

# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION MONTHLY UPDATE



May 9, 2025

Greetings,

We hope you enjoy this issue of the National Council Monthly Update summarizing the pertinent operations at VFW National Headquarters over the last month.

## **Quartermaster General**

The new Stars & Stripes Society donor recognition program is in full swing. This program is designed to enrich the giving experience of those who generously contribute essential funds that support the VFW's veteran-focused initiatives. Members, non-members, corporations, organizations, or anyone desiring to leave a lasting impression by supporting the work of this organization can participate. Choose the level of giving you like, and you can always upgrade to the next level when the time is right for you. Visit this link today: [heroes.vfw.org](https://heroes.vfw.org).

Contact: VFW Quartermaster General Marc Garduno, [MGarduno@vfw.org](mailto:MGarduno@vfw.org).

## **Development**

In April, Development surpassed its revenue goal of \$4,952,531, closing the month at \$4,987,579 — exceeding projections by \$35,000. While this marks a positive outcome financially, we began to observe a softening in donor engagement, particularly within our monthly giving program. A noticeable uptick in cancellation requests was noted, with many donors citing economic uncertainty and concerns about a potential recession's impact on their fixed income as their primary reason for discontinuing support.

In response, we have proactively offered flexible giving options and reassurances to help donors feel more comfortable maintaining their contributions to the VFW. We continue to monitor giving trends closely and remain agile in our strategies to ensure ongoing progress toward our annual revenue objectives.

Contact: VFW Development Director Kelly Jones, [KellyJones@vfw.org](mailto:KellyJones@vfw.org).

## **Legal Counsel**

The VFW filed an *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to grant review in *Hencely v. Fluor Corporation*, a case concerning the rights of injured service members and the legal accountability of defense contractors operating in combat zones.

The case involves Specialist Winston Tyler Hencely, a former soldier in the U.S. Army who was seriously wounded in a suicide bombing at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in 2016. The incident occurred when a local worker employed by a subcontractor of Fluor Corporation — a major defense contractor — detonated a suicide vest concealed beneath his clothing, killing himself and five others, and severely injuring seventeen

more, including Specialist Hencely. The Taliban claimed responsibility, stating the attack had been planned for months.

Hencely sued Fluor for negligence, asserting the company failed to screen or supervise its contracted Afghan laborers despite known risks of insider attacks. Lower courts dismissed the case on reasons derived from the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) and the political questions involved.

Although the FTCA governs claims against the United States — not private contractors — the court applied its underlying principles to Fluor. It concluded that adjudicating Hencely's claims would require the judiciary to second-guess military decisions and operational risk assessments, and thus the case was nonjusticiable. In effect, the court extended the immunity protections typically afforded to the government under the FTCA to a private contractor, even though the alleged negligence concerned employment practices rather than combat activities.

The VFW's brief strongly objects to this logic, arguing that extending FTCA immunity to private contractors erodes accountability, denies justice to injured veterans, and leaves critical gaps in oversight. The brief urges the Supreme Court to clarify that contractor negligence — particularly in matters unrelated to battlefield decision-making — must remain subject to judicial review.

By supporting the petition, the VFW seeks to ensure that veterans' rights are respected and that private contractors operating in war zones are held to legal and ethical standards. If granted, the case would be argued next term.

Contact: VFW General Counsel John Muckelbauer, [JMuckelbauer@vfw.org](mailto:JMuckelbauer@vfw.org).

### **VFW Store & Logistics**

The VFW Store has partnered with Mano's Wine and gifts to offer a 125th Anniversary VFW logoed wine bottle. The bottle is deep etched with the 125th Anniversary logo with gold inlay. This is a handcrafted reserve 2022 California Cabernet Sauvignon. Order here: [VFW 125th Anniversary Etched Wine](#). This product is not available in every state.

Contact: VFW Store & Logistics Director Hank Ellis, [HankEllis@vfw.org](mailto:HankEllis@vfw.org).

### **Human Resources**

- New Hires:
  - o Candance Wansing is a new Pre-Discharge Rating Representative in National Veterans Services.
  - o Robert McCain is a new Senior Applications Developer in the IT Department in the KC Office.
  - o Amanda Brown is a new Member Services Advisor in the Membership & Member Services Department in the KC Office.
- Promotions and Transfers:
  - o Crystal (Skye) Melcher was promoted to Planned Giving Major Gift Coordinator in the Development Department in the KC Office.

