DEPARTMENT OF ALABAMA VFW WEBSITE GUIDE

This guide covers the Department of Alabama website (VFWAL.ORG). Further, it covers the Department of Alabama Program Reporting Tool and Alabama All-State Dashboard.

The website pages below may or may not appear in the order discussed because they may be moved to add clarity or change seasonal importance. The Department Webmaster will try to maintain this guide; however, you may contact the web admin if you have any questions. Additionally, you can text him on his cell at 907-854-1320 to receive a callback. All-State Reporting Requirements are promulgated in the Commander's Leader Guide in the Resources tab of the Department of Alabama VFW Website. See Good Standing and All-State reports/frequency in the last pages of this guide.

Seven sub-headings are shown across the top of this website: Home **https://vfwal.org.**

About *
Programs * (the Major VFW Program and Some State Ones as well)
Resources * (Primarily for Veterans)
News *
Contact
Login * **

* The down arrowheads indicate that the page contains a drop-down menu with additional options. This means that by clicking on the down arrowhead, these options appear for the user to select.

** To see members-only content, log in with Username [VFW Member Number] and Password [Lastname]. Your password can be changed. If you need help, email the webmaster.

Home Page

The Sliders (1440x960) at the top of the page show essential information, including:

Getting Help – Suicide Prevention

Observance Day/Month (Variable)

Buddy Poppy Program

   VFWAL Buddy Poppy Order Page

Stewarding the Organization

   Join the VFW in Alabama!

Camp LeJeune Claims Promotion

Website changes are at the top of the page, followed by announcements, the Commander's Corner, VFWAL Social Media Links, News, Legacy Life Membership, Site Sponsors, and the Daily "In-Country" cartoon.

<u>Options under the "About" tab (primarily for non-members):</u>

[Search this Site](#) -- A Google-powered, site-specific search for all documents, pages, and references within the VFWAL.org website.

[About Us](#) – This is a brief Department of Alabama VFW history.

[Mission](#) – This is the National VFW and the Department of Alabama's Mission Statements.

[Officers](#) – This section contains photos and biographies of Department of Alabama officers.

[Auxiliary](#) – This describes the Department of Alabama VFW Auxiliary.

[Donations](#) – Directs visitors to the Department of Alabama VFW donation platform.

[FAQs](#) – Frequently Asked Questions

[Find a Post](#) – This page lists all the districts and the posts under the district with hyperlinks to their web pages, social media sites, and contact information for each post.

[Gallery](#) – Pictures, Banners, and Promotions.

[Guide to this Website](#) – This guide describes what is under each tab with a brief description of the section.

<u>Options under the "Programs" tab (primarily for Public Transparency):</u>

[Buddy Poppy](#) – The VFW Buddy Poppy program compensates the veterans who assemble the poppies and provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs.

[Community Service](#) – Reaching out to our communities is vital to our organization.

[Legislative](#) – This page identifies the recent legislative victories, priorities, and goals of the VFW's legislative efforts.

[Membership](#) – This is how to become a member of the VFW and what membership offers you.

[Public Servant and Safety](#) – This page describes the annual public servant awards the VFW recognizes.

[#StillServing](#) – A link to where Veterans can learn more about how they can still serve their communities. Engagement is a significant priority for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

[Veterans Benefits and Assistance](#) – This describes the Department of Alabama Service Officer and related veterans' benefits and assistance programs (VA Claims).

[Veterans and Military Assistance (VMS)](#) – This page describes the VFW's Adopt-a-Unit and Military Assistance Programs (Troop Support).

Youth and Education – This page describes the youth scholarships, scout of the year, teacher of the year, and VFW in the classroom.

Program Deadlines – lists the Post, District, and Department Deadlines.

Option under the "Resources" tab (primarily for Veterans): Member-specific resources are in the Members-only portal)

Color Guard/Honor Guard – The Public can request the Department Color Guard or Honor Guard or find out how to join the Team!

Department Guides, Bylaws, and Other Rules – This page includes the National and Department of Alabama Bylaws, The Department Commander's Guide, and Alabama Canteen Rules.

Student Veterans of America – This page describes various scholarships and grant opportunities for student Veterans.

Veterans' Affairs Resources – Rotating videos from the Department of Veterans Affairs YouTube channel theSITREP.

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs– Alabama State VA Resources is a valuable resource!

Veteran Discounts – A listing of veterans' discounts in the general community (PERKSPOT).

Website Guide – A guide to this website and how to do programs online.

