

**DEPARTMENT BY-LAW CHANGES 2017**

Recommended Department By-Law Changes to be Addressed at the Convention 8-11 June 2017.

Submitted by mail to the By-Law Committee Chairman 15 April 2017 and electronically, 1 May 2017.

Transmitted to required recipients with the May General Orders - 1 May 2017

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Item BI:

ARTICLE 7 - Section 2. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma

Line 1: Change three (3) to five (5).

Add to line 3 after the word convention - In addition, 2 (two) tentative Council of Administration meetings will be scheduled with the first occurring within the first 14 days of December and the second occurring within the first 14 days of April each year. The State Commander may cancel either or both tentative meeting if there is no substantial business to transact.

Justification: The time frame between currently scheduled CofA meetings does not enable the State Commander and his council to address pending issues in a timely manner.

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Item B II:

Article XIII- Delete entire article. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma

Justification: Men's Auxiliary - Remove entire section to comply with current national by-laws that have eliminated Men's Auxiliaries throughout the VFW.

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Item B III:

Article XIV Section 4. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma  
Line 2 - Change the word formally to normally

Add the following sentence to the end of the existing paragraph.

The State Commander may allow the district hosting State Loyalty Day to hold its district meeting on that day.

Justification: With the earlier National Convention dates, there is a limited number of weekend days in May that allow a district to hold its convention and have it conclude no later than 10 days prior to the State Convention. In addition, since the district is assembling, finding the volunteers to host a successful event is enhanced as members will already be in attendance.

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Item B IV:

Article XIV: Add Section 6. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma

Effective with the 2018-2019 budgetary year, and continuing thereafter, it will be the financial responsibility of each respective district to fund their respective commanders to the extent they deem acceptable. The state will be responsible for official mileage in accordance with current reimbursement policy for all Council of Administration members including district commanders.

Justification: With the significant reduction of members, the state budget shrinks each year. Without curtailing some expenses and sharing some responsibility it will be impossible to fund current programs and reasonably pay critical employees.

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ItemB V:

Article XIV. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma

Add section 7

The Department may establish a VFW Foundation for the benefit of the VFW in Oklahoma. The Council of Administration will approve the formation and the initial rules of the foundation. Once established the foundation will stand on its own. The current State Commander will be a member of the foundation and will assume a term

of no less than 3 years. Each succeeding commander will also become a member of the foundation under the same terms. The Department Quartermaster will also serve as the treasurer of the foundation. The cost to establish the foundation will not exceed \$3000.00 unless an increase is approved by the Council of Administration.

Justification - Establish a VFW Foundation for the Department - Authorize a committee comprised of the State Commander, Immediate Past State Commander, Quartermaster, Adjutant and the 3 Finance Committee members to establish a Foundation. Other members may be added at the discretion of the state commander if their unique contribution adds to the important work at hand. Establishing a Foundation will enhance the ability of the Department and Posts to receive grants from other foundations and corporations that will only give to 501(c)3 organizations. It is hope that funds within the foundation once accumulated will permit grants to the department, posts and other veteran services.

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Item B VI:

Add Section 8 -. Submitted by the Department of Oklahoma

Each district within the department will hold 3 meetings and a convention each year.

Justification: Holding district meetings in similar time frames better enables to state to asceliain the operating condition of posts and to disseminate information and training.

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I certify that these are the recommended By-Laws changes received or initiated at the State Headquarters by April 7, 2017.

Ron Gimondo  
State Adjutant  
Department of Oklahoma



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 VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
 OF THE UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS  
 2311 NORTH CENTRAL, SUITE 1200  
 OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73105

JAMES DOCKEMEYER 1317  
 STATE COMMANDER

BOB MASON 1098  
 SR. VICE COMMANDER

CORAL PORCH 5263  
 JR. VICE COMMANDER

RON GIMONDO 1719  
 QUARTERMASTER/ADJUTANT

May 2017

Greetings to all,

The year has steadily progressed and I have seen some great work from some posts and I have seen some posts continue to struggle. It is my hope that with this new election cycle that we are electing leaders to keep our posts in operation and the VFW in Oklahoma strong. We owe it to ourselves and to all veterans and their families.

