

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WAR DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA



PROGRAMS, SCHEDULE & LEADERSHIP

2025-2026

PREPARED BY:

ROGER FERGUSON, STATE COMMANDER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	page 2
Commander's Letter	page 3
Department Contact Information	page 4
Department Service Office & National Contact Information	page 5
Department Auxiliary Contact Information	page 6
VFW Mission, Vision and Core Values	page 6 - 7
VFW Purpose	page 7
Duties & Responsibilities of Post Commander	page 7-8-9
Department Calendar	page 10 - 11
VFW National Program Deadlines	page 12
Department Awards and Deadlines	page 13
VFW Employer of the Year	page 14 – 15
VFW JROTC Cadet of the Year	page 16-17
VFW Member of the Year	page 18-19-20

Hello Team Indiana.

I would like to express how honored I am that you have put your trust in me to be your State Commander. Congratulations to all the newly elected officers. A special thanks to all the appointed officers who have stepped forward to take a leadership role. Let's always put Veterans their families and our communities first in all we do.

(UNITED AS ONE) is this year's motto. I have always believed that working together toward a common goal is the best avenue to success. We all as Veterans understand how important this philosophy is. During our time in service to our country it could mean the difference between success and failure of the mission. Now as members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars this still holds true. Once an objective has went through the proper channels and voted on successfully to adopt by the membership or Council of Administration it is our responsibility to see it through. This can only happen if we all work together. As we are reminded at the beginning of every meeting that we are to transact business of mutual benefit and not let petty jealousies or trivial personalities influence us. If we all stand together (UNITED AS ONE) 2025-2026 will be a productive and successful year we all can be proud of.

If I or any other line officer, chairperson or office staff can be of any assistance please call. It's our job!

Roger Ferguson
State Commander
Department of Indiana
Veterans of Foreign Wars
rferguson8169@gmail.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

State Officers

Commander

Roger Ferguson – 812-480-4154 – rferguson8169@gmail.com

Senior Vice Commander

David Hammons-317-590-4921 – dhammonsvfw@gmail.com

Junior Vice Commander

Ken Lange- 317-607-8894 – KenLange64@yahoo.com

Surgeon

Keith Rohloff-405-535-7210 – keith.rohloff@outlook.com

Headquarters Staff

Adjutant

Rebecca Murphy – 765-561-4754 – adj@vfwin.org

Quartermaster

Michael Jordan – 317-377-1797 – qm@vfwin.org

Department Headquarters

9555 E. 59th street

Indianapolis, IN 46216

Main Number (317) 377-1795

Fax Number (317) 377-1797

State Service Officers

Department Service Officer

Shawn Ransford – 317-916-3629 – shawn.ransford@va.gov

Assistant Department Service Officer

Mark Carr – 317-916-3629 – mark.carr1@va.gov

Veterans Service Officer

Shannon Carr – 317-916-3629 – Shannon.carr@va.gov

Veterans Service Office

575 N Pennsylvania Street

RM 319

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Main Number (317) 916-3629

National VFW Numbers

Kansas City Office – 833-839-8387

Washington D.C. Office – 202-543-2239

Emblem & Supply Store – 833-VFW-VETS

Member Service Center – 833-VFW-VETS

Insurance Program – 800-VFW-VETS

Post Insurance - 800-829-8390

VFW Member Benefits – 833-VFW-VETS

Indiana VFW Auxiliary

Department Officers

President

Jessie Davenport – 260-749-4377 jdavenp93@outlook.com

Senior Vice President

Carolyn Patch – 317-556-5801 cjpatch@gmail.com

Junior Vice President

Barb Barger – 812-498-2686 bargervfw@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Kasey Osborn – 260-273-9571 Osburn.kassandra@gmail.com

Chaplain

Michael Fleenor – 765-524-5444 Michaelfleenor89@yahoo00.com

Chief of Staff

Jill Wilson – 260-433-2637 jilwil2929@yahoo.com

Leadership Guide

The VFW Mission

To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.

