

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

FOR

**HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF
CALIFORNIA**

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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(SOP) FOR
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STATES**

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**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
(SOP) DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED
STATES**

PURPOSE

The purpose of these Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is twofold: to maintain and manage a coherent and consistent Department of California, Veterans of Foreign Wars, organization and to efficiently control Department finances.

SECTION 1

CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION

In accordance with National By-Laws, Article 7, Section 716, the officers and committee members of the Department of California shall have their office or title designated as State rather than Department.

Control of this organization is vested in its members and each member will have an equal voice in its affairs. National and Department By-Laws provide the procedures by which member's rights may be expressed.

As such, members are represented by their own elected delegates to the Department Convention and they are represented by their District Commanders at Council of Administration meetings. Between conventions the administration of the Department of California is the responsibility of the Council of Administration.

The duly elected State Officers are the executive branch of the Department. They not only have a fiduciary responsibility to the Department, they carry out the mandates of the Council of Administration, the Department Convention and the requirements set forth by the National Headquarters. They are assisted in these duties by the various committees that are appointed by the State Commander.

SECTION 2

DEPARTMENT CONVENTIONS

The Department shall be governed by an annual Department Convention and the Council of Administration.

Based on the recommendations of the Convention Committee, members shall review, select and approve future Department Convention site(s) annually, but no more than five years in advance.

The annual Department Convention shall be held in the month of June. The place, date and time shall be designated by the preceding convention.

Conventions shall not exceed four (4) days duration, inclusive of the first Council of Administration meeting. They will be held no earlier than ninety (90) days prior to, and be concluded not later than thirty (30) days prior to the convening of the National Convention.

Convention meetings shall be called to order promptly on the hour set. If a quorum is not present when the meeting is called to order, the presiding officer may declare a recess until a quorum is obtained. A quorum shall consist of accredited representatives from no less than ten (10) Districts in the Department.

Each Post will pay a registration fee of (\$10.00) ten-dollar and a registration fee of (\$10.00) for every delegate to which the Post is entitled. Any change to the registration fee will be set by the delegates at the State Convention.

The State Quartermaster shall place these funds in a restricted convention account and all funds not used during the current convention shall be held within said account for future conventions. These funds will be expended only for expenses incurred in the holding of an annual Department Convention.

SECTION 3

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Before any reimbursement of expenses incurred by any officer or appointed Committee Chairperson/member is paid, an approved reimbursement form must be completed, signed and forwarded to:

VFW State Headquarters
9136 Elk Grove Blvd., Suite 100
Elk Grove, CA 95624

The following conditions also apply;

1. All claims for reimbursement **MUST** be filed within thirty (30) days of the actual incurrence.
2. Any claim that does not meet the guidelines adopted by the Council of Administration **MUST** be approved by the State Commander. In those cases, where the State Commander's expenses are in question, the Council of Administration will have approval authority. Only the State Commander has the authority to authorize travel other than that authorized by approved guidelines or budget.
- ~~3.~~ Any claim that does not meet the guidelines adopted by the Council of Administration **MUST** be approved by the State Commander. In those cases, where the State Commander's expenses are in question, the Council of Administration will have approval authority.
4. Per Diem is only authorized for travel, which involves being away from home overnight, where meals and lodging are not provided. Mileage will be reimbursed at a rate of \$.20 per mile effective immediately.
5. Those elected and/or appointed officers living outside the boundaries of the State will only be authorized travel reimbursements from the closest point of entry into the State to their destination.
6. Receipts for miscellaneous items must accompany all claims for reimbursement.
7. Travel by air will only be reimbursed at the same mileage rate for private vehicle use noted in paragraph 4. above.
8. If two (2) or more Officers travel together in the same automobile, only one Officer will be entitled mileage reimbursement.

9. At no time is spousal travel a reimbursable expense authorized for State officers or employees of the Department.

WHEN THERE IS DOUBT IF AN EXPENSE IS REIMBURSABLE, DO NOT INCUR IT WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE STATE COMMANDER.

SECTION 4
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CREDIT CARD USE

The following conditions apply to the issuance and use of Department credit cards:

The following positions are authorized to hold a Department credit card:

- Commander
- Senior Vice Commander
- Junior Vice Commander
- Quartermaster
- Adjutant
- Executive Administrative Assistant

Credit Card Limits

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| • Commander | \$10,000 |
| • Senior Vice Commander | \$5,000 |
| • Junior Vice Commander | \$5,000 |
| • Quartermaster | \$45,000 |
| • Adjutant | \$5,000 |
| • Executive Administrative Asst. | \$5,000 |

The following are specific conditions authorized for the use of Department credit cards by holders:

1. Dining purchase cannot exceed \$40.00. Any purchase over this amount must have a receipt with names of individuals, purpose and event.
2. The purchase of clothing apparel is NOT authorized.
3. Any purchases over \$500.00 must be approved by the QM and Commander.
4. Use of credit cards are for authorized Department expenses only; personal use is

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prohibited.

5. All charges incurred on designated cards will be charged to the designee's budgeted account unless approved by the State Commander.
6. If a designated card holder goes over budgeted expenses or there are unauthorized charges, the card holder will be required to reimburse the Department for those charges.

There are no exceptions to the conditions listed above. If any violation occurs, you may lose your privilege of holding a Department Credit Card

SECTION 5

RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

The policy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is established by resolutions adopted by the delegates attending Department and National Conventions. Suggestions or criticisms directed at Department or National, by individual members must be forwarded through their representatives in the form of a resolution. Resolutions that originate at the Post level shall be passed through the District and Department before being acted upon at a National Convention. Many times, an otherwise worthy idea gets nowhere merely because it is not correctly presented.

A resolution contains two separate parts; a statement of the problem to be solved, and the proposed solution to the problem. The problem is outlined in the “*WHEREAS*” clauses, and the proposed solution is given in the “*RESOLVED*” section.