In 5 weeks, we will have our annual convention. I am sure the convention committee is planning some outstanding events so please plan on attending. Our National representative will be none other than Keith Harmon, National Sr. Vice Commander in Chief. Let's get a big crowd at the convention to welcome our future chief!

I am pleased to announce that the Department of Oklahoma is the recipient of a \$15,000 grant from the VFW Foundation. The Foundation allocated \$100,000 per year for major grants with a \$15,000 limit to any single grant. These grants are extremely competitive and are open to any U.S. non-profit not just the VFW. My thanks to Ron Gimondo who worked on this grant for many months and wrote a compelling case as to why the VFW needs to support it its own and specifically why the Foundation needs to support Oklahoma.

The request was for continued refurbishment of our building on Blackwelder and 10th in OKC, with the primary reason being replacement of the roof. Work continues there as funds allow and we know that in June our Headquarters will be moving there (the veterans building we are now in closes on 1 July).

Did you know that not one regular budget dollar has been spent on that building! Everything to date has been from grants and donations including a \$5,000 gift from our wonderful Department Auxiliary. In the future operational costs will be a budgetary item and refurbishment/improvements dependent on grants and donations. It would be great if your post followed the example of Wilburton, Woodward and Chandler and made the Veteran Service Center a post project.

If I do not see you at your district meeting, then hopefully I will see you at the convention where we will elect our future leaders

Yours in Comradeship,

**J. J.**  
 State Commander



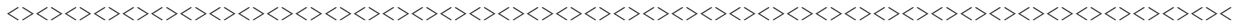
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**MAY 2017**

**General Orders**

**No.11**



*Special Notice*

**STATE HEADQUARTERS:**

We will endeavor to provide the State of Oklahoma with great service while adhering to a standard of excellence. The electronic version of the General Orders, program book, roster, etc. are available, so please send an email to State Headquarters if you would like to receive any or all of them. If you already receive them, you will remain on the distribution list. [vfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com](mailto:vfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com)

**STATE RAFFLE TICKETS:**

Raffle tickets are available from State Officers and District Commanders. There is a flyer attached to these General Orders for your use in your post. The raffle supports the youth programs in the Department. So, get your tickets now before they are sold out!

**LOYALTY DAY AND MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE:**

Section 223 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure provides that each Post shall make the necessary arrangements for proper observance of Loyalty Day and Memorial Day. Officers should see that suitable grave markers, wreaths and flags of the United States are placed on the graves of deceased veterans.

**NOTE FROM NATIONAL:**

*Under Section 211 of the National By-laws, the Commander-in-Chief maintains the authority to suspend and further revoke a Post Charter for failure to submit a properly completed Post-Election Report to this Headquarters by June 1. To ensure the accuracy of Post-Election Reports, this Headquarters is advising every Department to strongly encourage each of their Posts to file their report using the Online Membership System {OMS}.*



*Please remember the State Commanders! Sr. Vice  
 Commander :Bob.Mason*

**1. POST AND DISTRICT TRUSTEE AUDIT REPORTS:**

Quarterly Audit Reports must be submitted to State Headquarters in a timely manner. All post and district trustees are required to perform a quarterly audit four times per year. Manual of Procedures, Sections 218 (11) b and 418 (7) b. June 30 audits were due August 15. September 30 audits were due by November 15. Your audit for December 31 is due no later than February 15, 2017.

**2. QUARTERMASTER BONDING:**

Each Quartermaster must be bonded in an amount equal to liquid assets, which are defined as cash on hand, in the bank, and other negotiable instruments readily converted into cash. The minimum amount of bond is \$3000.00 for a premium of \$15.00: Additional coverage at \$5.00 per thousand. Pertaining to Districts and Posts bonding through State Headquarters, you must submit your bond applications to State Headquarters, 2311 N. Central Avenue, Suite 1200, Oklahoma City, OK 73105. Not later than 31, August 2017. *\*Posts that have less than \$3000.00 in liquid assets and have their past 3 audits on file may apply for a \$2000.00 bond for \$10.00.*

**3. SERVICE OFFICER BONDS:**

Service officer bonds require no application. Submit the Service Officer's name to State Headquarters and include a \$5.00 fee as payment to receive the required \$1000.00 Bond.