The VFW Vision

Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

The VFW Core Values

- Always put the interests of our members first
- Treat donors as partners in our cause
- Promote patriotism
- Honor military service
- Ensure the care of veterans and their families

- Serve our communities
- Promote a positive image of the VFW
- Respect the diversity of veteran opinions

The VFW Purpose

The purposes of the corporation are fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational, and are:

- to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members;
- to assist worthy comrades;
- to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their surviving spouses and orphans;
- to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States, and fidelity to it Constitution and laws;
- to foster true patriotism;
- to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom; and
- to preserve and defend the United States from all enemies.

The Mission, Vision, and Core Values are all based upon the purpose of the VFW. Our purpose establishes why we exist.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts, just as individuals do, sometimes lose sight of their objectives. As individuals most of us take inventory now and then to make certain that we are staying on track and heading toward our objectives. A good Veterans of Foreign Wars Post will follow this same practice to ascertain its current status.

Duties & Responsibilities of a Post Commander

The duties and responsibilities of a Post Commander are extensive, and the list below is by no means complete. This is an attempt to provide Post Commanders a resource and a basic guide. Without a doubt being a Post Commander is one of the hardest jobs in the VFW. Your best resources are previous Commanders, your District Commander, the latest version of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual. If you do not have the Manual of Procedures and Rituals book, it is available online at VFW.ORG or the VFW Store.

1. Familiarize yourself with:

- a. VFW Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual
- b. Department Bylaws
- c. Post Bylaws
- d. Post Club/House Rules (if applicable)
- e. Post Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) or other written policies (if applicable)

2. Holding monthly Post meeting, Familiarize yourself with:

- a. Robert's Rules of Order
 - Know how to handle motions
 - Basic parliamentary procedure
- b. Know when to use the gavel and when to salute
 - One rap calls attention or seats the body when standing
 - Two raps of the gavel call everyone to standing attention
- c. Prepare a written guide or use the VFW Ritual to run a proper meeting
 - At the start of each meeting have the members recite the purpose of the VFW, section 230102 – Purposes of the Congressional Charter (see ritual)
- d. Ensure accurate minutes are taken
- e. Properly initiate any new members
- f. Ensure General Orders are reviewed
- g. Only official VFW covers are allowed, no ball caps

2. You are responsible for the Post participating in the following Programs:

- a. Voice of Democracy (**REQUIRED FOR ALL STATE AND ALL AMERICAN**)
- b. Patriot's Pen (**REQUIRED FOR ALL STATE AND ALL AMERICAN**)
- c. Teacher of the Year
- d. Scout of the Year
- e. Buddy Poppy (**REQUIRED FOR ALL STATE AND ALL AMERICAN**)
- f. Community Service (**REQUIRED FOR ALL STATE AND ALL AMERICAN**)
- g. Police/Fire/EMT

3. Membership – Everyone's Responsibility

- a. Understand the State and National Membership Plans. The Post's goal is to achieve **All State** and **All American**.
- b. Know your membership resources: Department Membership Chairman and District membership chairpersons.
- c. Appoint a member to be your Post Membership Chairperson.

4. Membership Eligibility – New and Transfers

- a. Ensure each new member application or transfer is reviewed by the membership investigation committee for eligibility. This should include both new candidates and transfers.
- b. Your membership must vote on any new or transferred member. The membership may accept or deny any new candidate or transferring member.
- c. Each new member must be initiated, see Initiation ceremony in the ritual.

5. You are responsible for the Post Inspection being completed.

- a. Not the Quartermaster – You are responsible.
- b. Ensure the Quartermaster and the Adjutant have the documentation called for on the Inspection form.
- c. Prepare in advance for the Inspection.
- d. Remember Inspections are not a PASS/FAIL – they are merely a program to ensure your Post is on the right track.

6. Post Officers

- a. Ensure all officers of the Post understand their responsibilities. (See VFW Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual).
- b. Give new members time to familiarize themselves with the organization before taking a position they are not prepared for.
- c. Work with the junior officers, develop your team, someday you want them to become Commander.
- d. Have them attend School of Instruction at the District and State level.

7. If you have a canteen/club room.

- a. Ensure your House Committee understands their responsibilities.
- b. Ensure they are familiar with the post club rules.
- c. You and the Quartermaster are members of the House Committee.
- d. You are not the manager of the canteen/club room, the House Committee is tasked with managing the canteen/clubroom.