- o Michelle Thompson transferred to the Data and Operations Analyst position in Marketing Communications in the KC Office.
- o Susan Earnest transferred to the Administrative Specialist position in Administrative Operations in the KC Office.
- Current Vacant Positions in Recruiting Process:
  - o National Pre-Discharge Representative – Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia

Contact: VFW Human Resources Director Sari Maple, [SMaple@vfw.org](mailto:SMaple@vfw.org).

## **Membership and Member Services**

- Less than two months remain in the membership year, and a number of Departments are closing in on the 102% requirement set by the Commander-in-Chief. To keep us on track for that achievement, we need every Post, District, and Department to continue focusing on recruitment and retention – even if they have already passed 102%! The year is not yet over!
- We encourage Department leadership to identify Posts and Districts that might be struggling to make mission and reach out to them with assistance. Department Quartermasters can help with providing Unpaid/Relocated lists to help bring lapsed members into local Posts; by working together we are certain to accomplish this historic membership feat!
- This month brings the VFW Day of Service, and we urge all our VFW Posts to be visible out in our communities with their service activities. The more eyes we have on the good work that the VFW is doing, the more veterans will want to take part, and we will reap the long-term benefits of recruiting, retention, and mentorship.
- If your Posts, Districts, or Departments need membership brochures, applications, or supplies to fulfill their recruiting and retention goals, they can be ordered online through our website. Simply log into [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), click on the “Membership Recruiting Brochures Order Form” link, and place an order. If your Department has a potential recruiting event you would like our assistance in facilitating, please contact us at [membership@vfw.org](mailto:membership@vfw.org).

Contact: VFW Membership and Member Services Director David Prohaska, [DProhaska@vfw.org](mailto:DProhaska@vfw.org).

## **Administrative Operations**

- There are currently 44 Posts and one District under Department or Commander-in-Chief suspensions:

State	Post	Charter city	Suspension expiration date
Arizona	7401	Chandler	8.4.2025
Arizona	12031	Anthem	5.21.2025
California	6476	Colton	5.22.2025
California	7665	Lake Isabella	7.8.2025
California	10694	Santa Ana	5.14.2025
Connecticut	6726	Essex	5.10.2025
Florida	10097	Fort Myers Beach	5.21.2025

Florida	10733	Orange Lake	6.16.2025
Georgia	5456	Elberton	6.4.2025
Idaho	735	Pocatello	6.12.2025
Illinois	3510	Danville	6.10.2025
Illinois	5418	Rock Falls	6.24.2025
Louisiana	3686	Jennings	5.14.2025
Louisiana	4317	Jonesboro	6.19.2025
Louisiana	4858	Many	5.5.2025
Louisiana	7755	Bourg	5.14.2025
Maryland	10078	Baltimore	4.8.2025
Massachusetts	144	Boston	Revocation of Charter Hearing completed.
Massachusetts	2017	Dedham	5.15.2025
Massachusetts	2902	West Roxbury	5.15.2025
Massachusetts	6536	South Boston	Ongoing litigation.
Nebraska	8332	Arlington	3.15.2025
Nebraska	9897	Valley	4.15.2025
Nebraska	10045	Deweese	4.15.2025
New Mexico	6216	Albuquerque	7.24.2025
North Dakota	Dist. 8		5.1.2025
Ohio	1646	Harveysburg	7.29.2025
Ohio	3307	Youngstown	6.4.2025
Ohio	3494	Mansfield	5.14.2025
Ohio	8673	Springfield	7.23.2025
Oklahoma	5307	Salina	7.11.2025
Oklahoma	11201	Chickasha	7.9.2025
Pennsylvania	43	Martinsburg	6.25.2025
Rhode Island	602	Pawtucket	7.11.2025
Tennessee	1733	Knoxville	6.25.2025
Texas	2479	Sweetwater	7.11.2025
Texas	8315	Schertz	7.8.2025
Texas	8911	Fort Worth	5.4.2025
Virginia	176	Newport News	5.13.2025
Virginia	5715	Big Stone Gap	7.23.2025
West Virginia	410	Belington	7.15.2025
Wisconsin	1866	Marshfield	5.26.2025
Wisconsin	5470	Whitewater	5.26.2025
Wisconsin	8123	De Soto	7.17.2025
Wisconsin	10430	Clinton	5.12.2025

- There were two Post Consolidations:

State	Post No.	Consolidated w/Post No.	Date Approved
Europe	10312	9334	4.15.2025
West Virginia	3757	5469	4.30.2025

- There were four Defunct Posts:

State	Post No.	Termination Date
California	1534	4.23.2025

Maryland	1858	4.28.2025
South Carolina	641	4.10.2025
Virginia	6000	4.9.2025

- There are two new Posts:

State	City	Date Instituted	Post No.
Alabama	Spanish Fort	4.1.25	12241
Alabama	Owens Crossroads	4.16.25	12242

- Administrative Operations is engaged in nine Article IX Disciplinary Actions:

- o Florida:  
Post 4353 Life member – disciplinary action
- o Georgia:  
Post 4326 Life member – request for hearing
- o Idaho:  
Post 3622 Life member – disciplinary action
- o Massachusetts:  
Post 545 Dept. Junior Vice Commander – disciplinary action
- o New Jersey:  
Post 9563 Life member – summary disposition – August 2025  
Post 9563 Life member – summary disposition – August 2025
- o Oklahoma:  
Post 2976 Life member – disciplinary action
- o Texas:  
Post 9191 Life member – disciplinary hearing  
Post 9191 Life member – disciplinary hearing

- Six Administrative Removals/Actions:

Colorado:  
District 4 Commander – appeal denied (30 days to appeal to COA)

Massachusetts:  
Dept. Junior Vice Commander – submitted appeal

New Mexico:  
Post 6216 Commander – awaiting possible appeal

Ohio:  
Post 9716 Commander – awaiting possible appeal  
Post 9716 Senior Vice Commander – awaiting possible appeal

Pennsylvania:  
Post 3376 Commander – sent appeal to Dept. Commander for rebuttal (30 days to respond)

- Six Membership eligibility challenges:

Member Name	Post No.	Dept	Due Date
Terrance Soloman	10167	FL	5.26.2025
Kevin Green	9265	OK	6.9.2025
Greg Goodwin	8951	PA	6.30.2025
Michael Segura	2951	NM	7.2.2025
Lonnie Allmon	5156	TN	7.2.2025
Sean Scott	10141	FL	7.2.2025

- There have also been two voluntary resignations, two voluntary surrenders, two terminations, and one eligible letter.
- Administrative Operations has 18 Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation submissions for review. Since April 4, 2025, 77 Bylaws/Articles of Incorporations have been received, 65 have been approved and distributed, and seven have been returned for corrections and resubmission through proper channels.
- There have been 11 total Charters from March 5, 2025, produced:
  - o Two Post Name Changes
  - o One Replacement Charter
  - o One Location Change Charter
  - o Three Consolidation Charters
  - o One New Post Charter
  - o One Perpetual Charter
  - o Two Auxiliary Charters

Dept	Post/District No.	Unit Designation	Document Type
OK	4938/382	Post	Consolidation Charter
MD	10067/9083	Post	Consolidation Charter
VA	2613	Post	Perpetual Charter
NY	8649	Post	Auxiliary Charter
CT	4908	Post	Auxiliary Charter
GA	12239	Post	New Charter
AK	5559	Post	Replacement Charter
TX	8273	Post	Name Change Charter
ID	2738	Post	Location Change Charter
EU	9334/10312	Post	Consolidation Charter
TN	1697	Post	Name Change Charter

### **Department Inspections**

- At the beginning of the 2024-2025 term, nine Department Inspections were planned. At this time, all nine Department Inspections have been completed, and they are as follows:
  - o Michigan – completed

- o Delaware – completed
- o Oklahoma – completed
- o Mississippi – completed
- o Utah – completed
- o Pacific Areas – completed
- o South Dakota – completed
- o Washington – completed
- o Europe – completed

### **Department Approved Resolutions and Amendments**

- This is a reminder to please send your Department approved resolutions and/or amendments to the National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual that require action by the National Convention, immediately following the close of your Department Convention.

In order to meet the requirements mentioned in Article XIV of the National Bylaws/Manual of Procedure, stating “All proposed amendments will be available to Posts by the Adjutant General at least fifteen (15) days before the assembling of the National Convention for those amendments being proposed for consideration at the convention”.

**It is extremely important we receive these documents within two (2) days from the conclusion of your Department Convention. A response is required even if your Department does not have any resolutions/amendments to submit.**

Please send the electronic version (word document) to [TGniotczynski@vfw.org](mailto:TGniotczynski@vfw.org).

### **Election Reports**

- 2025-2026 Election Reports have been mailed out. To access the election report online; sign in to VFW.org and proceed to My VFW. Select Online Membership System (OMS), then press the drop-down menu on the left side of the screen for Election Report and select Post Election Report Filing. **NOTE: The National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure require a properly completed Election Report for the ensuing year to be submitted to the Department and National Headquarters by June 1.**

### **Department Officer Proof of Eligibility**

- With the start of Department Conventions right around the corner I want to remind everyone of the requirement to submit proof of eligibility for all newly elected Junior Vice Commanders and any elected Department Quartermaster or appointed Department Adjutant who are new to their position this coming year (2025-26).

