



#Today not Tomorrow

2026-2027 Membership Manual

Robert Jerdan
Department Commander

Andrew Pajak
Membership Chair

Honor Service  Inspire Future

Foreword

This manual is specifically designed to support Department, District, and Post Membership Teams in developing a comprehensive membership program. It provides:

1. Resources for organizing an effective membership campaign.
2. A basic timeline highlighting key membership dates throughout the Legion membership year.
3. Details on Department and National contests and awards available throughout the year.

Please note that the information included in this manual may be subject to updates. If changes occur, revised pages will be sent to each officer as needed.

Department Membership Contact Information

Mailing Address:

The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts
 24 Beacon St
 State House RM 546-2
 Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Membership Chairman

Drew Pajak
 80 Rhodes Ave.
 Feeding Hills, MA 01030

Robert Jerdan	Department Commander
Drew Pajak	Membership Chairman
Frank Macdonald	Membership Team Vice Chair
Louie Brault	Membership Team Vice Chair

Membership/Post 462 Inquiries:
 Department Adjutant Lisa Mcphee
 Department Website:

(617) 727-2966
www.Masslegion.org

National Membership Contact Information

(Contact your department before calling National)

Membership Inquiries: (800) 433-3318
 MyLegion Support: (833) 253-9995
 National Website: www.legion.org
 MyLegion Website: www.mylegion.org

Table of Contents

- Foreword1
- Department Membership Contact Information1
- Department Membership Directors Letter5
- Important Information and Notes.....6
- National Five-year strategic plan7
- The 2026-2027 Membership Plan..... 11
 - Mission Statement**11
 - Overall Objective:**11
 - Priorities**.....11
- Mentorship 13
- Membership Opportunities Everywhere! 14
- Increasing Your Post Membership: 11 Proven Steps to Use for Success 15
- Top 5 Reasons Veterans and Their Families Join the American Legion 16
- Top 5 Reasons for Veterans and Their Families to Renew Membership..... 16
- Need Help in Recruiting and Retention?..... 17
 - Frequently Asked Questions**..... 17
- The Importance of Membership in The American Legion..... 20
- The American Legion Post Community Injection Strategy 22
- Membership Recruitment Flyers..... 23
- Buddy Check..... 24
 - How do I organize a Buddy Check?** 24
 - Buddy Check Sample Scripts**..... 26
- What You Can Do.....Membership Ideas 27
- Unrenewed Member Sample Letter 28
- Expired Member Sample Letter 29
- DMS Transfer Sample Letter 30
- Sample Text Message Script for DMS Transfers:..... 31
- Sample Text Message Script for Renewals:..... 31
- Sample Text Message Script for Department Wide Membership Drives 32
- Some Suggestions to Increase Membership..... 33

Strategic Membership Plan 34

Department of Massachusetts - Plan of Action & Accountability Pledge..... 34

Membership Strategic Plan 34

Post 462, Post 297 and Direct Membership Solicitation (DMS) Members 35

What is "Holding" Post 462? 35

What is DMS? 35

Post Development & Revitalization 36

MyLegion.Org 37

Registration 38

My Groups 38

Membership Processing 38

Important Notes on Membership Processing 38

Reports in Process 38

Reports 39

Labels 39

How to Find Members in My Area..... 39

Members Renew Online39

Membership Renewal Schedule 2026-2027 40

Department Membership Goal Dates 2026-2027 41

National Membership Goal Dates 2026-2027 41

Awards Information 42

Department Awards 43

Individual Awards..... 43

Post Awards 43

District Commander Awards 44

National Awards..... 44

Special Individual Recognition..... 44

Post Awards 47

District Awards..... 47

General Information and Forms 49

Member Data Form 50

Member Data Form Instructions..... 51

Resolution 17 (2024)..... 52
Resolution 48 (2012)..... 53
Resolution 49 (2012).....55
Resolution 50 (2012).....57
Resolution 52 (2012).....59

A Letter from the Director of Membership

For those of you who are new to the Department Executive Committee (DEC) Welcome! For the rest of you welcome back.

As the District Senior Vice Commander one of your many duties is the membership position of your district. One requirement is your report to the Department Executive Committee during Membership Meetings. These meetings are held prior to the DEC in September, November, January, March, April and Pre Convention. You will receive a reminder email on or about the first of the month when we are having a Department Executive Committee Meeting.

It is your responsibility to know the membership status of your District and be able to articulate to the full Membership Meeting the current accomplishments and concerns. If you are unable to attend the Membership Meeting it is your responsibility to ensure that your commander is fully aware of the district's position so he/she can report for you!

In particle we are very concerned about posts that are failing to reach targets. First Target Date is September 10th for 50%. In recent years we have experienced several district representatives not being prepared and cannot answer questions asked about their posts. Recently, an additional issue has been the failing posts and the DEC not being aware until you are looking to suspend the charter. If you have posts that are in danger of turning in their charters it is important that the DEC is aware as soon as possible. Who knows, we may be able to assist and keep the post active, but if we are not aware until time to close the posts it's too late.

Please review the weekly membership report, if you have not already done so, please contact all posts, especially those that are not making targets and in this case that have not processed any memberships. You should receive a membership report weekly from the Department Office. If you are not, please contact them to be added to the distribution list. Please understand that just because Posts have members paid, they may only be PUFLS, and you may be called upon to answer for this post. By this time, all posts should have submitted membership on a regular basis. The constant answer of "I do not know I will have to get with them and get back to you" is not acceptable.

District Ten utilizes all active past district commanders, and current officers to have an individual POC for each post. This has proven to be a great tool and takes some pressure off our Senior Vice Commander to contact all posts. Feel free to utilize this as a means of being up to date on the membership position of all your posts.

Senior Vice Commander Pajak and his team are available to assist when needed just ask!

Frank MacDonald
The American Legion
Department of Massachusetts
Director Internal Affairs Division

Important Information and Notes

As you are aware, the Department of Massachusetts has begun processing membership through MyLegion.org. We have also sent out many informative pieces asking Posts to join us in this streamlined effort to make membership as painless as possible for Posts and Department.

1. Payments will be processed in the following manner.
 - A. Through MyLegion.org as established by National.
 - B. If your post continues to send cards for Department to process, the only payment method is sending a post check to the Department for the exact per capita for the number of cards.
 - a. Non-matching per capita will result in the return of cards and check as no accounts will be established for over or underpayments.
 - b. Department will not accept credit cards for payment of membership.
 - c. Posts are encouraged to start using mylegion.org as soon as possible as we will be eliminating the old way of submitting in the future.
 - C. If a member renews online using the National Website, their total payment is deposited into National's bank account.
 - a. Every two months the Department will run a report for the previous months, which provides the post per capita owed to each post.
 - b. On or about the 15th of the month following the renewals, National will send per capita payments to the Department.
 - c. Upon receipt of the funds, the Department will initiate an ACH transaction to the post for the credit amount due if bank account info is on file. If not, then a check will be issued bi-annually.
 - d. This process will also apply to duplicate payments.
2. The instructions and forms in this document will take precedence for the Department & National Awards Program in any instance where conflicting information exists in other Department & National publications.
3. This manual can be downloaded from the Massachusetts website at <https://www.masslegion.org/forms>
4. Districts & Posts are encouraged to establish incentive programs designed to foster an atmosphere of further growth & post-development within the **Legion Family**.
5. All target-date accomplishments are based on each Post's total membership received and posted on the target date by the close of business.
6. Incomplete data will not be counted.
7. A **NEW** member is defined as an eligible veteran who was not a paid member in good standing for the previous membership year. Transfers from one post to another do not count as a new member. The post to which a member pays their current dues will receive credit for that member for the entire year. No credits or dues will be transferred to the new post. Post goals will not be altered should a member transfer to another post or pass away either before or after paying their dues.

National Five-Year Plan

Membership & Post Activities Committee Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT: To increase membership and post development by creating a culture of growth and community involvement.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE:

Increase membership progressively over the next five years and beyond using the following strategies: *Be The One; Training/Education/Leadership Development; Communication; Post Development and Revitalization; Membership Recruiting & Retention and Community Engagement.*

PRIORITIES:

BE THE ONE – Significantly Reduce Veteran & Military Suicide.

TACTICS:

1. Training
 - A. Any available training that supports Be The One. (i.e. Face to Fight USAA grant to Columbia University, Light House Project; Identify Risk, prevent suicide.)
2. Encourage departments to develop a Be The One team.
3. Incorporate Be The One in the *Accredited Service Officer’s Manual*.
4. Conduct Buddy Checks.
5. Increase our presence on social media platforms on Be The One training.
 - A. Promote what the post is doing for Be The One.
 - B. Incorporate Be The One walks for visibility.
6. Promote the wide dissemination of calling 988 press 1, when in crisis.
 - A. Encourage family members to call when they need assistance with their veteran.

TRAINING/EDUCATION/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – To engage, educate and empower. If we do not train and mentor future generations of Legion family members, then there will be no Legion family. Improving knowledge of The American Legion by implementing educational tools and encouraging leadership development at all levels. It is an investment in our future that we must make, we cannot afford not to.

TACTICS:

1. Implement online training modules and interactive platforms to modernize training methods. (i.e. encourage members to take the Basic Training course.)
2. Establish regular communication with organizations willing to offer training resources and schedule training sessions accordingly.
3. Pair new members with experienced mentors to facilitate knowledge transfer and foster a sense of belonging.
4. Develop a coordinated approach across all levels to provide structured leadership development opportunities.
5. Host regular “Training Tuesday” events to encourage participation and continuity in educational initiatives.
6. Implement a “train the trainer” program to ensure consistency and sustainability in training efforts.

COMMUNICATION – Ensure dissemination of accurate and essential information to all members and the public.

TACTICS:

1. Utilize all internal media to encourage membership to join us in this five- year membership plan.
2. Encourage departments to develop a media relations team.
3. Communicate The American Legion’s story to the nation’s military components, with emphasis on eligibility.
4. Collect all members’ email addresses to encourage correct timely dissemination of information and any calls to action.
5. Increase PSA in local media channels.
6. Increase presence in social media.

POST DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION – Develop new posts, revitalize, or merge existing posts to promote growth within The American Legion.

TACTICS:

1. Encourage departments to conduct post evaluations to identify areas that may need post revitalization, merging of posts, or new post development. (1st year)
 - A. Revitalize posts as identified.
 - B. Encourage the development of new posts where revitalization efforts have not been successful.
 - C. Form new posts in communities with significant veteran populations.
2. Improve and actively engage the community through awareness of post activity in the community.
3. Encourage every post to welcome all members and guests.
4. Identify and use the proper membership tools at all levels to achieve growth.

