

South Dakota

**Department of South Dakota**

Program & Membership Guide

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Glynis Collier

State Commander

**“One Team, One Fight!”**

**2024-2025**

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**Dear Comrades,**

I hope this letter finds you well. As we embark on another year of service, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your continued dedication to the VFW and for all that you do for veterans and our communities. Your commitment is the backbone of our organization, and together, we continue to make a difference.

As we look to the future, one of our primary goals is to strengthen the VFW by increasing our membership and deepening our involvement in local communities. A stronger membership means a stronger voice advocating for veterans' rights, benefits, and support, both at the state and national levels. But we can't do this alone—we need your help.

**Membership Growth and Retention**

This year, I am challenging each and every one of you to recruit at least two new or recovered members. We also need to focus on encouraging our current members to upgrade to **Life Membership** or consider becoming a **Legacy Life Member** to ensure the long-term stability of our posts. For those of you who may know of members who have not yet renewed, reach out to them personally. Let’s make sure no one gets left behind.

**A Unified Effort**

Our posts can achieve more when we work together. I urge all of our members to collaborate on membership drives and community outreach. Let’s break down silos and foster teamwork between posts and auxiliary units. Together, we can create a welcoming environment where all veterans feel embraced and valued.

We also want to ensure that every veteran in South Dakota knows about the programs, benefits, and assistance available through the VFW. That’s why we’re ramping up our outreach efforts, working closely with our **Veteran Service Officers (VSOs)** to spread the word.

**Family, Community, and Modernization**

We’re working to update the image of the VFW to reflect the family-friendly and modern organization that we are. We want our posts to be welcoming not only to veterans but to their families and future generations. We need to show our communities what the VFW stands for today—service, camaraderie, and support for all veterans.

**Incentives and Recognition**

To keep things exciting, we’re offering incentives for top recruiters and posts that meet or exceed their membership goals. We’ll be tracking progress throughout the year, and I’m looking forward to recognizing the hard work of individuals and posts at our upcoming events.

Our strength lies in our unity. Each of you plays a vital role in our mission, and together, we will continue to advocate for veterans and serve our communities. I’m honored to work alongside such a dedicated group of individuals. Let’s make this year a success, and let’s build a stronger VFW for the future.

Thank you for all that you do, and I look forward to seeing the results of our collective efforts.

