

Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of Oregon
2024-25 Membership Plan
Soaring to Excellence
Strength in Service

Purpose

This membership Plan outlines our strategy for increasing and retaining members. I aim to engage Post and District leadership throughout the year, as they are in the best position to know their local areas. Many VFW-eligible veterans lack an understanding of the benefits and advocacy our organization provides. Our members must educate themselves on these benefits and become motivated to increase and retain our members.

Goals

- Recruit new and recover unpaid members
- Retain and mentor existing membership
- Promote the VFW with press releases in newspapers/social media
- Use National Membership data to improve membership and retention
- Increase Life Membership and promote the Legacy Life Membership program
- Encourage cooperation between Post and Auxiliaries for membership drives
- Ensure the image of the VFW is professional, supportive, and fully engaged
- Conduct Wellness Checks to ensure our members know they are valued and a critical part of this organization, their families, and the community

Commander Monthly Challenge

Each month, the Commander will promote the National Membership Challenges. In addition, there will be monthly challenges at the Department level. An example is:

- Individuals who attend the National monthly membership training, verified by zoom attendance, are entered into a \$25 VFW Store gift card drawing.

Training

- Training will be conducted at both the June 2024 and 2025 Conventions
- Membership training will be conducted at the 2025 Mid-Winter Convention
- District Schools of Instruction will have a membership or recruiting training
- Members are encouraged to participate in the Monthly membership training
- Department Officers will be available to assist with recruiting events, if needed

Retention

Retaining members is an important part of our membership program. For too many years, we have embraced the “one and done” philosophy. This does not help us in the long run and only delays the loss of members. The goal is to retain at least 80 percent of our members. Retention begins immediately upon joining the VFW. If members do not feel welcomed and valued as members, they will not remain.

Some members do not feel they receive the training needed to continue in the VFW. Commanders will engage members through informative meetings, Schools of Instruction, and other training. Members want to feel they are getting a Return on Investment and are gaining valuable insight into the VFW organization.

Post Revitalization

The Department of Oregon is determined to revitalize Posts instead of closing them. A revitalization effort can help reenergize and breathe life back into a post so the post can become viable again. My goal is to provide support and resources to Posts with challenges. The Department will dedicate funds for members to assist with leadership training and membership recruiting events.

Potential Members

According to a Feb 2024 National Membership Associate Director report, Oregon has 80,450 veterans across all eras. Our 2024 Department membership ended at 12,670; therefore, we have more potential members to add to the VFW family.

POST MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Post Membership Chair

Every post is required to have a Membership Chair who will best represent the VFW. These individuals are responsible for being the first point of contact within the community for new and prospective members.

Duties:

- Seek out and schedule membership table opportunities/recruiting events
- Establish lines of communication between the Department Membership, Post Commander, and Community Representatives.
- Research and coordinate outreach opportunities within the community.
- Build and maintain relationships with businesses, schools, organizations, etc.

Post Mentors

Each Commander shall name one member that best represents their Post to new and current members. Post mentors must meet the following criteria:

- Good communication skills
- Welcoming and encouraging attitude
- Knowledge of VFW programs
- Willingness to receive calls from new members

New Member Timeline

- One Month
Call to ensure the individual has received their member ID card.
 - If yes, congratulate them and invite them to the next meeting or event. Once they have been voted in as a member conduct an induction ceremony.
 - If No - Confirm it is on the way and follow up within five days.
- Two Months
Inquire if the member has visited the Post.
 - If Yes - Ask how their visit went. Do they have any feedback? Ask what they are interested in and inform them of volunteer opportunities.
 - If No - Ask if there is a day that you can personally meet with them. Highlight a few of the upcoming events or activities at the Post.
- Four Months
Ensure the member is receiving the Post newsletter or Commander emails.
- Six Months
Check-in with the member to see how their experience has been. Remind them their renewal date is approaching, and ask if they want to become a life member (outline its benefits).
- One Year
Ask the members what they think about the first year of membership. Remind them that they have unique experiences and that there is a place for them in the VFW.

