

VFW

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.®

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & REVITALIZATION MANUAL

A guide for establishing new VFW Posts and
improving membership in existing Posts.

Revised October 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Forming A New Post	5
Evaluating Your Local Community	6
Community Evaluation	7
New Post: Step By Step	8
New Post Checklist	12
Revitalizing An Existing Post	13
Evaluating A VFW Post	15
VFW Post Evaluation	16
Post Revitalization Checklist	17
Follow-Up Timeline	18
Host A Recruiting Event	23
Recruiting Event Checklist	28
Resources	29
Post Officer Responsibilities	30
Sample Mission Statement	31
Media Alert Sample	32
Press Release Template For New Post	33
News Release Sample	34
Sample Letter To Prospects	35
Kits For Purchase	36
Change Of Charter Location Form	37
Helpful Links Sheet	38
Application for Post Charter	39
Take Advantage of Easy Online Ordering	41
Online Membership Tools	42
VA Veteran Population Infographic	43
Establishing a New Post Checklist	44
Using The VFW Website	45

- Introduction -

Topics that will be covered in detail within this document:

How to determine if a new Post is needed within a specific area

Once determined, outlining the step-by-step process to take on setting up that Post to ensure survival

How to determine if an existing Post needs to be revitalized

Using unpaid/expired listings and members-at-large lists to find potential members

What resources (pamphlets, brochures, online links, etc.) are available online and through National and Department Headquarters

How to use other tools to be successful (mentor volunteers, maps, community leaders, etc.)

How to use current Post and community resources to inform current VFW members and community leaders that a new Post or revitalization effort is about to come to their area

How to contact Department and National leadership to assist in your efforts

Resources section for sample letters, media releases, helpful links and Department Headquarters contact information

FOR ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP MATERIALS TO ASSIST WITH POST DEVELOPMENT OR REVITALIZATION, RETENTION, AND RECRUITING, CONTACT:

VFW NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT
1 – 888 – JOIN – VFW
membership@vfw.org

- Forming a New Post -

The first step in forming any new post should be research. In the resources section of this document there are various links and documents to help you along. Make sure you look at the research document the VA has provided on veterans in the area you're thinking about putting a new Post. In the "Helpful Links" handout in the resources section it details various VA data points, SVA chapter locations, military base location data as well as where some Yellow Ribbon programs might be happening in the area. By taking all this data and cross referencing, you will be able to see sections on the map where a VFW Post is needed.

Once you have pinpointed a location, start by contacting city officials or the Chamber of Commerce. These leaders have the interests of the community at heart and will help. They are always aware that the VFW will be an asset to their community. Many officials are veterans and they may be able to suggest the names of eligible veterans who might be interested. Also, County service officer programs need the support of veterans' organizations. These service officers can assist in the development of a new Post.

Recognize that the VFW can only build its strength through personal contact. There is no satisfactory substitute for doorbell ringing and hand-shaking. No remote, impersonal approach will work as well.

There are many ways to make contacts. Reach out to VFW members who live in communities without Posts, as well as business professionals, personal friends, and advertising. Consider making contact with the following to test the waters on how the community would feel about a new Post in the area:

- Local government leaders
- Religious leaders
- School board members
- Local law enforcement & firefighters (common veteran employers)
- Local business leaders/Chambers of Commerce
- National Guard or Reserve units
- Active Duty installations (link in resource section)

- Evaluating Your Local Community -

The first step to determining where or if a Post should belong in a community is to perform a Community Evaluation. An evaluation anticipates that a VFW Post will participate in meaningful activities within the community.

This will allow you the ability to measure the impact of a Post's activities through both qualitative and quantitative analysis of your community. On the next sheet, take a few moments to evaluate your local community to see if there is the need for a VFW Post in your area.

The evaluation is an analysis of how a VFW Post would coexist within a community.

The primary purpose is to indicate whether a Post in your community could:

Fulfill a useful function

Be an organization attracting veterans

Be a community asset

Honestly evaluate the community. An evaluation will indicate where a Post is needed or if an existing Post should be revitalized. The evaluation will indicate where improvements are most needed, and where a VFW Post would be most useful.

Helpful Hint: When thinking about setting up a new VFW Post in your local area, make sure you start to outline what your Post mission statement is going to be. What is your local community missing, and how can your Post influence your population in a positive way. See an example of a Post mission in the resources section on page 31.

- Community Evaluation -

1. Is this a community where its residents would support a VFW Post?

When scoring this one, pay attention to the interest in other similar community activities. Does the community offer a variety of activities to appeal to the interests of a broad spectrum of the residents? What could a VFW Post offer?

Score: _____

2. A VFW Post would be an asset to the community.

Would an identifiable segment of financial support and volunteer manpower go to assist community programs and facilities – hospital, charity fund drives, recreation programs, etc.?

Score _____

3. Are other VFW Posts difficult to get to?

Consider not only the amount of miles between two points, but also the terrain. Don't just look at it "as the crow flies."

Score: _____

- 0 - No/Not Applicable
- 1 - Disagree
- 2 - Slightly Disagree
- 3 - Agree
- 4 - Strongly Average
- 5 - Completely Agree

4. Veterans in the community display their military status or affiliation.

If not, could a VFW Post function as a local community center and a place for veterans and their families to congregate?

Score: _____

5. Community aids veterans in need of help.

Counseling, medical care of hospitalization assistance, VA claims assistance, jobs, education and training, etc.

Score: _____

6. Veterans are appreciated and respected by the community.

Are veterans recognized and involved in the local community and does that community foster respect of veterans? (Recognition in newspapers, news stations, discounts and local stores, etc.)

Score: _____

7. Community offers activities and functions for veterans and their families and those deployed.

Are such activities well planned and well attended?

Score: _____

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to indicate what a VFW Post could contribute to community operations. This would identify the potential for a VFW Post is fulfilling a useful function, whether it would be an organization that has the potential for attracting a larger membership, and whether it would be recognized as a community asset.

- 0 – 14 **Community may not be receptive to a VFW Post**
- 15 – 20 **Use other VFW Posts in the area**
- 21 – 27 **Should have a VFW Post**
- 28 – 35 **Needs a VFW Post**

- New Post: Step by Step -

So, you need a new Post in a certain area. Now what? Department Headquarters are highly encouraged to set up a committee for New Post Development, and to establish a chairman of that committee. This committee would be a team with extensive knowledge of VFW policies and procedure. Note: If you are a Department with a large geographic area, consider having committee members from various parts of the Department. This team would take the lead on staying in contact with the new VFW Post through the process, but more importantly leading the Post in the first steps of the process. If you are a new VFW member who wants to set up a Post, contact your Department for guidance and leadership (see the Department roster at the end of this guide). If you are the Department leadership who is wanting to set up a new Post, make sure you're working hand-in-hand with local veterans in that area providing guidance and direction. Training is essential for survival of any new post and mentorship is a key element of that training.

Determine the area in which you wish to start a new Post. Go to the county courthouse and ask for recorded service discharges if available. These are public records in many counties; contact your county courthouse to confirm that you can access these records. From those you can compile a list of eligible veterans. You should plan on spending at least 2 – 4 days per area. Anything less than that would not constitute a true new or revitalization Post effort.

VFW Department Headquarters should consider placing Posts in:

- a) Communities without a Post and a population that is growing
- b) Location where a Post charter has been canceled
- c) Communities with a Post that has closed its membership (i.e., does not want any new members, special interest Post, etc.)
- d) County that does not have a Post

Your Department maintains a roster of At-Large members in your state, and can provide you with a list of VFW members in your area who are not currently affiliated with a specific Post. These veterans are already members of the VFW, but may be interested in belonging to your new Post! Contact your Department Headquarters and request, by zip code, a list of VFW members who currently belong to the department members-at-large in the area where you wish to start or revitalize a Post. The list will include Member ID Number, Name, Address, Phone Number, and email address.

The Department can also provide you with lists of recently relocated VFW members in your area who may be looking for a new Post to call home. For more information, contact your Department Quartermaster. (See roster of all Department Headquarters information in the Resources section). The list will include Member ID Number, Name, Address, Phone Number, and email address.

