

# **DEPARTMENT OF LOUISIANA**

## **MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**



**STATE COMMANDER**

**JAMES PRESTENBACK**

**“One Team, One Fight”**

## **MISSION**

To provide a supportive community for Veterans who served in foreign conflicts. Ensuring Veterans receive the benefits, care and recognition they deserve through legislative efforts. Promote patriotism and honor the sacrifices of our fallen.

## **MEMBERSHIP GOALS**

**1. Recruit, educate, and mentor new members.**

Building a stronger organization starts with informed and supported members, which helps us accomplish our mission.

**2. Strengthen leadership.**

Develop strong, committed leaders who inspire, guide, and support members at every level.

**3. Actively engage and increase membership.**

Recruit new members who align with our mission, and foster a sense of belonging through events, programs, and networking opportunities.

**4. Build effective communication channels.**

Use social media, newsletters, emails, and other tools to keep members informed, retain engagement, and increase active membership.

**5. Continuously improve and adapt.**

Regularly assess and refine programs and initiatives to keep pace with changes in technology and the needs of our members.

**6. Host engaging events for members and the community.**

Strengthen community ties and support recruitment through events that bring people together and showcase our mission in action.

## **MEMBERSHIP RECRUITING:**

- Posts and Districts should hold at least two (2) Membership Recruiting events for the 2025-2026 VFW year.
- Membership incentive awards will be posted monthly and quarterly.
- Membership awards will be presented at the Mid-Winter Conference and State Convention.

## **INDIVIDUAL RECRUITING AWARDS:**

- 1. RECRUITER AWARDS:** Members who recruit 3,10, 25 and 50 new and/or reinstated members will receive the awards below for their recruiting efforts. These awards are designed to recognize members for their recruiting efforts to strengthen our organization.
  - a. 3** – Commanders Challenge Coin
  - b. 10** – Commanders Excellence Award (Glass)
  - c. 25** – Commander’s shirt (recruiter)
  - d. 50** – VFW Commendation Medal
- 2. TOP RECRUITER:**
  - a.** The top recruiter in the State 2025-2026 will be presented with a plaque and earn a 3-night hotel stay at the State Convention.

## **POST CONTESTS AND AWARDS**

### **MID WINTER CONFERENCE AWARDS:**

- 1. 100% POST MEMBERSHIP:** Posts who reach or exceed 100% by December 31, 2025, will be entered into a drawing for the annual Dept of LA Timeshare. If the post wins, the post members decide who gets the trip.
- 2. HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP PERCENTAGE:** The Post with the highest membership percentage by December 31, 2025, and in good standing, the Commander will receive a 3-night stay at the Mid-Winter Conference.
- 3. 85% POST:** Those Posts who are at 85% by December 31, 2025, will be entered into a drawing for a \$50.00 Life Membership to the National Home.
- 4. HALL OF FAME AWARD:** Each Post reaching 100% in MEMBERSHIP transmissions and received by National Headquarters by DECEMBER 31 of current year, will receive the special Department HALL OF FAME AWARD citation.
- 5. 100% PLUS Membership Before December 31st:** Post Commanders who reach membership over 100% before December 31, 2025, will receive one (1) complimentary banquet ticket to the Mid-Winter Conference Saturday Night Banquet. Post will also receive recognition during the Banquet as well.

6. **GOLD CHEVRON AWARD:** To qualify for the Gold Chevron Award, a Post must **exceed its actual membership total from the prior year for *two or more consecutive years***. Eligibility is determined using the **Post's actual year-end membership total as of June 30, *NOT* the adjusted membership figures reported by National**. This award recognizes sustained membership growth and is presented annually at the **Mid-Winter Conference** and covers the prior two or more consecutive years of numerical gain.
- a. Posts achieving **2 to 5 consecutive years** of numerical gain will receive a **citation** indicating the number of consecutive years.
  - b. Upon reaching **6 consecutive years**, a **plaque** is awarded.
  - c. For each year beyond six, a **gold bar** will be added to the plaque to mark continued achievement.
7. **POST LARGEST NUMERICAL GAIN:** The Post with the largest new and/or reinstated gain by December 31, 2025 will receive two (2) Banquet Tickets at Mid-Winter Conference.

#### **STATE CONVENTION AWARDS:**

1. **DRAWING FOR \$50.00:** Any member who has signed up at least TEN (10) New Members between July 1 and May 31 of the current VFW Year will be entered in a drawing for \$50.00. The drawing will be held at the STATE CONVENTION.
2. **NEW MEMBERSHIP AWARD:** Posts that sign up 25 to 50 New Members will be entered in a drawing for one winner to receive \$75.00. A Post that signs up 51 or more members will be included in a drawing for one winner to receive \$100.00.
3. **POST LIFE MEMBERSHIP NUMERICAL GAIN:** The Post with the Largest Numerical Gain in Life Membership and Legacy Membership will receive a plaque.