**4. CANTEEN STAFF AND OTHER OFFICER BONDING:**

Applications will be available upon request by contacting State Headquarters. 405-525-2680

**5. 990-SERIES TAX RETURN:**

Tax-Exempt organizations that have not filed a required 990 series form for three consecutive years will automatically lose their tax-exempt status. All tax-exempt organizations must file a Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N or 990-PF with the IRS. For more information on filing, go to [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov). Proof of your last filing must be on file at State Headquarters. If your fiscal year ended on December 31 your return is due by May 15 each year, or the 15th day of the 5th month following the close of your year if it ends of that December 31st. If you need help call Ron Gimondo, Dept. QM.

**6. MANUAL OF PROCEDURE. SECTION 416:**

Elected and Appointed Officers: Chairmen and committees, District officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the District Adjutant. Additionally, District Commanders, District Senior Vice Commanders, and District Junior Vice Commanders shall submit proof of eligibility to the Department Adjutant. Officers are subject to removal without proof being on file at the appropriate level. If your district officers are not in compliance, your state representative will recommend removal.

**7. BYLAWS. SECTION 403-DISTRICT QUORUM:**

The minimum number of delegates required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a regular meeting, special meeting or District Convention shall be not less than one

(1) delegate each from fifty (50) percent of Posts in the District. It is mandatory that post commanders and other authorized individuals attend district meetings, as per sec 218 (1) k.

**8. NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:**

The location of our Washington, D.C. office allows us to monitor all legislation affecting veterans, alert VFW membership to key legislation under consideration and to actively lobby Congress and the administration on veterans' issues. Everything we do on Capitol Hill is with the VFW's priority goals and veterans' well-being in mind. With the strength of the nearly 1.9 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliaries, our voice on "the Hill" cannot be ignored!

**9. BUDDYPOPPY:**

If you are having a poppy drive or membership drive you will want to use your poppies and boards. Send your completed order form and a check with you amount due to: VFW Dept. of OK State Headquarters, 2311 N Central Ave., OKC, OK 73105. You may pick your poppies up at the State Headquarters after confirmation of availability. Or we will mail them. The distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in Section 711 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure. Department, District and Post Commanders should arrange now for the distribution of Buddy Poppies in their respective areas. *To be eligible for All State Post you must purchase 3 poppies per member based on our 2016 membership. Did you know if your auxiliary purchases poppies, that number does count toward your 3 per post member. Also, the poppy boards are 6 poppies each and counts towards that number.*

**10. POST CONSOLIDATIONS:**

Are you having trouble getting a quorum at your meetings? Do you cancel meetings due to Jack of membership attendance? If so, perhaps you should consider consolidating with another post. It may be an opportunity for two struggling post to become one viable, strong post. Procedures are outlined in Section 209 of the VFW Manual of Procedures. Failure to follow these procedures explicitly may result in non-approval of your consolidation.

**11. HOME DEPOT GRANTS:**

Does your post need repairs or a renovation? The Home Depot Foundation is now accepting application for its Community Impact Grants program. Grants of up to \$5000.00 are awarded to charitable veteran's groups like VFW Posts for repair and renovation of their buildings. For further information email-[SmallGrants@homedepot.com](mailto:SmallGrants@homedepot.com). Telephone calls are not accepted and applications are online. The program reopened on February 1, 2017.

**12. ADVERTISING OPPURTUNITY:**

From time to time you may see advertising in this publication. The page costs \$100 and includes an ad on our state website for that month. We are also developing ad prices for just website advertising. With our smaller income, it is important to derive income from other sources and advertising from great VFW sponsors is a very effective method. If you or a company, are associated with would like to advertise please contact Liz Hellams at our state headquarters. 405-525-2680 or email [yfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com](mailto:yfwhqoklahoma@outlook.com). Post specific events on the calendar are free.