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITING AND RETENTION – Increase membership by developing a comprehensive recruiting and membership retention strategy.

TACTICS:

1. Establish membership teams at all levels.
 - A. Develop a retention strategy at every level of the organization. **RETENTION MUST BE THE FIRST PRIORITY TO INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP.**
 - B. Develop and implement a strategy for transferring members from the department headquarters post into traditional posts.
 - C. Increase emphasis on traditional recruitment. *(Especially at post level.)* (i.e. provide recruitment training, utilization of the Legion app.)
 - D. Evaluate current reward and incentive programs at all levels and make recommendations for change, if necessary.
 - E. Encourage all levels to develop a working relationship with their military senior leaders to offer an opportunity to join The American Legion to all eligible members of the Active Military, the National Guard and Reserve components.
2. Find the right post to ensure the value of membership for the new member is met.
3. Ensure all new members feel welcome and are invited to participate.
4. Continue to enhance the membership renewal process.

5. Having successfully completed the VA claims process, department service officers are encouraged to invite eligible veterans to join The American Legion or renew their membership.
6. Offer participants in The American Legion programs, and their families, the opportunity to be a part of The American Legion Family, if applicable.
7. Encourage all members to establish their MyLegion account.
8. Emphasize the importance of utilizing MyLegion at the post level.
9. Encourage and promote multi-year and PUFL memberships.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation.

TACTICS:

1. Lead local patriotic ceremonies and events.
(i.e. Legion birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Flag retirement ceremonies, etc.)
 - A. Invite local leaders to attend and participate.
 - B. Work with local youth organizations.
2. Encourage attending other VSO conventions.
3. Promote post activities and include community involvement whenever you can, by inviting the public to attend the activities.
 - A. Hosting open houses.
 - B. Have an accredited service officer present at these events.
 - C. Have displays on American Legion programs (i.e. oratorical, baseball, JROTC, American Scouting, Jr. Shooting Sports, etc.)
 - D. Share the Consolidated Post Report with local leaders.
4. Create an environment where the post evolves into a community center for veterans and their families.
5. Engage with the other community groups or organizations. (i.e. churches, chamber of commerce, other community involved organizations.)

Approved by the Internal Affairs Commission on October 6, 2025 during the Fall Meeting.

Department Membership Plan

The Department 2026-2027 Membership Plan

Mission Statement: To increase membership and post development by creating a culture of growth.

Overall Objective: Expand membership steadily over the next year and beyond by implementing key strategies, including enhancing brand awareness, strengthening communication efforts, investing in training, education, and leadership development, revitalizing and developing posts, and focusing on effective membership recruitment and retention.

Priorities:

Strengthening Brand Awareness and Communication

Brand Awareness – Engage both members and non-members to enhance recognition of our identity and mission. (*Resolution 52*)

Tactics:

1. Develop marketing expertise to lead a renewed focus on marketing strategies and create a comprehensive plan to establish The American Legion as the foremost Veterans Service Organization in Massachusetts.
2. Foster corporate partnerships with veteran-friendly businesses that align with The American Legion’s values to enhance membership benefits and program awareness.

Communication – Ensure accurate and essential information reaches all members and the public effectively. (*Resolution 51*)

Tactics:

1. Leverage all internal media channels to inspire members to join the membership initiative.
2. Share The American Legion’s story with military units, emphasizing membership eligibility.
3. Collect member email addresses to improve timely communication and action alerts.
4. Expand Public Service Announcements (PSAs) through local media outlets.

5. Strengthen engagement across social media platforms.
6. Promote three-year membership renewals.

Advancing Training, Leadership, and Membership Growth

Training/Education/Leadership Development – Enhance knowledge of The American Legion by implementing education tools and fostering leadership development at all levels. (*Resolutions 50 & 52*)

Tactics:

Encourage the establishment of membership training team and long-term plans for growth. Support the expansion of the ALIE Basic Training Course and Department Legion College.

Post Creation, Development, and Revitalization – Establish new posts and strengthen existing ones to drive organizational growth. Look to Collages, Veterans Homes and Jails (*Resolutions 48, 49, 52*)

Tactics:

1. Conduct post evaluations to identify areas requiring revitalization.
 - Revitalize existing posts as needed.
 - Establish new posts where revitalization efforts have yet to succeed.
 - Develop posts in communities with large veteran populations.
 - If multiple posts within a district require assistance, organize a District Revitalization event.

Membership Recruitment and Retention – Strengthen membership through a strategic approach to recruiting and retention. (*Resolutions 48, 49, 17*)

Tactics:

1. Implement membership team at the department level made up of individuals at all levels .
2. Prioritize retention strategies across all organizational levels. *Retention must be the top priority in increasing membership.*
 - Facilitate member transitions from Department HQ’s post to traditional posts.
 - Emphasize traditional recruitment efforts, particularly at the post level.
 - Assess current reward and incentive programs and adjust as needed.
 - Cultivate relationships with senior military leaders to extend membership opportunities to eligible personnel in Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserves.
3. Ensure new members feel welcomed and engaged.
4. Continue refining the membership renewal process through platforms such as MyLegion.
5. Encourage Service Officers, upon successful VA claims completion, to invite eligible veterans to join or renew their membership in The American Legion.

Membership Opportunities Everywhere!

The American Legion stands as the largest and one of the most respected veterans' organizations worldwide. Today, it confronts critical challenges such as the War on Terrorism, Homeland Security, the Department of Veteran Affairs' CARES initiatives, and the ongoing support of military families across Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve components of the United States Armed Forces.

Legionnaires have made a powerful impact across America, standing alongside the families of fallen warriors at military funerals and spearheading programs like *Heroes to Hometown*, which assists dedicated service members returning from the battlefield as they navigate recovery from severe injuries, including traumatic head wounds and amputations.

The opportunities ahead are limitless. With renewed public interest in military affairs, veterans' healthcare, the Flag Amendment, and growing national support for service members, The American Legion is well-positioned for expansion. The *DMS Plus* program has demonstrated its effectiveness in identifying and reaching a new wave of veterans from every war era. These individuals must be contacted and integrated into local posts.

Strengthened by a robust membership, The American Legion continues to lead efforts addressing issues affecting women in the military, advocating for veterans impacted by Desert Storm-related illnesses, and providing unwavering support through the *American Legion Family Support Network* to service members and their families deployed across the globe. These challenges will not disappear, and experience has shown that sustained membership growth is essential to meeting present and future demands.

Keep in mind: A thriving membership campaign relies on teamwork to attract new members, transition Post 462 members, and maintain engagement within your post. Developing a strategic plan for the year will not only bring in new members but also strengthen retention efforts for those already part of The American Legion.

Increasing Your Post Membership: 11 Proven Steps to Use for Success

Membership Growth and Engagement Strategies

1. **Establish a Membership Recruiting Team** – Assemble a dedicated team to lead post membership drives. The Post Membership Chairperson sets clear goals and incentives for the team, while post officers recognize and reward those who contribute to membership growth. Buddy Check callers can also support recruitment efforts.
2. **Develop and Maintain a Prospect List** – Create a targeted list of local veterans, including delinquent post members and active or lapsed Department Headquarters members. Recruitment teams should engage these prospects through personal outreach, leading to renewals, reinstatements, or transfers. Lists can be generated via My Legion at www.MyLegion.org.
3. **Leverage the Total Force** – Engage Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard personnel as potential members. Growth is fueled by fostering connections and providing services to active-duty personnel and their families. Host dinners, family events, and special functions to honor and support service members. Reach out to armories and bases in your area.
4. **Maximize Media Outreach** – Successful posts utilize various media channels, including websites, newspapers, community bulletin boards, and broadcast stations, to promote meetings, activities, and events through Public Service Announcements (PSAs). For additional guidance, refer to The American Legion's Public Relations Handbook at [this link](#).
5. **Align Activities with Membership Interests** – Ensure sponsored activities reflect members' interests. Keep programs adaptable, adjusting as needed to stay relevant to the evolving needs of the post community. Younger Veterans are looking for more than a bar.
6. **Maintain Regular Communication** – Publish monthly or quarterly newsletters to keep members informed of activities, programs, and events. When members stay engaged, their enthusiasm and participation increases.
7. **Enhance Member Engagement** – Ensure meetings are informative, enjoyable, and well-organized. Meetings should be conducted efficiently and in alignment with The American Legion's By-Laws and Manual of Ceremonies.
8. **Foster a Welcoming Environment** – A designated Post Welcoming Committee should greet new members, introduce them to the group, and facilitate mentorship assignments to help new recruits integrate smoothly.
9. **Embrace The American Legion Family Concept** – Encourage collaboration among The American Legion, Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion. A unified approach strengthens efforts to benefit the post, community, state, and nation.
10. **Collaborate with Civic and Patriotic Organizations** – Engage with local groups that share common interests in youth programs, Americanism initiatives, and overall community support. Strengthening these partnerships expands impact.
11. **Host a Membership Rally** – Organize a rally at the post or district level to generate excitement. Incorporate fun activities such as Chili Cook-offs, family games, and competitions like Corn Hole to foster camaraderie. Promote the event through newspapers, radio, posters, and word of mouth. Consider inviting the Vet Center or other outreach initiatives to enhance visibility and attract participation.

Top 5 Reasons Veterans and Their Families Join The American Legion

1. **Shared Interests and Connection** – Exchange ideas, concerns, and discussions with fellow veterans who understand your experiences.
2. **Security and Support** – Access valuable benefits, including Service Officer assistance, discounts on various services, and collective strength in lobbying efforts.
3. **Social Engagement** – Build relationships with others who enjoy similar activities, events, and experiences, fostering camaraderie.
4. **Personal Growth and Recognition** – Be part of an organization that upholds a positive image and provides opportunities to volunteer, serve, and be acknowledged for contributions.
5. **Reliable Source of Information** – Stay informed on essential topics affecting veterans and their families through trusted resources and guidance.

Top 5 Reasons Veterans and Their Families Renew Membership

1. **Recognition and Prestige** – Members gain acknowledgment for holding leadership positions or contributing to meaningful projects. Being part of a respected and reputable organization adds to their sense of accomplishment.
2. **Fulfilling Activities and Programs** – Post events, functions, and initiatives meet member expectations, offering educational, enjoyable, and valuable experiences that strengthen engagement.
3. **Reliable Support and Security** – Membership provides confidence in valuable benefits, helpful Service Officers, and meaningful legislative efforts that advocate for veterans' rights and needs.
4. **Opportunities for Connection and Expression** – Members can share ideas, goals, and personal experiences while engaging with others who have similar perspectives and interests.
5. **Access to Valuable Information** – The American Legion’s media resources—including its magazine, Legion Dispatch, department and post newsletters, and website articles—deliver relevant, insightful, and accessible information that benefits veterans

Need Help in Recruiting and Retention?