It is the responsibility of the organizer to check every application with applicants' proof of eligibility, then attest by their signatures as to the eligibility of the applicants concerned. The By-laws state that there shall be at least 25 members on the charter application, of which at least 10 must be new members. This figure is not maximum. In many communities it may be possible to obtain 50 or more charter members on the application.

After signing up that first veteran, obtain a list of prospective members. If possible, ask the person to introduce you to other veterans in the community. If not, he or she may have a friend who can help contact prospective members. It is much better to have at least two people than to go alone. First, try to get applications from prominent veterans in the community and use them to influence others. While you must convince each prospective member individually, this method is very effective. VFW-eligible veterans are easier to find in small communities. In larger communities, evening and weekend calls are usually more successful. Once you have the first member signed up, do not stop until you reach the minimum of 25 applications and/or transfers required to complete the charter application.

Locate a place for organizational and subsequent monthly meetings. It can be the same location used during the recruiting effort: (existing Post home, municipal building, fire/rescue station, library, bank building, community activities center, township building, church, fraternal organizations).

Get the names, addresses, and email addresses of as many eligible veterans as possible. These might have come from the recruiting event. Prior to the new Post organizational meeting:

- a) About 2 weeks prior to the meeting send a notice to all members of new Post informing them of the meeting.
- b) Send an organizational meeting notice to everyone on Unpaid/Expired Report even if they have not joined prior. This will act as a second invitation to join the new Post.
- c) Invite Department and District officers to organizational meeting.
- d) Prepare a news release stating a new Post is being formed in the area and invite all interested parties to join you at that meeting. Again, it is very important that news releases are hand carried to the newspapers and radio stations.
- e) Designate one or two mentors for the new Post at the District or Department level.
- f) The mentor(s) should be knowledgeable of the VFW Manual of Procedure and By-laws and able to attend the meetings of the new Post as an advisor the first 4-8 months.

The organizational meeting is typically held within 30 days after the recruiting event. Items to be accomplished at this meeting are:

- a) Prepare a written agenda for the meeting.
- b) Designate someone to take the minutes.
- c) Have everyone in attendance stand and introduce themselves. This is your opportunity to determine if all present have either joined or transferred. Have those who have not signed up meet with a member of the Recruiting Team to complete the paperwork.
- d) Explain the membership application. Have those present complete applications and collect their dues.

- e) Explain the duties of all officers and ask for officer volunteers. Select a temporary Commander and Quartermaster to head the new Post until it is instituted. (The officers will not be elected or installed until after the Charter Application has been approved and a Post instillation date has been established.)
- f) Explain the functions of the VFW and its programs as briefly as possible to those in attendance.
- g) Try to have a Service Officer on hand to explain their duties and answer any questions they may have about veterans, dependents and survivor benefits.
- h) Explain the dues structure and let them suggest the amount of dues to charge. (Remember to consider that the dues must include the combined National and Department per capita amounts. Also leaving some for the Post treasury).
- i) Never close the organizational meeting until the decision is made when and where the next meeting will take place.
- j) Encourage those in attendance to recruit more members and attend recruiting events to make personal contacts in the immediate future.

Do not be disappointed if your attendance is low—many will wait to see what happens at this meeting before committing. As mentioned earlier a Post may be formed by completing a charter application consisting of 25 eligible veterans, of which at least 10 must be new members, submitted through proper channels to the Commander-in-Chief. Posts should retain copies of original applications and maintain accurate Post records as National Headquarters does not keep records for awards, anniversaries, etc.

Helpful Hint: If applicable, attempt to start a VFW Auxiliary at the New Post to maximize family support and participation.

Selecting Qualified Officers. The utmost thought should be given to the selection of officers qualified to serve effectively and who are willing to do full justice to their offices. Do not fill a Post office simply for the sake of filling it. Be sure every officer selected has the qualifications to fulfill the office's responsibilities. At the first meeting of prospective members, the organizer should read a list of offices to be filled by election so members can think about their votes before the election takes place. (See the Officer Responsibility sheet in the resources section). Special attention should be given to the Quartermaster. The instructor/mentor should explain the procedure for bonding the elected Post Quartermaster. Advise the members that the Post Quartermaster is to be the treasurer of all Post committees that handle funds.

Chartering. The charter of an instituted Post shall include the name, date of muster, location and list of members. The charter shall remain open for 90 days from the date of institution of the Post. After forwarding the charter application to the Department Headquarters (see Department Roster in index), urge the new members to bring other veterans who may be eligible for membership to the institution. Suggest to veterans that they bring their discharge papers as proof of eligibility.

Institution. Each new Post shall be instituted within 60 days of the date of the charter application is approved by the Commander-in-Chief. If not instituted within sixty days from the date of approval, said approval may be rescinded. At least 10 members must be present for institution. Set a date and location for instituting the Post. The selection of instituting and installing officers is up to the Department Commander. Usually the VFW member selected as instituting officer should be a Department officer. The VFW member designated as installing officer should be at least a Post Commander. If possible, present all new members with a VFW lapel pin.

Naming of Posts. VFW Posts usually bear the name of their community or the name of a deceased VFW member whom fellow members want to memorialize. No Post may be named for a living person, other than a living Medal of Honor recipient. After the name has been selected and voted upon, public notice should be withheld until permission to use that name has been given by the next of kin or the living Medal of Honor recipient.

The institutional meeting should be publicized. If desired, the public may be invited along with prominent officials and people in the community. Consider the size of the meeting place so the room can be arranged according to the VFW Ritual. The first impression is the lasting one. It is essential that the Post be instituted in a very serious and proper manner. If the Department has a Ritual team, it is suggested that it be used to assist the instituting officer in the performance of his or her duty.

The Department and District Commanders and their staffs should make every effort to attend the ceremony with as many VFW members from the Department as possible. This will give members of the new Post confidence in the District and Department and make them feel that they are a part of a larger organization.

To start a new VFW Post, Departments need:

1. Report of Institution in duplicate. This can be found in the Post Charter Kit.
2. A check made payable to the Department for dues covering National and Department per capita amounts for all members being reported. See listing of all National and Department per capita amounts in index.
3. Any other forms and reports the instituting officer shall require.

It is the responsibility of the Department, District and County Council (where one exists) to provide assistance to the new Post. Do not organize a new VFW Post and then feel that your job is done. Several months of follow-up work with the Post are needed to ensure that it will prosper and grow. For suggestions on a follow up timeline, see that section within this document.

Note: Recruiting events are essential to gathering new members for a VFW Post. Please reference the section of this document on hosting a recruiting event for further guidance.

Helpful Hint: For step-by-step assistance in establishing a new Post, check the Resources section of this document for a handy checklist!

- New Post Checklist -

- Identify areas that do not have a Post:
 - o _____
 - o _____
 - o _____
 - Contact Department and work continually with Department Headquarters
 - Make contact with local Mayor, Fire Chief, Police Chief and other community leaders to let them know that a VFW Post will be set up in their area. Ask for direction from them, and get their buy in.
 - Obtain Unpaid/Expired member-at-large report from Department Headquarters
 - Locate a place for monthly meetings
 - o Location Street Address:

 - Designate 1-2 mentors to help lead the new Post
 - o Mentor: _____
 - o Mentor: _____
 - Hold a recruiting event for all veterans, not just VFW-eligible veterans. At this event, distinguish those who are eligible vs. not and get them to fill out an application. See recruiting event checklist for more details.
 - Thirty days after the recruiting event, hold an organizational meeting
 - Send out a notice for the organizational meeting to all interested parties
 - Send out a notice to all those on the Unpaid/Expired member-at-large report, even if they have not responded to previous inquiries. This will be a second invitation to join the Post.
 - Invite the District and Department leadership to the meeting.
 - Prepare a news release stating that a new Post is being formed in the area. Hand carry to newspapers and radio/news stations.
 - Prepare a written agenda, sign in roster, and have someone designated to fill out applications for anyone who attends and wants to sign up.
 - Fill out the Post Charter Application and mail in with all applications **and monies** to VFW National Headquarters. The charter application must consist of **25 eligible veterans (10 must be new members)**.
 - Institution. **At least 10 members on the charter need to be present for institution.** At the institution meeting election and installation of officers will take place as well as picking out a name for the Post.
 - The charter will remain open for 90 days from the date of institution of the Post. VFW National Headquarters Administrative Operations office will run a final roster, send to the Post to approve and will then print and send the final Charter for the Post to display.
- Carry on! Conduct monthly meetings and start to influence the local community in a positive way.