8. District & Department functions:

- a. Post Commander or your representative must attend District meetings. If your Post misses two in a row the Post Commander will be relieved.
- b. You should attend the District and Department School of Instruction.
- c. Your Post should be represented at all District and Department functions, including:
 - Fall and Spring Conference
 - State Convention
 - State visit to the National Home and Indiana Veterans Home.

9. Miscellaneous:

- a. Election Report:
 - Ensure it is correct, including emails and phone numbers for each position.
 - If someone resigns or is no longer filling the position then you must submit an amended election report to National. (vfw.org)
- b. Ensure the Quartermaster is properly bonded.
- c. Ensure the Quarterly Trustee Audit is completed by the Trustees not the Quartermaster.
- d. Ensure all Fees to the District and Department are paid when due.
- e. Ensure delegates are elected to the Department and the National Conventions.
- f. There are many awards available to deserving members. Review the Department Awards and submit candidates.

Schedule 2025-2026

June 2025

28 VFW National Home 100th Anniversary Celebration, Eaton Rapid, MI

July 2025

4 Independence Day (Office Closed)

August 2025

9-14 National Convention Columbus, OH

22-24 State Golf Outing, Richmond, IN

September 2025

1 Labor Day (Office Closed)

5 C of A, Indianapolis Marriott East

6 SOI, Indianapolis Marriott East

11 Patriot's Day

19 POW/MIA Day – Indiana War Memorial, Indianapolis

21 Indiana Day, National Home for Children, Eaton Rapids, MI

25-28 Commander-in- Chief's Homecoming, Des Moines, IA

October 2025

2-4 State Campout, Rushville, IN

5 VFW Day – Indiana Veterans Home, Lafayette, IN

13 Columbus Day (Office Closed)

17-19 Big 10 Conference, Bettendorf, IA

31 C of A, Indianapolis, Marriott East

November 2025

1-2 Fall Conference, Indianapolis, Marriott East

11 Veterans Day (Office Closed)

27-28 Thanksgiving (Office Closed)

December 2025

7 Pearl Harbor Day

12-14 Winter Team Building, Nashville, IN

24 Christmas Eve (Office Closed)

25 Christmas Day (Office Closed)

31 New Year's Eve (Office Closed)

January 2026

1 New Year's Day (Office Closed)

19 Martin Luther King Day (Office Closed)

February 2026

16 Presidents Day (Office Closed)

28 Washington Conference, Washington, DC

March 2026

1-5 Legislative Conference, Washington, DC

April 2026

10 C of A, Indianapolis, Marriott East

11-12 Spring Conference, Indianapolis, Marriott East, VOD/PP Banquet

25 Testimonial. Evansville Post 1114

30 Awards Deadline to State Headquarters

May 2026

1 Loyalty Day

10 Mother's Day

25 Memorial Day (Office Closed)

June 2026

21 Father's Day

25 C of A, Indianapolis, Marriott East

26-28 State Convention, Indianapolis, Marriott East

VFW NATIONAL PROGRAM DEADLINES DATES

Smart / Maher Citizenship Education Teacher Award

- October 31, Entries to the Post
- November 15, Completion of Post judging
- December 15, Completion of District judging
- February 1, Department winners and reports due to National (to guarantee receipt for Department Spring Conference presentation.)

Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen

- October 21, Student entries to the Post
- November 15, Completion of Post judging
- December 15, Completion of District judging
- January 10, Completion of Department judging.
- January 15, District participation reports due to Department Chairperson
- January 15, Department winners due to National
- January 31, Department reports due to National.

Scout of the Year

- March 1, Scout entries to the Post
- April 1, Post entries to Department Scouting Chairperson
- May 1, Department entry to National from Department Scouting Chairperson

Community Service

- April 30, Post Special Project, and Fred C. Hall Submission (Dept to National)
- April 30, National Outstanding Community Service Post Submission (Dept to National)
- April 30, Department Community Service Report (Dept to National)

Public Servant National Award (Law Enforcement, Firefighter, Emergency Services)

- January 1, Nominations due (from Post to Department)
- February 1, (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation), Nominations due from Department to National.)

National Certificate of Recognition

- April 1 (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation), List due to National from Department.