Webmaster Support – External link that serves as a help ticket.

Options under the "News" tab:

Podcast – The monthly/weekly National VFW podcast is shown here.

News – This page shows National and Department of Alabama news items. This item filters DOWN to subordinate units.

Calendar – This page shows the current and future Posts and district, Department, and National events calendars.

Under the "Contact" menu:

You will see the Department phone number and office hours and complete a form to email to the Department Headquarters. There is a separate email for Webmaster support. You can also change your address in the database from a form in this menu.

Under the "Login" menu:

Members Only – This section contains information specifically for VFW members, Post Officers, District Officers, and Department Officers. In the log-in section, your username is your VFW member number. Your default password is your last name (only the first letter capitalized) with no spaces, hyphens, or other special characters.

Items Included in Members Only:

General Orders – This page links the Current and previous Department of Alabama General Orders.

Department Conference or Convention

Council of Administration Minutes – Minutes COA Meetings and Conventions.

Department Communications – Special Communications from the Department Commander.

Department Forms

Department Inspector

School of Instruction Presentations

VFW AL Member Store

VFW Bylaws, Forms, and Training (Includes National General Orders and other notices, and program guides and fact sheets).

Dashboard – Visual depiction of Post and District Good Standing and Program Reporting.

Program Reports – The Department of Alabama VFW required reports.

Post and District Roster – *Coming Soon*

As an aside:

You ONLY need to use the Login menu when you want to use the "Members Only" option. There is no need to log in to use any other option on the website.

Webmail is for Post and District-level elected Officers.

Only the webmasters and Committee Chairs with managed pages or reports can use "Site Admin."

Program Reports

The Program Reports Tool is a feature built by the National Webmasters as a tool to automate reporting at the Department level. Program reports collect and aggregate reporting data for transparency across the Department of Alabama and are configured to meet the program requirements of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Current Reporting Options:

Community Service * (Required after each activity / No less than Quarterly for All-American/All-State consideration).

Legislative Advocacy (Not currently required for All-American or All-State Consideration)

Veterans Assistance (Post Service Officer, Surgeon, and Chaplains - Monthly)

Youth Development (Youth Programs Chair – Annually)

Veterans and Military Assistance (VMS Chair -- Monthly)

* The only report that feeds directly to the VFW.org All-American Dashboard is the **Community Service report.**

The Post, District, and Email Address should self-populate based on your login. Make sure it is correct.

Make sure YOUR email address appears in the Submitter Email field.

The Date of Activity is when *the service was performed* – **Not the Date Submitted**.

Community Service

Post members should ONLY enter Community Service reports *after a vote of the members to conduct said activities.* Chairs or Officers should enter the other report types.

Select a Program*

- ○ Community Service
- ○ Youth Development
- ○ Legislative Advocacy
- ○ VMS
- ○ Veterans Assistance

After selecting Community Service, you must select an activity within that program. Choose the best descriptor for the service you service you completed.

Select an Activity*

- ○ Americanism
- ○ Blood Donations
- ○ Community Activities Program
- ○ Disaster Relief
- ○ Flag Etiquette
- ○ Honor Guard
- ○ Memorial Service
- ○ Public Servant Recognition (LE, FF, EMT)
- ○ Safety Program Activities
- ○ National Night Out
- ○ Wreaths Across America
- ○ Other

Americanism – Any activity that promotes pride and patriotism in the community, including talking to students or non-member citizens in classrooms, fairs, or festivals.

Blood Donations – organizing or participating in blood, platelet, or plasma drives (see Department Surgeon for more information about VFWAL-sponsored events).

Community Activities Programs – Active participation in community-organized events (parades, tree-lightings, or planning meetings).

Disaster Relief – Service or cash donation to assist with hurricanes, tornados, droughts, or other declared disasters. Disaster Relief Support - VFW

Flag Etiquette – https://www.vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette

Honor Guard – Post, Department Honor Guard, or Color Guard activities outside the VFW.

Memorial Service – Activities beyond attendance at a memorial service.

Public Servant Recognition (LE, GFF, EMT) – The activities of recognizing public service in the community beyond awards recognition.

Safety Program Activities – Any activity promoting public safety outside of the Post.

National Night Out – Activities related to the National Night Out or similar local programs. See National Night Out (natw.org).

Wreath Across America – Activities related to Wreaths Across America or similar local programs. See https://wreathsacrossamerica.org/

Other – Any other activity unrelated to directly supporting the VFW.