The “*RESOLVED*” section of a resolution should be complete in itself without depending on the “*WHEREAS*” clauses to give it meaning. It must be specific in nature, courteous in tone, and must be approved by the Post of which the author is a member.

If a resolution deals with a local problem, it needs no action on a level higher than that of the Post. If the resolution is intended for consideration at a Council of Administration Meeting, it should be forwarded to the District Commander. The District Commander shall present the resolution at the next Council of Administration Meeting. All resolutions of statewide, regional or national concern must be acted upon by the Department Convention. Those resolutions approved by a Department Convention which affect matters outside state boundaries must be forwarded by the State Adjutant to the National Convention for final disposal. Nothing herein shall prevent a resolution from being presented from the floor of a Convention meeting. The resolution must be submitted under the proper order of business and by an accredited delegate.

A proposed change to the National By-Laws, Manual of Procedure or Ritual must be submitted as such, not as a resolution. Proposed amendments must be definite and specific as to the verbiage to be deleted or added. Use of the most recent amended copy of the National By-Laws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual is encouraged, as proposed changes considered by Convention delegates cannot be amended on the floor.

By-Law, Manual of Procedure or Ritual changes not in proper form, unclear as to meaning, or concerning matters clearly not within the scope and purpose of the Veterans of Foreign Wars

cannot be considered by the National Convention.

SECTION 6

PUBLICATIONS

The official publication of the Department is entitled "The California Veteran." It will be published quarterly and all orders and official notices published therein shall be deemed to be sufficient notice to all members.

SECTION 7

COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

The Council of Administration shall consist of the following State Officers; Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Adjutant, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Chief-of-Staff, Inspector, Surgeon, Chaplain, District Commanders, and immediate Past State Commander.

The Council of Administration shall govern the affairs of this Department between annual Department Conventions. In the absence of the District Commander, the District Senior or Junior Vice Commander may represent their District on the Council of Administration.

The Council of Administration shall meet at least four (4) times throughout the year for business purposes. Once within 48 hours of the adjournment of the State Convention, at the Convention site, and again in October or November at a location selected by the State Commander; again in January at a location in Sacramento and finally just prior to the start of the State Convention at the Convention site. Special meetings called by the State Commander or upon the written request of the majority of the Council of Administration will be held at a location to be determined by the State Commander.

In the event an emergent action needs to be taken, outside of scheduled Council meetings, a means of electronic voting by the Council may be used. Until such time that the State Adjutant finds an appropriate method to conduct such electronic voting the following procedures will apply:

1. Such procedure shall be initiated by the electronic distribution (currently email) of all related materials for consideration by the Council to ALL of the Council members.
2. A member of the council will make a motion on the action with another member seconding the motion.
3. Once the motion and second has been made, 24 hours will be allowed for discussion of the action.
4. At the end of the 24 hours, a call for the vote will be made.

5. Each Council member shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
6. The deadline for receipt of electronic votes cast by Council shall be no more than 48 hours from the date and time of the original distribution of related materials.
7. Each Council member responding to any portion of this procedure MUST ensure that they use “Reply to All” for each of their responses.
8. Any vote cast WITHOUT using the “Reply to All” function will NOT count.

The State Adjutant will maintain a record of the electronic vote to include a tally of the votes cast and shall be kept on file at Department Headquarters.

The Council shall, by budget, establish salaries and/or expenses for State Officers and Assistants; the allowances, if any, to be made to the Council members, the State Sergeant-at-Arms; the Editor of “The California Veteran”, and committees for attendance at council meetings.

The Council of Administration shall confirm the appointment of the State Adjutant, State Legislative Advocate, Legislative Committee Chairperson, Service Committee Chairperson, the Convention Chairperson/Director and the members of the Board of Financial Review.

Members of the Department Council of Administration shall be entitled to expenses as shown in the current Department Budget. Vouchers for expenses must be submitted each month. The reimbursement for official travel for in-state travel will be at the rate set by the COA per mile and out of state travel will be reimbursed at the lower cost of the mileage rate or airfare. Food, lodging, and other expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost, but is not to exceed the budget provided. No expenses will be paid unless a completed Expense Voucher and supporting documents have been submitted.

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT TO REIMBURSE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION FOR AUTHORIZED EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES AS A STATE OFFICER AT THE RATE AUTHORIZED BY THE COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

The following guidelines shall be followed when submitting Claims for Reimbursement. Any deviation from these guidelines must be approved in advance by the State Commander.

1. Council of Administration members (Council) will be authorized expense at the rate established by the Council of Administration in the performance of their duties.

2. Regular/Special Council of Administration Meetings: Council members present during regular/Special Council of Administration meetings will be authorized actual cost of room and tax for up to two (2) nights, and R/T mileage.
3. State Convention: Council members at the end of their term who attend the State Convention will be authorized actual cost of room and tax not to exceed four (4) nights, and R/T mileage.
4. Telephone, postage, copying expenses, traveling within the District and other miscellaneous expenses incurred by the District Commander and other officers within the District are the responsibility of the District.
5. Other than what is provided for by the Department during the Council of Administration meetings and State Convention, Council members may not exceed the amount appropriated in the budget for their respective office as approved by the Council of Administration.

SECTION 8
COMMITTEES

Department programs and other activities are facilitated by the use of Committees. Committee Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson shall be appointed by the State Commander. They will, when authorized to travel as such, will make full and complete reports to the Council of Administration or to the Department Convention and their reports shall be subject to full and open discussion.

The State Commander shall be an ex-officio member of all committees but shall not serve as Chairperson.

The State Quartermaster shall serve as the Treasurer of all committees which handle funds.

Members of Standing or Special committees may be removed at any time by the State Commander.

