

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AMBASSADOR/ NATIONAL CHIEF OF STAFF

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You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf!

The Chief of Staff may serve as the Extension, Revitalization and Mentoring Chairman. So, what is a Department Chief of Staff and how important is this appointment to the success of the Department?

As Chief of Staff, you are the important assistant to the Department President. You should be that extra set of eyes and ears we wish we all had. The Chief of Staff will be a coach, counselor and mentor to all levels of leadership in the Department. They must be knowledgeable in all facets of the Auxiliary including Bylaws, Programs and Mentoring for Leadership.

The Chief of Staff works with the Department President to identify the warning signs of an Auxiliary in trouble before situations occur. The Chief of Staff should be informed of all issues, good and bad, in the Department. The Chief of Staff should train the District Presidents or Official Representatives to recognize Yellow or Red Flag issues early in the Program Year. When they know what a healthy and functioning Auxiliary should be, they can report immediately any concerns to the Department President.

The Chief of Staff has tools available to aid in maintaining strong and healthy Auxiliaries in MALTA. Promote the usage of these resources, such as Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation. Promoting the use of MALTA will lead to more informed members.

The Chief of Staff is instrumental in the success of each Department. Their support assures that goals are attained, Auxiliaries are instituted, members are trained and problems are solved. Healthy Auxiliaries provided better service to our veterans, their families and communities. With the permission of the Department President, the Chief of Staff can assist where needed for the good of the Department.

*From Sea to Shining Sea - Honoring Veterans
Who Keep Us Free*

The VFW Auxiliary was 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. Each Department President has appointed a Department Chief of Staff to serve with them closely to ensure that Auxiliaries remain strong, enthused and loyal to our organization. These traits allow for the Auxiliary to remain proud, patriotic and energetic, creating members who honor and protect our veterans and their families. Our men and women in uniform have made a similar promise to our nation when they took their oath and promised to safeguard the future of our nation. They remain strong, patriotic and proud, so that we may enjoy freedom. Our foundation is solid – now it is up to us to remain strong.

The Extension & Revitalization Program can benefit every member of the Auxiliary through education. 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.

Healthy Auxiliaries vs Struggling Auxiliaries

Green Flag - Healthy Auxiliaries

Auxiliaries that are healthy "are good to go." They have utilized or referred to the Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit found in MALTA. They have met the five (5)

essential requirements for an Auxiliary to be healthy. There are seven resources to assist Auxiliaries in identifying and solving issues within the kit. A Green Flag Auxiliary would be an excellent choice to mentor struggling Auxiliaries.

Yellow Flag - Struggling Auxiliaries

Auxiliaries that are struggling will need mentoring. It is up to the Department Chief of Staff, when requested by the President, to look to assist the Auxiliary. The District President or Auxiliary Representative must be honest in the assessment when completing the visit form after a visit to an Auxiliary. They have firsthand knowledge of the Auxiliary and must communicate any concerns to the Department President and/or Chief of Staff. This situation could be failure to meet any one or more of the five (5) essentials of an Auxiliary, but also a subtle sign such as not attracting new members, failure to complete Programs reports, not assisting veterans and families, no new Officers, or failure to attend District and Department meetings or trainings events.

The completed Official Visit forms should be shared with the Chief of Staff to peruse and perhaps pick up a "Yellow Flag" signal. As soon as struggle is reported, the Department Chief of Staff needs to work closely with the Department President and observe what is happening on the Auxiliary level and be ready to act.

Performance Improvement Plan

The process of arriving at a resolution would be that a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is put in place. A PIP Committee (not a suspension committee) is assigned to meet with the Auxiliary President, Secretary and Treasurer and under certain circumstances an individual member or members with the issues to discuss and develop a Performance Improvement Plan. This is the time to OBSERVE the Auxiliary and offer MENTORING. The President will pick the member or team that fits the Auxiliary – there is no one size fits all. The PIP Committee takes the lead and gradually gets the Auxiliary involved in correcting the issue; thus, the Auxiliary would not have to be put on suspension and the PIP Committee would advise the Department President that the Auxiliary could now be considered healthy. The PIP Committee should be able to attend their meetings and get them back on track. This is a critical time for an Auxiliary and

the spirit of kindness is an absolute must. This is REVITALIZATION at its peak.

Red Flag – 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 the current Auxiliaries are in good working order. It is also important to make presentations to unaffiliated Posts and when possible, 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. The Chief of Staff should be aware of any unaffiliated Post presentations and attend if possible. Always ask the Post Commander for permission to describe the benefits of an Auxiliary to the VFW Post. Extension tools and presentations are available in MALTA Member Resources. Once the Post has approval to establish an Auxiliary, the Department President will appoint an organizer to work with the Post.

Mentoring

Training and educating members to be future leaders is why we mentor. 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. Mentors are counselors and cheerleaders. Focus on positive attributes and encourage those while offering guidance and training.





EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Maintain and Strengthen Current Auxiliaries • Present to Unaffiliated Posts

Establish New Auxiliaries • Recognize Red-Flag Auxiliaries

The Chief of Staff has a critical leadership role in our organization. One of the responsibilities of the Chief of Staff is to provide guidance and resources to VFW Auxiliaries so they can ensure that Auxiliaries are healthy and successful.

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.

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. Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
2. Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year.
3. Quarterly audits by Trustees must be submitted.
4. Officers elected, installed and reported to National Headquarters no later than June 30. This generates the bond application via email.
5. The offices of President and Treasurer **MUST** be bonded by August 31.

Establishing New Auxiliaries

Whether a VFW Post decides on its own 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 closure 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.

Recognize new VFW Auxiliaries

Recognize new VFW Auxiliaries at District and Department functions to help them feel welcome and important.

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 including the Healthy Auxiliary Checklist, Auxiliary Meeting Clinic and more.

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 and more.

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)

Remember to use our additional Member Resources:

- "Understanding Auxiliary Traditions" video
- PowerPoint and PDF entitled "Why Having an Auxiliary Can Boost your Post"
- Top 10 Reasons for your Post to Have an Auxiliary Handout
- Good Job Certificates

Mentoring and Encouraging Members

- 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.
- 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 effective communication and respect for each other is demonstrated.
- Over time, a 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.
- The real goal here is to train your replacement and give them the tools they need to succeed.

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AWARDS

Awards for Members:

1. Citation and a \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one member in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best assistance to the Chief of Staff in establishing a new VFW Auxiliary with the approval of the Department President.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

The Department Chief of Staff must sign and send a copy of the completed Department nomination form to the National Chief of Staff by April 30, 2026 for judging.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Awards for District Presidents:

1. Citation and a \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one District President or Official Representative in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best assistance to the Chief of Staff with a struggling VFW Auxiliary by mentoring and maintaining a close relationship until the VFW Auxiliary becomes healthy, with the approval of the Department President. Use of MALTA Healthy Auxiliary tools and mentor training is required.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

The Department Chief of Staff must sign and send a copy of the completed Department nomination form to the National Chief of Staff by April 30, 2026 for judging.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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 most unique promotion educating members to maintain healthy VFW Auxiliaries and to promote Extension while utilizing MALTA Member Resources.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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 27.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.