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why should I renew my membership when I don't visit the Post or go to Post functions?

Answer:

Your membership in The American Legion plays a vital role in advocating for veterans' benefits. When The Legion represents veterans before Congress, your membership strengthens our collective voice, demonstrating that you support the rights and entitlements earned through service. By renewing, you show that you care—not only about your benefits but also about those who served alongside you.

2. Who should I join when I already belong to two or three other veteran organizations?

Answer:

Many American Legion members actively participate in multiple veteran organizations, recognizing the unique strengths of each. While other groups may provide meaningful support, The American Legion offers distinct advantages.

The Legion's dedication to community-based initiatives—such as Americanism programs, youth outreach, and scholarships—sets it apart. Additionally, its advocacy efforts have led to significant achievements, such as pressuring the VA to acknowledge Agent Orange-related illnesses for Vietnam veterans. More recently, Desert Storm veterans facing Gulf War illness challenges have chosen The American Legion for its strong track record of supporting veterans' needs.

3. I'm not old enough. Why should I join?

Answer:

Age is not a determining factor for membership. If you served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces during a time of war or conflict, you are eligible to join. Veterans who care about their earned VA benefits and the future of America are always "old enough" to make a difference. Your membership strengthens the organization's ability to advocate for veterans' rights and national interests.

4. Why should I join/renew and pay dues when I'm being helped through the VA without being a member of the American Legion?

Answer:

While membership in The American Legion is not required to receive VA benefits, these benefits exist because The Legion fought tirelessly to secure them for veterans. Now, we need your support to help safeguard and preserve these hard-earned protections for all who have served.

Your membership carries weight—Congress recognizes every member as another voice advocating for veterans' rights, ensuring continued access to the benefits you and others have earned through service.

5. Why should I become a member when my brother-in-law already shares his magazine with me?

Answer:

While it's great that your brother-in-law shares his magazine, membership in The American Legion offers far more than just reading material. He can't pass along the full experience—post activities, camaraderie, and exclusive member benefits. These include discounts on eyewear, prescription medications, hotels, vacations, car rentals, and special post events. With over 2.7 million dues-paying members enjoying these perks, membership provides both tangible benefits and a meaningful connection to the veteran community.

6. Why should I join the American Legion Post? Many Posts have non-veterans regularly visiting the Clubroom, and I don't wish to associate with them. I did the time and paid the price, and they didn't.

Answer:

*While this concern is understandable, many members come to appreciate **The American Legion Family** once they learn more about its purpose. **The American Legion Family** includes not only veterans but also their family members who actively support the organization.*

- **Sons of The American Legion (SAL)** – Made up primarily of sons and grandsons of Legionnaires.
- **The American Legion Auxiliary** – Includes daughters, sisters, mothers, and spouses of Legionnaires.

So, while you may encounter individuals in the Clubroom who are not veterans, they are likely dedicated family members who share the mission of honoring and assisting those who served. Their contributions strengthen the Legion's impact in communities and ensure ongoing support for veterans.

7. What is the American Legion going to do for me?

Answer:

Since 1919, The American Legion has stood by veterans, advocating for their rights and providing unwavering support. Today, it continues that mission—for you. As a member, The Legion serves you and your family, offering assistance in times of need and ensuring your voice is heard alongside nearly three million fellow veterans who have served during periods of war or conflict.

Through membership, you contribute to improving veterans' benefits, strengthening communities, and fostering patriotism among America's youth. The American Legion is more than just an organization—it's a network of dedicated individuals working together for a better future. Now is your chance to be part of the Nation's largest wartime veterans' organization.

8. Does my membership allow me access to other posts across the country?

Answer:

Yes! Your membership grants you and your family access to American Legion posts across the country. Whether you're traveling or relocating, you're always welcome to visit and enjoy the same camaraderie and conveniences as the post you frequent back home.

9. How long are my dues good for?

Answer:

The American Legion membership year runs from Jan 1 through Dec 31. The renewal process for the next year begins six months before your current annual dues expire.

10. What type of service activities are Legionnaires involved with?

Answer:

The American Legion was instrumental in the creation of the Veterans Administration and is universally recognized as the originator of the GI Bill of Rights. The Legion works constantly to maintain the rights and benefits earned by veterans through service to their country. Legionnaires are also involved with community activities ranging from hospital services and blood drives to youth programs such as Boy Scouts, Civic Awareness, American Legion Baseball, Scholarships, and the Annual American Legion Boys State/Boys National programs.

11. As a Legion member, how involved must I become in its service programs?

Answer:

Participation is entirely up to you. While some members take an active role in service programs, others prefer a more reserved involvement. The American Legion encourages every member to engage at a level that suits their interests and comfort, ensuring that all can contribute in their own meaningful way.

The Importance of Membership in The American Legion

Membership discussions arise at the start of each year and continue periodically—sometimes weekly, sometimes less frequently. While The American Legion offers a broad range of programs dedicated to supporting veterans and youth nationwide, its strength and longevity depend on a committed membership base. Without active participation, the organization risks fading, despite more than a century of dedicated service.

Addressing Declining Membership:

The steady decline in membership raises an important question: What can we, as volunteers—many of us average citizens with limited financial resources—do? The simplest and most impactful action is paying annual dues. While some may choose to become Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) members, which provides long-term benefits, every Legionnaire committed to sustaining the organization can start by renewing their dues at the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1st.

Paying dues early offers both logistical and financial benefits. Logistically, it reduces the burden on those tasked with membership tracking at post, department, and national levels. Financially, it minimizes the cost of repeated renewal notices throughout the year.

Since most members plan to renew, delaying serves no benefit. While financial constraints are understandable, many recognize The American Legion’s profound impact on our nation. By renewing early, millions of dollars once spent on multiple notices can instead be redirected toward vital programs and initiatives supporting veterans and their families.

The Heart of Volunteerism and Commitment:

Why so much emphasis on this? Because for many of us, involvement in The American Legion is rooted in a desire to give back—whether supporting veterans in general or focusing on a specific cause. Some dedicate countless hours to volunteering, while others contribute in ways that align with their capacity and passion.

Despite challenges, The American Legion remains a family, and families support each other. This is no different from The American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, and The Legion Riders. Together, we lift one another up. Each post may be unique and diverse, but we remain united in mission and purpose.

Strengthening Membership Nationwide:

Beyond renewals, addressing the nationwide decline in membership requires active recruitment. Every day, we encounter veterans—whether through a bumper sticker, a hat, or a shirt signaling their service. This is where a brief 30 to 60-second conversation can make all the difference.

Did you know a large number of veterans are never asked to join? This is particularly true of younger veterans. The most untapped demographic is female veterans, many of whom never receive an invitation to join. These women served with the same commitment and courage as their male counterparts—some even excelling beyond them—yet they often go unrecognized for their sacrifice. We must ensure they are welcomed as Comrades, as veterans who took the same oath to defend this nation.

An Inclusive Legion:

The restrictions preventing many from joining our great organization have been lifted. All honorably discharged and active-duty veterans qualify. Together, The American Legion and its family (Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders) can achieve "All for One Membership."

While we face a 3.12% attrition rate due to age or injuries, the national average is at a 15% decrease per post—meaning at least a 20% increase is required to maintain stability. Some members may have drifted away from Legion ideals, but we must remind them of our mission and purpose.

Renewing Our Commitment to Veterans:

Just as the nation rallied after Pearl Harbor, we must refocus on the fight ahead. Strengthening our ranks and standing united allows us to overcome any challenge—just as history has shown us. With that in mind we must also embrace the Future and the ever-changing mind set of the Veteran.

The American Legion Post Community Injection Strategy

Have you tried going to various businesses (particularly larger ones) and speaking to their Human Resources Department or Owner? Ask if you could post veteran information and posters with American Legion brochures. These types of resources are available from Department, and the posters can be downloaded from www.Masslegion.org, with an area where you can place your post information. These are great tools for recruitment and the advancement of The American Legion. Different versions are available, one with Uncle Sam and one with the **Legion Family** (see next page). Using every resource you have, most businesses are very veteran-friendly and will be very receptive to you. Plus, you may find another venue to seek support for your post programs and events.

You will find that most businesses, whether large auto dealerships or small mom & pop businesses are places to try. These venues could also sponsor your post for your programs or other events. Many businesses set aside funds to support community organizations such as The American Legion, AMVETS, and the VFW. Take advantage of these opportunities and position your initiative as a recipient of their annual donations. They are there for the asking. Just Ask.

There are also other venues for community injection:

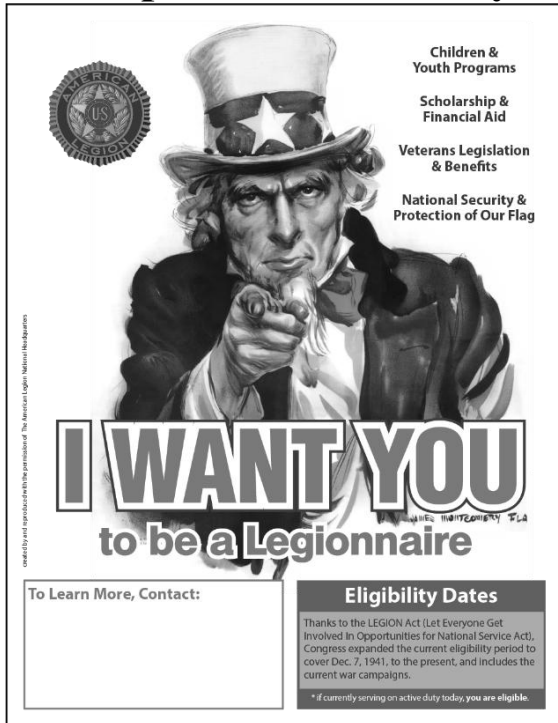
EMT of the Year, Firefighter of the Year, Law Enforcement of the Year, Teacher of the Year. These are ways to show that your post is committed to being an active community group, get out there, and shine like a lighthouse.

Then there are other courses of action:

Programs like Boy's State, Youth Law Cadet, JROTC, and School Awards. Are you presenting the awards directly into the recipients' hands? Remember you're trying to show the community you're there and that you care. So why would you drop off awards? Present them in person during awards ceremonies.

By being active in your community through local businesses, you can catch the fish not normally in your pond, so go fishing in all the ponds around you. You would be surprised to see what you can catch. With this approach, you not only gain new post members but support key elements that work on the front lines, which when you are presenting the mentioned awards at ceremonies, you show the spectators that The American Legion is there and is committed to their Community, State, and Nation.

