

*DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO*  
*LEADERSHIP MANUAL*



**BRIAN RAVAK**

**STATE COMMANDER**

**2024-2025**

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**ATTENTION: ALL POST AND DISTRICT  
COMMANDERS:**

**IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT YOU  
SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR  
POST AND DISTRICT QUARTERMASTER,  
ADJUTANT AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEM  
AND ALL POST MEMBERS AT YOUR  
MEETING**

**DEPARTMENT OF NEW MEXICO  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES**

1. Having been elected Commander of the Department of New Mexico, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, I, Brian Ravak, VFW Post 6917, Las Cruces NM hereby assume command on June 2, 2024.
2. All previous appointments having expired are declared null and void.
3. All Commanders are reminded that elected officials are to be bonded by the Accountable Officer Bond. (See Section 703 below) These bonds only cover the individuals holding that position. The forms are at [www.vfwnm.org](http://www.vfwnm.org) under Resources-Reports & Forms.

➤ Section 703 of the By-Laws state, “Each officer accountable for funds or property pursuant to any provision of these By-Laws shall be bonded with an indemnity company as surety in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which, so far as can be anticipated, they may be accountable. The bond premium shall be paid from the funds of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department, District, County Council or Post, as the case may be, to which each officer is accountable.

➤ The bonds of such accountable officers, in amount and as to surety, shall be approved by their respective units and held by their respective Commanders. The Commander of each unit shall be responsible for the proper and adequate bonding of all accountable officers in their unit.”

Therefore, if a Commander or any other elected officer handles funds for the VFW they must be bonded. This includes checks, credit and/or debit cards.

It is **STRONGLY** encouraged that any and all personnel handling any sort of funds for the Post should be bonded, regardless if the person is a member of VFW, VFWA or an employee. To bond these positions, you will use the Application for Canteen and Gaming Employees.

All units choosing to obtain the required bond from other than the Department of New Mexico will forward a copy of said bond to the Department Quartermaster upon receipt. Commanders are reminded that current bonds obtained through the Department expire on August 31, 2024. Please contact Headquarters if you have any questions.

4. Post Commanders are reminded that Section 709 of the National By-Laws require that any Post owning or operating a Canteen or Clubroom or other facility must maintain general and liquor liability insurance and must name as additional insured, the ***Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.*** and the ***Department of New Mexico.*** The State and Deputy Inspectors will verify this requirement is met.
5. Commanders, Senior Vice Commanders and Junior Vice Commanders of each District are appointed Deputy Inspectors and will ensure each Post within their respective District is inspected and reported properly to the State Inspector not later than December 31, 2024. Posts will not be considered inspected until the Inspecting Officer’s report is accepted by the State Inspector. Completed and signed Inspection Reports are to be sent to the Department Inspector, R.E. Bartosiewicz, Post 3280, his contact information is in your Directory.
6. Post and District Commanders are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring a copy of the completed Election Report is provided to both National and Department Headquarters. Posts and

Districts are considered not in good standing until the completed and full 2024-2025 Election Report is received by National Headquarters. Failure to comply in a timely fashion could result in suspension of the Post or District Charter. Posts are encouraged to file the Election Report online through OMS @ [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org). If not filed online, copies must be sent to Department.

7. Commanders are reminded that the regulation VFW cap is the only acceptable headgear at all VFW meetings. Baseball type caps, doo-rags, berets and western style hats will not be worn at VFW meetings per Section 803 of the National By-Laws.

**8. Post Commanders are reminded that the consumption, presence or dispensing of alcoholic beverages in the meeting room during any VFW meeting is prohibited.** Club Rooms, Canteens and Gaming Rooms, to include Pull Tab machines, do not have to be closed during VFW Post, District and Department meetings or training sessions. **So long as the meeting is not held in the Canteen proper or prohibited by Post/District By-Laws or Post Rules.** (You are the reflection of the Department of New Mexico; Officers WILL NOT hold any meeting visibly intoxicated)

9. Posts with a gross income of \$50,000 or more, including all dues collected, bingo or gaming funds, and canteen funds, must file with the Internal Revenue Service a Form 990 or 990-T where applicable. Posts and Districts with gross income of less than \$50,000 are now required to file IRS Form 990-N (E-Postcard). **This form can only be filed by online at [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov).** Failure to file may result in fines, penalties or loss of not-for profit status.

