



Department of Texas Veterans of Foreign Wars

MAY 2020

No. 8

GENERAL ORDERS

2019-2020 Series

1. **Executive Order No. 1:** Dated March 17, 2020 by order of William “Doc” Schmitz, VFW National Commander-in-Chief: “Pursuant to the authority under Section 618(a)(4), effective immediately and until rescinded, we ask that Posts, Districts and Departments, if possible and within the requirements of mandated State Declarations, make the attempt to elect officers. For such Posts, Districts or Departments that are not able to elect officers as a result of COVID-19, all current officers shall continue to function within their capabilities until new officers are elected. It is further stipulated that no Post, District or Department be sanctioned as result of the inability to properly functions, as mandated by state or local government declarations, as a direct cause of COVID-19.”

POSTS WILL NOT BE PENALIZED FOR MISSING DEADLINES.

2. **Cancellation of the 2020 VFW National Convention in Reno, Nevada:** On April 20th, in the wake of COVID-19, the Veterans of Foreign Wars officially cancelled the 2020 VFW National Convention scheduled to be held in July 2020 in Reno, Nevada.

This year will mark the first in the organization’s storied 121-year history where a National Convention will not be held. The VFW Auxiliary has also cancelled its Convention. The next VFW National Convention will be held in Baltimore, Maryland on July 31 - August 5, 2021.

3. **VFW Post & District meetings can be held:** The Governor’s Executive Order GA-18 as interpreted by the State Commander does allow for Posts and Districts to conduct VFW meetings provided the persons present do not exceed 25% of the stated building capacity. As an example, a Post that has a capacity of 100 could not have more than 25 people in the building or room if other rooms have a stated capacity as some of our Posts do.

Also, many Posts and Districts are under stricter requirements from City and County officials. According to the VFW National Commander-in-Chief, if you can have your meeting and elections great; if you need to postpone and rescheduled and have it in June (provided we are in the all clear), then great.

I am in concurrence with the Commander-in-Chief and would rather you all be safe then risk yourself for fear of being disciplined for not having a meeting. We have been around for 120+ years, we can wait a month to get back to business as normal.

4. **Texas Governor Abbott Re-Opening Operations:** Texas Governor Greg Abbott has announced that on May 1st, that retail stores, dine-in restaurants, movie theaters, shopping malls, Museums, Libraries, Golf course operations and specific local government offices can open provided that they do not exceed no more than 25% of their capacity. For some counties that have had 5 or less cases with approval may operate the above listed business at 50% capacity. Social distancing is still required to be practiced at these locations.

His Executive Order went on to say the following: **“People shall avoid visiting bars, gyms, public swimming pools, interactive amusement venues such as bowling alleys and video arcades, massage establishments, tattoo studios, piercing studios, or cosmetology salons.”**

This announcement would prohibit most--if not all VFW Posts from being able to reopen their canteens. Please check with your local officials before opening your Post up for Bingo or V-Sweeps.

5. **District Convention Meetings:** VFW National By-Laws for District Quorum require 50% of at least 1 delegate from each Post in the District to transact business which includes elections. As an example, a District with 14 Posts would need at least 50% representation of the 14 Posts meaning that 1 delegate from at least 7 Posts would need to be present to hold the District Convention.
6. **Post & District Election Reports:** Post and District Election Reports can be completed online at the VFW National website on the Online Membership System (OMS). Post Quartermasters and District Quartermasters need to complete the reports soon after the Post and District elections are held in May or June.
7. **All-State Deadline:** The deadline for All-State has been extended to Saturday, May 16th for all requirements not met prior to March 16, 2020. However, each Post has until June 30, 2020 to attain 100% in membership as that requirement is still required for All-State recognition.
8. **All-State Recognition Items:** All-State recognition items (such as Post All-State Plaques, VFW Overseas caps, lapel pins and recognition medals, etc.) can be ordered and purchased by completing the “All-State Post Entry Form.” The form can be found on the Texas VFW website in the Standard Operations Procedure (SOP).

9. **The 3rd Quarter Post/District Audit Report-Deadline Extension:** As your State Commander, I have had many questions asked regarding the 3rd Quarterly Post/District Audits.

The deadline for the 3rd Quarter Audit Report has been extended to May 16th.

