



Extension & Revitalization



VFW Auxiliary Department of Maryland

The Chief of Staff will be a coach, counselor, and mentor to all levels of leadership in the Department ...to ensure that Auxiliaries remain strong, enthused, and loyal to our organization.

Karlene Beams, National Chief of Staff



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Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of Maryland

CHIEF of STAFF
CATHY GISTEDT



Hello Maryland! I am excited to serve President Bill Siperek as his Department Chief of Staff. I will be working in 2025 - 2026 for **REVITALIZATION** of our auxiliaries and districts. Described as a process to make

something stronger and healthier, **REVITALIZATION** is an effort to update and to add fresh energy to an organization while carefully preserving its history.

What can I do to help both your auxiliary and your district to stay healthy as we re-energize across Maryland?

- ⚡ Guide you in **observing our bylaws and our rituals** to keep true to our history as Auxiliaries and Districts to the VFW.
- ⚡ Assist your auxiliary in **completing the requirements** needed to be a "healthy" auxiliary.
- ⚡ Support your Auxiliary and District Program Chairmen so that **Maryland's hard work is reported** to our National Ambassadors.
- ⚡ Assure that your District is serving as a **positive role model and resource** for your auxiliary.
- ⚡ Promote **mentoring at all levels** - auxiliary, district, and department - to increase member participation and to strengthen Maryland's leadership.

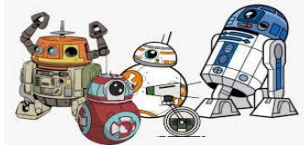
By celebrating our successes as we work together on any areas needing "uplifting," we can **REVITALIZE** Maryland's auxiliaries and districts to be **"A Force For Veterans."**



Forming a New Auxiliary – EXTENSION



As Department Chief of Staff, my responsibilities also include **EXTENSION**. Would you like to make a VFW Auxiliary more accessible to your community? Nearby, is there a *bachelor* Post (one with no auxiliary)? As Chief of Staff, I am happy to assist members interested in forming a new auxiliary in Maryland that can be more accessible to a new group of members. Get together with several members who are ready to take those first steps to institute a new auxiliary. Then, contact me at 410-477-1078. Together we can work to complete the requirements to form a team and **EXTEND** the availability and work of the VFW Auxiliary.



District Presidents....Be the Force!

District Presidents and Officers are crucial to revitalizing the auxiliaries in the Department of Maryland. The primary responsibility of District Presidents is to keep their auxiliaries healthy. A District's Official Visit provides an opportunity to observe a meeting as it is being conducted and to check that important deadlines are being met. But don't let your Official Visit and District meetings be your only interactions with your auxiliaries. To be a strong link between the Department and your auxiliaries, keep these points in mind:

- 🕒 Attend Council of Administration meetings to share information from the Department with your auxiliaries.
- 🕒 Serve as a role model for your auxiliaries by reviewing our Bylaws and Rituals to properly conduct meetings as currently scripted by National.
- 🕒 Help your members focus on the VFW Auxiliary's mission of helping veterans and their families by appointing District Program Chairmen to encourage projects and reporting in your district.
- 🕒 Be aware of any challenges facing your auxiliaries based on last year's Official District Visits. Each District President will be contacted to discuss support that your auxiliaries may need to start the year.
- 🕒 Use feedback from your District Mentor to keep improving your leadership so that your auxiliaries stay healthy.
- 🕒 Request that your Senior and Junior Vice-Presidents visit your auxiliaries at their monthly meetings throughout the year to provide on-going support.
- 🕒 Complete an Official Visit report for every auxiliary accurately reflecting the status of each auxiliary.

Dear District Presidents and Officers.....Maryland needs your leadership!

Encouraging a Mentoring Atmosphere

Every Auxiliary and District should have members ready to serve as mentors through the year. Whether by request or to satisfy a need that may be observed, mentoring will strengthen your Auxiliary and your District. Past officers and program chairmen who understand VFW Auxiliary Bylaws and Rituals and who know your Auxiliary or District's practices and usual community projects make perfect mentors.

Does your Auxiliary or District provide opportunities that encourage mentoring? Ask this:

- + Are your members comfortable asking questions?
 - Or, is a member's confusion ignored?
- + Are all members encouraged to volunteer?
 - Or, does the same group hold control for years?
- + Do experienced members offer their support to any member?
 - Or, are members expected to figure out things on their own?
- + Do all members feel valued?
 - Or, are only a few members recognized for their work and contributions?

Each + plus that you answered will help your Auxiliary or District build a positive mentoring atmosphere to increase member participation in VFW Auxiliary work and even increase willingness to accept positions of leadership. Mentoring is a plus that every Auxiliary and District needs to be *A Force For Veterans*.



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Healthy Auxiliary Checklist

Auxiliary To-Dos and Deadlines

What Your Auxiliary Needs to Do:

Deadline:

Election of Officers, and Delegates and Alternates.

○ April 30

Installation Report forwarded to Department and National Headquarters.

○ June 30

Bond Application submitted for offices of President and Treasurer bonded with an indemnity company authorized by National Headquarters or the Department.

○ August 31

Last quarterly audit and membership status of the VFW Auxiliary given to the Post Commander.