Cumulative Hours*	Miles*	Members*
o	o	o
Auxiliary Members*	Number of Veterans Helped*	Dollars Spent/Donated*
o	o	o

For **all** reports, enter the cumulative number of hours performed by all participants (unless you report individual participation). A designated officer should enter post-wide activities on behalf of the Post.

Enter the **TOTAL NUMBER OF MILES TRAVELED** by all participants.

Enter the number of VFW member participants.
Enter the number of Auxiliary participants if applicable.
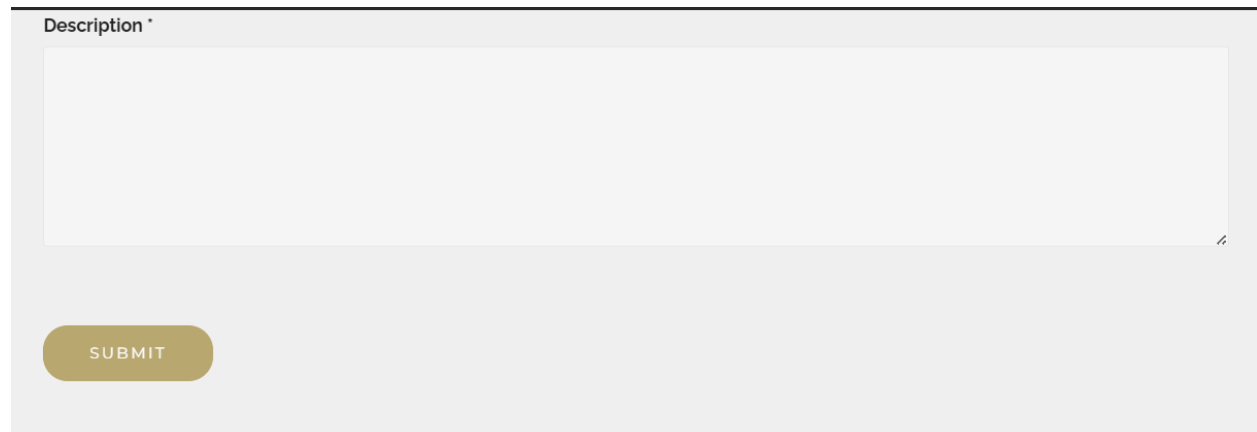
Enter the number of Veterans helped if applicable.

Enter the **TOTAL <u>CASH</u> DOLLARS SPENT/DONATED**.

The total value of service is based on $0.14 per mile driven in support of the service IAW IRS Release 2023-239; further, the value of community service is based on the average wage of private industry as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and calculated in by "Independent Sector" periodically. The value of Dollars Spent/Donated is based on charitable contributions earned from non-profit fundraising accounts (Post/District).

The **Description** is vital to the approval of the report. It must include What, Where, and How the service was performed in sufficient detail for the approver to understand the value of the service. The IRS may use this information to determine the Non-Profit Tax Status of the Post, District, or Department.

Example: Twelve members of the Post traveled to a community in need of revitalization. The members picked up trash, mowed lawns, and delivered groceries to needy individuals.

Description *

[text field   ]

SUBMIT

* It is important to note that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States does not claim as Community Service any service that it is chartered to perform or that an Individual would do as a matter of religious calling (see the VFW Programs Guide). These activities may be reported under another applicable Program Report. Buddy Poppy, Recruiting Drives, Youth Programs, Veterans Assistance, and Troop Support are not considered community service.

Reports other than Community Service

Legislative Advocacy

This includes work by individuals in letter writing, meetings, or lawful events to meet the VFW legislative agenda, such as participating in a Call to Action by the VFW Action Corps. The activities can be local, state, national, or other. For more information on Legislative programs, visit the Legislative page or call the VFW Department of Alabama Legislative Committee Chair.

Select an Activity*

○ Local

○ State

○ National

○ Other

Veterans Assistance

Veterans Assistance activities are *NOT* Community Service activities. They are what the Posts should always be doing. It is the Heart of our Programs—Helping Veterans and their families with our core programs. These reports are reportable to the Department AND the National. Recruiting and Buddy Poppy drive fall into this category. Post and District Chaplains, Services Officers, Membership Chairs, or Elected Officers should complete these reports (**Monthly**). The Department Adjutant or authorized agent approves them.