Members of all committees shall be made known to the membership by publishing the names of the Chairmen and committee members in General Order No. 2, on August 1st of each year.

No quorum is fixed for either Standing or Special committees. It shall be the duty of every Committee Chairperson to notify all members of their committee of a scheduled meeting. The committee may proceed with business provided the Chairperson reports to the reviewing body the number of members present.

When a Standing or Special committee has been appointed, the Chairperson will prepare a budget showing the anticipated expenses of the committee for the ensuing year. The budget must be prepared and submitted to the Chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee within a period of thirty (30) days after committee appointment. If this committee is promotional in nature, the chairperson will also prepare a tentative schedule of the committee's activities and forward the schedule and a copy of the budget to the State Commander.

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Members of the Department Committees, if directed by the State Commander to attend and provide a report, shall be entitled to expenses as shown in the current Department General Guidelines for Reimbursement. The reimbursement for official travel for in-state travel will be at the rate as stated in the Expense Reimbursement Section above. Food, lodging, and other expenses will be reimbursed at actual cost, but is not to exceed the budget provided. No expenses will be paid unless a completed Expense Voucher and supporting documents have been submitted.

Standing committees of each Department Convention shall be as follows:

Registration & Credentials

Organization & Rules

Resolutions

The State Commander will appoint all members of the Department Convention Committees, in such numbers as deemed advisable and in doing so will designate the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of each. The State Commander may appoint such additional Department special committees as deemed advisable or required of by the Department Convention, Department By-Laws, Department Council of Administration, National Convention, National By-Laws, National Council of Administration or the Commander-in-Chief.

The Credentials Committee and Organization and Rules Committee will meet in advance of the convening of the convention to establish registration criteria and Convention Rules of Order.

The following VFW Program Committees may be appointed by the State Commander to serve during the Administrative period:

STANDING COMMITTEES shall be as follows:

BOARD OF FINANCIAL REVIEW: The purpose of the Board of Financial Review is to provide independent oversight and review Department operations and activities as follows and any other areas of concern:

1. Audit the Quartermaster's Financial Records.
2. Audit the Adjutant's Records.
3. Review the current/latest External Audit Report for completeness and assess any recommendations made.
4. Review the current year's Budget for compliance as approved by the Council of Administration.
5. Review the proposed budget for the ensuing year.
6. Do a random sampling of all Credit Card Charges.
7. Validate the proper vacation accrual rate for paid employees.
8. Conduct random inspection of all Claim Reimbursement forms.

9. Ensure employee appraisal forms are being submitted in a timely manner.
10. Conduct a random inspection of Employee Time Sheets.

The Board of Financial Review will meet as necessary, but not more than 4 times a year, preferably as the Department Headquarters.

The Board of Financial Review will continue to operate throughout the fiscal administrative year to complete required tasks.

The Board of Financial Review will report their findings to the State Commander, who will make their report available to the Council of Administration.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET AND FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The Department Budget and Financial Advisory Committee Chairperson and members shall be appointed by the State Commander and held accountable directly to the same for creation of a workable budget. The Committee typically prepares financial worksheets to assist the Department Quartermaster in the preparation of a budget. The committee may amend, approve, or table budget-related bills utilizing the following steps to put a solid budget plan into action:

- Calculate expenses. The Budget Committee's first order of business is finding out exactly how much the Department is spending each month
- Determine the Department income
- Set savings and debt payoff goals
- Record spending and track progress
- Be realistic

The Department Budget and Financial Advisory Committee Chairperson must ensure that the Budget Committee functions properly, that there is full participation of all members during Budget meetings, that all relevant matters are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out. The final budget prepared by the Budget Committee meeting is then submitted to the Department Council of Administration for approval.

BY-LAWS/SOP/POLICIES: This committee shall be responsible for reviewing, evaluating and recommending changes of, but not limited to, the By-Laws, Standard Operating Procedures, Policies and or Procedures of the Department. This committee shall report all activities to the State Commander at least annually. Members of this committee shall serve for the following terms:

- 1) One for one-year term
- 2) One for two-year term
- 3) One for three-year term

The Committee members shall rotate up one year and the three-year member shall be appointed

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by the State Commander. Neither a member from the Department Council of Administration nor more than one member from a District shall serve at any one time.

This committee shall, at a minimum, conduct an annual review of the Department By-Laws and SOP to ensure they are current and in keeping with the National By-Laws, Manual of Procedure, State Laws in the case of Paid Employees and other written guidelines. It shall receive and evaluate all recommendations for changes and amendments submitted by subordinate units and the membership. It shall submit a written report of all recommended changes or amendments at the Council of Administration meetings for appropriate consideration and action

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: This committee will consist of a minimum of five (5) members. The committee shall provide information and assistance to subordinate units and the membership to assist them in carrying out new programs, on-going programs and programs of a special nature related to Americanism, Community Activities, Safety and Youth Activities.

The committee shall make written recommendations to the State Commander via the Awards and Citations relative to special recognition of deserving subordinate units, members or other persons for their efforts related to Americanism, Community Activities, Safety and Youth Activities. It shall coordinate with and assist the State Adjutant and State Convention Committee in those award presentations as needed.

- a. Americanism Subcommittee: The subcommittee shall provide information and assistance on programs designed to foster an understanding of and to reinforce the standards and ideals upon which our great nation was founded.

It shall give special emphasis to education programs and commemorative observances to ensure their adequacy, timeliness and propriety.

- b. Community Activities Subcommittee: The subcommittee shall provide information and assistance on programs designed to foster an understanding and commitment to the need for involvement in all of our communities by working with others in carrying forward worthwhile efforts that will be of benefit to the veteran and civilian community as a whole as well as specific individuals.
- c. Safety Subcommittee: The subcommittee shall provide information and assistance on programs designed to foster a spontaneous and continuous consciousness of the practice of safety for all age groups and all settings.
- d. Youth Activities Subcommittee: The committee shall provide information and assistance on programs related to youth oriented sports and athletics, non-athletic competitions, educational efforts, scouting and other worthwhile youth related projects.