Additionally, proof of eligibility is required for any new Department Commander or Senior Vice Commander, who for whatever reason were not in the line of succession the previous year, to which we already have proof of eligibility on file.

This proof of eligibility must be submitted to the Adjutant General pursuant to Section 516 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure.

This must be done after officers are installed and prior to National Convention and is most easily completed by sending documentation via email to Joseph Wolfgeher at [JWolfgeher@vfw.org](mailto:JWolfgeher@vfw.org).

Contact: VFW National Administrative Operations Director Quentin Carroll, [QCarroll@vfw.org](mailto:QCarroll@vfw.org).

## **VFW Foundation**

- The VFW Foundation is pleased to welcome three new team members on Monday, May 12:
  - Anthony "Tony" Lowe, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations. Many of you may already know Tony from his previous roles at the VFW Washington Office and, more recently, as a consultant to the VFW Foundation.
  - Savanna Cavanaugh, Corporate Relations Manager.
  - Mario Garcia III, Corporate Relations Manager.

Contact: VFW Foundation Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, [RFreiburghouse@vfw.org](mailto:RFreiburghouse@vfw.org).

## **National Legislative Service**

- **VFW Meets with White House Officials:** VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci and National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan met with members of the White House Office of Public Liaison to introduce our organization's goals, history, and [legislative priorities](#).
- **Military Toxic Exposures Roundtable:** House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mark Takano (CA-39) convened a roundtable with more than a dozen veteran organizations and advocacy groups to discuss toxic exposures on and around domestic military bases. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Nancy Springer contributed to the discussion. [Watch the roundtable](#).
- **Suicide Prevention:** The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a legislative hearing on enhancing mental health services and programs. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Meggan Coleman submitted written testimony. [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 19:35 mark.
- **State Veterans Homes Oversight Hearing:** The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health held an oversight hearing on reform at State Veterans Homes. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Meggan Coleman submitted written testimony. [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 26:11 mark.

Contact: VFW National Legislative Service Director Kristina Keenan, [KKeenan@vfw.org](mailto:KKeenan@vfw.org).

## **National Veterans Service**

- NVS hosted the annual Proficiency Training Conference in Annapolis, Maryland, with more than 200 accredited representatives in attendance either in person or virtually. During this conference, attendees learned about new VA regulations and programs, and received training on the new MyVetBenefits and Veterans Help Group Partnerships, both of which help connect veterans to additional services that veterans may need.



- NVS staff, VFW Washington Office staff, and members of John Lyon VFW Post 3150 joined the Daughters of the American Revolution National Headquarters and the National Park Service to wash The Wall in our nation's capital as part of the VFW Day of Service.
- NVS hosted an NVS Update call with more than 80 accredited representatives in attendance.
- NVS director attended the Senior Vice Commander Training in Kansas City, Missouri.
- NVS leadership met with the Department of Virginia and DVS to discuss the service officer program.
- NVS attended the monthly VSO meeting on claims, appeals and legislative issues.
- NVS attended the VA Debt Management Center VSO call.
- NVS deputy director and assistant director met with Yale Law School's Veterans Legal Services Clinic to discuss the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC).
- NVS attended the monthly VBA Education Service Call.
- NVS pre-discharge representatives briefed transitioning service members on VA benefits at military installations across the country.
- BDD leadership participated in an MSC conference.
- BDD leadership briefed the Navy Admiral TAP course, discussing how VFW may assist with their BDD claims.
- BDD team welcomed a new Pre-Discharge Ratings Review Rep.
- BDD team met for specialized training after the PTC course and BDD leadership followed with an Operational meeting.
- NVS health leadership attended an Office of VA Innovation VSO meeting.
- NVS health team attended the quarterly VA Veteran Transportation update.
- NVS health leadership participated in The Military Health Coalition update.
- NVS health leadership attended the VA's Intimate Partnership and Sexual Assault collaboration.



*VFW's Day of Service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*

As always, if you see a veteran in need, direct them to an accredited representative so that they can receive assistance. A listing of accredited representatives can be found at [vfw.org.NVS](https://vfw.org/NVS). Just use the "Find a Service Officer" tab on the right side of the screen to find an accredited representative in your area.

Contact: VFW National Veterans Service Director Michael Figlioli, [MFiglioli@vfw.org](mailto:MFiglioli@vfw.org).

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