**Yours in comradeship,**

Glynis Collier
**Commander, VFW Department of South Dakota**

**“One Team, One Fight”**

Commander Glynis Collier

2024-2025

**Post and District Expectations/Obligations**

***(Regardless if trying to achieve All-State or All-American status)***

|  |
| --- |
| **VFW POST “to do” CHECKLIST**Use this checklist (and Membership Guide) to put you on the right track to be a successful, thriving VFW Post. If your desire is to obtain All-State or All-American Status, please refer to Membership Guide. **Start working programs/checklist on July 1st!** Do not forget to include your Auxiliary when submitting reports. The Dept Office will continue to send out reminders in monthly General Orders (GO’s).  Access GO’s, Forms, this Checklist, SD VFW Program information, etc., at: SD VFW Website: <https://vfwsd.org> National VFW website: <https://www.vfw.org> |
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| **POST RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS** | **DUE BY:** |
| **JULY** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Post Membership Plan (Form on Dept Website) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Aug 1st |
| Trustees' Quarterly Audit Report (Quartermaster & Adjutant Books & Records) (Apr - Jun) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Jul 31st |
| Input Community Service on State Dashboard [www.vfwsd.org](http://www.vfwsd.org)  | Aug 15th |
| **AUGUST** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Complete Post BOND Forms (Submit to Dept HQs) | Aug 31st |
| Department Dues (Post membership as of Jun 30th previous Command Year) |   |
| Hospital Fund (Supports VA Med Centers in SD) (.35 cents per member)  | Aug 1st |
| Service & Rehabilitation Fund (Supports VAVS/VVS Programs in SD) (.20 cents per member)  | Aug 1st |
| Memorial Park & Chapel (Supports cost of maintaining Park & Chapel located in Black Hills) (.10 cents per member)  | Aug 1st |
| Department Donations (By Membership Category) (Post membership as of Jun 30th of previous Command Year) |   |
| Veterans Military Service (VMS) (Paid to National All-American Dashboard) | Aug 1st |
| Department Recruiting Events -  | Aug 1st |
| National Home for Children | Aug 1st |
| Special Olympics | Aug 1st |
| Purchase Legacy Buddy Poppies (.30 cents each - 3 per Post member as of Jun 30th of previous Command year) OR Tin Tap Poppies (.15 cents each – 3 per Post member as of Jun 30th of previous Command year) | Aug 1st |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **SEPTEMBER** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Trustees' Quarterly Audit Report (Quartermaster & Adjutant Books & Records) (Jul - Sep) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Oct 31st  |
| Accomplish One Membership Activity and input on state dashboard | Oct 15th  |
| **OCTOBER** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Attend Department Fall Council / Homecoming in Sioux Falls at Alliance Center | Sept 27-29, 2024 |
| Attend Fall District Meeting | Oct/Nov |
| Posts Pay District Dues (Pay District QM) | Due by Fall District Meeting |
| Input Community Service on State Dashboard [www.vfwsd.org](http://www.vfwsd.org) | Nov 15th |
| Annual Awards Programs (Forward to District POC) |   |
| Patriots Pen (One Entry to District Judging for every 15 Entries at Post Level) on Scholar’s App | Oct 31st |
| Voice of Democracy (One Entry to District Judging for every 15 Entries at Post Level) on Scholar’s App | Oct 31st |
| Teacher of the Year (Teacher Entry Grades (K-5) (6-8) (9-12) (Submit to Dept Chair) | Oct 31st |
| **NOVEMBER** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Veterans Day Activities – input Veterans Day activities on state dashboard  | Dec 15th |
| **DECEMBER** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Trustees' Quarterly Audit Report (Quartermaster & Adjutant Books & Records) (Oct - Dec) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Jan 31st  |
| Accomplish One Membership Activity and input on state dashboard | Jan 15th  |
| **JANUARY** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Attend Mid-Winter District Meeting | Jan/Feb |
| Attend Department Legislative Conference / VOD/PP/Teacher of the Year Banquet in Pierre  | Annually in Jan |
| Input Community Service on State Dashboard [www.vfwsd.org](http://www.vfwsd.org) | Feb 15th  |
| Annual Awards Programs (Watch GO's) |   |
| Public Servant Recognition (Entries to Dept Chair) (Law Enforcement, Fire Fighter & EMT) | Jan 1st  |
| **FEBRUARY** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| District Inspector Conduct Post Inspections (Send Copy to Dept HQs) | Due by Feb 15th  |
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| **MARCH** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Accomplish One Membership Activity and input on state dashboard | Mar 15th  |
| Conduct/Complete Post Inspection (Form on Dept Website) (Copy to Dept HQs) | Mar 31st  |
| Trustees' Quarterly Audit Report (Quartermaster & Adjutant Books & Records) (Jan - Mar) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Apr 15th  |
| Annual Awards Programs (Watch GO's) |   |
| Scout of the Year (Boy/Girl) (Submit to Post-Mar 1st) (Post to Dept Chair-Apr 1st) | Mar 1st  |
| **APRIL** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Complete National Convention Form & Delegation Form (Submit Form/Fees to National) (QM will receive in Mail) | Annually in Apr |
| Complete Department Convention Form & Delegation Form (Submit Form/Fees to Dept HQs) (Watch GO's) | Annually in Apr |
| Complete Post Election Report (Submit to National for 2023-24)  | Jun 1st  |
| Complete Annual Post Committee Appointment Letter (Submit to Dept HQs for 2023-24) | Jun 1st  |
| Attend Spring District meeting | Apr/May |
| 4th Quarter Programs Report (Feb - Apr) (Submit to Dept HQs) - Update in Dashboard | May 1st  |
| **MAY** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Memorial Day Activities (Submit on Quarterly Programs Report) (Submit to Dept HQs) - Update in Dashboard | Annually by Jun 30th  |
| Loyalty Day Activities (Submit on Quarterly Programs Report) (Submit to Dept HQs) - Update in Dashboard | Annually in May |
| Complete Tax Form 990 - Complete on IRS Website (Copy to Dept HQs) | Refer to May GOs |
| Community Service and Program Books | May 1st  |
| Accomplish One Membership Activity and input on state dashboard | May 1st  |
| **JUNE** |  |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Accounting Report | Monthly |
| Complete & Maintain Monthly Meeting Agenda & Minutes | Monthly |
| Attend Department Convention in Mitchell  | June 12-15, 2025 |
| Trustees' Quarterly Audit Report (Quartermaster & Adjutant Books & Records) (Apr - Jun) (Submit to Dept HQs) | Jul 31st  |
| **PROGRAMS TO WORK ON ALL YEAR** |   |
| Achieve 102% in Membership  | on-going |
| Support & Attend Department Recruiting Events | on-going |
| Donate and Support Commanders/President Special Project  | on-going |
| Publications Contest (Post Newsletter) | on-going |
| Veterans in the Classroom  | on-going |
| Support SD VFW Baseball | on-going |
| Youth Activities | on-going |
| Americanism  | on-going |

**Membership Goals and Objectives**

**1. Build a Stronger VFW for the Future**

* Strengthen the foundation of the VFW for longevity and continued success.

**2. Foster Mentorship and Team Building**

* Instill mentorship, teamwork, and esprit de corps among members.

**3. Veteran Service Officer (VSO) Outreach**

* Provide VSO outreach to posts and districts for better support and resource distribution.

**4. Increase Awareness of VFW Programs and Benefits**

* Ensure all veterans in South Dakota are aware of VFW programs, benefits, and assistance.

**5. Boost Membership and Participation**

* Increase membership and active participation in the VFW.

**6. Recruit More Life Members**

* Encourage members to become life members to secure long-term commitment.

**7. Increase Legacy Life Membership**

* Promote legacy life membership to enhance the VFW’s enduring impact.