Membership Recruitment Flyers



Children & Youth Programs
Scholarship & Financial Aid
Veterans Legislation & Benefits
National Security & Protection of Our Flag

I WANT YOU
to be a Legionnaire

To Learn More, Contact:

Eligibility Dates
Thanks to the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act), Congress expanded the current eligibility period to cover Dec. 7, 1941, to the present, and includes the current war campaigns.
* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.

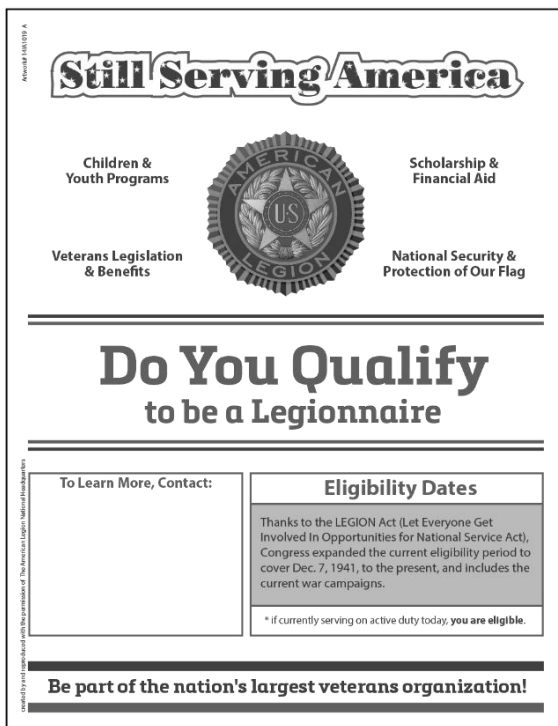


Children & Youth Programs
Scholarship & Financial Aid
Veterans Legislation & Benefits
National Security & Protection of Our Flag

I WANT YOU
to be a Legion Family member

To Learn More, Contact:

Eligibility Dates
Thanks to the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act), Congress expanded the current eligibility period to cover Dec. 7, 1941, to the present, and includes the current war campaigns.
* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.



Still Serving America

Children & Youth Programs
Veterans Legislation & Benefits
Scholarship & Financial Aid
National Security & Protection of Our Flag

Do You Qualify
to be a Legionnaire

To Learn More, Contact:

Eligibility Dates
Thanks to the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act), Congress expanded the current eligibility period to cover Dec. 7, 1941, to the present, and includes the current war campaigns.
* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.

Be part of the nation's largest veterans organization!



Still Serving America

Children & Youth Programs
Scholarship & Financial Aid
Veterans Legislation & Benefits
National Security & Protection of Our Flag

Do You Qualify
to be a Legion Family member

To Learn More, Contact:

Eligibility Dates
Thanks to the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act), Congress expanded the current eligibility period to cover Dec. 7, 1941, to the present, and includes the current war campaigns.
* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.

Be part of the nation's largest veterans organization!

Download your copy at <https://www.Masslegion.org/resources/membership/>

Buddy Check

The Buddy Check is a personal contact program established to ensure post members are not only kept close by maintaining communication with them at least twice a year, namely around Veterans' Day and The American Legion Birthday, but throughout the year. Several resources are available to help and guide your post to begin or reinstate the program on the National and Department's website.

The welfare of our members and their spouses is the primary concern on each call. Ask how they are doing, if there is anything the post can do for them, and if they need a ride to a post meeting or a VA appointment. Most of all, keep in mind to thank them at the start and end of the call, and though they may need to renew their membership, it is recommended to leave that out of the initial conversation, as it may seem that's the only reason for the call, the call is to check on them, maybe they are recovering from surgery or some other illness. When members get comfortable making these same types of calls, the "*Buddy Check Warriors*" can be used to make similar calls, such as lapsed membership. Accessing post reports with detailed and specific listings from the MyLegion website can provide targeted approaches for these calls. Be prepared and have information such as, post mailing address, programs in which your post is actively involved, and other post-focused initiatives. Even when our post members cannot reach other post members, we leave a message with contact information, stating the reason for the call and letting them know we are there for them.

Every post is unique. Just get a team of committed members who have a helping others personally. A little encouragement will develop a Call Warrior even if they're initially timid. They're probably ones you can also count on for other post functions.

How do I organize a Buddy Check?

Gather up a team to make calls or, if possible, personally visit members and former members of The American Legion and other veterans in your community. If each member in a team of 10 calls just 10 Legionnaires or veterans, 100 veterans can be reached in one sitting.

Use MyLegion.org to get contact information. The American Legion is currently limited in the amount of veteran information that can be attained without the aid of the VA but rolls of members and former members are available on MyLegion. org can always produce names and referrals to other veterans. Most posts have rosters of current and expired members at their fingertips. If posts can legally obtain other veteran names, they are urged to do so.

Save the file of members, and those whose memberships have expired, onto a spreadsheet or copy and paste into a Word file to distribute among Buddy Check team members. **Print several copies of the lists.**

Divide up the call list among your team members. Some may have personal connections with members or former members and would be best suited to make that particular Buddy Check.

Make a list of local resources that includes services like financial aid, employment opportunities, veterans’ services, home and auto repair, caregiver services, transportation services and any other known benevolent resources for veterans and their families. Having these resources at your fingertips will give the caller confidence to address the needs of veterans, whatever they may be.

Start calling, either from a quiet place inside the post home or from your own residence – to see how members and former members are doing. Ask if they need anything and invite them to any post event or activity coming up on the calendar.

Use the spreadsheet to record Buddy Check calls.

If you are making it a group effort, where many members of a Buddy Check team are calling on a particular night or time, **invite the local media** to show The American Legion reaching out to veterans and their families in the community. This not only shows The American Legion in a positive light; it also spreads awareness of the Buddy Check program for those in need or wishing to assist.

Make sure you **thank the member or former member** in the beginning and end of your call.

If the member or former member wishes to renew, be sure to **have your post’s payment procedure at your fingertips**, the address to send a check or offer to stop by in person to pick up the dues, which is another opportunity to connect.

Leave contact information in case the member or former member can’t take the call or needs anything in the future.

Buddy Check Sample Scripts

The following scripts can help you and your team make buddy checks on members and former members. Use these, modify them, or draft your own before reaching out.

Remember the most important part of the call is to see if the veteran and family are OK, if the Legion can help and invite them to celebrate any planned centennial events or activities.

For Members and Former Members:

Hi, [MEMBER’S NAME]. This is [YOUR NAME] from your American Legion Post [XYZ]. I want to thank you for your service to this great nation and your [PAST/CURRENT] membership in the organization ... also to see how things are going for you and your family.

The American Legion is doing its part to help the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs provide information and resources, as well as a welcoming environment to all veterans.

I’m calling to see if there is anything that your **American Legion Family** can assist you or your family with, or if there are any resources that I may be able to help you with?

Remember, your fellow Legionnaires are always here for you.

And I also wanted to let you know that we’re getting ready for our [NAME OF EVENT] event [DATE/EVENT] and want to invite you and your family to celebrate with us.

Thanks again for your service. If you need anything, call me anytime at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS] If you know of any other veteran in need, please let me know! Let’s stay in touch!

For Non-Member Veterans:

Hi, [Veteran’s NAME]. This is [YOUR NAME] from **your American Legion** Post [XYZ].

I’m calling to see if there is anything that your **American Legion Family** can assist you or your family with. The American Legion is joining forces with the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide information and resources, as well as a welcoming environment to all veterans.

Remember, your fellow veterans are always here for you. Less than 1% of all Americans will ever serve in the United States Armed Forces, so we veterans understand each other’s needs perhaps better than anyone else.

I may be able to direct you to resources that aid in critical matters such as health care, counseling, financial assistance and VA claims if you need them.

It is my honor to continue serving this nation by serving those who served, so if you ever need anything from The American Legion, do not hesitate to ask. We may not personally be able to solve your problem, but we can get you to the right resources.

Thanks again for your service. If you need anything, call me anytime at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS] Let’s stay in touch!

Access these scripts online and modify them to suit your needs: www.legion.org/membership.

What You Can Do.....Membership Ideas

Ask your relatives and neighbors if they belong. This is an oversight many times.

Present American Legion programs to other clubs such as Rotary, Elk's, Lions, Moose, etc.

Talk to Active Duty and Guard Reserve Units, many times Guard Units do not realize they qualify to be members. Find out if they were deployed (active duty for one or more days)

Watch local newspaper announcements of recent graduates from Basic Training and call their families.

Set up an American Legion booth at local community events, festivals, fairs, shopping malls and storefronts.

Posts can obtain a list of names of Headquarters/Post 462 members in their community by contacting Department Headquarters, or preferably from the MyLegion website.

Have a Labor Day kick off Campaign and include your American Legion Auxiliary and SAL.

Have an "Open House" for all veterans in the community.

Start a membership challenge program and have incentives for post members who sign up new members (get a T-shirt, or sign up 30 new members and get a Legion Cap, etc.)

Ask your bank if you can set up a "Veterans Week" display with an information table/area.

Conduct telephone campaigns. Scripts are available on the National website. These scripts can be fully customized, so they can be reworded in your own words, giving you the ability to have a more relaxed conversation.

Have a Corn Hole Tournament.

Hold a dart tournament.

Plan a motorcycle charity ride.

Any gathering in your community, whether attendees are veterans or not, can be valuable to The American Legion. They may have connections to veterans or families with children, making these events an essential part of the organization's outreach and impact.

Unrenewed Member Sample Letter

Good morning fellow Legionnaire,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. The reason for this letter is two-fold. One is to make sure you are doing okay, and to see if there is anything the Post can do for you. We understand many of the members do not come to the Post, so it is difficult for us to know your situation. If you are struggling, please know that the Post is here for you, and will try to assist you the best we can. Just give us a call!

The second reason is that in going through the Post roster, I noticed you have not renewed your membership for the coming year. Your current card has now expired and if you don't renew, you will lose all privileges at American Legion Posts around the world, including the canteen, games, and any other events that the Posts may be having. You will also lose all the other benefits that are available to you as a Legion member. Please check with your Post to make sure they have all your updated information.

Your renewal is very important to both the Post and the Department of Massachusetts. When you renew your membership, it assists the Post with activities and projects that support our Children and Youth, Veterans', and the local community. Every year our National Commander makes a report to Congress. This report is a comprehensive overview of how many dollars, volunteer hours, programs, etc. the Legion donates to our Veterans and community. The reason for this is that they chartered us and can take us away if we are not performing up to their standards. We are the largest Veteran's organization in the world, and we set a high standard for ourselves. We still follow the four Pillars that were originally set forth by our founders in 1919.