10. The Roster published by the Department of New Mexico is considered confidential and will not be made, under any circumstances available for public, commercial or political use.

11. Commanders are reminded that the National By-Laws provide for only one type of membership – Active VFW Membership as authorized through either an annual dues card or a Life Member Card. There is no provision in the By-Laws, nor is there any authority for issuance of Club, Associate, Honorary, Courtesy, or any other special type cards. Any Post issuing such unauthorized cards, or conducting club operations open to the general public are in violation of State liquor laws (Title 15 Chapter 10); therefore prohibited. Any Post within the Department of New Mexico signing such unauthorized membership cards are subject to disciplinary action.

12. The 125<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Louisville, KY is scheduled for July 27-Aug 1, 2024, in-person. REMINDER: At least one Post delegate fee is required for this event and are paid through OMS.

13. District and Post Commanders are reminded that Section 218 of the Manual of Procedure requires the Trustees prepare a Trustees Report of Audit in detail at the close of each quarter. The current quarter will end June 30, 2024 and must be submitted not later than July 31, 2024.

14. If the Post/District/Department has a function on Friday, the preferred attire will be a red shirt. This is to promote Red Shirt Friday. Remember all that are deployed.

15. The addresses for the Department of New Mexico Headquarters are.

Mailing:	Shipping
VFW Department of New Mexico	UPS Shipping/Freight:
PO Box 1084	VFW Department of New Mexico
Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346	123 Via Golondrina
Glencoe, NM 88324	

16. All checks received by the Department Quartermaster and returned for “Insufficient Funds” will incur a service charge of \$35.00 plus any bank charges. Repayment of returned checks will be in the form of cash, money order, or a bank Cashier’s Check.

17. The State Commander hereby directs that any smoking, including vaping, and use of other tobacco products is prohibited during Post/District/Department meetings, training sessions and banquets.

18. The State Commander has established the following dress code for Department meetings and sponsored functions. The desired style of dress will be published or announced prior to each function by the current State Commander.

- Business Dress: Suit or slacks with blazer type jacket, shirt, tie (including bolo tie); female VFW members may wear similar appropriate attire
- Business Casual: Slacks or “Dockers” style pants with polo style shirt
- Casual: Traveling clothes, including jeans.
- If you are receiving an award at the National Convention, the attire is Business Dress, on election day it is Business Dress for Department Officers due to New Mexico parading with the Incoming National Commander, all others are Business Casual.

19. District Commanders are reminded that, in addition to the Annual District Convention, Section 403 of the Manual of Procedure requires each District shall hold at least two (2) regular meeting each year for the purpose of transacting business and conducting school of instructions. It further states each District shall hold an annual District Convention for the purpose of electing District officers and for the transaction of business. **Therefore, per by-laws you will hold a total of 3 District meetings per year.** The last one of the three should be the District Conference. Please refer to Section 403 of the National By-Laws to ensure you have your dates in line with the Department Convention.

20. Post Commanders will ensure that the “Post Registered Agent” is the Post Quartermaster. Anyone else serving as the “Post Registered Agent” is in direct violation of the National By-Laws.

21. Post Commanders are reminded that, with any change to the top 3 Post Officers, the appropriate changes must be made with NM Alcohol and Gaming and the State Gaming Control Board, the NM Secretary of State as well as Department and National Headquarters. By not submitting these changes, the Post is in violation of State Laws and jeopardizes both alcohol and gaming licenses. This could result in a fine or termination of your license.

22. District and Post Commanders are reminded that no member in good standing will be deprived of the right to make an audible recording of any and all proceedings as long as the member has notified the conducting officer of the member’s intention to record the proceedings.

**23.** It is the desire of the State Commander that all Posts work in tandem with its Auxiliary to promote and support harmony and teamwork between both organizations. VFW members should not forget, nor take for granted, all the hard work and effort Auxiliary members put forth on behalf of the Post as well as its District, and the Department of New Mexico as a whole. Disrespect of any member of the Auxiliary by any member of the VFW will not be tolerated.

**24.** It is the desire of the State Commander that all Districts and Posts to keep the following in mind when answering any question.