Select an Activity*

○ Chaplain Services

○ Claims & Benefits assistance (PSO)

○ Unmet Needs/Relief

○ Buddy Visits

○ Homeless Vets Support

○ Hospital

○ Information Booth

○ National Home Support

○ Sport Clips Scholarship Submission

○ Stand Down Participation

○ VFW Mental Wellness

○ Well Check Phone Calls

○ Other

Youth Development

Youth development is a chartered program *NOT* considered Community Service. This includes the VFW awards of Patriot Pen, Voice of Democracy, Teacher of the Year, etc. See the Programs Pages or contact the Programs Chair for more information on these programs.

For non-program related youth activities. Use the Community Service Report under Americanism, Flag Etiquette, and define the service in the Description field.

Select an Activity*

- ○ JROTC, USNSCC, CAP, Etc.
- ○ Patriot's Pen
- ○ Student Scholarships
- ○ Teacher of the Year
- ○ Voice of Democracy
- ○ Other

Veteran and Military Support (VMS)

The final program is Veteran and Military Service. It covers two activities: The Adopt-a-Unit program and the Military Assistance Program. For more information on these programs, see the Program Page or contact the Department VMS Chair. The Post Adjutant submits these reports quarterly or as needed.

Select an Activity*

- ○ Adopt-a-unit
- ○ Veterans & Military Support (MAP)

Dashboard

The Department of Alabama VFW Dashboard is a tool that helps Post and District Leadership view requirements and compliance with:

Good Standing Requirements – Compliance with State and National Laws or the National Bylaws.

Program Reports – As required by the VFW Commander-in-Chief and Department Commander.

All-State Requirements – As the Department Commander requires (see Leader Guide).

Three reports update the contents of the Dashboard.

Good Standing Report (Completed by the Department of Alabama VFW Headquarters); or

All-State Report (Completed by the Department Elected and Appointed Officers); or

Programs Reports (Completed by the Post and District membership and Approved by the Department Adjutant).

The Department Adjutant and Webmaster input the Membership columns based on a monthly MEMSTATS report [*eventually, this report will pull data in real-time from National Headquarters*].

The **Post Requirements columns** are inputted by the Department of Alabama Headquarters based on submissions from District Commanders, Department Chairs, or other elected/appointed officers. This records compliance with IRS, state, or national law, rules, or procedures to maintain Good Standing accountability.

The **Program Participation Points column** records points awarded to program participation per the Leaders Guide. Only Posts meeting All-American requirements under the All-American Dashboard will see points under the current policy in this column.

The **reporting columns mirror the program reports' categories: community service, legislative advocacy, youth development, veterans assistance**, and VMS. The numbers in each column represent the number of approved reports for that Post/District in that row. The Field turns green when the minimum number of reports have been submitted per the Department of Alabama All-State requirements in the Leader Guide.

If your post is missing data in any column, verify that information with the Department Adjutant.

Enter the District number or select Post and search for your Post number to refine your search. You may need to select the Fiscal Year (FY) for the records you are searching.

The number in the far-right columns is the number of reports entered. The numbers are selectable.

