



**Virginia**  
**Recruiting SOI**  
**2022-2023**

# Our Mission



To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities.  
To advocate on behalf of all veterans.

Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

# Our Core Values



- Always put the interests of our members first
- Treat donors as partners in our cause
- Promote patriotism
- Honor military service
- Ensure the care of veterans and their families
- Serve our communities
- Promote a positive image of veterans
- Respect the diversity of veteran opinions

- Look at the VFW National Membership program, and align Post/District/State goals to that program
- Identify the needs of your Post/District/State (i.e. State to increase life memberships, new members, or retention)
- Ensure that each goal in your membership program is attainable and trackable

# Membership Program



Decide where you want to be on June 30, 2023 and divide that across all 12 months of the year (starting July 1, 2022). Set benchmarks, remember your life members are a huge number of members that help your statistics, create your team, and write your plan on paper.

Update your plan monthly. Talk about the plan at every Post/District meeting. Don't be afraid to make needed changes to the plan if the change is needed to ensure success. Ask for help. Get training and materials. Achieve your goal.

**“Take the ideas out of your head and write them on paper. That’s when they become a plan.”**

- Make a plan to “forward-think” past today to solve potential challenges early
- Create an action plan - not just a “plan” – what are the specific actions that must be taken to achieve success?
- Delegate short-term goals when appropriate

- Communicate the plan effectively & often. **Pro-Tip: Check for understanding**
- Execute the plan and move forward; analyze the results and adjust plan if needed
- Lessons Learned: take time at the end of the project to note what went well and what did not so the next project runs better



# Where Virginia Stands in Membership Now

## Virginia is:

- One of 52 departments
  - We have 13 districts
    - We have 127 posts (with At-Large)
- We serve in every community in the state

## Virginia has about 720,000 veterans

- If 10% are VFW eligible, we could have 72,000 members.
- We only have 31,542 members as of this year.

# Fundamentals of Membership



- The 3 R's of membership
  - Retain current members
  - Reinstate former members
  - Recruit new members

# Fundamentals of Membership (Cont.)



- Retaining current annual members
  - Email
  - Phone Calls
  - Note in the newsletter
  - Knock on their door
  - Mail them a letter
  - Engage on social media
    - Scan your followers for lapsed members

# Fundamentals of Membership (Cont.)



- Reinstatement of former members (lapsed at least 2 years)
  - Similar to renewing members, but a much larger pool to work with.
  - This could include unpaid At-Large members, members who moved here from other states, etc.

# Fundamentals of Membership (Cont.)



- The 3 R's put into perspective
  - **Retain** roughly 7,300 annual members
    - We will likely keep about 60%-70% of this amount (plus roughly 24,200 life members)
  - **Reinstate** nearly 10,000 unpaid members
    - We have the phone number/address for many of this number
  - **Recruit** new members to fill the gap
    - \*\*NEVER say there is no one to recruit\*\***

# The Art of Recruiting



## Step 1: Planning the Event

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Factors to consider for recruiting:
  - When (Weekend vs. Weekday)
  - Where (The actual store/location)
  - Weather (Are we inside or outside?)

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Who should work the event?
  - At least one person is the “recruiter”
  - People training to be recruiters
  - Other members show the face of the post and attract people similar to them
  - But...not too many (2-3 people per table)
  - Auxiliary can help also!

- **What should you put on the recruiting table?**
  - VFW Talking Points, Action Corps Weekly, VFW Magazine
  - Post information (newsletter, etc.)
  - Generic brochures
  - Unpaid membership roster
  - Roster of Posts
  - Eligibility requirements
  - **APPLICATIONS!!!**

**Break for 10 minutes**

# **Example 1 of how this actually works**

**You are planning your event. Knowing what we recommend to put on your table and who to bring, how do you relate to all of this information?**

## Step 2: Recruiting the veteran

- Tips of the trade
  - Read the person and identify the veteran
    - Ballcaps, bumper stickers, shirts, boots
  - The 8 words to greet a veteran
    - “Are you a veteran? Where did you serve?”
  - Formal vs. Informal recruiting
    - We are always recruiters



- Tips of the trade (Cont.)
  - Tell your story: In the military and VFW
    - There is the purpose of the VFW but also what makes it personal for you
  - The things people say: questions, comments and concerns
    - Don't get sidetracked
  - Bring it back to closing the deal

## **Step 3: Close the Deal and Complete the Application**

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Personal information
  - Needs to be fully completed
    - Get a good email and phone number (helps with the Action Corps sign-ups)
    - Try to get a physical address, not just a P.O. Box
    - We **DO NOT** need the social security number

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Military information
  - Military information needs to be aligned with VFW eligibility requirements
    - Get the dates of service (month and year)
    - Medal, ribbon, badge, pay, etc. that makes them eligible
    - Geographic location (major ocean for SSBN Sailors)

