

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AMBASSADOR/ NATIONAL CHIEF OF STAFF



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National Chief of Staff

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A Department Chief of Staff is an important part of the success of our VFW Auxiliary and vital to each Department in achieving our goals to serve our veterans and their families, increasing membership and promoting our Programs. The Chief of Staff will serve as the Extension & Revitalization Chairman and must be knowledgeable in all facets of Auxiliary including Bylaws and Programs and promoting Mentoring for Leadership.

They should be the Department President's assistant when asked and should be kept updated on what is going on within their respective Department. The Chief of Staff will be a teacher and mentor, and be compassionate while working with District Presidents and Auxiliaries to assure that the Auxiliary is functioning in a proper manner. A Department Chief of Staff can be a sounding board for the Department President and an extra set of eyes and ears to be on the lookout for the "Red Flags" that may indicate an Auxiliary is in trouble and needs assistance to be a healthy Auxiliary. Promote the use of *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* and using the resources in MALTA to take on the training of members. With the permission of the Department President, offer to assist the Department Secretary in getting any missing Bond or Installation Reports. Request copies of the Official Visit forms from the Department President to peruse and perhaps pickup on a "Yellow Light" signal.

A TRADITION AND PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

The VFW Auxiliary has been built on a strong foundation based on the traditions established in 1914. With those traditions comes a sincere promise to safeguard the future of the Auxiliary. The Extension & Revitalization Program will benefit every member of the Auxiliary. Keeping informed and becoming knowledgeable of our traditions and subsequent Programs will help us to mentor our members and prepare them for leadership roles. This is the heart of what we do in this Program.

BRANCHES GROW TALL WHEN ROOTS RUN DEEP

Each Department President has appointed a Department Chief of Staff to work closely with them to ensure that Auxiliaries remain strong and vibrant and that our organization grows and produces proud, patriotic and energetic members who will honor and protect our veterans and their families. Our foundation is solid – now it is up to us to build on that structure.

MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP

Train and educate members to be future leaders. We must ensure that the legacy of the VFW Auxiliary continues through strong and healthy Auxiliaries comprising members who are prepared to take on leadership roles to continue to move the VFW Auxiliary forward. Do not allow Auxiliaries to stay "anchored to the past" – technology is a wonderful tool that gives us the ability to reach so many members which then allows us to continue the tradition and promise to take care of our veterans and their families. Blend the past with the present to guarantee our future.

GREEN LIGHT – YELLOW LIGHT – RED LIGHT

Auxiliaries who are at the **GREEN LIGHT** are healthy Auxiliaries. Refer to MALTA Member Resources for the Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit – there are seven resources to assist Auxiliaries in identifying and solving issues within the kit.

YELLOW LIGHT Auxiliaries are exhibiting a Red Flag and a caution light and it is up to the Department Chief of Staff, when requested by the President, to take a look to assist the Auxiliary. The District President or Auxiliary Representative must be honest in the assessment of their visit to an Auxiliary as they have firsthand knowledge of the Auxiliary and communicate any concerns to the Department President and/or Chief of Staff. This Red Flag could be failure to meet any one or more of the essentials of an Auxiliary but also be a subtle flag about attracting no new members, failure to report in Programs to assist veterans and families, no new officers, not growing and failure for members in attending District and state meetings and trainings.

As soon as the **Caution** light appears, the Department Chief of Staff needs to work closely with the Department President and observe what is happening on the Auxiliary level - be ready to spring into action.

This is the time to step in and **OBSERVE** the Auxiliary and offer MENTORING. Pick the member or team that fits the Auxiliary – there is no one size fits all. Perhaps mentoring will be the remedy and the Auxiliary can get into the **GREEN** quickly. Mentors are counselors and cheerleaders. Focus on positive attributes and encourage those while offering guidance and training.

At this time, the hope is to avoid suspension but if it becomes necessary – your team should be able to attend their meetings and get them back on track. This is a critical time for an Auxiliary and your spirit of kindness is an absolute must. This is **REVITALIZATION** at its peak.

RED LIGHT – the Auxiliary will be put on suspension as a time to step back and regroup. Suspension simply means there is some work to do to get the Auxiliary where it needs to be. The hope is that the Auxiliary will recover and come back stronger and better than before.

EXTENSION

We need to make certain that current Auxiliaries are sound but it is important to make presentations to unaffiliated Posts and when viable to institute new Auxiliaries. An Auxiliary cannot exist without a Post and there must be a 2/3 vote of the Post to get started. Positive and knowledgeable Auxiliary presenters are important when addressing a Post. Ask permission to describe the benefits of an Auxiliary to a VFW Post. Extension tools and presentations are available in MALTA Member Resources.