Location		Starting	Current	Percent	IRS 990's	Inspection	Required	Ordered	District Meetings	Community Service	Legislative Advocacy	Youth Development	Veterans Assistance
15001		1,977	1,718	86.89%		1	5931	0	N/N/N/N	0	0	0	0
District 1		1,690	1,540	91.12%	2023	1	5070	0	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	0
2214	Howard F. Paddock Post	250	197	78.8%	2023	0	750	1000	Y/Y/N/N	1	0	1	0
2702	Gentry-Isom Post	435	412	94.71%	2023	1	1305	1500	Y/Y/N/N	1	2	0	0
4190	Lanier-Hine Post	343	315	91.83%	2023	1	1029	0	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	0
4543	Hayes-Pannell Post	48	43	89.58%	2023	1	500	0	Y/Y/N/N	5	1	3	3
4765	Lakin Garth Post	194	173	89.17%	2023	0	582	1000	Y/Y/N/N	15	2	0	10
5140	Post 5140 Florence Post	35	30	85.71%	2023	1	500	0	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	1
5162	Post 5162 Joyce M. Helson Post	191	204	106.8%	2023	0	573	1000	Y/Y/N/N	5	0	0	1
5184	Post 5184 Kelley-Dickinson Post	22	19	86.36%		1	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	3	3	2	2
5846	Post 5846 East Lauderdale Memorial Post	39	31	79.48%	2023	1	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	7	0	3	1
8362	Post 8362 Town Creek Memorial Post	25	23	92%		1	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	0
8640	Post 8640 Long-Hodges-Lowe Post	48	46	95.83%		1	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	1	0	0	0
10774	William Robinson Post	60	47	78.33%		1	500	0	Y/N/N/N	2	0	0	0
District 2		1,326	1,169	88.15%	2023	1	3978	0	Y/Y/Y/N	0	0	0	0
2760	Post 2760 Whorton-Dykes Post	182	136	74.72%	2023	1	546	0	Y/Y/Y/N	0	0	0	0
3128	Dekalb County VFW Post 3128	278	251	90.28%	2023	1	834	1000	Y/Y/Y/N	34	9	4	13
6073	VFW Post 6073	240	201	83.75%	2023	1	720	1000	Y/Y/Y/N	8	4	1	20
6226	Post 6226 Arab Post	108	76	70.37%	2023	1	500	500	Y/Y/Y/N	14	0	4	5
6837	Jimmy Harris VFW Post 6837	347	348	100.28%	2023	0	1041	1500	Y/Y/Y/N	60	8	10	30
8600	Post 8600 Wilson Parris Post	108	99	91.66%	2023	1	500	0	Y/N/Y/N	2	0	2	2
10408	Post 10408 Crawford Abel Post	63	58	92.06%	2023	1	500	500	Y/Y/Y/N	1	0	0	0
District 3		947	802	84.68%	2023	0	2841	0	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	0
668	Kelly Ingram Post	293	279	95.22%	2023	0	879	1000	Y/Y/Y/N	0	0	0	0
1762	Post 1762 Bailey Rogers Post	71	54	76.05%		0	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	15	0	0	4
3229	Post 3229 Springville Post	27	24	88.88%	2023	0	500	0	Y/Y/N/N	3	0	0	0
4850	Post 4850 Marvin Lee Ferguson Post	152	136	89.47%		0	500	0	Y/Y/N/N	5	0	0	1
5406	Post 5406 James Black-Nichols Brothers Post	69	62	89.85%	2023	0	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	8	0	0	0
6173	Post 6173 Brookside Memorial Post	155	96	61.93%		0	500	0	N/Y/Y/N	0	0	0	0
6652	Post 6652 Ragland Post	46	43	93.47%		0	500	0	Y/Y/N/N	0	0	0	0
12185	Lance Corporal Rivers Memorial Post	134	108	80.59%	2023	0	500	500	Y/Y/N/N	3	0	0	0

Second table:

Location		Starting	Current	Percent	IRS 990's	Inspection	Required	Ordered	District Meetings	Community Service	Legislative Advocacy	Youth Development	Veterans Assistance
6683	John Wiley Brock VFW Post	285	293	102.8%	2023	1	855	1000	Y/Y/Y/N	13	3	1	11

After selecting the number in the Community Service column, a pop-up window with a summary of all the reports is displayed and may be printed (CTRL+P).

Good Standing

Good Standing is defined in the [Commander's Leaders Guide](#) under the non-negotiables (page 17).

- Quarterly Audit Reports (submitted before the last day of the month following the Quarter: **30 October, 30 January, 30 April, and 30 June**) *

- Quartermaster Bond submitted to the Department HQ **NLT 1 September**. *

- IRS 990/990N (or an extension) submitted to IRS and Department NLT 15 Day of the fifth month of the VFW FY (**15 November**) * Note: Extensions are only granted until **May 15** by the IRS.

- Election Reports submitted electronically in OMS by the Adjutant on the effective date of the election (date Officer(s) takes office). *

- Satisfactory Inspection Reports are due to the Department **NLT 31 December**.

- All District, Department, and National Dues and Delegate Fees must be paid on time. All **arrearages must be paid before the Department Convention on 7 June 2024.**

- Post-level officer attendance at Conventions, School of Instruction, and District Meetings. *

- A true and accurate Deed or Mortgage must be on file at the Department.

- Canteens must submit a copy of the current Liquor License and Plan of Profitability.

- The Department Adjutant must review all external business contracts.

* Reported by email to ALVFW@yahoo.com and the District Commander. These items are tracked on the Department All-State Dashboard.

All-State Requirements (2024)

To be considered for All-State in the Department of Alabama VFW, **Posts** must be eligible for All-American in the current Fiscal Year, meet all the Good-Standing requirements, and achieve all requirements and earn 180 of the 253 possible points as indicated on Page 20 of the [Commander's Leader Guide](#). District Commanders must achieve one hundred (100) points, and the requirements are on pages 20 and 21.