FUNDRAISING: This committee shall consist of a minimum of two (2) members. The committee shall assist the Commander and the Council of Administration in the initiation, execution and monitoring of fundraising efforts to help defray Department expenses for administration and operations, support of veterans and community related programs and special unplanned programs. It shall act as the Department liaison with other units of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in these efforts, as well as fundraising activities involving outside commercial interests that have been approved by the Commander and the Council of Administration.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE: This committee shall consist of a minimum of two (2) members. This committee shall act as Department liaison with the National VFW Legislative Committee in order to advise the State Commander and the membership in a timely manner of those national legislative efforts considered to be of importance or of general interest. It shall recommend in writing to the State Commander and Council of Administration a prioritized listing of state and local legislative measures it feels worthy of support by the membership as a whole. To the extent of its ability, it shall assist with official VFW visits with elected officials at the national level.

STATE LEGISLATIVE: This committee shall consist of a minimum of two (2) members. This committee shall act as Department liaison with the State Commander and the membership in a timely manner of those State legislative efforts considered to be of importance or of general interest. It shall recommend in writing to the State Commander and Council of Administration a prioritized listing of state and local legislative measures it feels worthy of support by the membership as a whole. To the extent of its ability, it shall assist with official VFW visits with elected officials at the state and local level.

MEMBERSHIP: This committee shall provide information and assistance throughout the Department about membership eligibility, dues, programs and incentives for the recruitment, reinstatement and/or renewal of membership for all comrades. The committee shall conduct membership program classes at the Department School of Instruction and, shall conduct classes and provide assistance at the District and Post level as deemed necessary by the State Commander. The committee shall report the level of membership for each District and Post in the General Orders, at each Department Council of Administration meeting and to the State Commander as required.

PATRIOT'S PEN: This committee shall provide information and assistance to enable subordinate units to carry out the program. It shall publicize in a timely manner the theme for the current year with the information necessary to ensure the proper submission of program entries. It shall provide for judging at the Department level of properly submitted program entries and shall make written recommendations to the State Commander relative to awards and recognition. It shall coordinate and assist in those awards presentations, as necessary, with the State Adjutant, State Convention Committee and others as appropriate.

POW/MIA: This committee shall make itself available to the membership to provide information and assist on issues related to Prisoners of War and those listed as Missing in

Action. It shall seek out, collect and consolidate information from reliable sources relative to Prisoners of War and those listed as Missing in Action and shall submit a written report to the State Commander and the Department Council of Administration at the Fall and Winter Council meetings, the State Convention and at such other times deemed necessary by proper authority. It shall submit appropriate time sensitive information to the State Adjutant with a request to be included in the General Orders as necessary.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: This committee shall prepare and co-ordinate, as necessary, all official media releases at the Department level. It shall assist subordinate units and members, as necessary, in providing timely and appropriate information on Department activities and programs to the media. Guidance provided shall be consistent with standing Department policy, and shall not infringe on a member's right to express his/her own personal opinions as an individual.

RESOLUTIONS/AMENDMENTS: This committee shall receive, consolidate, review, present and make recommendations on all resolutions/amendments that have been submitted for the membership's consideration. It shall provide advice and assistance to the State Commander and the membership on the proper format and procedures for the submission of proposed resolutions/amendments in accordance with the By-Laws, Manual of Procedure and other official written requirements. It shall coordinate with the State Adjutant and the State Convention Committee, as appropriate, for the presentation of proposed resolutions/amendments to the membership.

STATE CONVENTION: This committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members. The committee shall, in a timely manner, solicit, evaluate and report on the availability of facilities required to carry out and conduct the Department Convention, Fall and Winter Council of Administration meetings and the Department School of Instruction. If possible, at least three locations for each should be offered for consideration.

This committee shall meet as directed with the State Commander, State Auxiliary President, Auxiliary Convention Chair and hotel representative to set up and coordinate the Department Convention with special emphasis being placed on the dates, times and locations of events needed to ensure the purpose of the convention as set forth in the Department By-Laws and other pertinent directives is carried out in an appropriate manner. The committee shall prepare a proposed Department Convention Program for approval by the State Commander. The approved program will then be published as a General Order prior to the convention.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY: This committee shall provide information and assistance to enable subordinate units to carry out the program. It shall publicize in a timely manner the theme for the current year together with that information necessary to insure the proper submission of program entries. It shall provide for judging at the Department level of designated program entrants and shall make written recommendations to the State Commander relative to awards and recognition. It shall coordinate and assist in those awards presentations, as necessary, with the State Adjutant, State Convention Committee and others as appropriate.

SCOUTING COMMITTEE: This Committee shall provide information and assistance to subordinate units and the membership, relative to the National Scouting Program as it relates to the Department. It shall receive, evaluate and make recommendations to the State Commander on all Scouting Award applications submitted to the Department. The committee shall coordinate and assist in those awards presentations and the promotion of all Scouting Programs.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR: This committee shall provide information and assistance to subordinate units and the membership relative to the VFW National Citizenship Education Teachers Award Program as it relates to the Department. It shall receive, evaluate and make recommendations to the State Commander on all Teacher awards applications submitted to the Department. The Committee shall coordinate and assist in those awards presentations.

VETERANS SERVICE COMMITTEE: This committee shall, in a timely manner, keep the State Commander and the membership informed of any known ongoing or proposed efforts being undertaken by the VFW National Veterans Service. The Committee shall report to Council of Administration issues deemed to be of interest to the membership. The Committee shall assist the State Service Officer with the planning of state training, help in identifying remote areas for field work and any other issues they may need assistance with.