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Type of membership, payment, Post to join
  - Life membership payment
    - In full (debit, credit, cash, or check)
    - Payment plan
      - 12 months, no invoices mailed, no cash
      - THEY MUST HAVE DEBIT/CREDIT CARD AND EMAIL ADDRESS WHEN YOU RECRUIT THEM
      - They must answer the email from National HQs
  - Annual membership
  - The Post they want to join
    - One close to them, your Post, or At-Large (15048)

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Recruiter credit, former member number, signatures, and the stub
  - List your name and member number for recruiter credit
  - If a former member with their card, get the number
  - Possibly two signatures
    - All sign on the back
    - Those with a credit/debit card sign the end
  - Complete the stub and give it as their receipt and temporary membership card

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Transferring and reinstated members
  - Complete the application mostly the same
    - No payments for Life Member transfers
  - If an annual member or expired, try for life membership
    - If they stay annual, get a payment if they expire before June 30th, 2023
  - If reinstated, get your member number on it for credit
    - No recruiter credit for transferring members
  - Complete the portion on the back about transferring
  - Have them sign

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Current member who just wants to renew in a Post in **Virginia** but **NOT** transfer:
  - Complete the application just the same as a new member
    - Get their member number if they have their card
  - Pitch life membership
  - Get a payment (check your roster to ensure amount)
    - No recruiter credit for transferring members
  - Have them sign
  - Send it to the Post they belong to or State HQs for us to verify the membership and process



## **Step 4: Follow-up with the new member**

# The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Make them feel welcomed and wanted
  - Call/email/send a letter to the person welcoming them and invite them to the meeting
  - Arrange a carpool if needed
  - The National “Welcome Aboard” package
  - The National “Welcome Aboard” email
  - Introduce their spouses to the Auxiliary

**Break for 10 minutes**

# **Example 2 of how this actually works**

**You have heard a lot today. What is something new you learned? What is something you do when recruiting that helps get new members?**

# **Additional Tools and Information**

- The QM Tools (Online Membership System, OMS) Information
  - Your Post QM can pull unpaids and those soon to expire for your own Post
  - Host a small group at the Post and call members
    - It works!!!

- Other ways State HQ can use IT to help you:
  - EXCEL spreadsheets by zip code, post, etc.
  - State-wide email blasts
  - At-Large members: former (expired) members

## Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Advertising/PR items free to you
  - Print ads
  - Radio commercials
  - Videos
  - “Ad Slicks” for print
    - [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) (Department resources ---> promotional tools)
    - Local news and radio may run ads or interviews for free, some charge



## Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Membership Monday Webinars
  - Hosted by National HQs Membership Department
  - Held each month live via Zoom Meeting
    - Get Zoom link from OMS Notification (your Post QM can help with this)
  - Webinars are recorded and placed on vfw.org under, Membership Recruiting & Retention as well as the VFW Membership Facebook page

# Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)

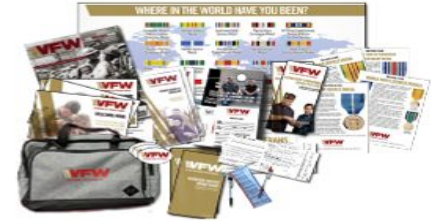


- Ordering supplies online
  - Use the online order form to order membership materials found on vfw.org
  - Most items free from National, but shipping is a cost
  - A kit, with a carrying bag, is an option to buy

## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EASY ONLINE ORDERING!

Instead of waiting for your order to be mailed or faxed in, make sure your Post gets the materials you need quickly and efficiently by ordering your materials online!

**Just follow these steps!**



1) Go to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) and click the "LOGIN" link in the upper right corner. Sign in when prompted.

*If you have not yet created an account on the website, follow the "Sign Up With TroopID" link to do so!*

2) Under "Membership Quick Links", select the Online Membership System (OMS) option.

3) On the left side of the page, you will see an option for Membership Order Form - click that link.

*You'll see that it automatically enters your mailing information! If you need your materials shipped elsewhere, go ahead and enter the new address. (This won't affect your address on file in our records)*

4) Use the dropdown list to indicate which items you need. It will automatically calculate the cost of items and shipping. When you're finished, click SUBMIT and it will take you to a billing page if there are any charges.

Once done, you'll receive an email confirmation and your order will be processed and sent out!