Please consider renewing your membership by going online, mailing it to the Post, or dropping it off at the Post. If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know!

Thank you for your service and for being a member of the American Legion.

Respectfully Yours,

Signature

Print Name and Title

Expired Member Sample Letter

Good morning, fellow Legionnaire,

I hope this email finds you in good health. The reason for this email is two-fold. One is to make sure you are doing okay, and to see if there is anything the Post can do for you. We understand many of the members do not come to the Post, so it is difficult for us to know your situation. If you are struggling, please know that the Post is here for you, and will try to assist you the best we can. Just give us a call!

The second reason is that in going through the Post roster, I noticed you have not renewed your membership for the coming year. Your current card has now expired and if you don't renew, you will lose all privileges at American Legion Posts around the world, including the canteen, games, and any other events that the Posts may be having. You will also lose all the other benefits that are available to you as a Legion member.

Your renewal is very important to both the Post and the Department of Massachusetts. When you renew your membership, it helps the Post with activities and projects that support our Children and Youth, Veterans', and the local community. Every year our National Commander makes a report to Congress. This report is a comprehensive overview of how many dollars, volunteer hours, programs, etc. the Legion donates to our Veterans and community. The reason for this is that they chartered us and can take us away if we are not performing up to their standards. We are the largest Veteran's organization in the world, and we set a high standard for ourselves. We still follow the four Pillars that were originally set forth by our founders in 1919.

Please consider renewing your membership by going online, mailing it to the Post, or dropping it off at the Post. If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know!

Thank you for your service and for being a member of the American Legion.

Respectfully Yours,

Signature

Print Name and Title

DMS Transfer Sample Letter

Dear (Member’s Name),

My name is (YOUR NAME), from American Legion Post (POST NUMBER). First, I would like to say “Thank You” for becoming a member of the largest and most powerful veteran service organization in the world. I noticed that you have joined the American Legion through our DMS program and are a member of Post 462, the administrative “Holding” post where your membership is currently in an “At Large” status at the National Level.

We would like you to consider transferring to a local Post. This post is American legion Post (POST NUMBER), located at (POST ADDRESS). By transferring your membership to a local Post, not only can you connect with other veterans, but a portion of your dues will be kept local, and you’ll be part of the true strength of our organization. Your membership will also allow you to have a voice and a vote in the operations and activities of the Post and support active-duty military and all veterans, from Washington D.C to our great state of Massachusetts and down to YOUR / OUR local community.

We realize not all our members can be active at the Post due to other responsibilities, health, etc. However, just paying your dues to the local Post allows them to work the programs of the Massachusetts American Legion in the local community.

I would like to invite you to stop by and visit our Post and attend our next meeting. Visit our family and see how we accomplish our mission of aiding our members with VA benefits and claims, involve our youth in the great programs of The American Legion and stay true to supporting military families and veterans. Our meetings are held on the (state meeting information day and time).

List here what events and programs your Post does _____

I’m looking forward to meeting you in person soon. When you arrive, please bring with you one of the following for verification purposes:

- DD -214 w/ Honorable Discharge
- Retired/Active-duty Military ID
- Massachusetts Driver License showing the “Veteran” Designation

Thank you for your service and being a member of the American Legion,

Respectfully Yours,

Signature

Print Name and Title

Sample Text Message Script for DMS Transfers:

Dear [Member's Name],

First and foremost, thank you for your service to our great nation! I am reaching out on behalf of the American Legion Department of Massachusetts to offer you the opportunity to transfer your current membership to a local post in your area.

This transfer comes at no cost to you, as you are already a member of a National holding Post. By joining a brick-and-mortar Post in Massachusetts, you'll be strengthening both your local community and the state's presence in The American Legion.

With your approval, I can process the transfer today. Simply reply "Yes" or "No" to this message, and I will place you in [Post #].

Thank you for your membership, your time, and your service to our country. We deeply appreciate your commitment to The American Legion!

Response if they agree to transfer their membership to a local Post:

Thank you for your response, for verification purposes please bring proof of Service such as a DD214, Retired Military ID, or Driver's License with a Veteran Designation to the Post.

Sample Text Message Script for Renewals:

Dear [Member's Name],

I hope this message finds you well and in good health. First and foremost, thank you for your service to our great nation!

I'm reaching out to encourage you to renew your Post membership today. Our membership numbers are currently below our goal, and your renewal plays a vital role in continuing to support veterans' programs and services.

You can renew your membership in one of two ways:

- *Online at mylegion.org (Be sure to use the same email associated with your registration and include your Post number.)*
- *In person at your Post, where you can pay your dues directly.*

We truly appreciate your ongoing support in this effort. If you would like to transfer to another Post, we're happy to assist with that as well.

Thank you again for your time, commitment, and service.

*Best regards,
[Title] [Name]
American Legion Department of Massachusetts*

Sample Text Message Script for Department Wide Membership Drives (November 11, 2026 & March 15, 2027):

Dear [Member's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. First and foremost, thank you for your service to our great nation!

Our Post is actively participating in a department-wide membership drive, working to strengthen our numbers and ensure continued support for veterans' programs and services. Your renewal is essential in helping us reach our goal.

You can join or renew your membership through one of the following ways:

- *Online at mylegion.org (Be sure to use the same email associated with your registration and include your Post number.)*
- *In person at your Post, where you can pay your dues directly.*

If you're interested in transferring to another Post, we're happy to assist with that as well.

Thank you for your time, dedication, and continued commitment to The American Legion. We appreciate your support!

*Best regards,
[Title] [Name]
American Legion Department of Massachusetts*

Some Suggestions to Increase Membership

- Post Open House:** Invite the public to your Post home to explain the programs and activities of The American Legion and the services being provided to your community. This should dispel any false image or stereotype. Put up tabletop booths with promotional materials on the various commission and activities of The American Legion. Have enough materials for distribution. Invite someone from a local VA hospital regional office, Vet Center, the SBA, or the PTA to answer questions and provide appropriate handouts where indicated. Invite the public to meet and greet your sponsored Special Olympics Team, American Legion Baseball Team, National High School Oratorical Champion, a well-recognized local hero who is a member of The American Legion, etc. Having your committee chair and Post Service Officer available to explain their operations is also important. Schedule your Open House so it is separate from other community events. Publicize widely and well in advance (i.e., newspaper, radio, TV, all appropriate public places, posters, and neighborhood leaflets). Conduct a special raffle that night (for guests and members): two times a year, in September and April.
- "Appreciation" Dinner:** Hold a special dinner (and social event) to show your support and appreciation for all veterans by having your members invite/sponsor an eligible veteran guest. Have a distinguished member of the community be the guest speaker (preferably a veteran, definitely a veteran's advocate). Help ensure the evening's success by preparing a brief but appropriate agenda. Distribute promotional materials and publicize them properly.
- Establish Contact with Other Community Organizations:** As part of an ongoing outreach program to raise awareness and improve the image of The American Legion in your community, contact other fraternal and civic groups. Ask for time on their meeting agendas to address their membership on some aspect of your Post's program. (Many of these groups are looking for guest speakers and would most likely be glad to oblige).
- V.I.P. Involvement:** Enlist the aid of local or state personalities in promoting the good works of your post and district. Try and relate their appearance to the local or state projects you have decided to undertake (i.e., Mayor and Governor Proclamations, appearances, speeches, and events).
- Related projects could be in the form of:** Membership Teams: Work with your membership teams (2&3 members to a team) to increase their membership by Dec 31st with a telephone round-up (new members and/or renewals). Half the team makes calls while the remaining members stand by with vehicles to pick up the dues immediately. A Door-to-Door Membership Drive: Target one or more neighborhoods in your community; divide up the street and conduct a door-to-door canvassing effort. Good planning and organization (advanced publicity, prepared introductory remarks for all canvassing, and a follow-up listing of the results) will significantly aid your chances for success, providing an evaluation of your effectiveness.

Strategic Membership Plan

Department of Massachusetts - Plan of Action & Accountability Pledge

Having a volunteer organization built upon its members who have pledged to a specific committee, chairmanship, or office:

What does this mean concerning an individual's level of responsibility and accountability?

How can one achieve their goals, and just what are they?

By accepting or agreeing to the task at hand, there is a level of self-accountability.

To be effective, effort must be applied, and with that, the more applied, the more results will be seen.

The Membership Strategic Plan:

- Weekly communication to your next level up (by phone, email, etc.) of actions/results.
- Weekly conference calls with the District Chair, with updates from lower levels.
- Weekly emails following Department conference call noting goal results and/or difficulties.
- What adjustments are needed to regain any lost goals to bring them up or past goals agreed upon?
- Assessments of long-term and short-range goals, where they started, and if achieved.
- Meeting Monthly with the District Chair in their operational areas to assess progress.
- Calculated and determined adjustments to the plan for effective results from the Membership Chair.

For projected membership goals to be attained, and for long-term sustained results, adjustments must be applied in a manner that is not so aggressive, so that it does not discourage advancements among District levels. Each post's strengths and weaknesses determine its stability. Posts that are struggling to uphold their mission may require additional membership support from within their District to reinforce their efforts and achieve their objectives

Each District is responsible for equipping its members with the necessary training and resources to ensure success. By working as a unified and resolute force, the entire Department can uphold its mission, set a standard for National, and ultimately serve both the veterans it seeks to support and the communities where each post operates.

There will be specific District and Department training, but **Commitment, Accountability, and Responsibility** are key to achieving the goals. As a Team and a Family that has raised our right hand and swore to the office or chairpersonship they hold, The American Legion will only ask what each member has given their word to uphold the **Duties** of their perspective position. Action is a must.

Post 462 and Direct Membership Solicitation (DMS) Members

Access to these members is directly available through the My Legion website, but posts can request them to be mailed to their post from Department. I encourage District Commanders and/or District Membership Chairpersons to provide them upon request, but this should not take the initiative from posts to do so on their behalf. National updates the DMS every Thursday. Therefore, there may or may not be any members in your area, and there usually aren't significant changes to Post 462. If you receive a "request to transfer" from a member, it must be attached to the Member Data Form (MDF) if the member's signature cannot be provided. When transferring these members into your post and they have already paid their current year's dues to Department or National, you will not receive credit for them, as with any other post transfer. But note they might have an AD code (that's 1 or 2 years in the Legion), and they have already paid their current year's dues, they will count toward your post's Target Goals. Call Department Headquarters if you need clarification on this. It is important not to send a membership card for a member who has paid their dues for the current year to another post and their transfers into your post. You only need to send the MDF to complete the transfer into your post. This will eliminate duplicate payments returned from National.

What is DMS?

