

LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIREFIGHTER, EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

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OVERVIEW

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States realizes that duties performed in the fields of law enforcement and emergency services, whether carried out in public view with the ensuing public acclaim, or performed in ways which gain little public recognition, are both exemplary and of great value to the nation.

Refer to the National VFW Programs Chairman's Guide for helpful tips and ideas in recognition programs. All Posts and Districts are encouraged to publicize this program in the local media.

Additional materials are available from VFW Emblem and Supply, or by visiting vfwstore.org.

Public Servant Award Citations for Public Servants

Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars honors a law enforcement officer, firefighter and emergency medical technician (EMT) from each Department to receive the VFW National Gold Medal Award. Post Chairmen are encouraged to submit a candidate for these awards to the District Chairman by November 15, 2017. The deadline for District winners to be submitted by the District Chairmen to the Department Chairman is December 10, 2017. The Department Chairman must select a single candidate for each award and submit those to Department Headquarters by January 1, 2018, and forward them to VFW National before February 1, 2018. Eligible candidates for each award are as follows:

Emergency Medical Technician

Any individual, who actively gives emergency medical treatment, provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care, provide rescue and civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

Law Enforcement

Any individual who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with enforcement of the laws pertaining to their area of responsibility. This award does not apply to individuals employed by private companies or security services.

Firefighters

Any individual who actively fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and give assistance to our nation's citizens.

Criteria for all Gold Medal Awards:

Candidates must have demonstrated:

- Recognition by their colleagues or those they serve.
- Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties. Documentation is the key, such as awards, letters, newspaper coverage, TV coverage, etc.
- Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities over a period of years and continuous growth in responsibilities and skills within their profession. Comrades,

pick a person with a record of impressive service over several years. Find the very best in your community by approaching the chief or supervisor of each department in your area.

- It is not necessary to choose from your community but it is strongly suggested. This is your opportunity network with your local organizations. Should you have difficulty in choosing from your area, then keep an eye on the news for special acts of heroism or noteworthy accomplishments by a Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, or EMT in a community nearby. You can honor them through your Post.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Documentation required for all candidates:

It is important that Post and District Chairmen alike understand the following policy: It is the Post's responsibility to interview, write, and submit the candidate packets to the proper Chairman in the chain. It is not that of the nominee's Department Captain or supervisor to do so. Any packets submitted for judging which have been written by someone other than the Post Chairman or Post representative should be returned to the Post for re-write. Any finalist packets submitted by District Chairmen to the Department Chairman for judging, which do not meet the criteria above, will be returned to the District Chairman for re-write. It will be the District's responsibility to make changes and resubmit corrected packets prior to final judging. Any packets received following judging will not be accepted. The Deadlines are published in multiple appropriate areas to include multiple areas of this guide.

Nominee packets should contain the following:

- Nomination letter from the Post containing the candidate's name, title, address, telephone and identifying the award for which the individual should be considered.
- One-page resume of the candidate's overall background.
- One-page resume of the candidate's background in their field.
- One-page listing of the candidate's accomplishment and awards in their field.
- Photograph (preferably a head shot no larger than 3" x 4") of the candidate (as Law Enforcement candidates may be undercover, photographs need not be recent).
- Written text should be in an easily readable font such as Calibri or Times New Roman and should be no less than 10 point and no more than 12 point in size.
- Keep your descriptions short and to the point. Try not to repeat information.

Please be thorough with your documentation. Entries must remain within the parameters described above. No other documentation will be accepted.

Post Chairmen submit to District Chairmen. District Chairmen submit to the Department Chairman. This is very important. The Department Chairman can provide assistance in improving the packet but I need enough *time* in which to help YOU! Submit as early as possible.

Posts may submit their packets online via email to the District Chairman. My contact information is listed at the beginning of this guide. Likewise, the District Chairmen may submit their packets to the Department Chairman online. All packets must meet the same criteria for non-electronic submission. It is very important that if you submit online that your packets are in PDF format only. Any packets received in Word or other publishing applications other than PDF will not be accepted. District Chairmen should monitor this and make corrections before submitting to Department for final judging.

DEADLINES

- Deadline for submission to Post Chairmen is November 1, 2017.
- Deadline for submission to District Chairman by Post Chairmen is November 15, 2017.
- Deadline for submission to Department Chairman by District Chairmen is December 10, 2017.
- Department Chairman must submit the winners in all three categories to the Department Headquarters no later than January 15, 2018.

REPORTING

District Chairmen are responsible to report all Posts that entered District competition so they receive proper credit.

Reporting Post participation online:

Upon submission of entries to the District Chairmen, Post Chairmen should report online by visiting www.ca.vfwportal.net/ and enter your program reporting information. Participating Posts will be credited at the Department level as soon as District Chairmen submit their reports to the Department Chairman.

Important! To qualify for awards, Posts must submit an online report. Reports must include but not be limited to:

- Present a certificate or plaque to an eligible individual Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, or EMT, and must state the name, agency, and date of presentation. You must report what you do!

The Department Chairman must submit a completed Committee report to the Department Headquarters no later than January 1, 2018 to ensure proper credit is given for Post participation.

AWARDS

Department awards are based on Chairman's recommendation and will be presented in all three categories as follows:

- The Department of California's first place winners will receive the Law Enforcement, Firefighter, or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) National Gold Medal Award certificate along with a **\$500.00** monetary award at an event to be scheduled within the winner's community by the Department Chairman and Post representative. The recipients will also be our State's winners for the National Gold Medal Awards in one of the three categories.
- The Department of California's second place winners in all three categories will receive a certificate.

Important! For a Post to qualify for All-State consideration it must do one of the following:

- Participate in at least one of the three programs according to the rules put forth above.
- Donate \$150 to Department in the name of one of the three programs, i.e. Law Enforcement, Firefighter, or EMT.

Over the past year, the question has been brought up about recognition for Posts that don't participate in the program but do honor first responders in their community. Although I have some leeway in interpreting the rules, I don't make them. If you wish to receive All-State consideration you must abide by the rules. It's not a difficult program to participate in and if you go so far as to recognize your first responders, the next step is writing and submitting a simple packet.

CONCLUSION

All Posts and Districts are encouraged to notify the Department Chairman with information about every Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter or EMT that is killed in the line of duty. Every fallen public servant reported to Department will be honored at the Department Convention. By doing so the Department of California and all of its Posts/Districts therein will demonstrate that Public Servants are appreciated and respected by members of the VFW Department of California.

All of our programs are important and which ones we participate in are up to the individual Posts. In a perfect world Posts would submit entries for all three categories...in a perfect world. In reality, recent history shows that this cannot always be accomplished. I encourage you to do the best you can even if it means only participating in one category. All I ask is you give it your best. Promote your winners by submitting them to your local newspaper. Not only will the public put a face with a name, they will see the local VFW cares enough to honor and recognize those who are our first responders in their community.

Remember Comrades, our Law Enforcement and Emergency Service Personnel face extreme challenges in today's society. Recognizing these men and women in your community for their vital service is an important moral boosting program. Know who these men and women are in your community by introducing yourself in person.

Send a letter of introduction to your local Police Department, Sheriff's Department, Highway Patrol Station, Fire Department Headquarters and EMT provider on your Post letterhead. Follow up with a phone call and a direct meeting. District Commanders and Chairmen, ***I encourage your direct participation as well.***

Comrades, I am available to assist you at any time. Please don't hesitate to call or e-mail me for more instructions should you need them. As your Program Chairman, I am looking forward to working with you in accomplishing our VFW program mission.