**IT'S THAT EASY!**

# Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



New Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ>



# Setting Goals and Achieving Success

- All-American and All-State plans as a guide
  - Can help a Post achieve great success
  - We have checklists on [www.vfwva.org](http://www.vfwva.org) to make it easier

- All-American
  - There are several parts to the plan related to recruiting.
  - Doing things through the year makes it easier to accomplish.
    - Make 100% plus 1 member
    - Conduct **TWO** membership events and report through the All-American Dashboard

## Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



**Major changes happen every year for both All-American and All-State plans. This course does not cover all changes and you will get more information in your annual SOI. You should read both plans in depth to learn more. The plans are on the State HQs website, [www.vfwva.org](http://www.vfwva.org).**

# Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



- All-State program requirements for Virginia point in one direction

## **Our overall goal is to STRENGTHEN membership and program participation**

- For membership that means...
  - More lifetime members
  - More annual members converting to be lifetime members
  - Stronger rates of annual members renewing
  - More legacy lifetime memberships



**The benchmarks for statewide membership through the year are:**

September 15, 2022: 75%

December 30, 2022: 90%

March 30, 2023: 95%

May 12, 2023: 100%

June 30, 2023: 105%

# Incentives and Special Awards

- There are several trips from National HQs for recruiting
- They include:
  - The D.C. Legislative Conference
  - Kansas City (National HQs)
  - National Convention
- See the All-American plan for more details

# Incentives and Special Awards



- There are several other awards from National HQs for recruiting
- They include:
  - Lapel pins for recruiting 1, 5, 10, and 15 members
  - CIC buckle or jewelry set for recruiting 25 members
  - National Aide de Camp cap and citation at 50 members
  - Medallion set for 75 members
  - Century Recruiter Cap or VFW Store credit for 100 members
  - “Century Plus” jacket for or 175 members

# Incentives and Special Awards



- Legacy lifetime membership award
  - When Posts have 25, 50, and 75 legacy lifetime members, they receive a special proclamation.
  - Post with 100 legacy lifetime members by July 1, 2023 receive a special proclamation and the Post receives a \$1,000 stipend to attend the National Convention for either the Post Commander or a Post representative.

# Incentives and Special Awards



## COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

**Commander-in-Chief Fritz Mihelcic has issued a challenge to all VFW Posts for the month of September 2021!**

We're a few months into the new membership year, and it's time to really put our focus on membership growth. We want this year to be a benchmark year when it comes to membership, and passing 100% in membership should be the goal that each and every Post, District, and Department strives for.

To encourage this, for the month of September 2021, \$500 will be awarded to the top Post in each membership division based on recruiting, renewing, and reinstating the most Annual members. This will count New members, Annual members who renew their dues, and lapsed members who pay their Annual dues to the Post. We want our Posts out there recruiting, retaining, and recovering members!

We know that a strong membership base is how we will move forward as an organization, because

***THE TIME IS NOW!***

Membership totals will be based on close-of-business totals on August 31st to September 30th.



## State awards for Posts



- **Several awards are based on your Virginia membership categories (different from All-American membership divisions)**
  - Category A: 10-75 members
  - Category B: 76-150 members
  - Category C: 151-250 members
  - Category D: 251-500 members
  - Category E: 501 or more members

## State awards for Posts (Cont.)



### Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 1) Plaque for the Post with the largest numeric increase as of May 5, 2023
- 2) \$200 to the Post with the largest increase in lifetime membership (minimum of 3 members) as of May 5, 2023
- 3) Plaque for Posts who renew all annual members (showing 100% retention on the National MEMSTATS report) by May 5, 2023



## State awards for Posts (Cont.)



### Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 4) Lifetime membership drawings: 4 drawings for an annual member in the Post to become a lifetime member based on the membership as follows:
  - a) September 23, 2022 for Posts who achieve at least 75% by that date
  - b) October 28, 2022 for Posts who achieve at least 85% by that date
  - c) January 27, 2023 for Posts who achieve at least 95% by that date
  - d) March 24, 2023 for Posts who achieve at least 100% by that date

## State awards for Posts (Cont.)



### Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 5) Post Commander and Quartermaster receive pins and coffee mugs if the Post make 100% by May 5, 2023
- 6) \$200 to the Post with the largest increase in legacy life membership as of May 5, 2023

## State awards for individuals



- Individuals may win the following awards:
  - Annual members who recruit at least 5 members get a portion of your dues reimbursed and your name in a drawing for a lifetime membership
  - Lifetime members who recruit at least 5 members are entered into a legacy lifetime membership raffle for a one-step promotion (or \$200 if already a Gold Legacy Lifetime Member)
  - All members who recruit at least 5 members are entered into a drawing for a trip to attend the National Convention (airfare/mileage & stipend).


# State awards for individuals (Cont.)




- Individuals may win the following awards:
  - “Recruiter of the Year” gets \$300 to attend state convention, a VFW cap, a nametag, and a citation with 2nd and 3rd place winners receiving a citation and trophy
  - Additional awards at the following levels:
    - 10 Members: Pen and keychain set
    - 20 Members: State Commander’s Challenger Coin
    - 35 Members: Special VFW cap and citation (unless previously received)
    - 50 members: State Commander’s “Top State Recruiter” shirt
    - 75 Members: State Commander’s jacket

# Membership Is Here To Help

# Questions?

A photograph of a man in a military uniform, wearing a camouflage cap and looking slightly to the right. The photo is partially obscured by a white diagonal bar.

**EVERYTHING WE DO,  
WE DO FOR VETERANS.**



**VFW**  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.