Membership Drives

At least twice a year, the Post will be encouraged by the Membership Chair to hold a membership/recruiting drive. Some suggestions would be:

- Fourth of July/Weekend: Host a Freedom Festival and remind everyone that "Freedom is not Free." Have a bar-b-que and a recruiting booth.
- Patriot's Day/Weekend - See if there are any community events planned. Presenting the colors at a high school football game is a great opportunity. Use this to promote the VOD, PP, Scouts, and TOY programs.
- Veteran's Day/Weekend: Local media like to publish stories about Veterans, so use it as a chance to share your story. Participate in community parades. Plan a Veteran's Day ceremony to recognize those who have served.
- Thanksgiving/Christmas: Encourage families to purchase Life or Legacy memberships for Veterans. If there is a Toys for Tots drive in your area, ask if you can host or seek donations on their behalf. Coordinate a Veterans' holiday dinner and use it as a time to invite the isolated. Participate in a Wreaths Across America ceremony at a local cemetery.
- Memorial Day: Finish strong by conducting wellness checks of members. Review unpaid lists and contact these members to encourage them to renew. Participate in a Memorial Day ceremony in your local community.

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
DEPARTMENT OF OREGON
2024-2025 AWARDS PROGRAM
RECRUITING AWARDS**

DEPARTMENT AWARDS LISTED WILL BE AWARDED FOR NEW MEMBERS

ONE Member	Department Pin
FIVE Members	Commander Pin
TEN Members	Commander Coin
FIFTEEN Members	Commander Polo
TWENTY Members	\$50 VFW Gift Certificate
THIRTY Members	VFW Portfolio Bag
FORTY Members	One Night Hotel (Convention)
FIFTY Members	Two Nights Hotel (Convention)

DISTRICT RECRUITERS

The commander's coin will be presented to the Top Recruiter for New Members in the Twelve (12) Districts. Department Headquarters will use information from the National Monthly Recruiter Report. The Cutoff date is **June 1, 2025.**

**ALL-STATE POST COMMANDER HONORS
ALL-STATE POST QUARTERMASTER HONORS**

**Posts are divided into four membership divisions
based on the previous year ending membership**

<u>QUOTA GOAL</u>	<u>POST MEMBERSHIP</u>		
DIVISION #1	0-50	Membership	100% + 1
DIVISION #2	51-100	Membership	100% + 1
DIVISION #3	101-250	Membership	100% + 1
DIVISION #4	251- Plus		100% + 1

All Posts who reach the membership goal and complete the criteria listed below will be awarded All-State Honors.

1. Membership: **Reach 100% plus one in the 2024-25 year.**
2. The commander must Recruit three (3) new/reinstate members.
3. **MUST ATTEND ALL** District Meetings unless excused by the Commander.
4. **MUST ATTEND** Department /District School of Instruction School (SOI) or Officer Training School (OTS) ***unless excused by State Commander.***
5. The post must participate in each of the following categories (CSR): Americanism, Community Activities, Safety, and Youth Activities.
6. Buddy Poppy Program: Post Buddy Poppy purchases must equal last year's Buddy Poppies or a minimum of 10 Buddy Poppies per member based on post membership (whichever is greater).
7. Post **MUST** be Adequately Bonded by August 31, 2024 (***as required by National and Department guidelines.***)
8. Ensure that all Post Audits Packets are turned in to the Department completed and on time.

To enable more students to be recognized in their respective areas, the State Commander encourages sharing extra entries with other Posts within the Department. However, you cannot share the same entry with another Post or District. (This special recognition pertains to numbers 9, 10, and 11.).