I am asking that every Post and District to adapt, overcome and improvise in getting their Quarterly Audit completed and sent in. If you feel comfortable having the three Trustees, Quartermaster and Commander of the Post meet to complete the Quarterly Audit, then do so.

If you would rather use email with electronic signatures as we do at the Department level with DocuSign, then do so. If you can email the Audit and have them send back a response affirming that they are signing the Audit, then do so as long as we have a copy of the email stating they agree with the Audit. If you want one person to drive to each person's house to have them sign, then go for it. If you want the Trustees to come to the Post staggered in one or more hour increments even spread out over several days, then do so.

10. **Post Insurance:** I have had several calls about insurance companies refusing to accept a delay in monthly payments. Comrades, all I can say is that if your Post is closed and you do not have insurance then you cannot open till you have insurance.

For those Posts that may be adversely affected financially by such closures, such Posts should see if they have any insurance policy, such as Business Interruption Insurance, in effect.

Posts should consult with their respective insurance provider for questions. Additionally, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) may provide some relief. The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to \$2 million in assistance and can provide vital economic support to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing.

These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate for non-profits is 2.75%. Terms are determined on a case-by-case basis, based upon each borrower's ability to repay.

Here is a link to the SBA for COVID-19 disaster assistance <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19>.

11. **State Convention Delegates Fees:** Per the State By-Laws, we are required to send out an invoice to each Post for State Convention Delegate fees based off Post membership as of April 1st of each year. As the State Headquarters staff is under "Work from Home" orders from the City of Austin and Travis County, we have had to adapt to how this will be done.

Wayne Cooley, State Assistant Adjutant, has sent each District Commander Post Delegate Invoices for each Post in their respective District. Invoices will also be posted on the Texas VFW website link noted below:

<https://www.texasvfw.org/2020stateconventioninvoicebydistrict>

As the COVID-19 Virus can live for up to 24 hours on paper, **the State Headquarters will not be mailing these delegate invoices to the Posts.** I know all 302 VFW Posts currently in Texas will suddenly claim they do not have access to a computer. This is where the District Commanders come into play as I am asking our District Commanders to contact their Posts and either direct them to the Texas VFW website to download the form or email the form to State Headquarters.

We will also have it set up so Posts can pay their delegate fees online and email or, as a last resort, fax in the delegate form with the names of those who had been elected. As a reminder, the State Convention Delegate fees are \$3.00 for every delegate a Post is entitled to which is one (1) delegate per every thirty (30) members or partial thereof.

12. The Texas VFW Foundation: The Texas VFW Foundation is ready for the large influx of assistance claims for individual veterans who have lost wages or been adversely affected due to COVID-19. Refer veterans to the Texas VFW Foundation website. <https://www.texasvfw.org/foundation>

13. Department Anniversary: The Department of Texas VFW will be turning 100 years old in 2020. As State Commander, I am asking that all VFW Posts provide a listing of veterans within their Posts who are either and/or will be 100 years old in 2020. To celebrate their 100th year of age this will be a great tribute to each of them. Check the June 2020 General Orders with more information on the Department's 100th Anniversary.

14. Candidates for Department Office 2020-2021:

- State Commander, Dick Shawver, Post 3893, Nacogdoches, D-19
- State Senior Vice Commander, Norman Macey, Post 4816, Porter, D-17
- State Junior Vice Commander, Jeff Clark, Post 9078, Round Rock, D-28
- State Junior Vice Commander, Lynn Toomer, Post 10429, Benbrook, D-21
- State Quartermaster, Dan West, Post 3413, San Marcos, D-5
- State Judge Advocate, Grant Seabolt, Jr., Post 6796, Dallas, D-3
- State Surgeon, Gerard P. "Jerry" Greene, Post 6796, Dallas, D-3
- State Chaplain, Al Lowe, Post 4008, Belton, D-14

15. Candidates for National VFW Office 2020-2021:

- VFW National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, Larry Velasquez, Jr., Post 8932, D-6
- VFW National Judge Advocate, Grant Seabolt, Jr., Post 6796, Dallas, D-3

