

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA



ALL-STATE PROGRAM 2023-2024

**Timothy B. Bryant
State Commander**

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Membership Mission

The 2023-2024 Membership program is designed to recruit and retain a committed membership base to help support the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW) mission. To develop a membership that is educated in organizational procedures and policies and actively engage in all levels of the Department and in their local communities. To embrace all generations of veterans and develop strong leadership and community involvement in our Posts.

Introduction

The VFW, Department of California's success lays in our ability to retain our current members, recover previous members, and recruit new members into our ranks. This is dependent upon our ability to communicate effectively at all levels of the organization. We need to utilize any and all methods to deliver information and training to our membership. We need the ability to address our members needs and concerns. As an organization, we need to focus on the tenets of the VFW: take care of our members, their families, and the veteran community.

Membership Goal

The VFW, Department of California's goal is to build a resilient organization through consistent growth and training. This growth and training should result in the Department ending the year with 57,340 members attached to 256 Posts or at-large.

Membership Objectives

1. Recruit new and reinstate previous members.
2. Retain and mentor existing membership.
3. Revitalize struggling Posts.
4. Involve veterans of all ages in all levels of the VFW.

All-State Criteria

The All-State program exists to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork, acknowledge accomplishments in membership growth and VFW core programs.

All-State Post Criteria

The 2023-2024 All-State Program for Posts is designed to reward Posts based on the factors listed below.

- ***Post must be in Good Standing***
 - The Post-Election Report for 2023-2024 must be received at Department and National HQ prior to July 1, 2023.
 - Post Quartermaster and /or all accountable officers must be bonded no later than August 31, 2023.
 - **Provide proof of liability insurance to Department by September 30, 2023.**
 - Post Commander, Quartermaster, and AT LEAST one Trustee must complete the School of Instruction/Department Training before **December 31, 2023.**
 - Post's copy of IRS 990/990n and CA Form 199/199n must be received at Department prior to December 31, 2023, if the Post is on the same fiscal year as the Department (7/1 – 06/30). If the Post is on the calendar year (1/1 – 12/31) for their financials, the tax forms are due by **April 15, 2024.**
 - All properly signed Trustees' Report of Audit must be received at Department within 30 days following the end of the observed quarter.
 - Post Commanders and/or their representatives (Sr Vice or Jr Vice Commander's only) shall attend all District meetings.
 - Delegate dues for State Convention shall be paid no later than June 1, 2024.
 - The Post shall have no arrearages with Department, National or District as of June 1, 2024.
 - All deficiencies noted on the Post Inspection Report shall be corrected NLT June 1, 2024.
 - **Post Service Officer must attend a Post Service Officer Training session prior to December 31, 2023. There will be 5 Post Service Officer Training sessions**

offered, 1 in person at the VFWCA State Convention and the remaining 4 via Zoom (date and times TBD). There will be no extensions or waiver to this policy.

- ***Post must participate in Buddy Poppy program***
 - The Post must purchase **five (5) poppies per member**, based upon the Post membership as of June 30, 2023.
 - The Post must conduct one Buddy Poppy drive and report it via the Department online reporting system.

- ***Post must, at a minimum, participate in these VFW programs***
 - Submit minimum one Voice of Democracy entry to your respective District for judging.
 - Submit minimum one Patriot's Pen entry to your respective District for judging.
 - Submit minimum one Teacher of the Year (any category) entry to your respective District for judging.
 - Submit minimum one Law Enforcement/Firefighter and/or EMT of the Year entry to your respective District for judging.
 - **Post must make the minimum Department monetary donations:**
 - Divisions 1-4 minimum \$300 donation, Divisions 5-11 minimum \$150 donation which will be divided between programs and the Foundation Post & Community Assistance Grant Program. **Donations made to National Programs or to the National Home do not count for credit in this category.**
 - Report **two (2)** Veterans Assistance Events **bi-annually** via the Department online reporting system.
 - Reporting Period 1 – 7/1/2023 to 12/31/2023
 - Reporting Period 2 – 1/1/2024 – 6/5/2024
 - Report **two (2)** Community Assistance Events **bi-annually** via the Department online reporting system.
 - Reporting Period 1 – 7/1/2023 – 12/31/2023
 - Reporting Period 2 – 1/1/2024 – 6/5/2024