Each committee may consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and at least (3) members, the State Commander may appoint as many committee members as deemed necessary and shall designate the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of each committee.

Travel reimbursement and or expenses, if any, authorized for a Committee Chairperson and its members shall not exceed the amount appropriate in the budget as approve by the Council of Administration.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES will be appointed, as required, by the current State Commander. Special Committees may be appointed only for the current year of the current Commander.

A Redistricting Committee shall be appointed for the purpose of reestablishing boundaries of any or all Districts in the Department of California:

1. When the State Commander feels it is necessary.
2. When a District or Districts, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, at any special District meeting for such specified purpose or when the request is made at a regular District Convention.
3. When the Council of Administration, by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, directs this to be done.
4. When the Convention Delegates assembled at a Department Convention by a majority vote, directs this to be done.

When one (1) of the above criteria is met, the State Commander shall appoint a Redistricting Committee, consisting of not less than five (5) members in good standing to review the boundaries of the District or Districts in question.

The Redistricting Committee shall report to the succeeding Department Convention which shall have the sole prerogative, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, to adopt or reject the recommendations of the Redistricting Committee.

No District or Districts shall be divided where the establishment of a new District with less than ten (10) posts and minimum aggregate of 750 members immediately after division exist.

Districts of less than five (5) Posts or less than five hundred (500) members may be cancelled by recommendation of the State Commander.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT: Committee Chairperson and their Committee members will be reimbursed for round trip mileage, at the rate established by the Council of Administration, only when that travel has been authorized by Budget or the State Commander.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES: Authorized reimbursement for expenses such as telephone calls and postage needed to carry out duties assigned. These expenses may not exceed the amount appropriated in the budget as approved by the Council of Administration for the respective program and requires the State Commanders approval.

OFFICIAL TRAVEL: Authorized mileage, and cost of hotel room and tax, when directed to travel in the performance of their duties by the State Commander resulting in overnight travel and requires State Commanders approval.

SECTION 9

REPORTING

All Posts within the Department are expected to submit Americanism, Community Activities, Deceased Comrades, Homeless Veterans, Hospital, Buddy Poppies, Quarterly Audits, Safety and Youth Activity Reports.

In accordance with Section 418 (a) (1)l, Posts will be inspected at least once yearly and the report will be submitted by the District Inspector/Commander to the State Inspector. Districts will be inspected at least once yearly and the report will be submitted by the Department representative to the State Inspector. A sample of each report is contained in Appendix A.

The preferred method of Program reporting is online reporting at vfwca.org. The reports can also be mailed or faxed to the Department Headquarters. The Department will ensure the information from the reports is posted to the appropriate online reports.

Reporting starts May 1, and ends April 15, of the current VFW Year. Department request Posts report as often as possible and all reporting activities be done on-line or sent directly to the appropriate chairperson.

It is important that Posts and Auxiliaries form a working relationship for these combined projects and do not submit “double reporting.”

SECTION 10

AWARDS

National and Department awards shall be specified in the National Membership Program and the Department All-State Program documents. These documents shall contain the requirements for each Post, District and Department award selection.

SECTION 11

REGISTRAR OF DECEASED MEMBERS

The State Chaplain shall read aloud the number of deceased members in each District and the total number of deceased members in the Department at the annual Department Convention Memorial Services.

SECTION 12

ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR NATIONAL OFFICE

The Department may endorse a candidate for National Office with the approval of the Department Convention or the Council of Administration. Such endorsement shall be made no earlier than two (2) years prior to the candidate's nomination for such office. An exception to the two (2) year rule would be when the candidate is from California. A California candidate's endorsement shall be made no earlier than three (3) years prior to the nomination for National Office.

SECTION 13

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS & SERVICE

The State Adjutant will be responsible for the direct management of Department Headquarters and its employees. The Council of Administration will determine and set any salary for the State Adjutant.

Department Service Officers and Department Headquarters employees required to travel in the performance of their duties as directed and approved by the State Adjutant or the State Commander will be authorized reimbursement as follows:

- All Department Employees shall use the Department owned vehicles for all official business, when available.
- Lodging
- If a Department Vehicle is not available, employee will receive reimbursement for mileage.
- Employees may not exceed the amount appropriated in the budget for their office as approved by the Council of Administration.

SECTION 14

VFW, DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA RIDERS GROUP STANDING POLICY

Definitions:

- **Motorcycle:** Two or three wheeled vehicle manufactured for use on public roads and highways.
- **President:** Presiding Officer of the VFWRG. Elected by the members of the VFWRG as a leader of VFWRG.
- **Vice President:** Assists the President of the VFWRG. Elected by the members of VFWRG as a leader of VFWRG.

- Secretary: Term for the designated individual made responsible for maintenance of meeting minutes or other pertinent documents related to the VFWRG.
- Treasurer: Sponsoring units Quartermaster. Authorized to handle the receipts and disbursement of funds related to VFWRG.
- Road Captain: Term for an individual within the VFWRG designated as a ride leader within the VFWRG. Typically assigned to an individual with extensive riding experience and planning abilities for events and rides.
- Sergeant-at-Arms: Term for the VFWRG individual assigned or appointed to maintain order within the By-Laws of the VFW or policies within the VFWRG.

References:

- VFW National Bylaws
- VFW National Resolution Number 308

Mission of VFW Riders Groups. To promote and support the programs of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, to promote motorcycle safety programs, and to provide a social atmosphere for VFW members who share the same interest.

Background. Discrimination based on race, religion, gender, or any other protected class will not be tolerated.

- The Veterans of Foreign Wars Riders Groups (VFWRG) within the Department of California ARE NOT a Motorcycle Club (MC).
- VFWRGs are considered to be a family oriented group.
- VFWRGs will abide by the laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, up to and including the National bylaws and Manual for Procedure, Department of California bylaws, rules, and regulations, as well as District and Post bylaws and procedures.

