

**The American Legion  
Department of Massachusetts**



**Strategic Plan  
for  
Sustained Membership Growth**

August 15, 2018

**The American Legion  
Department of Massachusetts, Inc.  
Room 546-2, State House  
Boston, MA 02133-1099**

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Membership and Post Activities

**“Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth”**

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

*Background: Department of Massachusetts instituted a Five (5) Year Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth in 2013. The plan has had some successes, however, as an organization we need to create a greater internal focus on the issues and methods to achieve and sustain membership growth. The plan has been updated annually and in now the “Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth.”*

**OVERALL OBJECTIVE:** To increase the end strength of the Department of Massachusetts on a yearly basis.

To obtain the goal of growing our membership progressively we will utilize the following strategies: Create Brand Awareness; Communication; Training/Education/Leadership Development; Post Development & Revitalization; Membership Recruiting, Reinstating & Retention.

Priorities:

**Create Brand Awareness** – Target members & nonmembers to create awareness of who we are and what we do.

Tactics:

1. Utilize marketing expertise to lead a new marketing focus and development of a comprehensive marketing plan to increase clarity of our brand awareness of The American Legion as the Premier Veterans Service Organization.
  - Modify and expand the current Marketing committee to add additional expertise in Small Business Marketing by the end of year 2019.
  - Seek out expertise from the local colleges and universities. Work on partnership with local universities by the end of year 2019.

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- Partner with corporations that can share their marketing expertise. (Ongoing)
  - Update and modernize the Department web- site and social media presence. (Ongoing)
2. Encourage corporate partnerships with veteran friendly organizations that have the same values as The American Legion to increase the benefits of being a member.
    - Encourage partnering with companies that gives priority to hiring veterans.
    - Partner with local Chambers of Commerce (if not politically affiliated)
    - Associate corporate name “The American Legion” with all legion programs. i.e. American Legion Boys State, American Legion Baseball American Legion Junior Law Cadet, etc.

**Communication** – Ensure dissemination of accurate and essential information to all members and the general public in a timely manner.

Tactics:

1. Utilize all internal media (Massachusetts E-Legionnaire, Vets News, Post Mailings, and Massachusetts Web Site and Facebook Page) to encourage membership to join us in this Strategic Plan for Sustained Membership Growth. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Have all Districts develop media relations teams by the end of year 2019. Establish a training team within the Department Media Relations to assist and guide the district teams by the end of year 2019.
3. Communicate The American Legion’s Story to local military components (Active, Reserve & National Guard), with the emphasis on eligibility. This is an ongoing effort.
4. Continue the effort to collect all members’ email addresses and telephone numbers to enhance timely dissemination of information and any calls to action.
5. Utilize the information gather from Consolidated Post Reports to enhance the legion name in local communities.
6. Increase the utilization of National PSA’s in local media channels.
7. Increase our presence in social media.

**Increase Training/Education/Leadership Development** – Improving knowledge of the American Legion by implementing educational tools and encouraging leadership development at all Department, District and Post level.

Tactics:

1. Have Districts & encourage Posts to develop membership training teams and long term plans for membership growth.
  - District that have not established membership training teams will have them by end of year 2018
  - Post to have teams trained and working by end of year 2019
2. Encourage participation in LEAD program. Department Training and Education committee will establish a semi-annual LEAD training within the Department, ongoing.
3. Work with District and Post leadership to increase participation in the American Legion Extension Institute (Basic Course). This is excellent training tool and is free to members. Strive to get more members enrolled. This is an ongoing effort.
4. Re-establish the Department American Legion College providing regional training at least twice a year in spring and fall. Ongoing.

(Note it is the policy of the Department of Massachusetts that all Department and District Officers are strongly encouraged to enroll in and complete the American Legion Extension Institute).

**Post Creation, Development & Revitalization** – Develop new posts, revitalize or consolidate existing posts to promote growth within The American Legion.

Tactics:

1. Require Districts to conduct post evaluation to identify areas that may need post revitalization, consolidation or new post development.
  - a. Revitalizing Posts is always the first priority
  - b. Consolidation of Post when revitalizing effort proves fruitless. The Department has an ongoing effort to review non-performing Post and to merge them with performing post when revitalization efforts fail. This is an ongoing effort.

- c. Encourage development of new posts where revitalization efforts have not been successful.
  - d. Form new post in all communities lacking a Legion presence that have significant veteran's population.
- 2. Continue revitalization efforts with assistance from the National Organization. This is an ongoing program.
- 3. Improve Community awareness of the Posts by being active in your community.
- 4. Encourage every post to welcome all members and guests.
- 5. Identify and utilize the proper membership tools at all levels to achieve growth.
  - “Why you should belong” and “How we help” brochures and the “Post Officers Guide and Public Relations tool Kit”.
- 6. Enhance partnership with all Massachusetts Chapters of Student Veterans of America ongoing.
- 7. Develop partnership with Salem State University, Bridgewater State University and Springfield Technical Community College and other centers of higher learning which are interested educating their students on the American Legion and where possible establish an American Legion Post on campus. Ongoing.

**Membership Recruiting, Reinstating, 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. Develop retention teams, have members assigned, trained and operational. Ongoing.
  - b. Develop Reinstatement Teams at every District to work the Expired Members Lists ongoing effort Districts 3, 5, 8 and 10 have teams in place all other Districts will have teams by end of year 2019.
  - c. Develop and implement a strategy for transferring members from the Department Headquarters Post (Post 462) and DMS-99 into traditional Posts. Ongoing effort the Membership Chairman has placed a goal of transferring 500 members per year.

- d. Encourage Posts with military installations, National Guard armories or Reserve Centers to develop a working relation with their Senior Military Leaders to offer an opportunity to join The American Legion to all eligible military personnel. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Establish a Post Welcoming Committee to greet new members, introductions and assign mentors to the new Post members.
3. Utilize our Department Staff as recruiters to invite eligible veterans to join The American Legion this is an ongoing effort. The Department staff currently works several Career Fairs, plan to utilizing them more at yellow ribbon events and other recruiting opportunities.
4. When applicable include the entire American Legion Family, Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Riders.
5. Increase awareness of the American Legion Riders throughout the Commonwealth. We have set a goal to establish 3 new rider chapter per year.