- **Post must participate in membership**

- Post must provide, to their District Commander and the State Adjutant, a Membership/Recruiting Plan by August 31, 2023.
- Post must conduct at least two (2) membership drives/recruiting events [Personal contact, Mail, E-Mail, Telephone, and/or Recruiting Booth campaigns] by May 1, 2024, and report the results via the Department online reporting system.
- Post must achieve its membership goal by June 30, 2024, per the following table:

- **Membership Goal by Division**

Division	Membership size	Goal
1	951 and up	102%
2	750-950	102%
3	356-749	102%
4	246-355	102%
5	185-245	102%
6	143-184	102%
7	112-142	102%
8	88-111	102%
9	68-87	102%
10	51-67	102%
11	1-50	102%

- **District Commander Recommendation**

- While it is understood that this is under the District Commanders purview, one guideline that must be met is that if a post is going to make “All-State” they must have representation (Post Commander, Sr Vice or Jr Vice only) at each and every District Meeting. District Commanders must factor that into their decision for recommendation.
- The intent is that Posts ***should*** be participating in VFW Programs. Upon recommendation of the District Commander, the State Commander may consider waiver of participation in **up to two mandatory programs**. In that event, the Post may qualify for All-State by paying \$100.00 for each missing program requirement, ***but the Post will not be considered as a top five Post.***

All-State Post Award

- The top five (5) Post's in each Division, provided they meet all the "All-State" requirements shall receive:
 - Post Commanders will receive an "All-State" Commander's Cap and Pin.
 - Post Quartermasters will receive their choice of an "All-State" Quartermasters Cap or a \$75.00 gift certificate from the VFW Emblem & Supply Department.
 - All other Posts qualifying for All-State may purchase, **through the Department ordering process**, an All-State cap. (See the Post All-State Application form in the appendix.)
 - **NOTE:** The closing date for the All-State Program shall be the close of business on April 15, 2024, to receive "All-State" Caps for presentation at the State Convention. Any post earning All-State status between April 16, 2024, and June 30, 2024, will have their awards ordered in July and upon receipt will be forwarded to District Commanders for appropriate presentation in a timely manner.

All-State District Criteria

The 2023-2024 All-State Program for Districts is designed to reward Districts based on the factors listed below.

- **District must be in Good Standing**
 - The District Election Report must be received at Department and National HQ prior to July 1, 2023.
 - District Quartermaster must be bonded no later than August 31, 2023.
 - District signed audits must be received at Department within 30 days following the end of the observed quarter.
 - District meeting minutes for 2023-2024 must be received by Department HQ within 30 days following the actual District meeting, and all minutes must be received no later than June 1, 2024.
 - All Post Inspections must be completed by December 31, 2023.
 - Must provide a District School of Instruction by December 31, 2023.

- District Commanders or representative (Sr Vice or Jr Vice only) shall attend all Department Council of Administration meetings.
- All deficiencies noted on the District Inspection Report shall be corrected NLT June 1, 2024.
- **District Service Officer must attend a Post Service Officer Training session prior to December 31, 2023. There will be 5 Post Service Officer Training sessions offered, 1 in person at the VFWCA State Convention and the remaining 4 via Zoom (date and times TBD). There will be no extensions or waiver to this policy.**
- The District shall have no arrearages with Department and National as of June 1, 2024.
- District must make the minimum Department program donations:
 - Divisions 1-3 minimum \$500 donation, Divisions 4-6 minimum \$300 donation which will be divided between **programs and the Foundation Post & Community Assistance Grant Program.**
- Must be recommended by the Department Commander.
- ***District must, at a minimum, participate in these VFW programs***
 - Submit one Voice of Democracy entry to Department for judging accompanied by the District Post Participation report.
 - Submit one Patriot's Pen entry to Department for judging accompanied by the District Post Participation report.
 - Submit minimum one Teacher of the Year (any category) entry to Department for judging accompanied by the District Post Participation report.
 - Submit minimum one Law Enforcement/Firefighter and/or EMT of the Year entry to Department for judging accompanied by the District Post Participation report.
- **District Membership Goals**
 - District must conduct **at least two (2)** membership recruiting events and/or community activity events by June 1, 2024 and submit a report of the results to Department.
 - District must achieve its membership goal by June 30, 2024, per the following table:

▪ **District Membership Divisions:**

Division	Membership size	Minimum %
1	5000 to 14000	102%
2	3282 to 4999	102%
3	2172 to 3281	102%
4	1447 to 2171	102%
5	906 to 1446	102%
6	1 to 905	102%

All-State District Award

To be considered as an All-State District Commander you must demonstrate outstanding, positive leadership qualities. You shall provide quality communication skills to the Posts in your District to ensure they participate in the programs and goals of the VFW.

