

## Membership Program Overview

### Retention! Retention! Retention!

We all know Membership is the backbone of our organization, so why do we find it so hard to keep our members? If we take the time to **Invite** potential members to join our Auxiliary, should we not also take the time to **Invest** in them as well? We need to find a better way to communicate with our members so that they want to be **Included** in everything we do. By reinforcing the importance of the goals of our organization, we can give our members a reason to invite new members to join us. If we want to continue to make our puzzle grow, we need active members, not just numbers on a report. We need those puzzle pieces to help us work on our Programs. Everything is connected. Let's find ways to teach them about the Organization they joined and make it FUN!

### Invite New Members • Include Current Members • Invest in the Future of the Organization

The VFW Auxiliary started with a small group of women who wanted to serve veterans, and it has grown exponentially and now includes both males and females as members. There is only one way to add members: **ask someone to join**. And once they join, **ask them to participate**.

#### Ask Someone to Join

There are numerous places and times to ask someone if they want to join the VFW Auxiliary. Your approach will look different depending on who your audience is.

In all cases, the potential member should have some knowledge of what the VFW Auxiliary is and what we do before they ever receive an application.

#### Important tools:

- Fact Sheet, available for free from National Headquarters.
- Business card with contact information. (Order yours from the VFW Store - [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org).)
- National website, [vfwauxiliary.org](http://vfwauxiliary.org).

#### Follow Up!

Most likely, the first time you talk to someone new about the organization, that person will not be ready to commit. It's important to ask for their contact information and then follow up within a week.

#### Ask Them to Participate

The key to keeping members is getting them involved. Call or email a new member within a week with the next meeting date and time, or the next possible event or project. Offer to pick him/her up, or invite him/her to get coffee before or after a meeting.

Put a team of members in charge of contacting new members or members who haven't been to a meeting recently. The team should be friendly and knowledgeable about the Auxiliary.

#### Ways to Encourage Participation:

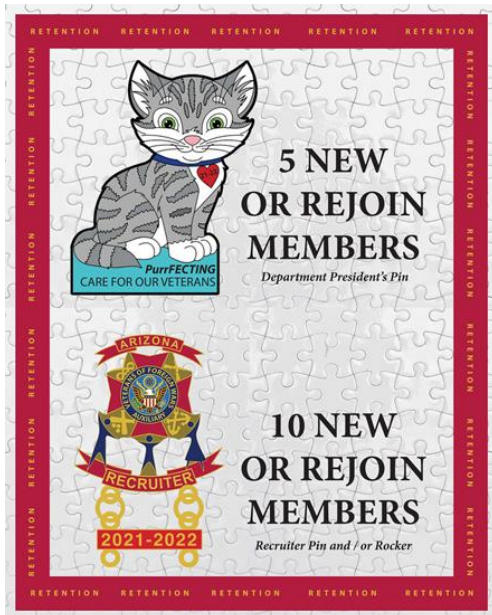
- Monthly sign-up sheet for regular events.
- Emails and phone calls for special events.

- Public recognition of current volunteers. (Consider posters at your VFW Post Home, if permitted, that spotlight member involvement.)
- Be specific about what they will be doing, including the time commitment.
- Find out how that person best communicates, whether by phone, email, Facebook or texting.
- Have another member stay with them for the entire length of the activity or event.
- If they say “no” to the first invitation, be sure to ask again!
- Plan family-friendly events! Members with children in the home want opportunities to do things with his or her family.

## Have a Plan

- Every Department and Auxiliary should have a Membership Plan. This plan should include:
  - Contacting current members.
  - Outreach to former members.
  - Recruiting events for new members.
  - Picking a mentor for a new member.
- Before a membership year begins, set your calendar for when you plan to do each of these.
- Make it as easy as possible for members to renew their dues. They can renew online in MALTA!
- Plan at least four recruiting events in your community each year.

## Department Awards



## National Awards

### AWARDS FOR MEMBERS

1. Cardinal Puzzle Pin and a citation to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new and/ or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022\*. Official form required; available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Due to National Headquarters by June 10, 2022. Pin will be mailed directly to the member.

2. National Membership Achievement Award to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022\*. Official form required; available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Due to National Headquarters by June 10, 2022. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2022 National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Award will be mailed directly to the member if not in attendance.

3. Soaring Above and Beyond Award to one Auxiliary member who recruits the most new and/or rejoined members from July 1, 2021 through May 31, 2022. The award will feature the member's name alongside the name of an honored veteran. Official form required; available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Due to National Headquarters by June 10, 2022. Winner will be announced and award presented at the 2022 National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Award will be mailed to the Department for presentation if member is not in attendance.

### **AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES**

1. Retain & Gain Award \$50 to each Auxiliary that retains 90% of their Annual members AND reaches 100% Plus by June 30, 2022.