9. Forward at least one Patriot's Pen entry for District Judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.
10. Forward at least one Voice of Democracy entry for District judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.
11. Forward at least one Teacher entry for District judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.
12. Post must sponsor a minimum of one membership drive event in their area. It is acceptable to combine with your District and other Posts to meet this

- requirement. **(A \$100 Stipend is available to assist with space rental - a receipt and an after-action report is required for funds).**
13. Veteran & Military Support Program (Must complete one of the following):
 1. Adopt a Unit and submit a participation report to the State Chairman
 2. Sponsor a deployment, welcome home, or Christmas party event funded in part by the Post and Veteran & Military Support Program
(NOTE: Posts can coordinate events with other organizations)
 3. Donate to the Department program a minimum **of \$50.00**
 14. Maintain Health and Welfare checks on your post members. Keep a log of calls made to let our members know we care about them. This engagement could encourage them to be more involved and it assists with updating membership information.
 15. Department Veterans Service Office
 1. Post **MUST** have a Service Officer
 2. Donate to the Service Office a **minimum of \$50.00**
 3. Post Service officers must be trained by the State SO (**unless excused by the State Commander**)
 16. **MUST** donate to the Department \$50.00 for each category:
 1. Voice of Democracy
 2. Patriot's Pen
 3. Teacher of the Year
 4. Commander's ProjectNote: VOD/PP/TOY donations are due on **December 1, 2024**. This will assist in obtaining funds prior to the Mid-Winter convention.
 17. **Must submit to the Department a Completed Election Report (NLT May 15, 2025).**
 18. Coordinate one event related to Veteran Mental Health or Suicide Prevention.
(NOTE: Posts can coordinate events with other organizations)

ALL-STATE POST QUARTERMASTER ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Must attend the State/District School of Instruction or Officer Training School. **(unless excused by State Commander)**
2. Must recruit one (1) new and/or reinstate members.
3. All State and National delegate fees paid by the deadlines.
4. Post 990's need to be completed and a copy sent to the Department (unless the Department files 990N for post).
5. Ensure that all Post Audits Packets are turned in to the Department complete and by the deadlines.

ALL-STATE POST ADJUTANT ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Maintain copies of all Post Officers proof of eligibility.
2. All Post minutes must be up to date.
3. The Adjutant must recruit one (1) new and/or reinstate members.
4. Record programs at the post level on the National All-American Dashboard.
5. Must provide assistance to post in completing all VFW programs.

IF ONE PERSON IS BOTH QUARTERMASTER & ADJUTANT THEN ONLY NEED TO RECRUIT AS QUARTERMASTER

ALL-STATE POST COMMANDER/QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT AWARD

A Total of 12 All-State caps for Post Commander/Quartermaster/Adjutant will be paid for by the State Headquarters. Post Commander/Quartermaster/Adjutant All-State caps will be awarded at the State Convention in June 2025 if All-State requirements are met by **April 1, 2025**. After this date, if qualified, the Post may purchase these caps through the Department.

1. All-State Cap **(The Department will only pay for caps of the Top 12 Post Commander/Quartermasters/Adjutants to reach goal by the April 1, 2025)** All-state caps will be presented at the Convention or delivered at the next District meeting following the Convention
2. \$25.00 cash (Cash awards will only be presented if the awardee is present at the 2025 Department Convention)
3. The Post will receive an All-State 2024-2025 plaque.
4. Post Members may purchase "All-State Post Member" caps through the Department.

BEST "OVERALL" MEMBERSHIP AND PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

One Post Commander/Quartermaster and Adjutant with the Best Overall Membership and Program achievements will be designated "Captain" of the All-State Post Commanders/Quartermaster and Adjutant Team. This distinction will be embroidered on their 2024-25 All-State Caps. A \$50.00 Cash award will be awarded to each with a plaque. **(Note: Cash awards will only be presented if the awardee is at the 2025 Department Convention).**

**ALL-STATE DISTRICT COMMANDER HONORS
ALL-STATE DISTRICT QUARTERMASTER
HONORS CRITERIA**

Districts are divided into four membership divisions based on previous years ending membership.

	DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP		QUOTA GOAL
DIVISION #1	400-800	MEMBERSHIP	100% + 1
DIVISION #2	801-1000	MEMBERSHIP	100% + 1
DIVISION #3	1001-1300	MEMBERSHIP	100% + 1
DIVISION #4	1301-PLUS	MEMBERSHIP	100% + 1

All Districts that reach 100% + 1 in membership and complete the criteria listed below will be awarded “All-State Honors” at the Department Convention.