- Revitalizing an Existing Post -

If a Post is already in place, look for these indicators to revitalize a Post:

- a) Post does not have any active programs
- b) Post is not holding scheduled or regular meetings
- c) Post membership has declined at an alarming rate
- d) Post where leadership has lost vision or interest
- e) The community is growing but Post membership is declining
- f) Post membership is declining with no activity

Obtain Unpaid/Expired reports from Department Headquarters. Contact your Department Headquarters and request, by zip code, a list of VFW members who currently belong to the department members-at-large in the area where you wish to start or revitalize a Post. Also request from Department Headquarters a list of expired members from all Posts that reside in those zip codes. List to include Member ID Number, Name, Address, Phone Number, and email address.

Review the membership lists with the New/Revitalization Post Team. Locate a place to be used as a Headquarters while you are conducting the recruiting drive – usually two to four days. Prime places to use are: existing Post home, municipal building, fire/rescue station, library, bank building, community activities center, township building, church, fraternal organizations such as Rotary, Civil Air Patrol, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Masons, Elks, Moose and Union Halls.

Once you gather the lists of names from the Department of past members, or members who live in the area who might want to join the revitalized Post, set up a recruiting event to gather them in and encourage the renewal of their membership, or the transfer of their membership into the revitalized VFW Post.

Note: Recruiting events are essential to gathering new members for a VFW Post. Please reference the section of this document on hosting a recruiting event for further guidance.

Besides a recruiting event, you can host a series of campaigns to find veterans who will be eager to join you in your efforts of revitalization of the local VFW Post. Using telephone campaigns, going door-to-door, putting booths at local events (county fairs, Reserve and National Guard drill weekends, baseball games, church bazaars, craft fairs, etc.), and email campaigns, are some ways you can reach out to find some valuable VFW-eligible people in your area.

The Department is highly encouraged to assign a committee member to your VFW Post revitalization effort. This person should be from the District or Department who has an extensive knowledge of the VFW policy and procedure. This person should gather a team of local VFW members in the area where a Post needs revitalization who recognize that work will need to be done to save their VFW Post. This team will form a local committee who will be able to go out and recruit others to join in the cause.

Proper use of a recruiting campaign can be a most effective way to contact the lists of expired/relocated members in the area and recruit them to the revitalized Post. Membership teams should prepare lists showing the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of these members. Once the list is compiled into one location, divide it among two teams. These teams will be in charge of contacting the members on their lists and reporting back to the committee on their success.

Helpful Hint: It might be beneficial to host a telephone calling party. Gather all the members of the teams to one location. Give each team the same number of names, and have a competition. Get a local business to donate a gift card, or other incentive (pizzas, round of golf, etc.) for the winners. Gather on a Saturday or Sunday so that calling will be most effective and whichever team gets the most commitment out of their list, wins.

Once you start gathering members for your revitalized Post, you can start figuring out what the mission of the Post is going to be. Take a look in the resources section for a sample mission statement. Your Post should be building itself into a strong permanent organization in the community whose members are not just a list of names on a roster, but are integral parts of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the community.

The general public knows of the VFW as a group of veterans who share the experience of overseas service. However, as members, we recognize the organization as much more. To us, VFW is an organization connecting us together by a common experience, and values to include concern for fellow veterans. We honor and serve those in uniform and their families. We value patriotism and service to our communities and nation and we desire to see the Veterans of Foreign Wars along with our values continue to future generations.

- Evaluating A VFW Post -

To determine where a Post should belong in a community, or where a Post should be revitalized within a community, a Post Evaluation should be conducted first. An evaluation anticipates that the Post will participate in and host meaningful activities within the community.

You should be able to measure the results of a Post's activities.

- Qualitative analysis of a Post
- Quantitative analysis of a Post

The evaluation is not necessary to just rate your Post, although this can be a very valuable tool, but to determine how a VFW Post would interact within a community. The primary purpose is to indicate whether a Post is:

- Fulfilling a useful function
- Whether it is an organization attracting veterans
- Whether it is truly a community asset

Honestly evaluate the Post. An evaluation will indicate where a Post needs to be revitalized. The evaluation will indicate where improvement is most needed, or where one might want to acknowledge areas where their Post excels.

- VFW Post Evaluation -

1. Post has good youth programs.

When scoring this one, look not only at the variety of the programs and the number of youth served, but also at the Post's management of the programs.

Score: _____

2. Post members are interested and active and welcoming to new members.

Does the Post offer a variety of activities to appeal to the interests of a broad spectrum of the membership or are all the "eggs in one basket?"

Score _____

3. Post is a real asset to the community.

Does an identifiable segment of the Post's financial support and volunteer manpower go to assist community programs and facilities – hospital, charity fund drives, recreation programs, etc.?

Score: _____

0	-	No/Not Applicable
1	-	Disagree
2	-	Slightly Disagree
3	-	Agree
4	-	Strongly Average
5	-	Completely Agree

4. Post aids veterans in need of help.

This element begins with an active Post service officer and goes on from there – counseling, medical care of hospitalization assistance, claims, jobs, education and training, etc.

Score: _____

5. Post has a professional and efficient operation. Don't be deceived on this one by a quartermaster or commander who substitutes activity for progress. Look at the condition of Post records, files, clubroom operation, etc. Are all By-laws and procedures being followed?

Score: _____

6. Community is aware that a VFW Post exists. Does the Post have an effective public relations program to display its achievements and its participation in civic programs?

Score: _____

7. Post conducts regular, active meetings.

Are meetings conducted properly? Does commander have a prepared agenda? Are programs planned in conjunction with the meetings?

Score: _____

The purpose of this evaluation is to indicate, how a VFW Post is contributing to community operations. This would identify the potential for the VFW Post to fulfill a useful function, whether it would be an organization that has the potential for attracting membership, and whether it would be recognized as an asset.

0 – 14	Needs immediate action
15 – 20	Consider a revitalization effort
21 – 27	Address areas that need improvement
28 – 35	Excellent VFW Post

- VFW Post Revitalization Checklist -

Identify areas that have a Post that needs revitalizing:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Contact Department and work continually with Department Headquarters

Make contact with Post leadership and inform them of a revitalization effort.

Obtain Unpaid/Expired member-at-large report from Department Headquarters

Obtain Post roster of current and expired members.

Locate a place for monthly meetings (if there is no Post home) and recruiting drive.

- Location Street Address :

Designate 1-2 mentors to help lead the revitalization effort:

- _____
- _____

Hold a recruiting event for all veterans, not just VFW-eligible veterans. At this event, distinguish those who are eligible vs. not and get them to fill out an application. See recruiting event section and checklist for more details.

Thirty days after the recruiting event, hold a meeting

Send out a notice for the organizational meeting to all interested parties

Send out a notice to all those on the Unpaid/Expired member-at-large report, even if they have not responded to previous inquiries. This will be a second invitation to join the Post.

Invite the District and Department leadership to the meeting.

Prepare a written agenda, sign in roster, and have someone designated to fill out applications for anyone who attends and wants to sign up.

Conduct monthly meetings and start to influence the local community in a positive way. Stay in contact with Department and National leadership for guidance. See Phone Roster in index for contact information.

Carry on! Conduct monthly meetings and start to influence the local community in a positive way.

- Follow-Up Timeline - for New Post or Post Revitalization Activities

The Department should have the District Commander assign at least one VFW member who is well acquainted with the organization to attend each meeting of the new Post for at least six months, or longer if it seems necessary.

The VFW member(s) should be able to help the new Post in all aspects of VFW work. It is also important that the VFW member(s) be diplomatic with their assistance.

The new Post members must be made to feel that we are there to assist them.

Resolve that you will not abandon a Post once you have organized it or revitalized it. You must continue to help new Posts get solidly on the ground. This can be accomplished by making yourself available to advise and help Post officers and committees.

