

DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

“THIS WE’LL DEFEND”



STATE COMMANDER

JEFF BARNES

MISSION

To provide support for all Veterans who served in foreign conflicts. Promote an “All In” policy where we make strides to advance benefits, health care and disability ratings. Joining with other Veteran groups to have a “one voice” concept for legislative actions.

MEMBERSHIP GOALS

1. To recruit, educate and mentor new members.
2. Strengthen Leadership. Develop strong, committed leaders who inspire and guide members not just “fill a seat”.
3. Actively recruit new members by fostering a sense of belonging through events, programs and networking.
4. Build effective communication channels by using social media, newsletters, and email.
5. Continue to adapt to changes in technology for quicker and easier access for the VFW.
6. Hosting community events to ensure our members and the citizens can unite to have a strong group to assist with VFW growth.

INDIVIDUAL RECRUITING AWARDS

- **RECRUITER AWARDS:** Members who recruit 10, 25 & 50 new and/or reinstated members by May 15, 2026, will be listed in the e-newsletter, published in the Department Convention book and be recognized at the Department Convention with a Citation.
- **TOP RECRUITER:** The top recruiter in the State as of May 15, 2026, will be listed in the e-newsletter, published in the Department Convention book and presented with a Citation at the Department Convention.

POST CONTESTS AND AWARDS

MID-WINTER CONFERENCE AWARD

POST MEMBERSHIP: Posts who exceed 100%+1 by December 31, 2025, will be listed in the e-newsletter, published in the Mid-Winter book and entered in a drawing for a Post \$250-dollar gift card to be held during Mid-Winter Conference.

STATE CONVENTION AWARDS

- **NEW MEMBERSHIP AWARD:** Posts that recruit 25 to 50 New members by May 15, 2026, will be listed in the e-newsletter, published in the Department Convention book and will receive a plaque.
- **POST LIFE MEMBERSHIP NUMERICAL GAIN:** The Post with the largest numerical gain in Life Membership will be listed in the e-newsletter and published in the Department Convention book. The Post will also receive a plaque in recognition.

ALL-STATE POST CRITERIA

The All-State program recognizes outstanding Posts who excel in membership growth, community service and participation in VFW programs. This designation means the Post fully meets all Department requirements in membership and VFW programs as noted on the National dashboard. All-State selections will be made in sufficient time to allow members to plan for attendance to the Awards Banquet during the Department Convention June 13, 2026. Each All-State Post will be listed in the e-newsletter, published in the Department Convention book and will receive a Post plaque and a streamer for their Post flag.

PRIMARY REQUIREMENTS

The primary requirements are divided into Membership Requirements and VFW Program Requirements. Both must be fulfilled for a Post to be on the 2025-2026 All-State Team!

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- Membership must be 100% +1 by May 15th, 2026
- Although no recruiting events are required, active recruitment should always be a priority of all Post and Members.

ALL STATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District Judging by Nov. 15, 2025, and report entered into the National dashboard system.
Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging by Nov. 15, 2025, and report entered into the National dashboard system.
- Teacher of the Year, Scout of the Year and First Responder of the Year are not required by National but as a local Post these programs should still be recognized if possible.
- Buddy Poppy- Post under 150 members must purchase 500 Buddy Poppies. Post over 150 members must purchase 1000. Buddy Poppy must be purchased by May 15, 2026 (Membership is based on MemStats as of June 30, 2025)
- Donate \$125 to the National Veterans & Military Support Services through the National dashboard by May 15, 2026.
- Donate a minimum of \$100.00 to all three State Commander's Special Projects, by May 15, 2026, Make checks payable to VFWMS
 - * The Fisher House at Keesler
 - * The Department of Mississippi
 - * The Fifth Squad
- Post must submit at least 1 quarterly community service report through the National website. The dates are July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-March, and April-June. Post Commander, Sr Vice, Jr Vice and A/Q can enter these reports.
- Must participate in the VFW Day of Service event held during the month of May and entered onto the VFW National report form. Post must register at todaysvfw.org/day-of-service/ no later than May 15, 2026. The event must meet

certain criteria aimed at making a meaningful difference in the community. The criteria can be found here: <https://todaysvfw.org/vfw-day-of-service-faq/>

Post to be in Good Standing

- Post shall have the Quartermaster BONDED by September 1, 2025.
- All Post homes must send a copy of the declaration page of their current Liability Insurance to the Department, showing the Department and National as additionally insured.
- Post **shall submit** a properly filled out quarterly Trustee Report during the 2025-2026 year. Quarterly dates are Jan. 1 to Mar. 31, April 1 to June 30, July 1 to Sept. 30, Oct. 1 to Dec. 31.
- Post inspection completed, and all discrepancies corrected by March 1, 2026.
- Post must submit 2026-2027 election report by May 15, 2026.
- Post must file the 2024 990 with receipt forwarded to Department by November 15.
- Annual report to Secretary of State, copy to be submitted to the Department by May 15, 2026

ALL-STATE DISTRICT CRITERIA

District Commanders seeking All-State status must complete the below listed requirements. All-State selections will be made in sufficient time to allow members to plan for attendance at the Department Convention June 12-14, 2026. District Commanders, earning All-State will receive an All-State Citation and a District Flag streamer.

ALL STATE DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

- Membership must be 100% +1.
- One recruitment event within District. Yellow Ribbons do not count towards this.
- Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging December 15 with report entered into the National dashboard.
- Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging December 15 with report entered into the National dashboard.
- A trustee report sent to the Department after every District meeting.
- Election report for the year 2025-2026 entered into the National system.
- All posts in District inspected and deficiencies corrected.
- All deficiencies noted on the Department inspection report corrected by May 15, 2026.
- Quartermaster must be bonded through the Department by September 1, 2025