Wilmington
- _____ Veteran is either a) on active duty, b) honorably discharged, c) died in the line of duty
- _____ Veteran (required if living) or Applicant has signed the photo release statement
- _____ Applicant has submitted a copy of a military verification form
- _____ Submitted photo shows the veteran in uniform
- _____ The photo is an original photo lab print, slide, film strip, or commercial print from original digital photo
- _____ The photo was NOT created from another printed photo, including home printed photos, scans of printed photos, photos taken of another photo, newspaper print, or a copy of an existing print
- _____ The photo is at least 3 inches by 5 inches in size
- _____ I understand photo acceptance is determined by the Chamber alone, and applications may be rejected due to the quality of photo submitted
- _____ I understand I must leave the photo with the Chamber so it can be scanned for the banner, and I will be notified when it is available to be picked up at a later date
- _____ I agree the Chamber shall not be held liable for any loss, damage, or destruction of original photos.
- _____ I understand the banner will be displayed during calendar years 2026 and 2027
- _____ I agree to the partial refund policy if the banner is unable to be displayed for two years for any reason
- _____ I agree that if I do not pick up the banner within 90 days of notice it will become property of the Chamber.
- _____ Any damage sustained to a displayed banner will be handled at the discretion of the Chamber.
- _____ I have read, understand, and agree to all Hometown Heroes Banner Program rules and requirements listed at wilmingtonilchamber.org/hometown-heroes

2026 Hometown Hero Banner Program Rules & Guidelines

The Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Hometown Hero Banner Program honor and recognize current and former residents of Wilmington who have served our country in a branch of the military.

Please read these guidelines before filling out the application.

Application Requirements

Nominees must meet all of the following requirements:

1. Be a current or former resident of Wilmington
2. Served in the United States Armed Forces
3. Meets one of the following criteria:
 - a. Is currently on active duty
 - b. Honorably discharged
 - c. Died in the line of duty

The following information must be provided:

- Signature for photo release
 - If living, the veterans must sign
- Photograph of the veteran in uniform (see details below)
- Copy of a military verification form (DD214, military ID, etc.)

Banner Design, Display Times, and Location

Banners are 24" x 48" double-sided vinyl. Each includes the Veteran's name, branch of service, years active, and a photograph. They will be displayed on poles along Route 53 (Historic 66) and Route 102 in Wilmington for a two-year period, between approximately Memorial Day through Veteran's Day. Requests for specific display locations cannot be honored, and banners are likely to display in different locations in their first and second years.

Photograph Requirements

This program **requires** an original photograph of the veteran in uniform. We can accept original prints, 35mm slides, or film strips. Original prints are those made from film negatives or a digital photograph.

We cannot accept the following: Home printed photos, scans of printed photos, photos taken of another photo, copies or reprints made from an existing print, newspaper images, or any image that did not originate from the original film or digital source.

It is important to the Chamber that the banner photographs maintain a level of image quality that is respectful of all our veterans. If you are unable to provide a suitable photo, determined at our discretion, your money will be refunded. We are mindful that this may prevent participation to some applicants, but we cannot print photos that do not meet the minimum requirements.

You must submit an original photograph. We will scan the photo for the banner, and you may pick it back up. You must leave the photo with us. If you are unwilling to do so, you will not be able to purchase a banner. The Chamber will make every effort to ensure your photo is returned to you in the same condition it was left with us. Your photo will be available for pickup after we have scanned it for your banner.

Photos need to be at least 3"x5". Larger is better as the photo on the banner will be enlarged to nearly two feet tall. Photos will be cleaned up digitally as much as possible to remove scratches, rips, and dirt. In some cases, photos will be too damaged to clean up enough to print on a banner. If this is the case you will be asked to provide an alternate photo. If no suitable photo can be provided, we will be unable to print the banner and your money will be refunded.

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Limitation of Liability

The Chamber assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage incurred to submitted photographs. Applicants acknowledge and agree that the Chamber shall not be held liable for any unforeseen circumstances, including but not limited to loss, damage, or destruction of submitted photos during the submission, review, or printing processes. Applicants are encouraged to retain copies of their submitted photographs for their records, and submission to the Chamber implies acceptance of this limitation of liability.

Cost

The cost to participate in the program is \$150 total for the two-year display period.

Partial Refunds if Program Ends Early

If banners are not displayed for the two-year period for any reason, the Chamber will refund applicants 50% of the original purchase price, minus actual printing costs. Refunds will be processed promptly upon confirmation that the second year of display will not occur. Applicants acknowledge and accept this refund, contingent on deducting printing costs, as a reasonable resolution for any non-fulfillment of the two-year term.

Deadline

The deadline to apply is March 31, 2026, or until all spots are full. We cannot accept applications for 2026 after this date.

Where to Apply

All applications, supporting documentation, and photos are to be submitted **exclusively to the Wilmington Chamber Office, 616 Davy Lane in Wilmington**, or next door at 614 Davy Ln. You may mail in your application.

Additional Information

The number of locations available are limited. Spaces are given to complete, qualifying applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Your application is not considered complete until **all** requirements are fulfilled. To help us stay organized, please do not submit an application without the accompanying photograph, service verification, and signatures.

At the end of the two-year display period, applicants will be contacted to pick up their banners. You will be contacted at the email or phone number you provided. Banner displays cannot be extended beyond the second year, but you may reapply to have a new banner printed using the same information. You do not need to resubmit service verification or the photo. Any banners not picked up within 90 days of notice become property of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and will be disposed of. Any damage sustained to a displayed banner will be handled at the discretion of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce.

Only one veteran may appear on each banner and only one banner may be displayed for any individual veteran.

You may purchase additional banners for your own personal use at the same cost of \$150.

Applying for a banner as a surprise to a living veteran is not permitted under any circumstances.

Questions?

Email info@wilmingtonilchamber.org | Visit wilmingtonilchamber.org/hometown-heroes