Advisory Committee. The Department of California will establish a Committee known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Riders Group Advisory Committee. This committee shall consist of five members (with one chair). This committee will have equal representation from both Northern and Southern California.

Registration. Riders Groups will register and seek approval of patch designs in accordance with section 803 of the National by-laws/Manual of Procedure and this policy.

Membership. The VFW Department of California Riders Groups will be made up of members in good standing of the VFW and the Auxiliary.

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- Members of the VFW Riders Group must be the legally registered owner of a street-legal motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license in their state of residence, and maintain proper levels of insurance.
- Subject to the authorization of VFW sponsoring unit, the VFWRG will be allowed to invite non-member participants, but those individuals **MUST** be sponsored by a member of the VFW or Auxiliary.
 - Such participation of non-members **DOES NOT** constitute member in the VFW or Auxiliary, nor should it come with the promise of any material, financial, or other benefit to the VFWRG, its members or committee; nor to any other member at any other organizational level within the VFW or Auxiliary; nor will there be any similar gains for the honoree through the conferring of "participant" status, but is intended as a means to provide recognition to those who show strong support to the VFW/VFWRG stated purpose.
 - Non-member participants **WILL NOT** be authorized to wear the Cross of Malta Patch.
 - **Sponsors will be held accountable for the actions of those they sponsor.**
 - Persons otherwise not eligible for VFW or Auxiliary who subsequently become eligible for the VFW or Auxiliary membership **MUST** join the VFW or Auxiliary.

Meetings. Each VFWRG will hold regularly scheduled meetings at a date, time, and location as set by the VFWRG and its sponsoring unit. All meetings will be conducted in an orderly manner.

By-laws. Posts sponsoring Riders Groups will establish By-Laws, a Standard Operating Procedure, and/or adopt additional rules and regulations for the governance of their Riders Group. These documents will be reviewed and approved by both National and Department with an approved copy of documents on file at Department HQ.

Management. For the purposes of management of the VFW Riders Groups, National By-laws Section 709 applies. All money, property, records, or assets of any kind owned by the Riders Groups shall be placed in the custody and care of the sponsoring Department, District, or Post Quartermaster and is subject to the same rules and procedures as any other Post money, property, assets, books, and records. All Riders Groups will be included in sponsoring Post audit reports as a separate line item on their quarterly audits.

Officers. Each VFWRG will annually elect/appoint officers from within its ranks as follows:

- President (Elected).
 - Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit.

- Duties. Presiding Officer of all VFWRG meetings. The President will act as a liaison between the VFWRG and the sponsoring unit and community organizations. The President will request from the sponsoring unit, approval for all events, expenditures of VFWRG dedicated funds. The President will give a monthly report of the unit's activities.

- Vice President (Elected).

- Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit.

- Duties. Will perform the duties as presiding officer in the absence of the President. Assists in the planning of VFWRG events. Coordinates the flow of information provided to VFWRG members and advises the President of concerns of VFWRG members.

- Secretary (Appointed by the President).

- Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit.

- Duties. Responsible for keeping all the VFWRG records, written reports and correspondence between outside organizations. The Secretary will maintain all applications and Waivers of Liability forms. They call roll at VFWRG meetings and are responsible for recording the meeting minutes. It is the Secretary's duty to notify all members of special meeting times and dates other than the normally scheduled meetings. The Secretary will maintain the by-laws of the VFWRG noting any changes as voted on and approved by the Sponsoring Unit.

- Treasurer.

- Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit.

- Duties. The Treasurer collects monies from all fundraising events and coordinates disbursement of funds and turns them over to the sponsoring unit Quartermaster. The Treasurer shall give a detailed report of all receipts and disbursement of funds at all VFWRG meetings. Shall provide a monthly financial report to the sponsoring unit Quartermaster for inclusion in the sponsoring units financial report. The Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining all the VFWRG patches that are un-issued as well as a record of the

- Per Section 709 of the National bylaws and National Resolution 308, all money, property or assets of any kind or will be placed in the custody of the Quartermaster of the sponsoring unit. Such money, property, assets, books, and records shall be subject to the same rules and under the same procedure as any other Post, County Council, District, or Department money, property, assets, books, and records.

- Sergeant-at-Arms (Appointed by the President).
 - Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit or its Auxiliary.
 - Duties. Makes certain to uphold rules of the VFWRG and keeps order at all meetings and events. Reports actions of its members who do not conform to the rules of the VFWRG, or its sponsoring unit, to the President.
- Chaplain (Appointed by the President).
 - Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit or its Auxiliary.
 - Duties. Provides spiritual guidance to VFWRG members.
- Road Captain (Appointed by the President).
 - Must be a member in good standing of the VFW, and a member of the sponsoring unit or its Auxiliary that meets criteria as ride leaders, capable of executing rides and functions pertaining to the VFWRG.

Duties. The Road Captain is responsible for route planning and if needed the coordination of support vehicles for events. When on an event, they are the ranking officer if the President and Vice-President are not present and therefore leads the VFWRG formation on the ride. If the President is on the ride, the Road Captain rides at the front of the group with the President. The Road Captain will give a pre-ride safety briefing to all participants on the event including Support Vehicle drivers and passengers.

Reporting Requirements.

- VFW RG's shall make a monthly report to its sponsoring unit.
 - In the case of any VFWRG that belongs to the Department or District, you will make your reports to the Department Adjutant and/or Quartermaster no later than 30 days after completion of the month.
- VFW RG's shall make an annual report to the National VFWRG Advisory Committee (via the Department VFWRG Advisory Committee) via letter. The following will be included:
 - A full accounting of VFWRG members and participants to include VFW members, auxiliary members, and invited participants.