1. **Proof of eligibility** of the Commander, Senior Vice, and Junior Vice must be received by Department NLT **1 June 2025**.
2. **MUST** conduct at least two (2) District Conventions (Fall and Spring) **unless canceled upon approval of the State Commander**.
3. **MUST HOLD** a District School of Instruction (SOI) with Fall District meeting (**No later than 1 November 2024**) or attend a State SOI.
4. **MUST HOLD** at least one recruiting event. The District recruiting event may include a combination of Posts in the District.
5. Must recruit at least three (3) new/reinstated.
6. **MUST COMPLETE ALL** Post Inspections by 15 October 2024 and SUBMIT the report to the State Inspector no later than 31 October 2024.
7. Must ensure that the District is adequately Bonded, and all Audit Packets are completed by the deadline.
8. Forward at least one Patriot’s Pen Winner entry for State judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.
9. Forward at least one Voice of Democracy entry for District judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.
10. Forward at least one Teacher of the Year entry for State judging in accordance with National and Department guidelines.

11. Veteran’s Service
 1. Must have a District Service Officer certified by the State SO (**unless excused by the State Commander**).
 2. All Posts in the District must donate to the Service Office.
12. Must submit to the Department a completed District Election Report (NLT May 15, 2025).
13. Coordinate one event related to Veteran Mental Health or Suicide Prevention (can partner with other organizations on these events).

ALL-STATE DISTRICT QUARTERMASTER ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Monitor that all District Audits are turned in to the Department on time.
2. Must recruit at least one (1) new member.
3. Provide assistance so that all VFW Programs are complete.
4. Attend Schools of Instruction (unless excused by the State Commander).
5. Ensure a copy of the District 990's to the Department (unless Dept. files 990N for the District).
6. Assist Post Quartermasters if they need help or at the request of the State Quartermaster.

ALL-STATE DISTRICT ADJUTANT ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Retain copies of all District Officers proof of eligibility.
2. Record programs at the District level on the National All-American Dashboard.
3. Must recruit at least one (1) new member.
4. All District minutes must be up to date.
5. Must assist the District in completing all VFW programs.
6. Assist Post Adjutants if they need help or at the request of the State Adjutant.

IF ONE PERSON IS BOTH QUARTERMASTER & ADJUTANT - ONLY NEED TO RECRUIT AS QUARTERMASTER. IF THEY HOLD A POST POSITION THEN RECRUITS WILL ALSO COUNT TOWARD DISTRICT REQUIREMENT.

ALL-STATE DISTRICT COMMANDER/QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT AWARD

1. All-State Cap (*DEPARTMENT WILL ONLY PAY CAPS FOR THE TOP 4 DISTRICT COMMANDERS/QUARTERMASTERS/ADJUTANT TO REACH GOAL BY **APRIL 1, 2025.***) All-State Caps will be presented at the Convention or delivered at the next District meeting following the Convention.
2. \$25.00 Cash (Cash awards will only be presented if the awardee is present at the 2025 Department Convention).

One District Commander/Quartermaster/Adjutant with the best Overall membership and program achievements will be designated as “Captain” of the All-State District Commanders/ Quartermasters/Adjutant Team. This distinction will be embroidered on their 2024-25 All-State caps, and a \$50.00 cash award will be awarded to each.

(NOTE: Cash awards will only be presented if the awardee is present at the Department Convention)

District Commanders Incentive:

Those District Commanders leading their Divisions and reaching or exceeding 102% by May 31, 2025, will receive a \$500 incentive award (one member).

Special State Commanders Challenge:

Posts that have a robust program for checking on the health and wellness of members who are not attending meetings or are unable to attend meetings will have their names placed in a drawing for a \$200 gift certificate to the VFW Store.

Post reports of action (how many phone calls or home visits were made and how many dues were collected or paid by the post because of these visits) need to be reported to Department HQ by **May 31, 2025**.

The winning name will be drawn at the 2025 Department Convention.

OREGON'S ELITE RECRUITERS

The top individual recruiter with the most new and reinstated members between July 1, 2024, and May 1, 2025, will receive three days of paid lodging at the June 2025 state convention, two awards banquet tickets, and a plaque.