The DMS program is a form of direct marketing used to solicit membership in The American Legion. Mailing lists are rented from commercial list brokers and compared to our membership files to remove members' names from the rented lists. Contacted prospects wishing to join complete an application form, certifying dates of service in the U.S. Armed Forces, the character of discharge, a branch of service, and birth date, then submit the form with payment. National Headquarters sends a membership card signed electronically with the signature of the National Adjutant, a welcome letter, and other information. These new members are placed in the Department Headquarters post of their state in accordance with the current policies of the National Executive Committee. Lists of the DMS or headquarters post members in the area are available from Department Headquarters or through MyLegion.org. Utilizing these lists is an excellent way to increase post membership, boosting American Legion engagement in the community and giving veterans a louder voice in Congress. For the DMS program to truly be effective, these new members must be personally contacted and invited to transfer to a local post. Ultimately, every post receiving a transfer is responsible for verifying the member's eligibility using a DD 214 or other official proof of honorable military service.

Post Development & Revitalization

Post development and revitalization (PD&R) is a way for The American Legion to reassert itself into the local community. The 21st Century Report states there should be an American Legion post near every high school, and we are trying to meet this challenge. If there are communities that do not have a post within it, post development is a great way for The American Legion to become an asset in the local community. There are times when membership in a local post has declined and interest in the programs is non-existent. A revitalization effort can help reenergize and breathe life back into a post so the post can become viable once again.

Did you ever stop to think what an active American Legion Post means to a community or a neighborhood? Or how many veterans and young people are being shortchanged if there isn't one? No service officer to help with claims, hospitalization, or death benefits. No students from the local high school are attending Boys State or participating in the Oratorical Contest. No Legion Baseball teams. Most importantly, there is no place for veterans to make themselves heard. Those missed opportunities would be an immense loss in assisting veterans, promoting National Security and Americanism, and educating the next generation on character-building values.

The Department Post Revitalization Program, with the help of Department Leadership and National's Regional Membership Liaison, can help with any district-wide or post development and revitalization efforts. Whether it provides timelines and material or being on the ground to train and conduct the development and revitalization effort, we are here to assist in those endeavors.

To establish where a post should be placed within a community or whether it should be revitalized, conducting a Post/Community Evaluation is essential. This evaluation helps ensure that the organization will engage in meaningful community activities. While it can serve as a valuable tool for assessing a post's effectiveness, its primary purpose is to determine how an American Legion Post can best integrate and contribute to the community. The suggested evaluation can be found in the National Post Development and Revitalization Manual.

If you feel there are communities that would benefit from a district or post development or your post needs help with revitalization, please read National Post Development and Revitalization Manual and Contact the Department Chairman to discuss ways to accomplish this task.

MyLegion.Org

Registration

American Legion leadership, post and Sons of The American Legion squadron membership is accessed through individual MyLegion.org accounts. **MyLegion.org accounts are to be registered with the email address on your individual membership record that National Headquarters has on file. Registering with an email not listed as your primary email will not provide access to membership details, leadership resources or permissions.** To register an account:

- Go to MyLegion.org
- Click "Register" in the upper right-hand corner
- Enter your email in the Register window and click Next. A Verify Account window opens. Leave this page open. Go to your email and retrieve the OTP (One Time Password).
- Enter the OTP and click Verify.
- Click Next and you will be logged in.
- Go to My Account to view membership details.

My Groups

Adjutants and Commanders at the post, squadron, county, district and detachment level have access to My Groups. These administrative officers have authority to assign permission to others. My Groups provides the capability to:

- Export and print electronic membership roster.
- Email members.
- View and edit member information.
- Access membership functions such as view members, members renewed online, registered members, global member lookup, reports and labels, process membership, Consolidated Post Reports and Consolidated Squadron Reports, and officer materials.

Membership Processing

Online membership processing is only available for posts and squadrons.

To add a new member or renew a member expired longer than one year - begin with add/transfer member. If the expired member wants to submit past dues, contact Department Headquarters. If a member has been expired for more than five years, you would enter them as a new member.

The listing in post transmittal only displays names of members eligible for current year and one year previous. Paid members will not display in this listing.

To renew a member. Search the member and click in the box to the left of their renewal year. A box will appear to check "Current or former member." Enter the member's ID and last name. Their name is added to the batch and summary recalculates. If you need to remove a member from the batch, just unclick the box to the left of their name.

To add a new member. Click "Add/Transfer Member" tab. A box will appear to check "New member - never been a TAL or SAL member." Individuals can create a MyLegion.org account prior to becoming a member. They are assigned an ID number that will become permanent if they join.

To transfer a new member. Click "Add/Transfer Member" tab. A box will appear to check "Current or former member." Enter member ID and last name to save member to transmittal.

To view members in the transmittal, hit List Selected button.

Online membership processing is designed for payment to be processed with a post or squadron account. Not with individual credit cards.

Important Notes on Membership Processing

- Previous transmittal history is in progress to be available soon.
- Payment information for transmittal processing was not converted from the previous MyLegion.org platform. After finalizing the first transmittal, a hold will prevent a second submission until the first transmittal completes. This hold is to ensure payment information is stored correctly and to prevent multiple declines in the event the first transmittal is rejected.
- To update payment information, contact My Legion support by email to mylegion@legion.org.
- Declined transmittals will require new bank information to be entered prior to submitting the next batch.
- Processing time is three to nine days.
- There is a \$10,000 batch limit for transmittal. Amounts higher than that should be broken down to separate transmittals that meet the limit.
- Transmittals are to be finalized within 14 days. Open transmittals not submitted within 14 days will be sent a reminder and then are deleted if no action is taken. All transmittals will then have to be re-entered. When transmittals are done in the timely manner, members will not receive future renewal notices, and they will receive their membership card in a timely.

Reports in Process

- Paid and headquarters transfer report also is expected to be ready in the first week of June.
- Expired listing
- Deceased member history
- CPR summary for district and county
- Detachment reports

Reports

Rosters and reports are generated in My Groups. The My Groups menu identifies the membership group to be managed.

- The left menu option has a link for Reports and Labels.
- Consolidated reports are also located on the left menu.
- View Members provides the current membership listing.
- This is also the location to view and manage membership Reports available prior to the new My Legion interface are in progress.
- The current report area includes the most used reports for managing members, revitalization, and communications.

Labels

Mailing labels can be produced 30 per sheet labels in standard 3 column, 10 row format.

How to Find Members in My Area

To create a listing of HQs post member information, begin in Reports and Labels - Find Members in My Area.

- This report provides contact information for members in your headquarters post only within a designated area defined by zip code.
- When using this report, the zip code must be entered first.
 - Only zip codes within your group's state is included. This report is not to be used to locate members in other departments. You can select a few zip codes or all. It may take a few minutes to generate the zip code list. After the zip codes have been selected you can select last paid year and "View Report".

The report generates and is sorted alphabetically. It includes contact information on file at National Headquarters. This listing can be exported to save or print using the export icon.

This report can be used for revitalization. Contact these members and ask them to transfer.

Members Renew Online

This report provides date range parameters.

- Using the small calendar icons, select the date range and View Report.
- The report generates. The current report includes all online transmittals. The Amount paid defines if the member paid online.
- The paid amount reflects what was paid to National.
- This listing can be exported to save or print using the export icon.

Membership Renewal Schedule 2026-2027

CUT OFF DATES	RENEWAL MAIL DATES
MAY	JULY 1-8, 2026
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER 4-10, 2026
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER 8-14, 2026
DECEMBER	JANUARY 3-9, 2027
FEBRUARY	MARCH 1-8, 2027
APRIL	May 2-8, 2027

Transmittals not received by the cutoff date may not prevent a subsequent renewal notice from being delivered at or around the renewal date.

Please note, renewals transmitted and **received by the cutoff** (which is also a National Target Date) will be updated prior to printing renewal notices, assuming they can be successfully scanned. Membership that must be hand-keyed (new members and renewals that can't be scanned) will take longer to process.

Please transmit as early and as often as possible in advance of the Target Dates to help avoid delays in processing.

Department Membership Goal Dates 2026-2027

Target Date	Designation	Required %
September 9, 2026	Early Bird Kickoff	65%
October 7, 2026	Fall Meetings	70%
November 4, 2026	Veterans Day	75%
December 2, 2026	Pearl Harbor Day	80%
January 6, 2027	Mid-Winter	85%
February 3, 2027	President's Day	90%
March 3, 2027	Legion Birthday	95%
April 7, 2027	Children & Youth	98%
May 5, 2027	Armed Forces Day	100%
May 31, 2027	Convention Awards	100+3 Mbr%

Department target dates are the first Wednesday of the month unless there is a holiday that falls on that day or at the beginning of that week. Since Labor Day falls on Monday the 7th and the office will be at convention, the September target date will be on the 10th Thursday.

National Membership Goal Dates 2026-2027

Target Date	Designation	Required %
September	Early Bird/NEF Kickoff	50%
October	Fall Meetings	55%
November	Veterans Day	65%
December	Pearl Harbor Day	75%
January	Mid-Winter	80%
February	President's Day	85%
March	Legion Birthday	90%
April	Children and Youth	95%
May	Armed Forces Day	100%
Delegate Strength	30 days prior to National Convention	

Awards Information

Department Awards

Individual Awards

Department Recruiter of the Year Award

The Legionnaire certified with the highest number of traditional new members will be declared Recruiter of the Year. The award includes a plaque and two (2) paid nights, at the Department Convention. The winner of the award **MUST ATTEND the Department Convention to receive compensation.**

Department Headquarters will determine the Department Recruiter of the Year by reviewing the Brigade Awards submission forms submitted on or before May 6th. The Department Recruiter of the Year will be submitted for the National Recruiter of the Year Award (See National Awards section). The top recruiter certified from each Post will receive a certificate from Department Headquarters, noting their accomplishment. In addition, membership recruiter pins will also be awarded based on Brigade Awards submissions.

Department Wide American Legion Membership Drive Incentive

Following the Department-wide Membership Drive on November 11, 2026, and March 15, 2027, the Post with the highest percentage of membership in each of the four categories achieving the highest increase in membership by November 15, 2026, and March 19, 2027, will receive \$100.00. No forms are needed. Department will verify. This incentive recognizes outstanding efforts in membership growth and engagement within the organization.

Post Categories	
Category I	15-99 members
Category II	100-250 members
Category III	251-400 members
Category IV	400+ members

100%+3 Membership Post Achievement Awards

All Posts achieving 100%+ 3 members by May 31, 2027, will receive a Certificate. No forms are needed. Department verified.

District Awards

85% Membership District Chairman Achievement Award

Any District Membership Chairman, who achieve 85% by November 11, 2026, will be recognized at the Winter Conference and receive a framed certificate. and a check for \$50.00.

