

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AMBASSADOR, NATIONAL CHIEF OF STAFF



PENNY HURT
National Chief of Staff

734 E. 9th Street
Davenport, IA 52803-5612

(563) 650-6134

whatisaredflagauxiliary@
gmail.com

As the Extension & Revitalization Ambassador and National Chief of Staff, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to work with each Department Chief of Staff and provide the guidance, resources and tools they need, so, that they, in turn, can work with their District Presidents, Auxiliary Presidents and Chairmen to ensure that Auxiliaries are functioning in a healthy manner.

A Chief of Staff must be patient, have the ability to listen, understand and show compassion, vital tools in solving an existing problem. Auxiliaries look for guidance from their Department Chief of Staff, and as each Auxiliary is different, a Department Chief of Staff needs to utilize a “one size does **not** fit all” plan. We need to ensure that Auxiliaries are conducting business in a way that works for them and their members feel empowered and engaged.

Although the Department Chief of Staff must provide information to the Auxiliaries, they need to ensure that the District Presidents or assigned Official Representative can as well. The Department Chief of Staff and the District Presidents should work together. A District President or assigned Official Representative needs to be honest in their assessment of the Auxiliary. If the Department President doesn’t know an Auxiliary is in trouble, they can’t help.

Ensure the legacy of our great organization continues through strong, healthy Auxiliaries with members who are prepared to take over leadership roles when needed. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* and MALTA Member Resources are two of the most valuable tools available to members on all levels to learn about and understand their duties.

Official Visit Communication

Department Chiefs of Staff must educate District Presidents or the assigned Official Representative about how to recognize red flags that may lead to problems in an Auxiliary. The report must be an honest assessment of the Auxiliary and affirm that the Auxiliary is in good working order or that it has areas in need of improvement. If your Department does not have Districts, it is the responsibility of the Department President to recognize the red flags that may lead to problems in an Auxiliary.

Extension & Revitalization

Extension is a two-part Program: instituting new Auxiliaries and assisting troubled ones. It doesn’t do any good, on any level, to bring a new Auxiliary in the front door only to have one go out the back door. We need to save what we have and grow new, well-functioning Auxiliaries.

Presentations to an Unaffiliated Post

Choose a positive, knowledgeable member to speak to the Post Commander and ask for permission to address Post membership about the benefits of having an Auxiliary. An Auxiliary cannot exist without a Post and a new Auxiliary cannot be instituted without a 2/3 vote from the Post. Extension presentations and tools are available in MALTA Member Resources.

Revitalize and Rejuvenate

Since District Presidents or the assigned Official Representative have first-hand knowledge of their Auxiliaries, it is important that they communicate with the Department President and Chief of Staff to identify areas of concern. When visiting individual Auxiliary meetings, be sure to recognize any achievements the Auxiliary has attained. Every member needs to feel that their involvement is necessary for the success of their Auxiliary. All Officers of the Auxiliary, the Mentoring for Leadership Chairman and the Membership Chairman should take part in revitalizing the Auxiliary. Encourage the Auxiliary to reach out to their community to recruit new members and inform the community of the advantages afforded to those areas that have active VFW Posts and Auxiliaries.



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 on the Online Auxiliary Academy and 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.

These tools invite all members to come forward and take on a position of leadership, mentoring, and being a member who advocates for their Auxiliary and the veterans we serve.

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) Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. (Sec 212)
2. Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year. (Sec. 207)
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.

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 he/she 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 of the *VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*.

Suspensions, Cancellations and Consolidations

An Auxiliary is in danger of losing its Charter when they are unable to meet the 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary. Suspensions are used in certain cases to give Auxiliary members a chance to fulfill their duties and continue with their mission of serving veterans, service members and their families.

Please know that being placed on suspension is not negative. It is not labeling your Auxiliary as a “bad Auxiliary.” It simply means there is some work that needs to be done to get your Auxiliary where it needs to be. A team appointed by the Department President to mentor, educate and listen will help bring your Auxiliary back to health.

Cancellations can only be done by the National President, with or without the recommendation of the Department President.

If a VFW Post closes or consolidates, Auxiliary National Headquarters will be notified. **ONLY AFTER THIS NOTIFICATION** can the process for closing or consolidating begin.

- Far too often, an Auxiliary will start the cancellation or consolidation process because they heard through the grapevine the Post was shutting down or consolidating with another Post. Rumors can be harmful and actions should not - and must not - be taken due to rumors.
- The notification from National Headquarters will allow ample time to close, move members to their desired working Auxiliary or consolidate where the Post goes.

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AWARDS

Awards for Members

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one member in each of the four Conferences who assisted the Department Chief of Staff in nurturing/strengthening a struggling Auxiliary and utilized *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* in their efforts. The Department Chief of Staff must complete and submit the required nomination form available in MALTA Member Resources to the National Chief of Staff by April 30, 2024.

\$25 VFW Store gift certificates will be mailed directly to the winning members from National Headquarters after National Convention.

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 guidance and advice. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award 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 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.