- District Commanders will receive an “All-State” Commander’s Cap and Pin.
- District Quartermasters will receive their choice of an “All-State” Quartermasters Cap or a \$75.00 gift certificate from the VFW Emblem & Supply Department.
- NOTE: The closing date for the All-State Program shall be the close of business on April 15, 2024, to receive “All-State” Caps for presentation at the State Convention. Any District earning All-State status between April 16, 2024, and June 30, 2024, will have their awards ordered in July and upon receipt will be awarded at the next Council of Administration meeting.

Important Notes

Reporting Tip. To save time and effort, it is recommended you do reports monthly rather than for individual events if appropriate. For example, for honor guards you can do something like this: You will enter the number of hours volunteered, the number of members who participated, and the number of miles driven. The narrative may say, *“The Honor Guard did 33 services during March 2024.”* Reporting is to be completed via the online reporting system on the State Website.

NOTE: Events shall be reported only once in the online reporting system. Posts **shall not** report the same event in multiple categories. For example, if a post awards a grant of \$500 to a deserving veteran; the post cannot report the \$500 grant in Community Assistance and \$500 in Veterans Assistance.

All-State Department Monetary Program Donations. Reporting for this section will be via the Monetary Donation Form. **It is NOT necessary to make a report on this via the department website.**

School of Instruction (SOI). Commander, Quartermaster, and at least one (1) trustee must attend the SOI/Department training for the post to be given credit. SOI will be held by the Districts and there is no set limit as to how many SOI's you may have. The Department may offer webinar training for the Quartermaster and Trustees. This training will qualify as a substitute for the District SOI for Quartermasters and Trustees only. You must report via the check in sheet, and it must be verified and signed by both the District Commander and District Instructor. The sign-in sheet must be legible for individuals and posts to get credit. **SOI is not to be reported via the department website.**

Post Service Officer Training: The Post Service Officer must attend one regional or webinar training session provided by the Department and the State Service Officer. Your attendance shall be verified by the Department or the instructor.

Conduct Veterans Assistance: You must report via the online reporting system **at least two (2)** separate types of events bi-annually of the following to receive credit for conducting veterans' assistance:

- Adopt-a-Unit/MAP activities (Identify the Military unit and event)
- National Home
- Unmet Needs/Relief (Ensure you report the specific reason for the relief)
- VFW Mental Wellness
- Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship submission
- Military & Veterans Support (Women Veterans, Homeless, Iraq/Afghanistan)
- Claims & Benefits assistance (DO NOT report names or specific issues)

Conduct Community Assistance: You must report via the online reporting system **at least two (2)** separate types of events bi-annually of the following to receive credit for conducting community assistance:

- Citizenship/Americanism
- Honor Guard
- Flag Etiquette
- POW/MIA
- VA Volunteer Services (hospital/clinic)
- Disaster Relief
- Stand Down Participation
- Safety Recognition

Buddy Poppy Drives: You must conduct one Buddy Poppy drive during the year and report it via the online reporting system. To qualify as a Buddy Poppy drive, you must set up a booth, table, etc... in an area to specifically disperse poppies and related materials. Handing out Buddy Poppies at a dinner, funeral, parade, etc... does not qualify as a “drive”.

Non-Reportable Events: Attending a VFW meeting, Post or District, is not community service and reportable. Weekly or monthly dinners are not reportable community service events. The money you may have raised is reportable when you donate it to a specific cause. Special event dinners where the Post provides a free meal to needy veterans, their families, or community members is a reportable community service event.

Conduct Membership Drive or Recruiting Event: You must report via the online reporting system **at least two (2)** separate membership drives and/or recruiting events:

Follow the steps outlined in National’s recruiting guide. [4 steps]

- Step #1 – Select and organize a membership committee
- Step #2 – Develop a recruiting plan
- Step #3 – Set realistic goals

- Step #4 – Plan your activities

Types of drives/campaigns/events

- Personal contact
 - Door to Door
 - Membership recruiting booth
- Mail (Communicate using the tools and information below)
 - Unpaid (by Zip code) member at large lists
 - Dues notices
 - Post newsletters
 - Benefits information
- Conduct a Telephone/E-mail campaign
 - Contact unpaid members
 - Reach out to prior years lapsed members
 - Obtain unpaid members (by Zip Code) at large lists from Department
- Request Department recruiting training or event assistance