99% Membership District Chairman Achievement Award

The District Membership Chairman, who achieve 99% by February 01, 2027, will be recognized at the Department Convention and receive a framed certificate. and a check for \$150.00.

100%+3 & Highest Percentage of Membership District Commander Achievement Award

District Commanders who achieve 100% +3 by May 31, 2027, will be recognized on stage at the Department Convention and receive a framed certificate. The District Commander, with the highest percentage above 100% + 3, will also receive a special dinner with the Department Commander in recognition of their outstanding leadership.

District Commanders' New Post Achievement Award

District Commanders who create a new American Legion post in their respective districts and have the new posts' temporary charter application on file at National Headquarters by May 6, 2027, will receive a framed certificate, and the new post will receive their colors from the Department.

National Awards

Special Individual Recognition

100% Post Commander & Post Adjutant Pins

All Post Commanders and Post Adjutants of the posts achieving 100% membership by May 6th will receive a 100% Commander Pin and 100% Adjutant Pin. No forms needed. Department verified.

National Recruiter of the Year

Department Headquarters will determine the top new member recruiter by reviewing the Brigade Awards submission forms and certifying the winner to National Headquarters. The top new member recruiter, properly nominated and certified from each Department, will be awarded a framed certificate, from National, noting his or her accomplishment. The individual with the highest number of new members recruited from among all the Departments will be declared National Membership Recruiter of the Year. The award includes a trip to the National Convention: six days and five nights for the Legionnaire and guest, round-trip air transportation, hotel accommodations and reserved seating tickets to the National Commanders' Banquet for Distinguished Guests.

Monetary awards will be presented to the next highest 26 individuals:

- One \$1,000 check
- 10 \$150 award checks (third place)
- 15 \$100 award checks (fourth place)

The Gold Brigade Award

A Legionnaire who recruits 50 or more NEW members into The American Legion by the Department May goal date, will qualify for enrollment in the elite GOLD BRIGADE of The American Legion. These very special Legionnaires will be awarded unique gifts that designate affiliation with the Gold Brigade of The American Legion. Also, special recognition will be given to those Legionnaires through special announcements at National Convention, in The Dispatch, online and in other media. The gifts awarded to a Gold Brigade recipient will depend on the number of times the member has qualified for their separate respective awards. Certification forms to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2027.

First Time Gold awardees will receive:	Gold Brigade Patch Special Gold Brigade Cap Pin Gold Brigade Certificate
Choice of:	Designer Jacket Polo Shirt Sweater w/ a Gold Brigade Logo
Second through fourth Time awardees will receive:	Gold Brigade Certificate
Choice of:	“Hash Mark” for jacket sleeve Designer Jacket Polo Shirt Sweater w/ Gold Brigade Logo
Seventh Time and beyond awardees will receive:	Gold Brigade Certificate “Hash Mark” for jacket sleeve
Choice of:	Designer Jacket Polo Shirt Sweater w/ Gold Brigade Logo

Gold Brigade Fifth Consecutive Year Award

Any recipient who has earned the Gold Brigade award for five consecutive years to include the current membership year by the Department May goal date, is eligible for a distinctive blue Gold Brigade blazer. A Legionnaire may only qualify for this award once every 5 years. Certification forms are due to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2026 (pages 49-50).

Gold Brigade Sixth Consecutive Year or More Award

Any recipient who has earned the Gold Brigade award for six consecutive years to include the current membership year by the Department May goal date, is eligible for a \$150 check and an American Legion Cap with the label "Master Recruiter," a Gold Brigade plaque, a cap pin and hash mark. Certification forms are due to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2026 (pages 51-52).

Gold Brigade Tenth Consecutive Year or More Award

Any recipient who has earned the Gold Brigade award for ten consecutive years to include the current membership year by the Department May goal date, is eligible for a distinctive blue Gold Brigade blazer. This is a one-time award. Certification forms are due to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2026 (pages 53-54).

The Silver Brigade Award

A Legionnaire who recruits 25 to 49 NEW members (excluding any transfers) into The American Legion by the Department May goal date, will qualify for this award. A silver pin and certificate will be awarded. Note: Silver and Gold Brigade awards cannot be awarded to a recruiter during the same membership year. Certification forms are due to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2026 (pages 55-56).

The Bronze Brigade Award

A Legionnaire who recruits 15 to 24 NEW members (excluding any transfers) into The American Legion by the Department May goal date, will qualify for this award. A bronze brigade patch and certificate will be awarded. Note: Bronze, Silver and Gold Brigade awards cannot be awarded to a recruiter during the same membership year. Certification forms are due to Department Headquarters on or before May 6, 2026 (pages 57-58).

New Post Development Pin

The New Post Development Pin is available to any individual who assists with the initial start-up of a new post. These volunteers can be nominated for this pin at any time throughout the year (page 59).

Post Revitalization Recognition Letter

Individuals who assist in revitalizing a post will receive a recognition letter from the National Commander for their hard work (page 60).

Pioneer Award

The National Membership & Post Activities Committee created the Pioneer Award on May 5, 1965, to recognize those directly involved with new post formation. However, recognition and awarding of this citation are the new posts' responsibility. Completed certification forms should be returned to Department Headquarters for approval prior to being forwarded to National Headquarters (page 61).

Post Awards

Post Honor Ribbon

Honor ribbons are awarded to all posts whose membership for the current membership year (as of December 31st) achieves an advance membership (for the year about to begin) equal to or greater than the final membership for the year ending. Department will certify eligible Posts to National.

Certificate of Meritorious Service/ All-Time High Award

This certificate is awarded to all posts that have, by December 31st, enrolled an advance membership for the membership year equaling or surpassing the posts' previous all-time high membership. Department will certify eligible Posts to National.

Five or More Consecutive Years/ All-Time High Post Award

Department Headquarters will certify to the National Headquarters all posts that retain Five (or more) Consecutive Year All-Time High. The post will receive a citation issued by the National Headquarters. After a post has won the award for five consecutive years of all-time highs, it continues to win the award each year thereafter as long as each year's membership set a new all-time high.

Post Membership Retention Award

This award recognizes posts for their ability to renew their previous years' membership. To qualify, the post must have at least the minimum number of members to maintain their post charter and retain at least 90% of their previous year's membership by the May target date. The accompanying certificate for this award will reflect retention categories of over 90, 95, and 100%. Department will certify eligible Posts to National.

Post Revitalization Recognition Letter

A revitalized post will receive a letter from the National Commander welcoming them back into The American Legion (**page 60**).

District Commander Awards

District Commander "Race to the Top" Competition

(Cut-off date is March 31st) Competition is divided into five categories based on the membership of the District without regard to geographic locations. District Commanders will compete in each of the following categories based on the final membership year totals and a top District Commander for the National Award will be selected from each of the five categories. Post Ribbons will also be awarded to each top District Commander for all posts in those districts. Second and Third place awards will also be presented in each category. The District Commanders will be awarded checks in the amount of \$500 for second place or \$375 for third place, but no additional ribbons will be awarded for the Posts in these districts. Must be 100% to qualify. Department will certify eligible District Commander's to National.

Race to the Top Categories	
Category I	15-1,499 members
Category II	1,500 – 2,999 members
Category III	3,000 – 4,999 members
Category IV	5,000 – 7,499 members
Category V	7,500 plus members

First place award: The top District Commander and guest in each category, whose district membership on March 31st represents the greatest percentage over the final previous years' membership, will receive a trip to the 108th National Convention in Kansas City, KS. **The district cannot be less than 100% to qualify.** Each winner and guest is entitled to a trip to the national convention as a distinguished guest of the National Commander, including round-trip airfare, tickets to the National Commanders' Banquet, and hotel accommodation for six days and five nights. These District Commanders will also receive Legion caps signifying they are Race to the Top winners, awarded on stage at the National Convention with ribbons for each of the districts' posts.

Second place: The District Commanders in each category whose district membership on March 31st represents the second-highest percentage over the final previous year membership will receive a \$500 check. **The district cannot be less than 100% to qualify.**

Third Place: The District Commanders in each category whose district membership on March 31st represents the second-highest percentage over the final previous year membership will receive a \$375 check. **The district cannot be less than 100% to qualify.**

District Commanders' New Post Achievement Award

District Commanders who create a new American Legion post in their respective Districts and have the new posts' temporary charter application on file at National Headquarters by May 6, 2026, will receive a framed certificate. Department will certify eligible District Commanders to National.

District Commander Achievement Award and District Honor Ribbon

All District Commanders whose May target date membership exceeds the previous years' membership by at least the number of posts in that district will be awarded the District Commander Achievement Award framed certificate. In addition, the district will receive a District Honor Ribbon for its district colors. Department will certify eligible District Commanders to National.

100% District Commander Pin

This special pin is worn only by those legionnaires who as District Commanders accomplished at least 100% of their assigned District membership goals. Department will certify eligible District Commanders to National.

General Information and Forms

Please clearly print or type the information when filling out the form.

Information that is illegible or incomplete is subject to error. Your help in ensuring the accuracy of the information reported is appreciated and will assist National Headquarters in maintaining a more accurate database for members of The American Legion.

The Member Data Form should be used to report:

- Name/Address Changes
- Date of Birth
- Email Additions or Changes
- Continuous Years Changes
- Post Transfers
- Deceased Members

The Member ID Number, Post Number and the name of the Department is required for a Member Data Form to be processed by National Headquarters.

The following pertains to transfers only:

The transfer from one post to another is a privilege granted to any paid-up Legionnaire with the approval of the post to which the member desires to transfer.

A TRANSFER MAY BE MADE UNDER THE FOLLOWING RULES:

1. No transfer shall be made unless the member requesting transfer has a membership card showing the member is in good standing at the time the transfer is requested.
2. No charge shall be made to the member for the privilege of transfer and no dues shall be transferred from one post to another. The accepting post may require payment of the difference in dues on a pro-rated basis if dues are higher than the transferring member's former post.
3. A Legionnaire desiring transfer of membership must first secure approval from the post to which transfer is desired. This may be done orally or in writing. The Adjutant of the new post will complete and route the parts of the form as instructed.
4. Department or National Headquarters will transfer the member's record to the new post, provided that member's current record is on file and provided the information on the transfer is complete.
5. No member may transfer to another post if the member has disciplinary actions within their post and this post has notified National Headquarters of the situation.

ROUTE THE MEMBER DATA FORM AS FOLLOWS:

1. Email copy to the department headquarters then national headquarters IT / Member Support Services
deptadjutant@masslegion.org
2. Send copy to the transferring post
3. Post keeps copy for their files.

