

Our Districts: The Force to Keep Our Auxiliaries Healthy

(Detailed slide revision from School of Instruction Workshop)

Created by Cathy Gistedt, Chief of Staff

Slide 1: Title slide

Slide 2: The slide presentation will emphasize:

1. the responsibilities of District Presidents and Officers as key links in keeping auxiliaries healthy
2. the guidance and assistance members should expect from the district leadership

Slide 3: Yoda tells us, “Important districts are.”

Slide 4: Four key words in the presentations:

1. Link
2. Instruction
3. Knowledge
4. Inspections

Slide 5: Looking back to the formation of our districts: 1914

National VFW Auxiliary communicated directly with the auxiliaries.

Slide 6: Looking back: 1925

As the number of auxiliaries grew, Departments were formed to improve communication.

Slide 7: Looking back: 1948

With continued growth of the VFW Auxiliary, Districts are formed.

Slide 8: The purpose of Districts is to serve as the crucial links between the Department and the auxiliaries of Maryland.

Slide 9: District Officers are President Bill Siperek’s eyes and ears to communicate to over 10,000 VFWA members in Maryland.

Slide 10: VFW *Bylaws & Rituals* emphasize districts providing instruction and inspection throughout the year.

Slide 11: Districts should be providing:

1. instruction for Auxiliary Officers and Chairmen
2. promotion of our National Programs

Slide 12: *Instruction:* District Officers

Slide 13: How can districts provide instruction to strengthen the auxiliaries?

- Conducting organized, informative District meetings following the Ritual.
- Visiting auxiliary meetings to learn their auxiliaries' areas of strength and areas that could benefit from mentoring.

Slide 14: Districts are asked to hold 3 – 4 meetings in the upcoming year:

- July/August – to conduct the District's School of Instruction
- October/November – to provide guidance to the auxiliaries to start the year healthy
- January/February – to share updates to end the year healthy
- April – to close with all responsibilities completed and to celebrate as a Team

Slide 15: July or August: Organize your year

- Appoint chairmen and share materials from the Department
- Schedule the District meetings
- Schedule visits to auxiliary meetings and for the Official Visits to the auxiliaries

Slide 16: More for July or August

- Check the current health of your auxiliaries using the Official Visit forms from the previous year in your District President's folder.
- Approve the District's Standing Rules
- Explain the assistance that can be provided by your District Mentor

Slide 17: Visit the auxiliaries in your district throughout the year.
(District Officers can help.)

Slide 18: October or November: Include these items in your meeting agenda -

- Are the responsibilities of each auxiliary being met?
- From your auxiliary visits, what tips can you give the auxiliaries to be healthy?
- Are auxiliaries reporting for all the National Programs?
- What important points from the September Council of Administration meeting should be shared with your auxiliaries?

Slide 19: January or February – Is your auxiliary ready to end the year strong?

- Have responsibilities been met?
- Are programs 100% reported?
- What end of year reminders should be given?

Slide 20: April

- Consider holding a Memorial Service to remember district members who have passed by name.
- Elect and Install District Officers.
(Installation Report is entered in MALTA and a signed copy sent to the Department Secretary Libby Dalla Tezza to keep on file.)

Slide 21: With this instruction and guidance, Red Flags will be identified early so that every auxiliary can be healthy and strong.
(Notify President Siperek of any Red Flag auxiliaries in your district.)

Slide 22: District Officers should mentor officers and members by example.

- Conducting meetings using the Ritual and a prepared agenda.
- Sharing information received from the Department with the auxiliaries.
- Promoting the National programs.
- Learning your auxiliaries' strengths and needs to help them.

Slide 23: District Officers need to be knowledgeable.

Slide 24: If an Officer needs (or would like) to improve their knowledge, there are resources available.

- *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation and 2025-2026 National Program Book.*
- On the VFWA National website under *Miscellaneous Resources*:
 - *VFW Auxiliary National Programs – An Overview*
 - Links to the National Facebook page and You Tube videos
- Read our *Bylaws & Rituals*
- Contact Department Officers for assistance and mentoring.
- Use your District Mentor.

Slide 25: Auxiliary Members should also be knowledgeable.

- Know what support your District should be giving to your auxiliary.
- Attend the Department's Official Visit to your district to speak directly with Department Officers and Chairmen.

Slide 26: Inspection: When districts are instituted, they are asked to *insure functioning Auxiliaries.....through instruction and inspection."*

Slide 27: *Inspection* brings a negative air and usually fear from auxiliaries. But a visit from your District President should feel just the opposite.

Slide 28: Every Auxiliary should welcome your District President's Official Visit as an opportunity to receive support.

Slide 29: How can auxiliaries be prepared for their Official Visit?

- A District Officer should have visited your auxiliary at least once before the Official Visit to help with the meeting and programs.
- Auxiliary Officers should look over the Official Visit form the District President will be using to know what is expected.

Slide 30: A clear copy of the District President's Official Visit form is included for reference with the next 8 information slides.

Slide 31: The District President's Official Visit: Instructions

- Note that the books of the Secretary and Treasurer must be at the Official Visit and signed by the District President.

Slide 32: More About the Instructions:

- At least one of the Auxiliary's Trustees is needed at the Visit.
- The District President must send President Bill Siperek a copy of the completed form at least one week after the visit.

Slide 33: Looking at the Set-Up of the Chart:

- There are questions to ask the President, Secretary, and Treasurer *before* the meeting.
- A section of the form requires close observation by the District President as the Auxiliary conducts its meeting.

Slide 34: Important: Check the last column of the chart.

If an auxiliary is not meeting an expectation, *corrective action* must be decided to help them improve and is to be listed on the chart.

Slide 35: What are some corrective actions?

- A suggestion for improvements given at the meeting.
- Referral to resources for properly functioning at future meetings.
- Request mentoring from the Department.

Slide 36: Be sure to:

- See the actual documents and financial papers (like the 990N and Personal Business Property Tax) to confirm proper completion.
- Carefully record all dates needed.

Slide 37: Auxiliary Officers and Members: If your Official Visit is not scheduled by Nov. 1st contact president Bill Siperek at 410-274-1323.274-1323. This Visit will help to keep your Auxiliary healthy and strong.

Slide 38: District Presidents:

- Please print clearly in dark ink so the scanned copy sent to Department is legible. No photos!
- Remember to complete the 3rd page following the Official Visit that is not signed by or given to the Auxiliary President.
(This is only for the Department President to see your comments.)

Slide 39: Each of us has a role in strengthening our Auxiliaries so we can continue to work for our veterans and their families.

Slide 40: Any questions contact Cathy Gistedt at (410) 477-1078 or *cathygistedt123@gmail.com*.