Full page ads or smaller ads of past events are billed at a 50% discount!

**13. ESTATE PLANNING WHILE SUPPORTING THE VFW:**

Create a Legacy with Just A few Words - Wills ensure your family and loved ones will be taken care of after your lifetime. Once it's completed and you feel like supporting future generations of veterans, you can do so by adding a gift to the VFW in your will. To learn more about wills and how easy it is to make a gift in your will to the VFW, contact the VFW Planned Giving Office to request a free guide today. You can reach us by calling (816) 968-1119, email [plannedgiving@vfw.org](mailto:plannedgiving@vfw.org) or visit [www.vfw.org/plannedgiving](http://www.vfw.org/plannedgiving).

**14. VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING:**

118TH National Convention Housing is officially open. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org). The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for New Orleans, LA - July 22-26, 2017, including a tentative agenda .

**15. CONVENTION REGISTRATION:**

Section 222 of the Manual of Procedure states each Post will pay, in advance, a national convention registration fee of twenty-five (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and material and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten-dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations would be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, ATTN: Convention Registration or you may register on-line by going to [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org).

**16. CONVENTION BOOK PHOTOS:**

Once again, we are preparing the annual State Convention Book for 2017. All Council of Administration are requested to submit a recent headshot to State Headquarters. Officers who have not provided a photo in the past will not be in the Convention Book if one is not submitted.

**17. ATTENTION COMMANDERS:**

Attention is directed to Section 213 of the National By-Laws concerning any Post in arrears for any financial obligations to County Council (if applicable), District, Department and National for fees, dues, poppy money, supply money, failing to have the office of Quartermaster properly bonded in accordance with Section 705, failing to ensure that the Post is properly insured in accordance Section 709, failing to submit properly completed quarterly Post Trustees report of Audit, Post Election report for the ensuing year, or other obligations, shall be deprived of all representation in County Council Meetings (if applicable), District, Department, and National Conventions. Such representation shall be restored promptly upon proper adjustment of such



deficiencies.

**18. ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION:**

The 96th Annual State Convention will be take place at the The Biltmore Hotel, 401 S. Meridian, OKC, OK 73108, the phone number is 405-947-7681, June 8-11, 2017. Our National Representative will be National Sr. Vice Commander Keith Harmon. Please make plans to attend. The rate per night is \$59.00 plus tax.

**19. CONVENTION MEMORIAL SERVICE UPDATE:**

Request all posts that have not yet forwarded the names of deceased members for this year, do so by May 31, 2017. A very crucial part of our service will be the recognition of our departed comrades. Please forward names to State Headquarters.

**20. ANNUAL AWARDS:**

Please take time to review the 2016-2017 awards and recognition categories in the 2016-2017 Program Goal. If you believe your post or any of your members are qualified to receive an award, please ensure you have completed the necessary steps. Of special interest is All-State Service Officer awards. For a service officer, must be nominated by their respective post. Or in the case of district service officer, must formally be nominated by their respective District Commander.

**21. PATRIOTS PEN AND VOICE OF DEMOCRACY:**

This years Voice of Democracy theme is: American History-Our hope for the future, and the Patriots Pen theme is: America's gift to my generation. Get those applications to the schools soon!



*Happy Mother's Day*



## ***DATES TO REMEMBER***

### May, 2017

1	-Loyalty Day	Fly your Flag!
4-7	-State Sr. Vice and State Adjutant Training	Kansas City, MO
14	-Mother's Day	Fly your Flag!
15	-Peace Officers Memorial Day	Fly you Flag! Until Sunset
20	-Armed Forces Day	Fly your Flag!
29	-Memorial Day	Fly your Flag! Half-staff until noon!