16. District Meetings for May and June: Below are the current meeting dates & locations:

• <u>District 1</u>	<u>May 31st</u>	<u>Post 2772 - Sherman</u>
• <u>District 2</u>	<u>June 6th</u>	<u>Post 2775 - Orange</u>
• <u>District 3</u>	<u>May 17th</u>	<u>Post 6796 - Dallas</u>
• <u>District 4</u>	<u>June 6th</u>	<u>Post 8790 - Houston</u>
• <u>District 5</u>	<u>May 2nd</u>	<u>Post 8800 - Startzville</u>
• <u>District 6</u>	<u>May 30th</u>	<u>Post 8621-Alice</u>
• <u>District 8</u>	<u>May 16th</u>	<u>Post 3278 - Brownwood</u>
• <u>District 9</u>	<u>May 23rd</u>	<u>Post 2466 - Lubbock</u>
• <u>District 10</u>	<u>May 30th</u>	<u>Post 10354 - El Paso</u>
• <u>District 12</u>	<u>May 30th</u>	<u>Post 7523 - Mineola</u>
• <u>District 14</u>	<u>May 16th</u>	<u>Post 1820 - Temple</u>
• <u>District 16</u>	<u>May 17th</u>	<u>Post 6378 - Dickinson</u>
• <u>District 17</u>	<u>May 30th</u>	<u>Post 4816 - Porter</u>
• <u>District 18</u>	<u>May 24th</u>	<u>Post 10802 - Donna</u>
• <u>District 19</u>	<u>June 6th</u>	<u>Post 1836 - Lufkin</u>
• <u>District 20</u>	<u>May 30th</u>	<u>Post 9186 - San Antonio</u>
• <u>District 21</u>	<u>May 17th</u>	<u>Post 9299 - Alvarado</u>
• <u>District 24</u>	<u>May 16th</u>	<u>Post 4146 - Victoria</u>
• <u>District 25</u>	<u>May 23rd</u>	<u>Post 4372 - Odessa</u>
• <u>District 28</u>	<u>June 7th</u>	<u>Post 10427 - Leander</u>
• <u>District 29</u>	<u>May 16th</u>	<u>Post 4694 - Mexia</u>
• <u>District 30</u>	<u>June 13th</u>	<u>Post 4376 - Seven Points</u>

17. District Election Packets: The District Election Packets for all the incoming District Commanders will be emailed in May to the current District Commanders.

It is very important that all incoming District Commanders fill out and return the forms to the Department of Texas VFW Headquarters as soon as the May and June District meetings are completed.

You can email the forms to Wyonda Laurence, Department Secretary (Email: wyonda@texasvfw.org). You can also use your cell phone and take a photo of the forms and email the forms to Wyonda.

18.Proof of Eligibility Requirements for incoming 2020-2021 District Officers: Proof of eligibility for the following positions are to be submitted to the Department of Texas VFW Headquarters no later than June 15, 2020:

- District Commander
- District Senior Vice Commander
- District Junior Vice Commander
- District Quartermaster
- District Adjutant

If proof of eligibility is not submitted within thirty (30) days of the election, your office will be declared vacant and your eligibility will be challenged.

If the incoming District officer for the above-mentioned positions previously submitted “proof of eligibility”—there will be no need to resend to Department of Texas VFW Headquarters.

19.Membership: The Department of Texas VFW is currently sitting at 92.42% with 63,517 members as of May 1, 2020.

20.Congratulations to District 30 for reaching 100%+ in Membership: District 30 is the first District in Texas to reach 100%+ in membership (as of May 1, 2020 = 101.80%).

21.Congratulations to the following 88 Texas VFW Posts for reaching 100%+ in Membership as of May 1, 2020, for the 2019-2020 VFW Year:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| • Post 10712-Pharr | (123.91%) | Commander Jesus R. Pineda |
| • Post 2676-Windthorst | (121.62%) | Commander Bert J. Hoff |
| • Post 12171-San Antonio | (119.30%) | Commander Lee M. Rivas |
| • Post 9180-Forney | (115.66%) | Commander Michael J. Rock |
| • Post 5871-Huntsville | (114.52%) | Commander William L. Hubbard |
| • Post 12041-Lytle | (113.41%) | Commander Larry L. Sanders |
| • Post 8541-San Antonio | (113.36%) | Commander William E. Smith |
| • Post 6974-Burnet | (112.90%) | Commander Reece E. Carter |
| • Post 6111-Arlington | (112.26%) | Commander Manuel D. Leal III |
| • Post 6014-Hamlin | (112.00%) | Commander Roy L. Williams |
| • Post 7106-Ennis | (111.29%) | Commander Donald R. Fritz |
| • Post 10358-Hearne | (111.11%) | Commander Robert Boggan |
| • Post 12152-Cleburne | (111.11%) | Commander Johnathan Laureles |
| • Post 10462-Houston | (110.77%) | Commander Billy D. Wilkinson |
| • Post 4376-Seven Points | (110.31%) | Commander William J. Fuzi |
| • Post 7426-Farmersville | (110.28%) | Commander Brian R. Chapman |
| • Post 8273-Frisco | (110.11%) | Commander Shenna R. Lawless |