Who is responsible for following up with New Post/Post Revitalization activities?

- It is critical that there is constant mentoring from the Department and District so this Post does not “fall through the cracks.”

When should follow-up Start?

- A representative from the Department or District should attend the Post meetings for at least a year, or until such time as the Post dictates that they are capable of surviving in their community.

Why do we follow-up with new and revitalized Posts??

- No newly formed or revitalized Post should be expected to be able to jump right in and “make it on their own” within the first year. By providing mentoring and guidance, prior experiences of successful Post development can be used to help a new or revitalized Post succeed.

NOTE: The following suggestions are provided as a guideline to assist you in determining how/when/where/what, etc., so that the follow-up effort is a success.

First Week (Department & District Leadership):

One to two weeks after the institutional meeting, the District Commander or Department Headquarters should send a letter with information as follows to all new members and prospects not signed up during the initial recruiting campaign:

- Provide date, time, and location of first meeting and include a proposed activity agenda.
- Welcome all new, reinstated or transferred members to the Post.
- Inform members of the current status of the Post, to include the total number of members and names of those newly acquired VFW members on the charter or revitalized Post roster.

An instructor/mentor should be assigned to each chair officer to explain his or her duties in detail (see handout). Special attention should be given to the Quartermaster. The instructor/mentor should explain the procedure for bonding the elected Post Quartermaster. Advise the members that the Post Quartermaster is to be the treasurer of all Post committees that handle funds.

The instituting officer will complete the institution report and send it, along with the Quartermaster bond, through channels to the Adjutant General.

Posts should retain copies of original applications and maintain accurate Post records as National Headquarters does not keep records for awards, anniversaries, etc.

Second – Third Week (Department & District Leadership):

- Conduct the first Post meeting. The Post meeting should be held within two to four weeks after the completion of the Charter/Revitalization fieldwork.
- Department/District officers should help conduct the first meeting for a newly chartered Post and assist as required for a revitalized Post.
- The mentoring process begins at the first Post meeting. Introduce department and district officers; allow them to give a brief description (3 minutes or less) of the elected or appointed duties of the office they hold.

- Have the Post members introduce themselves to one another. Allow a two minute time frame for the member to give a brief background of his or her interests, family and military service.
- Introduce members to the responsibilities and activities required of the Post officers.
- Provide a brief highlighted history of the accomplishments of the VFW.
- Before closing the meeting set the date, time, and place for the next Post meeting.
- Involve as many new members as possible in the activities that will lead up to the next meeting; i.e., press releases, telephone trees, volunteers to do mailing of notices and what is planned for future meetings.
- Exchange names and telephone numbers with all interested members. Contact and communication is very important and should be developed between the new Post members.

Fifth-Sixth Week (Department & District Leadership):

- Department/District officers should help conduct Post meeting, as needed.
- Ensure Post Commander and Quartermaster know how/where to download their respective manuals and tools from www.vfw.org under My VFW. Log in to the website, and visit the “Officer Training” link within the Training and Support section.
- For a new Post: if the temporary charter has been approved, signed and returned completed from National Headquarters, present to Post membership.
- To ensure that a Post makes progress, explain the importance of having Post officers, as outlined in the Constitution and By-laws. Once you have completed the explanation, elect or appoint a slate of Post officers.
- Assist and mentor the new officers and appointees working with them to ensure they are successful. This will lead to knowledgeable officers and a successful Post. Make certain the new Post officers and appointees understand the mentoring process is an on-going Department/District activity.

- Complete Post Election Report to be submitted to Department Headquarters. This can be done online by visiting www.vfw.org and clicking login. Once logged in, click on Online Membership System to submit the election report to National Headquarters online.
- Assist the Post in filing for their non-profit tax ID Number.
- Give a very brief overview of two or three basic VFW programs they may wish to get involved with. Ask membership for their input on what they feel may be a good Post program or community activity.

After 2nd or 3rd Meeting (Post Leadership, with District Assistance):

Find volunteers from the Post to form committees with the following aims:

1. **Financial:** Provides plans and ideas for fundraisers and other activities designed to develop monies for planned Post activities and programs.
2. **Membership:** Develop ideas to increase membership and activities focused on the retention of the member. Develop teams within the Post to make contact with new member prospects. Support developing public relations campaigns, newsletters, welcoming committees, and all activities promoting membership of the Post.
3. **Programs:** Develops Post activities and programs that benefit the majority of the members, create good public relations, co-sponsor community activities, and provide the public with information on Americanism, Youth programs. Remain open to ideas as they are presented from the floor.

Helpful Hint: District and Department leadership must continue to work with the Post, be available to them, and provide support and mentoring as required. Once a Post is up and running, don't lose contact. Plan on attending the Posts meetings until you feel they are comfortable in conducting their meetings and required business.

- An additional important issue! -

Recognition: People will work harder for you if you let them know how much you appreciate their help. While there are many ways you can thank your volunteers, it would be easy for one to develop/create certificates for those who have assisted in the Post Development or Revitalization effort, and have the certificates presented at an appropriate venue.

<i>Completed?</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>What</i>
	First Week	Dept/District Leaders	Send out letters to help organize the first meeting
	Second-Third Week	Dept/District Leaders	Conduct initial Post meeting
	Fifth-Sixth Week	Dept/District Leaders	Assist with election of officers, mentor new officers
	After 2nd or 3rd meeting	Post, with Dept/District help	Set up committees

- Host a Recruiting Event -

In nearly every community there are VFW members who belong or have belonged to a VFW Post in another area. These VFW members may have been active in the VFW previously but have moved to a new community without a Post. These people might be interested in helping you organize a Post. Any veteran who has maintained membership even after moving away from a Post, is a good prospect to help you organize a new one. Also, a VFW member who belonged to a VFW Post that has gone defunct may be helpful in establishing a new Post.

Place recruiting posters/flyers on bulletin boards making announcement of recruiting activity - giving time, place and contact name. Use posters/flyers anywhere there is a high traffic flow of people – mini-mart, gas station, grocery store, hardware store, dry cleaner, city utility payment office, barber shop, bowling alley, etc.

Review the membership lists with the New/Revitalization Post Team. Locate a place to be used as a Headquarters while you are conducting the recruiting drive – usually two to four days. Prime places to use are: existing Post home, municipal building, fire/rescue station, library, bank building, community activities center, township building, church, fraternal organizations such as Rotary, Civil Air Patrol, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Masons, Elks, Moose and Union Halls.

Build a “sales kit” for use while recruiting. Items you will need for recruiting event are:

- a) Membership Applications
- b) Membership Benefits brochure
- c) Veterans and Military Support Brochure
- d) Other pamphlets/literature that advertise the VFW and its' programs (See contents of Recruiting Kit)
- e) Four to eight knowledgeable VFW members to make up the recruiting team
- f) Member-at-large report from department listing all current and expired members with addresses and phone numbers
- g) Map of area or GPS system
- h) Phone books
- i) Cell phone or access to telephone

Send Invite Letter (see samples) to all individuals on Unpaid/Expiring report in the ZIP code(s) where you are planning a new or revitalized Post. Inform them of the time and place that you will be available to talk to them about membership in the new or revitalized Post. If possible, try to have a Department, District or Post Service Officer on hand to answer questions about veterans, dependents and survivor benefits; this information should be included in the Invite Letter. Give name and phone number of a contact person in the area who can answer questions about the organization of the new or revitalized Post.

Helpful Hint: Gather email addresses of potential/new members and stay connected by sharing updates and information this way. You can even use a mass email service like Constant Contact or GroupMail to send emails and newsletters out so all new members are informed of meeting times and locations.

News release and recruiting flyers/posters. Prepare a news release announcing recruiting drive (see sample). For best results the press releases should be hand delivered to all area newspapers and TV and radio stations by a member of the Post. Make sure the invite letter is delivered well in advance of the recruiting drive. Flyers and posters will be developed announcing the recruiting drive and both should be provided to the local contact person. Placement in the community should be at least one week prior to the event.