DEPARTMENT AWARDS & DEADLINE DATES

Community Service Award

- Award for the total Community Service as reported by Community Service Chairperson as of April 30, 2026. Presented at Department Convention.
 - Outstanding Community Service Award – \$150, Plaque
 - Community Service Honorable Mention – \$100, Certificate

Loyalty Day Parades

Based on submissions received by May 20, 2026. Submission to include a narrative of the parade, number of Post participating, any State officers, pictures and estimated public attendance. The Post that sponsors the District Parade is eligible for the Post Award. Submissions to the Loyalty Day Chairperson. Presented at Department Convention.

Awards:

- District
 - District Loyalty Day Parade Award – \$150
- Post
 - Post Loyalty Day Parade Award – \$150, Plaque

Honor / Color Guard Award

Based on submissions received by April 30, 2026. Submissions include pictures of events, parades, and funeral ceremonies. Number and type of events. Submission to the Junior Vice Commander.

Awards:

- Outstanding Honor Guard Award – \$150, Plaque
- Honor Guard Honorable Mention – \$100, Certificate

Kieston Holloway Chaplain Award

The Kieston Holloway Chaplain of the Year Award is an annual award to Honor Post and District Chaplains for their commitment and service to our veterans. Submissions due by April 30, 2026. Submit nominations to the State Chaplain. Presented at Department Convention.

Award:

- Kieston Holloway Chaplain Award – \$150, Plaque
- Chaplain Honorable Mention – \$100, Certificate

Dwight D. Eisenhower Leadership Award

Commanders, selection from the outstanding leaders within the Department. Presented at Department Convention.

Award:

- Dwight D. Eisenhower Leadership Award – Trophy

VFW Employer of the Year Award

Employer of The Year

Purpose of the Award: To recognize an employer for outstanding service in the supporting, hiring and retention of veterans.

Deadline: The deadline for submission of nominations of employers of veterans to State Headquarter is no later than 1 April 2026. Nominations received after that date will not be eligible for consideration of the award.

Procedure: Only those nominations that include adequate documentation on the nominee's employment practices concerning veterans will be considered for the VFW Employer of the Year Awards. The nominator should provide a copy of the company's written policy on employment of veterans if available, a description of how the employer supports veterans' activities in the community, and any other reasons why the nominee should be selected to be the Employer of the year Award winner. *Governmental agencies are not eligible for this award.*

Award: The Winner will receive a plaque to be presented by the Commander at the Annual convention.

Judging Criteria:

1. Identify and describe the employer's programs and or benefits designed to recruit veterans, including innovative business practices used to increase veteran recruitment.
2. Describe the employer's policies that give a preference to hire veterans, referring veterans, or any other veteran policy (i.e. VA veteran sick leave hours). Provide the positive and significant impacts these policies have on the employer's business results.
3. Describe the employer's policies or initiatives that improve the current and future veteran employer's career opportunities.
4. Provide the number of veterans employed, the total number of employees, and the percentage of veterans employed during a set time period: June 23ed, 2025 to March 1st, 2026.
5. Describe collaborative efforts with business organizations, educational partners, and community organizations that improve veteran employment opportunities.
6. Explain why veterans would choose this employer over other employers.
7. Provide documented endorsements, newspaper articles, awards, or letters of support highlighting the nominee's contributions to veteran friendly employment or retention.
8. Provide the number of veterans employed with the employer for over one year.
9. Provide the number of veterans employed with the employer for five years.

**VFW Employer of the Year Award
Nomination Form**

Nominator's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Nominee's Position: _____

Nominee's Name: _____

Employer's Business Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Employer's Point of Contact: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Why do you feel this employer deserves this award?

Please attach additional pages, as necessary.

VFW JROTC Cadet of the Year

VFW award for special recognition of outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership for Junior ROTC Cadets. This award seeks to recognize a remarkable cadet who will become a leader in their community and serve their country.

Award:

- 1st Place \$200 – Plaque
- 2nd Place \$150 – Plaque
- 3rd Place \$100 – Plaque

VFW award for special recognition of outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership for Junior ROTC Cadets. This award seeks to recognize a remarkable cadet who will become a leader in their community and serve their country.