- A full accounting of VFWRG activity, which should include ALL VFWRG events in chronological order. Each event you will report mileage, total number of participants, and total participation hours.
- A full accounting of funds raised and disbursed by the VFWRG for the year.
- Prior to June 1st of every year, VFWRG's will provide a roster of their officers to Department HQ and their hosting unit. This information provided will be used to promote and disseminate information regarding VFW organized riding events and VFW RG policy recommendations

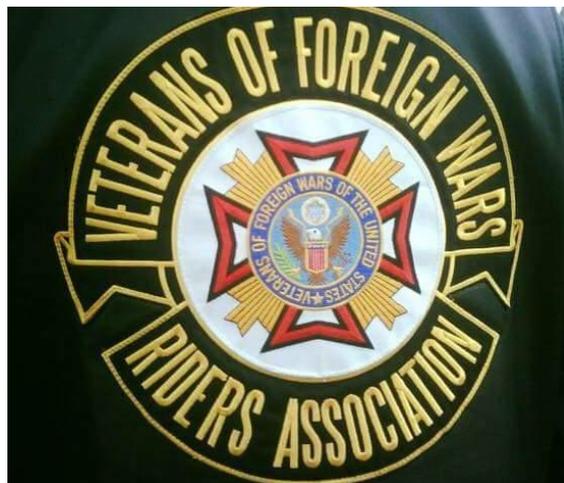
Dress Code. The VFWRG is a representation of the VFW, and as such, members shall dress in a manner that promotes a positive image of the VFW, particularly when operating in group activities or interacting with the community.

Patches.

a. No patches with profanity, depicting acts of a sexual nature, or otherwise not within the keeping of the standards set forth by the VFW will be worn.

b. Per National Resolution Number 308, at no time will any VFWRG utilize a three-piece patch design, nor display patches identifying their group as an "MC." In addition, the use of rockers or appearance thereof is deemed unacceptable.

c. The patch requirement is as noted below:



Variations of this back patch are subject to the approval of the Commander-in-Chief (via the Department Commander), consistent with the requirements of the VFW. Riders Groups will register and seek approval of designs in accordance with section 803 of the National by-laws/Manual of Procedure and this policy.

NOTE: It is the policy of the Department of California that non-member participants WILL NOT wear the patch. The Cross of Malta is reserved for qualified members only.

- The VFWRG Back Patch may be worn by all VFWRG members in good standing when approval is obtained consistent with the requirements of the VFW. Each back patch may contain the VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark (or VFW Logo for auxiliary members, if so adopted).
- VFWRG approved back patches will be the ONLY patch to be worn on the back of jackets or vests to identify a unit.
- The VFWRG Back Patch and other related articles of clothing incorporating the VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark must be worn in a manner consistent with the VFW requirements.
- The VFW reserves the right to revoke authorization granted to a VFWRG, or any VFWRG member or participant, to wear or display any VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark.

General Conduct. There will be a clear procedure outlined of how misconduct is governed for members and participants and will be clearly specified in the VFWRG Bylaws, SOP, or other rules and regs governing the VFWRG.

- a. VFWRG members and participants will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values and mission of the VFWRG and of the VFW.
- b. Alcohol consumption during VFWRG sanctioned riding activities is STRICTLY prohibited.
- c. VFWRD members and participants may be dismissed from a meeting or activity/ride as a result of inappropriate behavior.
- d. VFWRG members and participants are 100% responsible for the actions of their guest(s) at a VFWRG event. Actions of a guest of the member or participant can be grounds for dismissal or the guest and/or the VFWRG member and participant.

Waivers and Liability.

- a. All VFWRG members and participants will complete a yearly membership application. This application will include verbiage outlining a release of liability which will be signed by the individual or guardian thereto. The yearly application will include language indicating the member carries liability insurance for themselves if a rider, which also implies that their passengers are covered by the minimum state, city, and or local requirements. Those individuals not meeting the criteria to sign a yearly waiver as a legal adult will be required to have a

parent/legal guardian sign for that individual. The application and release will include, to the fullest extent permitted by law, language that requires the VFW to indemnify and hold the Post, District, County Council, Department, and National VFW, and the officers and employees of each, harmless from any and all claims arising from in in connection with:

1. The conduct or management of the VFWRG.
 2. Any act, omission, or negligence of the VFWRG or any VFWRG member or participant.
 3. Any accident, injury, or damage whatsoever occurring during any VFWRG event. This application and release shall be retained by the sponsoring unit for seven (7) years.
- b. Ride activities by the sponsoring unit will be required to have liability release waivers for each participant outside of the VFWRG, regardless of age or status, if those individuals will be participating in or on a motor vehicle for the event.
- c. Waivers and liability release forms will comply with the National Policy as well as guidelines from the American Motorcycle Association (AMA).
- d. Sponsoring units will be required to have proof of general liability insurance to protect such units and must name, as additional insureds, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California.

SECTION 15

RETIREMENT PLAN

The Department at the present time does not have nor does it offer a Retirement Plan.

The Department's Tax Deferred Savings Plan is a defined contribution plan covering all employees of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States who meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Summary Plan Description. Please refer to the Summary Plan Description for specific information concerning the terms of the Plan. The following information is provided for general guidance only.

The Plan offers employees the opportunity to save money for the future, receive employer matching contributions up to 10% and use a selection of investment options, while reducing current income tax liabilities. The Plan offers the following:

- Retirement Savings – Employees may contribute a specified percentage of compensation to the plan (up to 15%, but not to exceed the IRS maximum) on a pre-tax basis.
- Investment Opportunities – You may invest your pre-tax contributions, rollover contributions and any employer contributions among different investment funds.
- Loans – Participants may borrow from the plan at market interest rates.
- Tax Benefits – Employees pay no income taxes on contributions to the plan or investment earnings until plan benefits are distributed.

Employees become eligible to make pre-tax contributions to the plan on the first day of the month following 90 days of employment.