Press Releases. Some newspapers, radio, and TV stations will announce news of your organizational meeting for free if it is presented to them as a news release. You may also need to use paid advertising such as posters, circulars or advertisements on broadcasting stations or in newspapers. Templates for press releases can be found online at www.vfw.org in the Training & Resources section after you login. See a sample of a press release in the index.

- a) For use in local newspapers and neighborhood bulletins
- b) For broadcast use (radio or cable access TV stations)
- c) Use in community bulletins (church, recreations centers, home owner publications, etc.)
- d) Use in newsletters of other community-based organizations/corporations (i.e. employers, fraternal organizations, etc.)

Do not let the first veteran you talk with discourage you from your goal. Somewhere in every community is a veteran who is interested in the VFW. Maybe he or she is concerned about veterans' rights. Perhaps the needs of the community are first in his or her mind. The secret is to find the person, then identify his or her basic interests. Remember when speaking with members of the community; be positive, speak positively and act positively.

During the event there are a number of things that need to be accomplished in order to make your effort successful. One way a new Post or revitalization event is considered successful is by the number of recruited members. A second, and as important, way to measure the success of a membership drive is the number of community leaders that have been informed. Whereas numbers are important, the community leaders also need to be educated about what the VFW Post can do for their neighborhood.

Any veteran who comes to your meeting is interested. Whether one person or 10 people attend, this is the nucleus for your new Post. Do not be discouraged by a low turnout. These veterans will work with you in contacting others. After the first veteran signs up, ask if they can provide the names of other veterans who might be eligible. This has a chain-reaction effect. Before you know it, you will have the required number of 25 for a charter application.

After signing up that first veteran, obtain a list of prospective members. If possible, ask the person to introduce you to other veterans in the community. If not, he or she may have a friend who can help contact prospective members. It is much better to have at least two people than to go alone. VFW-eligible veterans are easier to find in small communities. In larger communities, evening and weekend calls are usually more successful.

Membership Focus

- a) Use leads for making personal contact with all prospects, informing them of the VFW's goals, utilizing the tools from your sales kit to assist you in this effort.
- b) Station recruiting teams at high traffic areas to sign up new members.
- c) Personally visit (knock on doors) all delinquent/expired members on the Unpaid/Expired report asking them to reinstate or transfer their membership into the new or revitalized Post. Leave a brochure or door hanger (available on Membership Order Form) with contact information if they are not home. Make sure you follow up!
- d) If unable to contact these veterans personally, contact them by mail. Enclose a self-addressed postcard the veteran can mail back if they are interested.
- e) For those that do not have a physical address listed, make phone calls instead.
- f) You, the recruiter, should complete a membership application and have individual pay their annual dues.
- g) Complete a membership application for all members wishing to transfer from another Post. Capture all other data as well (birthday, branch of service, etc.)
- h) Determine with the Membership Team, and the recruited members, when to hold the Organizational Meeting and set the date, time and place. The Organizational Meeting should be held within thirty (30) days to ensure that the enthusiasm of building the Post membership is not diminished.

- i) Ask the new member(s) for referrals. Utilize any and all referrals developed by these individuals.

Before you move on, thank the new member(s) and provide information on the time, purpose and location of the first/next meeting. Inform the new member(s) that their membership card will be sent to them by mail from National Headquarters.

You must be thoroughly familiar with the background, accomplishments and objectives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as well as the obligations of each Post officer. Have a handout with the responsibilities of each officer to provide prospective members of your new Post.

When talking to prospective members, be positive in your approach. Have no doubt that a Post will be revitalized. Fill out membership applications for the prospective members, otherwise they may look at it and say, "Come back and see me later." These callbacks waste your time, so try to avoid them. NOTE: No transaction is complete until you have a completed membership application with the new member's signature and dues.

Brief the following key community agencies on the VFW family's programs and its service to veterans. Also, from community agencies may come possible members and leaders for the new or revitalized Post.

- a) National Guard or Reserve Units
- b) School superintendents and administrators
- c) Other civic organizations
- d) Chamber of Commerce
- e) Police and Fire Departments
- f) Mayor/City Managers
- g) Unions or other major businesses in the area

As the organizers interacting with potential new members of your VFW Post:

- Conduct yourself in a manner that commands respect for yourself and for the VFW which you represent.
- Carefully read and understand the VFW Congressional Charter, By-laws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual.
- Make sure prospective VFW members are given a wholesome impression of the organization.
- If you do not know the correct answer to a questions, do not guess. Instead, reply that you will get the answer and give it to the person later.

Establish a high goal of new members to recruit. Once you have the first member signed up, don't stop until you have enough new active members to revitalize an existing post. This goal should be defined prior to the start of the recruiting event. When the recruiting event is over make a roster or list of all members of the new or revitalized Post, to include:

- a) Name, address and phone number
- b) Include Membership ID Number
- c) If known, add qualifying overseas service and Branch of Service
- d) Designate if member is new, transfer, continuous or reinstate
- e) How much paid for membership and if by cash or check

Deliver roster, membership applications, member data forms and ALL money to one of the following:

- Department Headquarters representative
- Post Quartermaster
- Post mentor

Have that person sign that they received all paperwork and payments and ensure you keep a copy of signed roster for your files. Posts should retain copies of original applications and maintain accurate Post records as National Headquarters does not keep records for awards, anniversaries, etc.

If your Post has no Post home, locate an effective place for organizational and subsequent monthly meetings. Can be same location used during the recruiting effort: (municipal building, fire/rescue station, library, bank building, community activities center, township building, church, fraternal organizations such as Rotary, Civil Air Patrol, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Masons, Elks, Moose and Union Halls).

- Recruiting Event Checklist -

- Contact the local community leaders and get their buy in. They might have some good suggestions on local movers and shakers
- Contact Department and work continually with Department Headquarters
- Place Posters/Flyers around the community to let people know about the event to start a new Post/revitalize an existing Post.
- Review membership lists from Department Headquarters.
- Locate a place to host the recruiting drive. (Usually need space for 2-4 days)
 - o Location Street Address: _____
- Build a recruiting kit to sell the VFW (applications, brochures, handouts, etc.)
- Send an invitation letter to all veterans on the unpaid/expired report. (Sample letter in resources section).
- Identify a local contact person in the area who has VFW knowledge and experience
 - o Assigned: _____
- Prepare a news release (sample in resource section) for the recruiting event.
- Distribute flyers to public areas within the community advertising the event.

During/After the event:

- Make sure to brag about the great things the VFW is doing and plans to do in the local community. Talk about the programs and get people excited.
- Make a list of all the new members for the new/revitalized Post.
- Deliver the roster and applications and all money to the Post Quartermaster or Department Headquarters.
- If one doesn't exist, set up a location for future monthly meetings.
 - o Location Street Address: _____

- Resources -

Post officer responsibilities	30
Sample mission statement	31
Media alert sample	32
Press release template for new Post	33
News release sample	34
Sample letter to prospects	35
Kits for purchase	36
Change of charter location form	37
Helpful links sheet	38
Application for VFW Post Charter	39
Membership material order form	41
Online membership tools	43
Department headquarters roster	45
VA veteran population infographic	47
Establishing a new Post Checklist	48

- Post Officer Responsibilities -

A complete listing can be found in Section 218 of the VFW Manual of Procedure.