➤ It is good for the Post/District/Department?

➤ Is it good for the Order?

The Department is not here to settle disputes of petty jealousy or canteen issues. Keep it at the lowest level possible.

**25.** The Department of New Mexico will hold its annual training at the following locations:

➤ Northern areas; TBA.

a. Joint Training will be from 9-12, Lunch from 12-1pm with VFW training to follow

➤ Southern Areas; TBA

a. Joint Training will be from 9-12, Lunch from 12-1pm with VFW training to follow

**26.** The Fall Conference will be at 10:00 AM, September 14, 2024 at Post 6917, Las Cruces. The uniform will be “Business Dress.” for officers and Casual for all others. Roll Call of District/Post Commanders will be taken for All-State eligibility.

**27.** State Commander’s Homecoming will be held on September 14, 2024, following the Fall Conference.

**28.** All Post Commanders will ensure that at least one copy of the 2025 Podium Edition of the National By- Laws is ordered from VFW Emblem Supply as soon as possible. Emblem Supply will ship copies upon publication. It is recommended sufficient copies be ordered to provide all line officers with the current edition. It is also recommended that all members be offered the opportunity to obtain a copy of the Podium Edition if desired. All previous editions are considered obsolete upon publication of the 2025 Podium Edition. All Post Commanders will encourage their Service Officers to have a copy of the Servicer Officer Book and be present at your Post meeting. The SVC Officer book is available for download from OMS.

**29.** The 2024-2025 Voice of Democracy Theme is ***“Is America Today Our Forefathers’ Vision?”***. The Voice of Democracy entries are due at the Post by October 31, 2024. Post winners will be forwarded to their respective District Chairman not later than November 26, 2024. District First place winners will be forwarded to Gary Logsdon, Post 2951 Santa Fe. Entries must arrive at the State Chairman’s home address, listed under Appointments; no later than midnight, Friday, December 15, 2024. State Judging will start on or about December 16, 2024.

**30.** The 2024-2025 Patriot's Pen Theme is *"My Voice in America's Democracy?"* Patriot's Pen Essay entries are due at the Post by October 31, 2024. Post winners will be forwarded to their respective District Chairman not later than November 26, 2024. District First place winners will be forwarded to Gary Logsdon, Post 2951 Santa Fe. Entries must arrive at the State Chairman's home address, listed under Appointments; no later than midnight, Friday, December 15, 2024. State Judging will start on or about December 16, 2024.

**31.** The 2024-2025 Teacher nominations are due to the Post by October 31, 2024. Post winners will be forwarded to their respective District Chairman not later than November 26, 2024. District First place winners will be forwarded to Gary Logsdon, Post 2951 Santa Fe. Entries must arrive at the State Chairman's home address, listed under Appointments; no later than midnight, Friday, December 15, 2024. State Judging will start on or about December 16, 2024.

➤ **NOTE: All Entry, Judging, and Post/District Reporting forms are located at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) under Member Resources-Training & Support- Community Service, Scholarships & Awards or at [www.vfwnm.org](http://www.vfwnm.org) under Programs.**

**32.** Now is the time to start preparing for Buddy Poppy Program Campaigns. There are two styles of poppy's available. The "Legacy" poppy, which is what we were used to ordering and the Tin poppy. Both order forms are located at [www.vfwnm.org](http://www.vfwnm.org) under Programs-Buddy Poppy. Buddy Poppy orders MUST be ordered through the Department. Remember, there is a 6-8-week order time, sometimes longer so prepare early!

**33.** The State Commander's Membership Program and All-State requirements can be reviewed on the Department of New Mexico web site at [www.vfwnm.org](http://www.vfwnm.org) under Programs; and/or under the appropriate tab in this Leadership Manual.

**34.** The State Commander's All-State Program can be reviewed on the Department's website at [www.nmvfw.org](http://www.nmvfw.org) under the Programs tab; and/or under the appropriate tab in this Leadership Manual. The Compliance report/dashboard will show the progress for this program. If you have any questions, please contact Department HQ.

**35.** VFW is a volunteer duty (no pay for your work), but I will hold each Line Officer's accountability for their duties.