Note: The signature of the Post Adjutant is required in reporting an Honorary Life Member, a deceased member, a transfer or a continuous years change.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
May 8-9, 2024
Indianapolis, Indiana**

**Resolution No. 17: Department Retention Award
Origin: Membership & Post Activities Committee
Submitted by: Finance Commission**

WHEREAS, The American Legion is a membership driven organization; and
WHEREAS, The membership of The American Legion successfully sign-up thousands of new members each year; and

WHEREAS, Even with the large number of new members signed up each year the membership of the national organization has continually decreased; and

WHEREAS, Every year there are thousands of both long and short-term members who fail to renew their membership in The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, It has become increasingly evident that retention of members is a major problem in American Legion departments and posts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 8-9, 2024, That a department retention award be created based upon the highest percentage of retention using the same categories as the Big Twelve Competition; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments must have a minimum of a 90 percent retention rate to qualify for this award and the decimal point will be carried out three places (e.g. 98.565%); and, be it further

RESOLVED, That membership transmittals must be received by the national organization by the June 30 cutoff date; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That in each of the six categories, one department will be selected as the winner of this competition and will receive a check in the amount of \$2,000.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 48: Diversity and a Veteran is a Veteran (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 27, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 27, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion, founded in 1919, as a fraternal veterans' organization based upon firm comradeship born out of war service, and dedication to equitable treatment for all veterans, particularly the disabled, their widows, and their orphans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion affirmed its continued commitment and support to all our comrades, their children, their widows and orphans and the generations to come during the Minneapolis Convention, September 6-8, 1994; and

WHEREAS, A veteran is a veteran, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed or age and is eligible to belong to The American Legion as long as he or she meets the prescribed eligibility requirement; and

WHEREAS, American Legion posts are made up of war time veterans from all walks of life, who gave of themselves, sacrificed so much and asked for so little in return to become eligible to be a member of The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of elected and appointed officials at all levels of The American Legion to ensure that our governing document, the National Constitution and By-Laws is strictly enforced and adhered to; and

WHEREAS, By virtue of membership in The American Legion, members are entitled to certain benefits including access to any American Legion post; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #27 (NEC, October 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That The American Legion strongly recommends that every level of The American Legion (departments, districts, counties and posts) review its Constitution and By-Laws and those of superior bodies within the organization to ensure it is in compliance with the rules that govern this organization; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a veteran is a veteran, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed, age, or war era, and is eligible to belong to The American Legion as long as he or she meets the prescribed eligibility requirements; and, be it further

RESOLVED, Departments, districts, counties and posts dedicated to the programs of The American Legion are urged not to take unwarranted actions that may lead to barriers that hamper the growth, support of programs and active community involvement that may adversely affect the growth of The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we operate with a common focus, derived from cooperation and fraternal relationships developed from working together at all levels of the organization, for the sole intent and purpose of carrying out the duties and responsibilities commonly shared at each level of The American Legion; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 27, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled, “Diversity and a Veteran is a Veteran” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 49: Disenfranchising (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The December 2011 change to the charter of The American Legion created the need to examine and edit language within certain resolutions of the organization in order to bring a resolution into compliance with the Charter, and gave opportunity to correct deficiencies in other resolutions, the subject herein being one as originally set out in Resolution No. 28, NEC, October 2006; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 28, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 28, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The number of American Legion posts has shown an annual reduction at a time when veterans' population is increasing; and

WHEREAS, This trend must be reversed if The American Legion is to afford every veteran an opportunity to become a member; and

WHEREAS, Every community should have the benefit of an active American Legion post that supports American Legion programs; and

WHEREAS, The original 21st Century Report recommended an American Legion post for every high school in the community in order to offer appropriate American Legion programs to high school students, which today is still a very valid concept but because of the consolidation of schools in the communities across the Nation does not provide adequate number of posts for all the eligible veterans to become a member of a post in their local community in order to provide this support; and

WHEREAS, Departments are urged to review the veteran population data in the counties in their state as compared to the location of posts and if there is not a post for every 200 veterans located in the local community there should be a major emphasis to start new posts in order to service all veterans as well as the local school systems with The American Legion programs; and

WHEREAS, A reduction of Posts directly reflects the decline in membership within each Department; and

WHEREAS, A strong presence within the community begins with an active American Legion Post; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee on January 15, 1923, approved a resolution to allow the establishment of new posts regardless of location and without undue outside interference; and

WHEREAS, Resolutions approved at the 1965 National Convention in Portland, Oregon and the 1971 National Convention in Houston, Texas, recommended that new post development be a priority project of department commanders; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #28 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That the formation and revitalization of American Legion posts be a recommended priority which only the Department Commander or the Department Executive Committee controls in accordance with Article IX Section 1 of the National Constitution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, As long as all of the required obligations are met for the establishment of a post, no individual post, county, or district shall have the authority to deny any individual(s) the opportunity to start or revitalize a post, that the final decision on all post charter applications will be made by the Department Commander or Department Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That no post charter will be cancelled without the department attempting to revitalize the post in question and attempts made by the department to start a new post within the same calendar year for every post submitted for cancellation to the National Executive Committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments are urged to form new posts in communities where there exists a large veteran population in order to provide veterans an opportunity to choose which post they desire to belong as well as make it more convenient for the veteran; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 28, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled “Disenfranchising” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 50: Training and Education (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 30, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 30, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Their specific assignment was to study "the future needs of the veterans to which The American Legion needs to adapt its programs and activities as we enter the 21st Century"; and

WHEREAS, The Internal Affairs Commission is the subordinate body to formulate and recommend policies and to oversee the implementation of adopted policies relating to activities conducted for organizational purposes; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is fundamentally a patriotic organization, dedicated and devoted to advancing the ideals of America—justice, freedom, democracy, and loyalty; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has always touted these basic principles, they do not come without exacting a price for the rank and file; and

WHEREAS, Service and membership go hand-in-hand, so do progress and growth through active support and participation as a result of education and training; and

WHEREAS, Our world is a universal information database, with its leaders and forerunners being those that use these powerful tools as cornerstones to ensure a quantitative and qualitative edge over other systems and/or groups; and

WHEREAS, This must be accomplished through the effectiveness and abilities of our leaders at all levels of the organization; it is essential they are given the opportunity, the orientation, and knowledge about American Legion programs and activities; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #30 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That all levels of The American Legion leadership are urged to develop a standard for its leadership to include a knowledge about programs, activities, goals and objectives of the organization in order to do their best and be more proactive towards the needs of those they serve; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That leadership at all levels (National through Post) are urged to recommend to all candidates for office to consider taking and successfully completing the on-line version of The American Legion Extension Institute course; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That every department of The American Legion be encouraged to start and staff a comprehensive training seminar/college (also known as Legion College) for the purpose of training its leaders; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the National Organization of The American Legion develop a training environment, seeking a better-trained cadre of leadership that may include the use of computer technology/communications, written materials, teleconferencing, other electronic media, workshops, conferences, and seminars; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That all levels of The American Legion be strongly and resolutely urged to develop and execute a continuing education program pertaining to The American Legion programs for leadership and members; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 30, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled “Training and Education” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2012**

Resolution No. 52: The American Legion Post Operations (21st Century)

Origin: Internal Affairs Commission

Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission

WHEREAS, The December 2011 change to the charter of The American Legion created the need to examine and edit language within certain resolutions of the organization in order to bring a resolution into compliance with the Charter, and gave opportunity to correct deficiencies in other resolutions, the subject herein being one as originally set out in Resolution No. 31, NEC, October 2006; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee met and reported to the National Executive Committee, October 15-16, 1997, its findings and recommendations and six resolutions were approved by the National Executive Committee in May 1998; and

WHEREAS, The National Commander's 2006 Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Retention, which met July 5 and 6 and July 24 and 25, 2006 recommended all six resolutions be reaffirmed because of their importance on the membership program of The American Legion for the future; and

WHEREAS, That Resolution No. 31, dated May 6, 1998, subject as above, was reaffirmed by the 2006 Fall National Executive Committee as Resolution No. 31, dated October 18-19, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is composed of individuals having a basic common bond by serving their country in a wartime period; and

WHEREAS, These citizen soldiers, while serving on active duty defending the principles of our democracy, have received a high level of useful discipline and training, and through these associations and experiences during military life, plus the application of prudent logic and wisdom, have built the activities and programs of our great organization; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that this rich tradition be preserved for future generations, and in order to remain informed and competitive with other groups and associations, doing business through time-tested methodology must always be subject to reflection, review, and change as necessary, in order to maximize influence in our communities, states, and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Our quality service to veterans which they have earned and deserve, can be dramatically enhanced if The American Legion urges the following at all levels of the organization:

1. ensure post operations are legal
2. provide continuous training
3. include hands-on instruction
4. utilize new technology i.e., Internet, email, office automation, public relations
5. make appropriate changes as necessary
6. current leaders serve as mentors by teaching, guiding, counseling and tutoring those being passed the mantle of leadership; and

WHEREAS, Due to the importance of this resolution in the foundation of our membership plans for the future, Resolution #31 (NEC, 2006) should be rescinded and replaced by this resolution to keep all six of the original 21st Century resolutions together; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 17-18, 2012, That all department, district, county and local American Legion leaders are urged to develop a leadership plan that stresses the need of mentoring and training of all post officials in such areas as:

- 1. Developing and executing post mission statements**
- 2. Developing and executing a five-year plan to include description in each of the following areas: post activities, programs, budgets to include financial projections, membership and public relations/communications**
- 3. Development of a constitution and by-laws to include proper charter filing, incorporation, report filing to include Consolidated Post Report, maintaining a proper check and balance system to include audit, risk management (liability, property and event insurance), and proper writing of resolutions**
- 4. Formation and training of committees based on the size and mission of the post in the local community**
- 5. Develop programs in conjunction with the Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion to welcome new veterans into the community with emphasis on welcoming our wounded warriors home through the “Operation Comfort Warriors” program to their communities**
- 6. Reaching out to all veterans in the community and listening to their concerns; and, be it further**

RESOLVED, That departments, districts, and counties are urged to develop an integrated coordinated assistance visit plan, or sometimes referred to as Post Responsibility Audit (copy in Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies) so every post is visited by one level of leadership at least once a year to review the aforementioned areas with the post leadership; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Legion believes that each post is a community based wartime veterans organization known for helping all veterans, families and children in the community and where social programs will not supersede the reason The American Legion was founded in 1919 and where the image is associated with “Service First”; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That when referring to an American Legion post in all official documents, publications, signage, and advertising that the word “post” be used instead of club, hall or other term; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 31, of the National Executive Committee, October, 2006, titled “The American Legion Post Operations” (21st Century) is hereby superseded and rescinded.