- 1) **Post Commander:** responsible for presiding at all Post meetings, ensuring observance of VFW regulations, ensuring that Post business is legal and proper, decides matters of VFW policy and regulation, appoints officers to the Post, approves use of Post funds, ensures that all monies and reports are properly forwarded to the Department and National Headquarters, and attends all properly called District meetings and Conventions.
- 2) **Senior Vice Commander:** assists the Commander with their duties and presides in their absence.
- 3) **Junior Vice Commander:** assists the Commander and Senior Vice Commander with their duties and presides in their absence.
- 4) **Quartermaster:** is bonded in accordance with VFW Bylaw, collects all monies due the Post and takes charge of Post funds, disburses Post funds in a proper manner, receives and processes membership dues, reconciles financial reports for the Post and provides such reports to Post Trustees for regular audits, files appropriate financial forms to government agencies as appropriate.
- 5) **Adjutant:** handles official Post correspondence, maintains books and records (including copies of all member applications, minutes of Post Meetings, and all current orders), and maintains copy of the By-laws and Manual of Procedure.
- 6) **Chaplain:** handles opening and closing of all Post meetings
- 7) **Judge Advocate:** directs Post in legal matters
- 8) **Surgeon:** coordinates visitation and care of hospitalized members or those in veterans or nursing homes
- 9) **Officer of the Day:** verifies all members are entitled to remain during Post meetings
- 10) **Trustees:** review Quartermaster's reports on a monthly basis, conduct quarterly audits of Post reports and property. Trustees may not hold any other elected position or any position that they would audit as a Trustee.
- 11) **Service Officer:** assist members of the Post and their family with obtaining rightful entitlements from State and Federal agencies, in accordance with VFW Guide for Service Officers

SAMPLE

Post Mission Statement

The MSG William J. Crawford Veterans of Foreign Wars Post ##### is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of United States military veterans, their families, and our local community. VFW Post ##### and its Auxiliary seek to provide unique and urgently needed services that improve the lives of veterans, military personnel and their families all the while supporting positive citizen involvement for the betterment of our community.

Post Vision

Our varied programs include “CARE” packages for deployed service members, welcoming veterans home from conflicts, care for homeless and disabled veterans, patriotic essay and speech programs contests that award scholarships to America’s youth, youth activities, “Just Say No” coloring contests to discourage the use of drugs program for the younger children and recognition of educators through our “Teacher of the Year” program.

Our organization is founded on Americanism, teaching the people of our land respect and honor to the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance and our country. Our hospital programs gives us the opportunity to visit our veterans in Veterans Administration Hospitals and Nursing Homes. We are active on the Legislative front as well, keeping watch over legislation that impact our current and future veterans services and benefits, and contacting our representatives in Congress to voice our ideas and concerns. Our Auxiliary has a Cancer Aid and Research program that provides funds to Cancer Researchers in Colorado. This program also provides grant money to our members who are stricken with this disease. The VFW National Home in Michigan provides a home for veterans in need, their families, widows and widowers and their children. We also provide financial and other support to other worthy non-profit organizations that serve veterans and their communities. All of our programs are non-political, free and require no affiliation for assistance. We actively seek community and corporate partners to join us in our cause to serve and recognize our nation’s combat veterans.

We constantly strive to preserve and strengthen camaraderie among VFW members; to perpetuate the memory of our dead and to assist all of their widows, widowers and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the government of the United States of America and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom; and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomever and wherever they may be.

Post Motto

“Deeds - Not Words”

Media Alert Sample

Media Alert for:

Day of the week, Month date, Year

Start time a.m./p.m. – End time a.m./p.m.

What: Brief description of the event

When/Where: Date
Time
Address

Who: List the key groups or people participating; include any relevant information which makes this a newsworthy event

ABOUT THE VFW: The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is the nation’s largest and oldest major war veterans’ organization. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is comprised entirely of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. With nearly 1.6 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in nearly 6,200 Posts worldwide, the nonprofit veterans’ service organization is proud to proclaim “NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS” than the VFW, which is dedicated to veterans’ service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information or to join, visit our website at www.vfw.org.

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Name
Email Address
Phone Number

Additional information: When applicable, include any important or necessary information regarding third-parties involved in event.

Press Release Template

For Immediate Release

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post Expands Service to the _____ Community

KANSAS CITY (date) – Eligible veterans in the _____ area have an opportunity to join in on a partnership that will increase community service in the area. The Veterans of Foreign Wars, the nation’s oldest veterans organization, is inviting all veterans in the area to join them in providing service to all veterans and their families.

Officers and staff members of the Kansas City-based Veterans of Foreign Wars National Headquarters and _____-based State Headquarters will be in town, along with members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post _____ to kick off this community and veteran service campaign.

Veterans can visit with VFW representatives at (address) on day/date, between the hours of ____ to ____ or they can call _____, Post (representative) at (phone). Information about veterans benefits and VFW membership will be available.

Post # _____ will focus on community service and assistance to veterans, in keeping with the over-119-year tradition of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The scope and nature of the Post’s community service will be determined by its members and inputs from local civic and community officials.

“Service! That’s what The Veterans of Foreign Wars is all about,” said _____, Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars for the Department of _____. “(City/town) is an ideal place to strengthen partnerships with the veterans and the community. The people here care about their community and practice good citizenship every day. .”

The Veterans of Foreign Wars was instrumental in establishing the Veterans Administration, development of the National Cemetery Administration, in the fight for compensation for Vietnam vets exposed to Agent Orange and for veterans diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. In 2008, we won a long-fought victory with the passing of a GI Bill for the 21st Century, giving expanded educational benefits to America’s active duty service members and members of the guard and reserves who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. We were the driving force behind the Veterans Access and Accountability Act of 2014, and continually fight for improved VA medical centers services for women veterans.

Equally aggressive are the VFW’s efforts to instill values in young people through numerous programs, including Voice of Democracy, Patriot’s Pen, Scout of the Year and VFW Teacher of the Year. Some of our earliest ties to the community involve youth groups and perhaps none are stronger or more lasting than the relationship between the VFW and America’s scouting organizations. In fact, our partnership with the Boy Scouts of America dates back to 1915 when VFW Post 2100 helped to establish Troop 1 in Everett, Washington.

Since its inception in 1899, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been an outspoken advocate for veterans’ benefits, children & youth, patriotic American values, a strong national defense and quality- of-life issues for those serving in today’s armed forces.

--vfw--

Contact:

Email:

Phone:

News Release Sample

For Immediate Release

Month (spelled out) Day, Year

Headline

Sub-headline (optional) – Only the first letter of the first word capitalized, except proper nouns City, State (AP Style)

First Paragraph: Make sure to answer who, what, where, when, why and how.

Following paragraphs: Supporting information, least relevant information appearing at the end. Quotes add value to the release, usually included in the second or third paragraph.

ABOUT THE VFW: The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is the nation’s largest and oldest major war veterans’ organization. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is comprised entirely of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. With nearly 1.6 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in nearly 6,200 Posts worldwide, the nonprofit veterans’ service organization is proud to proclaim “NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS” than the VFW, which is dedicated to veterans’ service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information or to join, visit our website at www.vfw.org.

-vfw-

Contact:

Email:

Phone:

Sample Letter

(Date)

Dear Veteran:

Do you want to ensure veterans have timely access to high quality, comprehensive and veteran-centric health care? Do you want to fight to sustain G.I. Bill benefits and insist on improvements to education, employment and transition programs so veterans have an opportunity to obtain meaningful employment after leaving military service? Do you believe in working alongside America's youth in your community to instill a sense of patriotism?

If you answer "yes" to any or all of these questions, then the Veterans of Foreign Wars would like to have you in our corner by becoming a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is chartering a new Post in _____ to expand its services to veterans, their families and the community. Our commitment since 1899 has been to provide service to our veterans and to this end provide you the information you need to join in this commitment. Did you know that . . .

- As a VFW member you can save up to 20% off on wearable activity trackers and smartwatches?
- As a VFW member, you have exclusive access to life planning products and insurance from the VFW Insurance Program.
- As a veteran, you have free access to the state's nationally accredited VFW Service Officer who can represent veterans with the VA and assist with filing claims?

If you were not aware of these programs, then we hope you consider becoming a member of the newly formed _____ Veterans of Foreign Wars Post. Through your membership we can keep you informed of everything that you have earned for you and your family in serving your country.

Officers and staff members of the Kansas City-based Veterans of Foreign Wars National Headquarters and _____-based State Headquarters will be in town _____ through _____, to kick off this community and veteran service campaign. According to Veterans of Foreign Wars By-laws, at least 35 veterans are required to form a Post.

We invite all veterans in this area to attend the new Post's formative meetings at _____ Membership staff will be available at that location on _____ from _____ to _____.

A _____ Veterans of Foreign Wars Service Officer will also be available for all area veterans with claims or other veteran-related questions on _____ from _____ to _____ at the _____.

We would be honored if you would share with us in building up the _____ Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and helping make it a Post that all area veterans would be proud to claim as an asset to their community – an asset that makes a difference!