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Maintain and Strengthen Current Auxiliaries • Present to Unaffiliated Posts Establish New Auxiliaries • Recognize Red-Flag Auxiliaries

Chiefs of Staff work with District Presidents and the Department President to maintain current Auxiliaries. They encourage members, promote teamwork and provide guidance during challenging times such as suspension, consolidation or even the loss of a Charter. Chiefs of Staff also work closely with their Department President and organizers to establish new Auxiliaries.

Maintaining Current Auxiliaries

The National Organization has developed many resources for members to use, including tools available in MALTA Member Resources. These resources have proven to be valuable tools in helping Auxiliaries be more productive.

1. The Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit includes seven (7) resources to assist Auxiliaries in identifying and solving issues:

- Healthy Auxiliary Checklist
- Healthy Auxiliary Member Questionnaire
- Auxiliary Meeting Clinic
- Communication Phone/Text Tree
- Good Job Certificate
- Healthy Auxiliary Certificate
- VFW Auxiliary Mentoring Guide

2. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* makes every effort to educate members on all aspects of the duties of Officers at all levels, how to be a Chairman, the why of reporting, etc.

3. Saving an Auxiliary may be achieved by recruiting new members. Work with your Membership Chairman to help an Auxiliary become Healthy. (No new members = a true Red Flag) (See Membership in MALTA Member Resources for recruiting tools)

5 Essentials of an Auxiliary

The National Organization requires only five (5) things of an Auxiliary:

1. Auxiliaries should have at least ten (10) business meetings per year. (Sec. 210, A.) Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. (Sec. 212, A.)

2. Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year. (Sec. 207, C.)

3. Quarterly Audits by Trustees must be submitted. (Sec. 814)

4. Officers elected, installed and reported to National Headquarters no later than June 30. This generates the bond application via email. (Sec. 804A and 806A)

5. The offices of President and Treasurer MUST be bonded by August 31. (Sec. 814, E.)

Establishing New Auxiliaries

Whether a VFW Post decides on its own that it wants an Auxiliary or whether an Auxiliary member or non-member sees the potential for a new one, the steps for creating an Auxiliary are the same.

1. A VFW Post must vote by 2/3 majority to have an Auxiliary. (An Auxiliary can never exist on its own without a Post and can never be started without that Post's permission.)

2. The Department President appoints the official organizer of that Auxiliary, and the organizer must be a member of the Auxiliary.

• It would help to allow two others who are knowledgeable with Auxiliary business and work well with others to be on an organizing team. They can answer questions and assist with training, educating and mentoring the new Auxiliary once it is instituted. It is recommended that the organizer and the organizing team work with the Auxiliary and its members for at least a year, or until they are ready to proceed as an Auxiliary in good standing.

3. A minimum of 15 eligible applicants must be on the Charter application. Transfers are accepted at the close of the institution and just prior to the installation of the newly-formed Auxiliary.

The Department Chief of Staff could assist by providing the following tools for the organizer and organizing team:

- Talking points for the first meeting.
- A procedure for membership applications.
- When and how to collect dues.
- Assist in securing and filling out official and proper paperwork.
- See that deadlines and filings are met in a timely manner.

For more information on this topic, see Article II, Auxiliaries and Article VIII, Officers (Sec. 815) of the VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual.

Mentoring for Leadership

- Mentoring helps broaden leadership skills and leadership provides guidance for mentoring members; they work hand in hand.
- A stronger membership on every level of our organization will be accomplished through mentoring. Mentoring for Leadership will enhance all types of Program activities.
- Through the mentoring process, extending the hand of friendship to a new member or even a tenured member who has been inactive for a while can create a strong and vibrant organization. Providing a positive and organized meeting experience will leave members wanting to come back, especially when good communication and respect for each other is demonstrated.
- Utilizing the Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future document will help you get started in creating a Program for your Auxiliary.
- Through this Program you will be encouraged to embrace and promote the CARE concept.

C - Catch the member when they first join.

A - Ask them to participate.

R - Remember what it felt like to be new.

E - Engage them in a Program that fits them.

- Over time, this member may express interest in holding an office or chairmanship. Work with them to help them succeed. This will only make the Auxiliary and the organization better. Choose the mentor carefully. If the member is interested in floor work, choose an experienced floor worker, if they are interested in keeping books, have them work with the Secretary or Treasurer.
- The real goal here is to train your replacement and give them the tools they need to succeed.

Remember to use our Resources:

Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation
Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit
MALTA – Extension & Revitalization
The current year National Program Book
“Understanding Auxiliary Traditions” video

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AWARDS

Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Chief of Staff in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of mentoring and/or training to educate their VFW Auxiliary members on the duties of the Officer roles to ensure the future of the VFW Auxiliary.
2. The Outstanding Performance Award and Second-Place Outstanding Performance Award will be awarded in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 24.

Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2025 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Columbus, Ohio.