**8. Recruit and Recover Unpaid Members**

* Focus on recruiting new members and recovering unpaid members.

**9. Retain and Mentor Existing Members**

* Prioritize retention and mentorship for current members to keep them engaged.

**10. Promote Collaboration Between Posts**

* Encourage cooperation between posts for membership drives and joint activities.

**11. Increase Community Involvement**

* Encourage active involvement in local communities and spread awareness of the VFW's purpose.

**12. Update VFW Image to be Family-Friendly**

* Modernize the image of the VFW to appeal to families and the younger generation.

**13. Embrace and Welcome All Veterans**

* Ensure all veterans feel welcomed and included in the VFW community.

**14. Encourage Family Members to Join the Auxiliary**

* Promote family participation by inviting them to join the Auxiliary.

**15. Foster Cooperation Between VFW and Auxiliary**

* Strengthen relationships between the VFW and Auxiliary for joint membership efforts.

**Membership Program: Key Action Points**

The membership program is a post-driven initiative. Posts must involve their members in recruitment and retention efforts.

**Incentives and Creative Approaches**

* Offer creative incentives and discounts to encourage new sign-ups and renewals.
* Use the **12-month payment plan** for life membership as a recruitment tool.

**Membership Goals**

We are only as strong as our membership status. To achieve growth, we aim for:

* **5% Increase** in New Members
* **10% Increase** in Life Members
* **5% Increase** in Reinstated Members
* **5% Increase** in Legacy Life Members
* **95% Average Retention** for posts in South Dakota

**Membership Achievement Goals by Date**

| **Date** | **Membership Goal** |
| --- | --- |
| **Jul 31, 2024** | Obtain 80% |
| **Sept 30, 2024** | Obtain 85% |
| **Nov 30, 2024** | Obtain 92% |
| **Jan 31, 2025** | Obtain 96% |
| **Mar 31, 2025** | Obtain 99% |
| **May 1, 2025** | Obtain 102% |

**Key Strategies for Recruitment and Retention**

**1. Student Veterans Chairman**

* Collaborate with state universities and colleges to recruit student veterans.
* Provide resources like computers, tables, and signs for recruiting events through a grant from National VFW.

**2. Top Recruiter Incentive**

* The member who signs up the most new, life, or reinstated members will receive an incentive (TBD). The cutoff date for this is **May 1, 2025**.

**3. Commander’s Recruiting Challenge**

* **State Commander Collier** challenges every member to recruit **two (2)** new or recovered members this year.

**4. Incentives for Recruiting**

* **Annual Members**: Recruit 5% of your total post member count (based on MemStats on Jul 1, 2024) to receive an incentive.
* **Life Members**: Recruit 5% of your post's member count by **Jul 1, 2024**, for a TBD incentive.
* **Legacy Life Members**: Recruit 2% of your post's member count by **Jul 1, 2024**, to earn an incentive.

**Retention: Definition and Key Focus Areas**

Retention is crucial for growth, even if it isn’t a prerequisite for the All-State or All-American programs.

**Retention Types:**

1. Annual members renewing their dues.
2. Annual members upgrading to life membership.
3. Transferred members who continue to pay dues to your post.

Encourage members to consider **Life Membership** to avoid annual dues reminders and promote **Legacy Life Membership** for lasting contributions to the VFW.

**Membership Division: Points System**

| **Criteria** | **Points** |
| --- | --- |
| Top 5 posts to reach 102% membership | 200 |
| Points for new/reinstated members (5% to 100%) | 10-200 |
| Membership plans submitted by Oct 1, 2025 | 200 |
| Early submission of membership plan (Aug 1) | 100 |

**Maximum Total Points: 900**

**VFW Programs and Projects: Points System**

| **Program** | **Points** |
| --- | --- |
| Aid to Others / Hospital | 20 |
| Americanism / Patriotism | 20 |
| Firefighter / EMT / Law Enforcement Awards | 100 |
| Patriots Pen / Voice of Democracy | 150 |
| Teacher of the Year | 50 each |
| Youth Activities | 20 |
| Community Service Program Book | 200 |

**Maximum Total Points: 1050**

**All-State Post Commander and Quartermaster Qualifications**

**Key Criteria for White Hat Teams:**

* **102% Membership** by **May 2025**.
* Submit 2025-2026 Election Report by **Jun 1, 2024**.
* Purchase **3 Buddy Poppies per member** by **Jun 30, 2024**.
* Submit a Membership Plan by **Oct 31, 2024** (extra points for early submission by Aug 1).

**Additional Awards and Recognition**

* **Baker-Simpson Award**: Outstanding Commander.
* **William J. Radigan Award**: Outstanding Quartermaster.
* **Tice-Gallagher Award**: Awarded to the top District Commander.
* **Most Valuable Comrade (MVC) Award**: For exemplary dedication and service.

**Final Notes**

This Membership Plan is a guide for growing the VFW in South Dakota. By focusing on recruitment, retention, and community engagement, we will strengthen our organization for years to come.

For more resources, visit [South Dakota VFW Website](https://vfwsd.org) or contact **National VFW** directly at 1.833.VFW.VETS.