If I can assist you in any way with a VFW or VA matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or _____ at _____ . For Veterans,

Department Commander
The Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of _____

AVAILABLE IN THE VFW STORE



VFW RECRUITING KIT

This kit contains everything needed to set up an effective recruiting booth or table to target veterans and/or active-duty service members. Included are 25 each of the Take Pride flyers (suitable for framing) covering all the campaign medals which qualify veterans for membership. Also included are large posters, door hanger self-mailers, VFW decals, and a collection of applications, brochures flyers, copies of the VFW magazine, and a heavy-duty, nylon briefcase for transporting these items. A supplies reorder form is included for your convenience.

POST CHARTER KIT

All the tools necessary for a new Post (or perhaps an existing Post that needs a fresh start) to get up and running quickly and easily. This complete kit contains everything necessary to conduct meetings, obligate members, account for members and funds, submit reports, conduct programs and more. Included are the following: an altar cloth, altar flag set (including a POW-MIA flag), Bible, gavel, eight copies of the VFW bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual, a service office guide, Post minute book, Quartermaster ledger, a pad of misc. receipt forms, draft book, receipts and disbursements pad, trustees report of audit pad, two VFW Store catalogs, a membership binder, 100 eligibility sheets, 50 VFW Cross of Malta lapel pins, 100 membership application forms, 50 VFW benefits flyers, 50 membership recruitment brochures, a "Membership Campaigning on the Post Level" booklet, 50 "Planning A Successful Buddy Poppy Campaign" brochures, 50 "History of the Buddy Poppy" brochures, one "New Post Development and Post Revitalization" manual and two copies of the absolutely vital "Report of Institution" form. Everything you'll need to ensure the success of a new Post in one convenient package.



NEW POST STARTER KIT

This "Post in a box" is designed to equip a team of up to four recruiters with everything needed to form a new Post. This comprehensive kit includes: an application for Post Charter, "Starting A New Post" guide, 100 membership applications, 100 membership recruitment brochures, 100 VFW benefit flyers, 100 door hanger self-mailers, 100 VFW decals, four Pocket Recruiter Guides, four eligibility sheets, for "Membership Campaigning on the Post Level" booklets, four "Join The VFW" Posters and 20 of the new "Post Forming Soon" Posters. All kits are available through the VFW Store by calling toll-free 1.800.821.2606 or by visiting www.vfwstore.org.



**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
406 WEST 34TH STREET KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64111**



CHANGE OF CHARTER LOCATION

Date: _____

To: Commander-in-Chief

Through: Commander, Department of _____

In conformity with Section 205 of the VFW National By-Laws, application is hereby made through the channels, for the permission to change the charter location of

_____, VFW Post No. _____
POST NAME

from _____
CURRENT CHARTER LOCATION

to _____
PROPOSED CHARTER LOCATION

The undersigned hereby certify the proposition to change the charter location of this Post was made at a regular meeting held on _____
DATE. Thirty (30) days written notice was given to the Department Commander and members of the Post. A final vote on the motion to change the chartered location was taken at a regular (or special) meeting on _____
DATE, and approved by two-thirds (2/3) or more of the members present.

We further understand when permission to change the chartered location of the Post has been granted, an amend charter will be issued by the Commander-in-Chief at the Post's expense. THE COST OF AN AMENDED CHARTER WILL BE \$25, payable to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, due at the time of application.

Attest: _____
POST ADJUTANT

POST COMMANDER

Approved by the Department Commander _____ by _____
DATE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER OR ADJUTANT SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Approved by the Commander-in-Chief:



Helpful Links

NEW POST
STARTER KITS
AVAILABLE FOR ORDER
BY CALLING
1-800-821-2606 OR
ONLINE WWW.VFW.ORG

INTERACTIVE MAP OF
ALL VFW POSTS
WORLDWIDE:
<https://www.vfw.org/find-a-post>

Veterans Data Central provides essential detailed data reports on the social, economic, and housing patterns of veterans in the US:

- <http://www.veteransdata.info/>

Base Guide List provides a directory of military bases across the US:

- <http://www.military.com/base-guide/browse-by-location>

Student Veterans of America provides a directory of chapters across the US:

- <http://studentveterans.org/CHAPTER/DIRECTORY>

National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics provides data on the veteran population:

- https://va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program provides event calendars for ongoing programs involving current service members in the deployment cycle:

- <https://www.jointservicesupport.org/YRRP/Default.aspx>



Application for Post Charter

Headquarters) _____

(Through Department TO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES:
 The individuals listed hereon, in accordance with Section 201 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure, hereby apply for a charter for a Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to be located in:

 City, County, State, Country

PRINCIPLE ORGANIZER(S): _____
 Printed Name(s)

DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION (if applicable): District No. _____ Commander (Printed Name & Signature) _____ County Council _____ Commander (Printed Name & Signature) _____

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ENDORSEMENT

I have verified each applicant for membership is a (1) U.S. citizen or U.S. National, (2) has honorable service in the armed forces of the U.S. (3) service entitling the applicant a recognized campaign medal of the U.S. government, or received special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger, or 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of service in Korea as set forth in the VFW Manual of Procedure. I understand once this application is approved by the Commander-in-Chief, I will designate an instituting officer who shall see the Post is instituted within sixty (60) days of application acceptance in accordance with Section 201 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure.

Form must be legible. Information should be completed in every detail. Membership applications and dues must accompany the application at the time of submission. A Post may only be formed by completing this charter application consisting of twenty-five (25) eligible veterans, of which at least ten (10) must be new members. This application shall bear the recommendation of the District and County Council Commander, where one exists, and the Department Commander. Once the application is approved, a Post number will be assigned. No Post shall be instituted with less than ten (10) members of the new post present. If not instituted within sixty (60) days from the date of approval, said approval may be rescinded. The instituting officer shall review all documentation submitted by members being mustered to verify eligibility. After such institution, election and installation of officers, the instituting officer shall submit the report of institution to Department Headquarters. The Post may not adopt the name of a living person; other than a living recipient, and only after written consent from the recipient has been received, or adopt a name already adopted by another Post in good standing in the same Department. The application will be submitted by the Department Adjutant to the Adjutant General for authorization by the Commander-in-Chief.

INTERNAL USE ONLY			
Received _____	Approved _____	Post No. _____	Date of institution _____

	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE/INITIAL, SUFFIX)	MEMBERSHIP TYPE (ANNUAL LIFE, INSTALMENT LIFE)	FORMER MEMBER (POST #)	OVERSEAS CAMPAIGN MEDAL SERVICE OR QUALIFYING SERVICE		UNIT	NAME OF CAMPAIGN MEDAL
				BRANCH OF SERVICE	MONTH & YEAR FROM TO		
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	NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL, SUFFIX)	MEMBERSHIP TYPE (ANNUAL, LIFE, INSTALAME NT LIFE)	FORMER MEMBER (POST #)	OVERSEAS CAMPAIGN MEDAL SERVICE OR QUALIFYING SERVICE		UNIT	NAME OF CAMPAIGN MEDAL
				BRANCH OF SERVICE	MONTH FROM		
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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 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!