• Post 3893-Nacogdoches	(109.60%)	Commander Don Kirkley
• Post 9191-Killeen	(109.29%)	Commander Leanna D. Davis
• Post 10376-Marble Falls	(108.93%)	Commander Lloyd E. Crippen
• Post 4700-San Antonio	(108.28%)	Commander Gilbert V. Rodriguez
• Post 9299-Alvarado	(108.21%)	Commander Jessica Cavender
• Post 12058-Kyle	(107.21%)	Commander Bobby J. Diaz
• Post 3892-Harker Heights	(107.04%)	Commander Anson L. Booker
• Post 8573-Canyon Lake	(106.90%)	Commander Perry S. Connel
• Post 6439-Wellington	(106.25%)	Commander David E. Mitchell
• Post 8552-Del Rio	(106.23%)	Commander Ventura Mancha
• Post 6525-Rockdale	(106.14%)	Commander Larry J. Rubino
• Post 9192-Killeen	(106.08%)	Commander David F. Reese
• Post 1533-San Antonio	(106.04%)	Commander Gilbert R. Uriegas
• Post 10454-Grapevine	(105.91%)	Commander Roy D. James
• Post 1406-Dallas	(105.66%)	Commander Reggie L. Williams
• Post 3992-Mount Vernon	(105.56%)	Commander Charles D. Hallman
• Post 5398-Pittsburg	(105.56%)	Commander Lance D. Boyd
• Post 4006-Navasota	(105.17%)	Commander Tony L. Lambert
• Post 9173-Smeltertown	(104.86%)	Commander Jesus R. Tovar
• Post 6968-Linden	(104.69%)	Commander Philip D. Doss
• Post 6970-Poteet	(104.25%)	Commander John E. Shipley
• Post 9167-Princeton	(104.17%)	Commander Jason Williams
• Post 6205-Muenster	(104.00%)	Commander Douglas J. Martin
• Post 6284-Kermit	(104.00%)	Commander Kevin D. Daniel
• Post 4403-Port Lavaca	(103.94%)	Commander Edwin L. Simons
• Post 8554-Mason	(103.45%)	Commander Billy W. Hight
• Post 912-Baytown	(103.23%)	Commander Jerry W. Johnson
• Post 4443-Austin	(103.08%)	Commander Joseph E. Touchet
• Post 9186-San Antonio	(102.96%)	Commander Nathan L. Zuniga
• Post 7767-Breckenridge	(102.90%)	Commander Donal F. Yoes
• Post 3891-Hondo	(102.70%)	Commander Tony B. Johnston
• Post 2466-Lubbock	(102.61%)	Commander Benny Guerrero, Jr.
• Post 8587-Georgetown	(102.61%)	Commander Randy M. Downing
• Post 7108-San Antonio	(102.52%)	Commander John C. Maines
• Post 1309-Smithville	(102.50%)	Commander Henry B. Kubena III
• Post 4002-Longview	(102.49%)	Commander Charles W. McGregor
• Post 8560-Sulphur Springs	(102.44%)	Commander Richard Nail
• Post 4136-Eastland	(102.27%)	Commander Gary L. Gray
• Post 5620-Carthage	(102.22%)	Commander John D. Foster
• Post 581-Houston	(102.07%)	Commander Richard A. Compton
• Post 4676-Universal City	(101.71%)	Commander Joseph D. Ramon