### June, 2017

8-11	-State Convention	Biltmore Hotel, OKC
14	-Flag Day	Fly your Flag!
18	-Father's Day	Fly your Flag!
21	-Summer Begins	

### July, 2017

4	-Independence Day	Fly your Flag!
22-26	-National Convention	New Orleans, LA
27	-National Korean War Vet Armistice Day	Fly your Flag!

### **DISTRICT MEETINGS 2016-2017**

District 1	05/06	11:00 am	Salina 5307	Matthew Ward, Surgeon
District 3	05/07	11:00 am	Stigler 4777	John Hartman, Inspector
District 4	05/06	11:00 am	Durant 3916	Coral Porch, Jr. Vice Cmdr
District 5	05-06	9:00 am	Mannford 7741	James Dockemeyer, Cmdr
District 7	05/06	11:00 am	Muskogee 474	Troy Hensch, Past State Cmdr
District 8	05/07	11:00am	Bristow 3656	James Dockemeyer, Cmdr
District 9		10:00am		
District 10	05/06	10:00 am	Shawnee 1317	Curt Watts, Chief of Staff
District 13	05/07	10:30 am	Weatherford 6143	Coral Porch, Jr. Vice Cmdr
District 14	05/07	1:30 pm	Duncan 1192	Ron Gimondo, Adj/QM
District 15		11:00 am		

## **TRAINING SCHEDULE**

### **VETERANS SERVICE CENTER, 1103 N BLACKWELDER, OKC, OK**

May 13	10:00 am	Service Officer training
May 13	10:00 am	Quartermaster training
May 13	1:00 pm	Commander training

Lunch will be provided.....

**Service Officer Certification:**

It is the goal of the state that all service officers attend training each year. However, service officers with more than 3 years of experience as a minimum must attend every two years. The state will begin to issue training certificates for display at your post. We will issue these over time and they will have an expiration date. The completion of current training will result in a new certificate being issued. For new service officers the expiration date will be one year from date of issue and for those with more than 3 years of experience the expiration date will be two years from date of issue. Training will be offered each month at the Veteran Service Center, 1103 N. Blackwelder, Oklahoma City. We will continue regional training at select sites around the state

**Commander/Quartermaster/Adjutant Training:** This will be held each month in OKC at the same address as above. We highly encourage new officers as well as those trying to get their posts back into compliance to attend these sessions. However, the training is open to all VFW members, so use this opportunity to learn more about being a successful post.

**By-laws Training and Reviews:** Each month we will host an informative session where we will review National and State By-Laws and how they affect you and your post. We will also have time to review your actual Post By-Laws and see if revisions are in your best interest. If you do not have any by-laws you will leave with a working template.

**Web Site training:** None scheduled at time of print.

OFFICIAL

BY ORDER OF:



Ron Gimondo  
Adjutant



James Dockemeyer  
State Commander

***Things to Know -Things to consider:***

...Membership Records- We all know that we at all levels must have on file the eligibility document for all elected officers. But what about regular members? The new application that has been in use for the past year or so has a place for service dates. Some put in the entire service dates of the member and some just put in the dates of qualifying service. I believe either is acceptable as long as the dates of qualifying service are covered by the time period. A copy of the application with 3 member signatures on the back of the application is what you need to keep at post level for IRS and other agency requirements, showing that your members are eligible and duly investigated and voted into the VFW.

...State HQ can process your membership applications or renewals if you do not have the capacity to do so on-line. Please keep the cardboard copy of the application at your post (see above paragraph) and mail us the paper front. Please enclose \$30.50 for each new member or renewal/reinstate. We will keep the original in your post file at HQ in case of any issues.

...If Office is closed during the week, the phones are forwarded to the State Adjutant. If you get the answering machine, please leave a message and he will get back to you as soon as possible.

...If your Podium book is out dated you may be violating current directives inadvertently.

...Your District Commander is there to help. If they cannot or will not call State Headquarters.

*Please remember that there are many dedicated individuals willing to help you when you need assistance. Call us and ask-you might be surprised at how friendly we are!*

***Tidbits brought to you by your friendly State Headquarters Staff***