District Commander Additional Tools:

- View rosters for Posts in your district
- View a list of Unpaid/Expiring officers in your district
- View Legacy Life members in your district

Department Commander Additional Tools

- View Post Officer list, including term lengths, vacancies, and unpaid/expiring officers
- View recruiter reports for your department
- View a list of Legacy Life members in your department
- See information about Posts in your department
- View your department's unpaid/expiring report
- Find Unpaid/Relocated members
- View rosters for Posts in your Department

Department Quartermaster Additional Tools:

- Submit an IT request for data and reports
- View and process New Member Prospects
- Renew, Transfer, and Decease members
- Request Duplicate card for members
- Update member contact information
- Get a list of Undeliverable Addresses in your Department
- Process new member applications
- Convert members to Life or Legacy
- Grant limited QM account privileges to up to 10 other members
- View the Monthly Maintenance Journal for your Department
- Track Life, Legacy, and Dues payouts
- See Post officer vacancies, Posts without election reports, unpaid/expiring officers, and Unpaid/Relocated members in your department
- View a Recruiter Report for your department

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Membership Dept.:

1-888-JOIN-VFW
membership@vfw.org

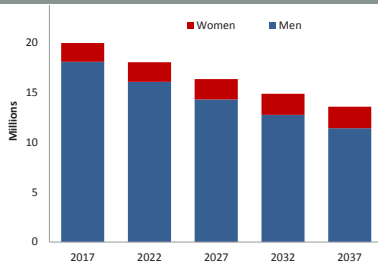


U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

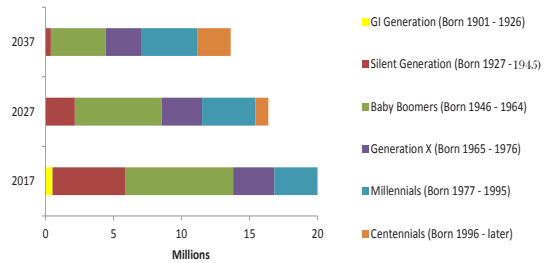
Veteran Population Projections 2017-2037

The Veteran Population Projection Model 2016 (VetPop2016) provides the latest official Veteran population projection from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VetPop2016 contains projections for each fiscal year from 2015 to 2045.

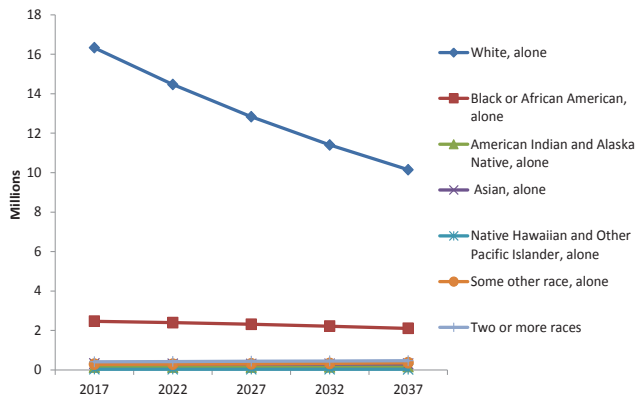
The total Veteran Population is predicted to decline from 20.0 million in 2017 to 13.6 million in 2037



Annual % Change 2017 - 2037
 Total: -1.9%
 Male: -2.3%
 Female: +0.7%



Race and Ethnicity

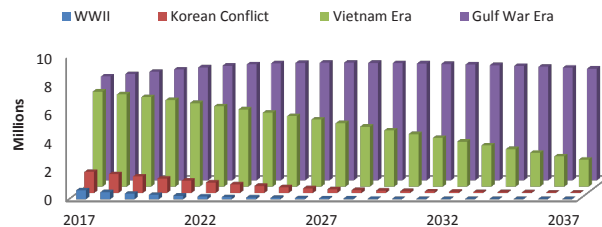


Minority Veterans are predicted to increase from 23.2 percent of the total Veteran population in 2017 to 32.8 percent in 2037. Hispanic Veterans will increase from 7.4 percent in 2017 to 11.2 percent in 2037. Minorities are all races/ethnicities except non-Hispanic White Veterans.



Beginning in 2016 Gulf War Era Veterans became the largest Veteran Cohort

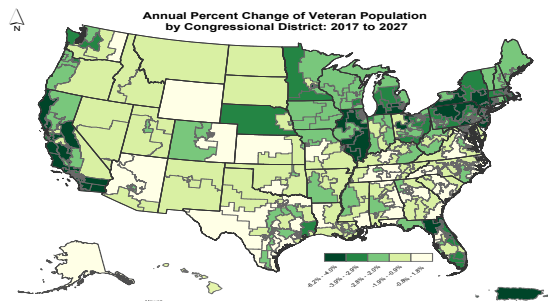
2017	
Gulf War	7,271,000
World War II	624,000
Korean Conflict	1,475,000
Vietnam Era	6,651,000



Where Veterans Live

Rank	2017	2027	2037
1	CALIFORNIA	TEXAS	TEXAS
2	TEXAS	CALIFORNIA	FLORIDA
3	FLORIDA	FLORIDA	CALIFORNIA
4	PENNSYLVANIA	N. CAROLINA	N. CAROLINA
5	NEW YORK	VIRGINIA	VIRGINIA
6	OHIO	GEORGIA	GEORGIA
7	N. CAROLINA	PENNSYLVANIA	OHIO
8	VIRGINIA	OHIO	PENNSYLVANIA
9	GEORGIA	NEW YORK	WASHINGTON
10	ILLINOIS	WASHINGTON	NEW YORK

50% of Veterans reside in the top 10 states. Veterans are moving to the West and South.



- How to establish a new Post in 5 easy steps -

1. Download a copy of the charter application form (online)
 - ◇ Once filled out, this will list at least 35 members:
 - ◇ At least 10 of these will need to be new members
 - ◇ The remaining 25 members can be a combination of new, reinstated, or transferring members.
 - ◇ Completed Membership Applications are sent to the Administrative Operations Department at the VFW National Headquarters.
 - ◇ Must include the dues payments
 - ◇ Please do NOT send in DD214s or other eligibility paperwork

2. Administrative Operations then verifies all the information and assigns the Post a number.
 - ◇ Letters approving the application are sent to the Department Commander and Adjutant and detail further instruction on instituting the Post.

3. A Post has 60 days from the date on the approval letter for the Post to be instituted.
 - ◇ Please notify Administrative Operations of the proposed date of institution
 - ◇ 25 members must be physically present to properly institute the Post.
 - ◇ As per Sec. 201 of the Manual of Procedure: “The Department Commander having jurisdiction shall designate an instituting officer. The instituting officer shall be a member in good standing and shall hold or have held an office equal to or of higher rank than Post Commander.” Generally speaking, the instituting officer should be a prominent person in the Department.
 - ◇ The Charter remains open after the date of institution for 90 days to allow for a Post to add to its charter member roster.

4. You will receive a Report of Institution, fill it out, and send it back to the Administrative Operations Department.
 - ◇ Essentially, this is the first Election Report
 - ◇ The Report of Institution declares the Post Name, Post Meeting Date and Time, the elected/appointed officers, and the dues amount.

5. 90 days after the date of institution, a roster will be sent out from Administrative Operations to the Post & Department Commander and Adjutant to verify within 15 days.
 - ◇ Once that is received back to Administrative Operations, the Post Charter will be printed.
 - ◇ No charter members will be added after the 90 day period.

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP TOOLS

Available through www.vfw.org with your free login



The VFW has an extensive online resource center for help with your membership, or your role as an elected officer. To view these resources, please visit www.vfw.org and click login or create an account if you have not already done so. If you need help accessing or understanding the material, the VFW National Membership Team stands at the ready to assist you.

ALL VFW Members:

- Renew Membership or Upgrade to Legacy Life
- Update personal contact information (address, email, phone)
- Request a duplicate card
- Download your digital membership card for Apple or Android devices
- Set up a payment profile
- View Training and Support materials
- Learn about Member Benefits
- See what VFW Posts are doing around the world
- Find contact information for elected officials
- Apply for financial assistance grants and scholarship programs
- Donate to the VFW
- Get in touch with a certified Veterans Service Officer in your area
- Access Memstats (Membership Statistics)
- Read online issues of the VFW Magazine as well as press releases and other VFW publications
- Connect with VFW through social media links to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube

Post Commander Additional Tools:

- View your Post Roster by name, to include Legacy members
- Access the VMAIL system

Post Quartermaster Additional Tools:

- Submit an IT request for specific queries
- Review and process New Member Prospects
- Renew, Transfer, and Decease members of your Post
- Request a duplicate card for a member
- Update a member's contact information
- Convert members to Life or Legacy
- Process applications for New and Reinstated members of your Post
- View your Post roster to include Legacy Life, Unpaid members and those with undeliverable addresses
- View your Monthly Maintenance Journal
- Track financial payouts to your Post for Life Members, Legacy members, and regular dues payouts.
- File your Election Report
- Access the VMAIL email communication system

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Membership Dept.:
1-888-JOIN-VFW
membership@vfw.org

NOTES

NOTES



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.®

VFW National Headquarters
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
1.888.JOIN.VFW
membership@vfw.org