• Post 3366-Corsicana	(101.67%)	Commander Dennis M. Hall
• Post 8235-Fort Worth	(101.63%)	Commander Charles A. Beltram
• Post 9182-Katy	(101.62%)	Commander Donald H. Byrne
• Post 8967-Port Aransas	(101.45%)	Commander Michael A. Garrett
• Post 8550-El Paso	(101.33%)	Commander Jeraldine J. Wells
• Post 10373-Jefferson	(101.32%)	Commander John T. Cooper
• Post 3278-Brownwood	(101.12%)	Commander James Masters
• Post 856-Austin	(101.11%)	Commander Preston S. Rogers
• Post 2772-Sherman	(101.09%)	Commander Jeremy B. Ford
• Post 8558-Nocona	(100.96%)	Commander Matthew Moore
• Post 5617-White Settlement	(100.94%)	Commander Ernie A. MonDragon
• Post 2933-Dripping Springs	(100.90%)	Commander Ronnie G. Barnett
• Post 2438-Bay City	(100.90%)	Commander Donald C. Wells
• Post 6386-Ingleside	(100.70%)	Commander Greg A. Dalin
• Post 8790-Houston	(100.57%)	Commander Michael D. Flanagan
• Post 10377-Lake Belton	(100.56%)	Commander John P. Burford
• Post 5074-Roanoke	(100.54%)	Commander James Benotti
• Post 2399-Mineral Wells	(100.49%)	Commander James E. Bransom
• Post 10429-Benbrook	(100.47%)	Commander Jerry W. Grantland
• Post 10460-Lake Dallas	(100.00%)	Commander John P. Marquez
• Post 1514-Village Mills	(100.00%)	Commander Richard L. Moore
• Post 8913-Lancaster	(100.00%)	Commander Wilton Black
• Post 5683-Merkel	(100.00%)	Commander Jesus Moreno
• Post 8789-Bowie	(100.00%)	Commander Stacy Marie Smith
• Post 6719-Raymondville	(100.00%)	Commander Stephen D. Million
• Post 8791-Port Isabel	(100.00%)	Commander Irene Camacho
• Post 2033-Woodville	(100.00%)	Commander Clarence A. Dominy
• Post 6382-Hallettsville	(100.00%)	Commander Jason A. Ward
• Post 6794-Brownfield	(100.00%)	Commander Garvis W. Johnson
• Post 7103-Athens	(100.00%)	Commander William E. Malone

22.100th Annual Department of Texas VFW State Convention: Currently we are still planning on having our State Convention in Austin to be held June 17-21, 2020. However, depending on the restrictions in place we may have to modify to accommodate.

Final decision to hold the State Convention will be made on June 1, 2020. Check the Department of Texas VFW website for event updates, or possible modifications.

Currently the State Convention is scheduled to be held at the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton Hotel Austin (6505 North Interstate 35, Austin, Texas 78752). Details for the Convention are posted on our Department website (agenda, hotel reservations, banquet tickets). <https://www.texasvfw.org/100th-annual-state-convention>.

Plans were to have during the State Convention a “Combined Hospitality Room” at the hotel. We recently learned that the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton has requested cancellation of that setup due to the COVID-19. More details will be shared later regarding this change at the State Convention.

23. Proposed Department of Texas VFW By-Law changes: Any proposed By-Law changes and resolutions must be submitted from the Post through the District to the Department Headquarters in Austin no later than May 7, 2020.

24. State Commander Homecoming: Currently we are still planning on having the State Commander Homecoming to be held on June 25-28, 2020 in Bay City. We are working with the hotel on making sure we have enough rooms. Details are posted online at www.texasvfw.org regarding the hotel accommodations, registration and tentative agenda.

I understand that you may already have other plans for this date and if you have already paid and cannot make it please let me know and we will refund your registration fee. If you have not paid and still cannot make it and you are a member of the 2019-20 Council of Administration, please let me know so I can adjust our room reservations.

If you need a refund, please email Dan West, State Adjutant/Quartermaster, stating that you need a refund so Department Headquarters can get it processed. Dan West’s email address is: dan@texasvfw.org

25. 2020-2021 Theme for Voice of Democracy:

“Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?”

Voice of Democracy is open to 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students enrolled in public, private or parochial schools in Texas. To qualify, all student entries must be submitted to a sponsoring local VFW Post by October 31, 2020. The official entry form can be found on the National VFW website.

26. 2020-2021 Theme for Patriot’s Pen:


“What is Patriotism to Me?”

Patriot’s Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students enrolled in public, private or parochial schools in Texas. To qualify, all student entries must be submitted to a sponsoring local VFW Post by October 31, 2020. The official entry form can be found on the National VFW website.

By order of:


Keith King
State Commander

Attested By:


Dan West
State Adjutant/Quartermaster