○ Within 30 days of assuming the office of President

District Dues - Based on June 30 membership of prior year. (If applicable.)

○ September 30

Audit Reports

Period 1/1 – 3/31 completed by 4/30

Period 4/1 – 6/30 completed by 7/31

Period 7/1 – 9/30 completed by 10/31

Period 10/1 - 12/31 completed by 1/31

○ Approved Audit to Department Treasurer
Period 1/1 – 3/31 due by 5/31
Period 4/1 – 6/30 due by 8/31
Period 7/1 – 9/30 due by 11/30
Period 10/1-12/31 due by 2/28

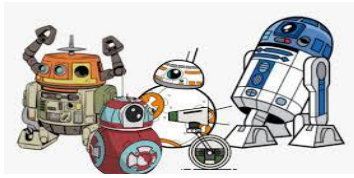
Project, promotion and/or donation in National Programs. See the National Program Book for goals, awards and more information.

○ See the National Program Book and your Department Program Book for deadlines.

Minimum of ten members paid in order to maintain charter.

○ February 1 of the current year

Hold at least ten business meetings per year.



Handling Challenges

To problem solve any challenge, here are suggestions to help the process go smoothly and to be the most effective:

- 1st – Define the **SOURCE** of the conflict.
Is it a situation? Is it a member?
- 2nd - Understand **WHY** the other side is upset.
Open dialogue without placing blame.
- 3rd – Determine a **PLAN** that is fair to both sides. Base your next step on what is best for your Auxiliary or District.

Be sure to end by talking about what needs to be done to keep this from happening again.

Take Action Against Red Flags!

When your District President brings up several areas of concern at the Official Visit, what can you do? Stop. Don't panic. Where could you use help improving? Can your auxiliary do this alone? Your District is there for support. Have your Auxiliary President, Secretary, and Treasurer join with your District President and Officers as well as the District Mentor to create a **Performance Improvement Plan or PIP**.

From the observations made, hold a discussion focusing positively on ways your auxiliary can improve – a plan. Forming a small **PIP Committee** of district officers or members with experience in the areas that your auxiliary would benefit from mentoring is a great first step.

By attending the auxiliary's meetings to observe and give instant feedback, your district leadership can address those dangerous red flag situations to *revitalize* your auxiliary and get you back on track for a successful year...bringing the sunshine back!



Auxiliary Tips to Remain Strong!

Share...

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- ✿ Your projects by reporting to Department Chairmen.
- ✿ Online resources with those not computer-savvy.
- ✿ Our VFWA by holding a Membership Drive.

Take time to know...

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- ✿ Our Bylaws, Rituals, and Traditions.
- ✿ The responsibilities of your Auxiliary and District Officers.
- ✿ Support your District and Department can provide.

Attend...

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- ✿ Your District Meetings to stay informed.
- ✿ The Department's Official Visit to your District to speak directly to Dept. Officers.
- ✿ Social events to be connected.

Recognize...

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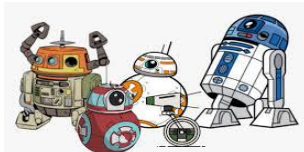
- ✿ The proper way to conduct meetings by the Ritual.
- ✿ Red Flags in your Auxiliary signaling change is needed.
- ✿ The benefits of having a District Mentor.

Then...

Watch Auxiliaries Remain Strong!

From Karlene Beams,
the National Chief of Staff:

*Blend the past with the present
to guarantee our future.*



Awards for District Presidents

District Presidents. You are the important link that connects the Department to each Auxiliary in Maryland. In appreciation of your work to make us *A Force For Veterans*, the following awards will be presented to District Presidents at our Convention in Ocean City on May 26th – May 29th 2026.

For promoting HEALTHY AUXILIARIES:

District Presidents will receive a citation and personal gift for working to support and to mentor the auxiliaries in their district by:

1. Attending all Council of Administration meetings to serve as the link between the Department of Maryland and your auxiliaries.
2. Conducting at least three (3) District meetings to maintain contact with your auxiliaries. District Mentors will report after each meeting.
3. Assuring all quarterly audits have been submitted by your auxiliaries to Department Treasurer Jackie Kimball.
4. Achieving 100% reporting for all National Programs by each auxiliary to the Department Program Chairmen by April 15th.
5. Reaching at least 100% membership for your District.
6. Preparing your auxiliaries for the District's Official Visit by scheduling a visit by a District Officer to monthly meetings before the Official Visits.
7. Conducting ALL Official District Visits to your auxiliaries by March 1st and sending Department President Bill Siperek a copy of the Visit form.



For encouraging the EXTENSION of VFW Auxiliaries in Maryland:

One (1) District President will receive a citation and personal gift for outstanding efforts to establish a new VFW Auxiliary for the Department of Maryland. The District President will also be submitted to the National Chief of Staff Karlene Beams to compete in our Program Division for a National citation and VFW Store gift certificate.

For REVITALIZATION of an Auxiliary:

One (1) District President will receive a citation and personal gift for assisting an Auxiliary in their district by maintaining a close relationship and mentoring the Officers and Chairmen to keep the Auxiliary healthy. The District President will also be submitted to the National Chief of Staff Karlene Beams to compete in our Program Division for a National citation and VFW Store gift certificate.