Criteria:

Possession of individual characteristics contributing to leadership including:

- Positive attitude toward the JROTC program.
- Outstanding military bearing and conduct both in and out of uniform.
- Personal attributes (self-confidence, initiative, flexibility, judgement).
- Patriotism (commander or member of color guard, drill team, flag protocol instruction team, and actively promote Americanism). Shows devotion to school, community, America. An individual(s) who practices service through repeated acts of support.
- Courtesy (dependability, punctuality, human relations, respect, cooperation).
- Growth potential (capable of assuming high leadership responsibilities in JROTC Unit with additional training and experience).
- Demonstrated leadership potential, military bearing, and scholastic achievement.
- Attainment of a grade of "B" in JROTC with an overall average of "C" in all subjects for the previous semester. Must not have a failing grade in any subject for that period of time.
- Must be active in at least one other student co-curricular activity or club: i.e., music, athletics, student government, junior achievement, etc.

Eligibility:

- Any 10th, 11th, or 12th grade student that is currently enrolled as a JROTC Cadet actively engaged in the JROTC program, and one who meets the criteria for the award.

Procedure:

- Nominations to Department by April 30th 2026.

**VFW JROTC Cadet of the Year Award
Nomination Form**

Nominator's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Nominating Post: _____ Nominating District: _____

Nominee's Rank and Name: _____

Nominee's School: _____

JROTC Instructor Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Why Do you feel this Cadet deserves this award?

Please attach additional pages, as necessary.

VFW MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Purpose: The award is to recognize a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who has exemplified in their actions and accomplishments, the true spirit of the Organization serving the needs of their Post, and Community, and who has dedicated themselves in a professional manner to addressing the Pillars of our Organization. Department leaders are encouraged to submit to VFW Programs office a narrative write up on a comrade from the Department who is leading from the front and supporting one or more of the purposes of our Congressional Charter.

Awards:

- 1st Place \$200 – Plaque
- 2nd Place \$150– Plaque
- 3rd Place \$100– Plaque

Purpose: The award is to recognize a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who has exemplified in their actions and accomplishments, the true spirit of the VFW by serving the needs of their Post, and Community, and who has dedicated themselves in a professional manner to addressing the Pillars of our Organization.

Posts are asked to nominate one of their members as Veteran of the year. Look for those comrades from your post who stand apart from the rest by serving the community and Veterans. Embodying the purposes of our congressional charter: to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead; and to assist the family members left behind; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its Constitution and laws; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all enemies.

Eligibility: This award is intended to recognize a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who has been a member for at least one full membership year and has received a nomination for their activities during the award Year from their Post.

Award candidates holding any of the following elected or appointed offices during the award year are not eligible. Specifically-Commander, QM, Adjutant, Service Officer, or Chaplain. In addition, Past State Commanders and Past or current National Council members are ineligible.

Nominations are due at State Headquarters by 15 April 2026

Criteria: This award recognizes exceptional performance as a member of the VFW. Examples of service that would be considered in judging the nominee include the following:

- Nominee presents themselves in a professional and helpful manner within the Organization and within the Community.

- Nominee shows an active interest in the Department by attending meetings and showing a willingness to consider leadership roles.
- Nominee participates in activities and events within the Department to help raise awareness of the Organization in the Community.
- Nominee has shown a willingness to work together with other VFW, Auxiliary, and Riders Members in a spirit of cooperation to accomplish the same goals.
- Nominee volunteers for and participates in activities and events that address the needs of target groups and individuals in the Community.
- Nominee has demonstrated actions which contribute to improving the quality of life for those we are intended to serve, whether they are children or adults, and whether they are homeless, hospitalized, handicapped, in need of a job or education.
- Nominee encourages members of the Community to support VFW programs and continually encourages others to become members.

Nominations will be submitted by a nomination form to State Headquarters by April 15th, 2026. The nomination form will contain the veteran's name, Post Number, and a description of what the veteran has done since July 1, 2025, that makes them worthy of being the Veteran of the Year. Nominations are to be sent by email to adj@vfw.in.org. The Veteran that is selected will receive recognition from the State Commander as the Veteran of the Year and recognized at the State Convention.

**VFW Veteran of the Year Award
Nomination Form**

Nominator's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Nominating Post: _____ Nominating District: _____

Veterans Office and Name: _____

Veterans Post: _____

1. Explain how this Veteran made a positive impact on the VFW.

2. Explain how this Veteran has made a positive impact in the lives of his / her fellow veterans.

3. Explain how this veteran has made a positive impact in his / her community.

Please attach additional pages, as necessary.