## ALL-STATE POST CRITERIA

The All-State program recognizes outstanding Posts who excel in membership growth, community service and participation in VFW programs. This designation means the Post fully meets all National and Department requirements in membership and VFW programs.

The Top 10 Commanders and Quartermasters of Posts selected for the All-State Team will receive an **All-State pin, citation, and cap** or may choose an **\$80.00 credit to the VFW Store** instead of a cap. The Post itself will also receive an **All-State certificate** in recognition of their teamwork and achievement.

All-State Posts will be selected by the All-State Committee based on final verified reports. Post seeking All-State recognition must submit an **All-State Entry Form** to the Department Headquarters by **May 7, 2026**.

### IMPORTANT DETAILS:

- **Qualifying membership numbers will be tracked through MemStats.**
- **All-State selections will be finalized early enough** to allow awardees time to make plans for attending the State Convention in late June.

### NOTE:

- Posts that meet the criteria **after May 7th but before June 6th** will still be recognized as **All-State**, but the Commander and Quartermaster will **only receive a pin and citation**. The Post will also receive a citation.
- Post that meets the criteria after June 6<sup>th</sup> but prior to June 30<sup>th</sup> will receive recognition at the August Council of Administration/Training.
- To select the **All-State Captain** for the 2025–2026 program year and to recognize the most outstanding Posts, both **primary requirements** and **secondary criteria** will be reviewed.
- If more than 10 Posts meet all requirements, secondary criteria will be applied to determine the Top 10 Posts at State Convention.

## **ALL-STATE POST PRIMARY REQUIREMENTS**

The primary requirements are divided into Membership Requirements and VFW Program Requirements. Both must be fulfilled for a Post to be on the All-State Team!

### **MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS:**

- Greater than 35 members on May 30 of the current year
- Membership greater than 100%

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

- Two Recruiting Events
- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District Judging
- Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging
- Safety – one entry submitted to the State Chairman
- Buddy Poppy- must purchase Buddy Poppies (3 per member on roster as 30 JUN prior year. Post with less than 100 Members MUST order at least 500 Buddy Poppies)
- Donate a minimum of \$125.00 to VFW National Veterans & Military Support (VMS)
- Donate a minimum of \$100.00 to the State Commander's Special Project
- Submit quarterly community service reports in Program Reporting (Members Only)
- **Post must be in good standing:**
  - Post is bonded
  - Post submitted all four Trustee Reports for the 2025-2026 year
  - Post inspection completed and all discrepancies corrected
  - Post submitted election report for 2026-2027 year
  - Current 990 Filed
  - Annual Secretary of State Filing
  - Current Bylaws

### **ALL STATE EXTRA**

- Community Service Record Book for State judging (electronic or book)
- Teacher Entry submitted to District for judging
- Americanism Entry submitted to District for judging

- Post conducted a hospital or Veterans home visit
- Donation to the VFW National Home
- Post Commander & Quartermaster attended District and State Conference

## **ALL STATE DISTRICT CRITERIA**

District Commanders selected All-State will receive an All-State citation and the option of a cap or \$80.00 to the VFW Store. The Department Commander will select the Captain of the District All-State Team.

### **IMPORTANT DETAIL:**

- District Commanders seeking All-State status must complete all requirements and submit an entry form to the Department Headquarters by May 7, 2026.
- Qualifying membership activity and program items must be completed on or before that date.
- All-State selections will be made in sufficient time to allow members to plan for attendance at the state convention in June.

### **NOTE:**

- District Commanders that meet the criteria **after May 7th but before June 6th** will still be recognized as **All-State** but will **only receive a pin and citation**.
- District Commanders that meet the criteria after **June 6<sup>th</sup>** but prior to June 30<sup>th</sup> will receive recognition at the August Council of Administration/Training.

### **ALL STATE DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS:**

- Membership greater than 100%
- Two Recruiting Events
- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging
- Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging.
- Must have 1/2 of Posts in District purchase Buddy Poppies according to Post requirements.
- Properly Bonded.
- All quarterly trustee reports sent to the Department.
- Election report for the following program year sent to Department.

- All posts in District inspected.
- Participate in the Mid-Winter Cook-off Competition. A District team can be VFW and/or Auxiliary members.