SECTION 16

DEPARTMENT VEHICLES

The Department will furnish to the State Commander an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00 towards the purchase and maintenance of an automobile for use during the Commander's term of office.

A 1099 will be issued to the State Commander for the amount of \$25,000.00 expenditure. No other monies from the Commander's budget may be used toward the purchase of the car.

The State Commander shall provide insurance listing the Department, as additional insured, effective on the date of delivery of the vehicle through the end of his term in office.

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The State Commander will not purchase a vehicle prior to April 15th of the year elected as State Commander.

The State Commander will be responsible for fuel and other expenses and may be reimbursed for these expenses if incurred while on Department business. Expenses will not exceed the amount appropriated in the account(s) as approved in the Department budget by the Council of Administration.

All state and local laws will be observed when operating these vehicles. Any traffic violations or other violations will be charged to the licensed driver. Any damages occurring due to negligence of the licensed driver will be his/her responsibility.

SECTION 17

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Department Council of Administration is responsible for adopting and approving changes to the SOP as deemed necessary due to new or revised requirements from National Headquarters, Department Council of Administration or the general membership.

The SOP maybe changed by a majority vote of the Department Council of Administration and the approved changes shall take effect immediately.

Appendix A
Job Descriptions

Job Description Department Adjutant

Job Title: State Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California

Department: Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Headquarters, Elk Grove, CA

Supervisor: State Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California

General Job Description:

The candidate will be responsible for administrative oversight and support for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California, a department consisting of approximately 300 posts, 15 districts, and 80,000 comrades.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Supervising:
 - Department HQ Executive Assistant, and Admin Assistants at Elk Grove
 - Employees in the VFW Veterans Affairs Offices in Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego as well as satellite sites in Sacramento, Long Beach, and La Jolla.
- Supporting all VFW National and Departmental Programs
- Coordinating communication between the Department and VFW National Headquarters.
- Maintaining communication between the Department and Districts to ensure smooth flow of information.
- Managing of all Departmental reports to ensure accurate information is getting out to districts including the District and Post Status Reports.

Minor Duties and Responsibilities:

- Ability to cross-train with the State Quartermaster
- Standard Receptionist Duties
 - Answering phone calls
 - Utilizing office equipment
 - Filing and Typing of Reports and Correspondence

Qualifications and Skills:

- Management and Leadership and Communication skills
- Ability to understand Labor Law
- Typing ability
- Microsoft Word and Excel Intermediate knowledge including Mail Merge
- Microsoft Access preferred but not required

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*** Must be available for travel to all parts of California. There will be a minimum of five times per year in terms of travel (once out of state), but more like 10-12.

Job Description Administrative Assistant

Job Title: Administrative Assistant

Department: Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Headquarters, Elk Grove, CA

Supervisor: Department Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California

General Job Description:

The candidate will be responsible for general clerical assistance in support of the Department Adjutant and in their absence the Executive Assistant.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Administrative Support at Conventions and Meetings outside of Elk Grove
- Administrative Support of key Departmental Programs such as Voice of Democracy
- Review of key Department programs such as Quarterly Audits and Bonds for Accuracy
- Departmental ordering of Buddy Poppies
- Recording of Program Donations
- Updating of the District and Post Status Reports

Minor Duties and Responsibilities:

- Standard Receptionist Duties
 - Answering phone calls
 - Utilizing office equipment
 - Filing and Typing of Reports and Correspondence

Qualifications and Skills:

- Typing ability
- Microsoft Word and Excel Intermediate knowledge including Mail Merge
- Microsoft Access preferred but not required

Job Description

Department Quartermaster

Job Title: Department Quartermaster

Department: Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Headquarters, Elk Grove, CA

Supervisor: Department Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California

General Job Description:

Assist the State Adjutant in administering the day-to-day administrative operations of the Department of California.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- As required in the National Bylaws
- Maintains the Departments Financial records and program data.
- Maintains and oversees the VFW California Foundation financial records and program data.
- Reviews all Post and District Audits
- Prepares annual IRS report
- Coordinates with posts on IRS and State tax issues
- Supervises the Bookkeeper
- Oversees the Department bonding program to include issuance of annual bonds to posts.

Minor Duties and Responsibilities:

- Standard Receptionist Duties
 - Answering phone calls
 - Utilizing office equipment
 - Filing and Typing of Reports and Correspondence

Qualifications and Skills:

- Typing ability
- Microsoft Word and Excel Intermediate knowledge including Mail Merge
- Microsoft Access preferred

Job Description Executive Assistant

Job Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Headquarters, Elk Grove, CA

Supervisor: Department Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California

General Job Description:

Assist the State Adjutant in administering the day-to-day administrative operations of the Department of California.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Administer and maintain files on official National and Department programs.
- Preparing the Department Program Guide and other related program materials.
- Prepare Department correspondence, memorandums and articles for publication/website.
- Coordinate with Posts/Districts/National to ensure completion of required reports and programs.
- Coordinate with the Service Committee to ensure completion of required reports and programs.
- Coordinate with Program Chairs to assist in preparing and processing required reports, order supplies and awards.
- Answer General questions related to programs and veteran entitlements and refers inquiries to the appropriate agencies.
- Coordinate with hotels for all VFW meetings and trainings.
 - Prepare and distribute annual bid packages
 - Prepare and maintain hotel and banquet reservation files and data
 - Prepare agendas and other related items (i.e., invitation letters).
- Any other duties that may arise in the day-to-day operations of the office.
- Opens and Distributes Mail.

Minor Duties and Responsibilities:

- Standard Receptionist Duties
 - Answering phone calls
 - Utilizing office equipment
 - Filing and Typing of Reports and Correspondence

Qualifications and Skills:

Approved by the Council of Administration 06/18

- Typing ability
- Microsoft Word and Excel Intermediate knowledge including Mail Merge
- Microsoft Access preferred