**36.** The following appointments for the 2024-2025 term are hereby announced.

## **2024-2025 VFW Department of New Mexico Appointments**

### **Council of Administration and Department Employees**

**Adjutant/Quartermaster** – David Fouse; Post 7686

**Assistant Adjutant** – Victoria "Tori" Haddox: Post 5890

**Chief of Staff** – Kathy Schiebel: Post 6917

**Deputy Chief of Staff** – Ralph E. Myers: Post 6917

**Inspector** – R.E. “Bart” Bartosiewicz: Post 3280

**Assistant Inspectors** – District Commanders or District Inspectors

**Judge Advocate** – BJ Lawrence: Post 7686

**Secretary** – Kelly Fouse: Aux Post 7686

**Surgeon** – Mark Bowman: Post 3274

**Veteran Service Officer** – Louis Rossi: Post 5890

**Veteran’s Claims Consultant** – Kaitlin Jaramillo

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## **Committee Chairmans**

**Auxiliary Liaison** – Beth Miller: Aux Post 6917

**Bataan Memorial Chairman** – Len Hampton: Post 6917

**Buddy Poppy Chairman** – Clay LaMaire: Post 3221

### **Budget Committee**

Brian Ravak: Post 6917

Dave Fouse: Post 7686

BJ Lawrence: Post 7686

Jim Haddox: Post 5890

Gary Logsdon: Post 2951

Mack Dyer: Post 3274

**By-Laws Committee Chairman** – Mark Decker; Post 9517

### **By-Laws Committee**

Cathy Brock: Post 3274

Rel Melon; Post 10124

Jim Berdine; Post 10763

**Citizenship/Americanism** – Kevin James; Post 10763

**Community Activity Chairman** – Jason Burke: Post 12212

**Homeless Veteran Chairman** – Len Hampton: Post 6917

### **Facebook Admin**

Rel Melon; Post 10124

Victoria “Tori” Haddox; Post 5890

Len Hampton: Post 6917

Brian Ravak; Post 6917



**Hospital Chairman** – Don Frias; Post 401

**Immediate Past State Commander** – Victoria “Tori” Haddox; Post 5890

**Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans Chairman** – Jason Burke; Post 12184

**Legislative Chairman** – Jim Haddox; Post 5890

**State Legislative Chairman** – Mack Dyer; Post 12184

**State Legislative Members** – District Commanders or Legislative Reps

**Life and Legacy Life Member Chairman** – Mary Tutza; Post 6917

**Loyalty Day Chairman** – Danny Cruz; Post 1547

**Membership Chairman** – Mark Decker; Post 9517

**Membership Deputy Chairman** – Greg Cranmer; Post 6917

**Membership Committee** – District Commanders or District Membership Chairmans

**MOC/MOCA Liaison** – MOC Grand Commander Don Frias; Post 401

**National Home Chairman** – Gary Logsdon; Post 2951

**Newspaper Editor** – Mark Decker; Post 9517

**Newspaper Coordinator** – Betty Decker; Aux Post 614

**NM Gaming/Liquor Liaison** – R.E. “Bart” Bartosiewicz; Post 3280

**Officer of Day** – Greg Cranmer; Post 6917

**Parliamentarian** – Victoria “Tori” Haddox; Post 5890

**Patriot's Pen** – Gary Logsdon; Post 2951

**Photographer** – Darrel “Rel” Melon; Post 10124

**POW/MIA Chairman** – Mark Bowman; Post 3274

**Public Relations Officer** – BJ Lawrence; Post 7686

**Safety Chairman** – Paul Golden; Post; 5890

**Scouting Chairman** – Terry Brown; Post 5432

**Special Project Chairman** – TBD

**Student Veterans Association Chairman** – Vacant

Jennifer Ray; Aux Post 3370

**Teacher's Award** – Gary Logsdon; Post 2951

**Time and Place Committee** – BJ Lawrence; Post 7686

Jim Haddox; Post 5890

Gary Logsdon; Post 2951

Mack Dyer; Post 12184

Beth Miller; Aux Post 6917

**Trustees**

Vernon Luce; Post 3280

Paul Golden; Post 5890

Raul Sanchez; Post 6917

**Trustee Alternates**

Kathy Schiebel; Post 6917

R.E. "Bart" Bartosiewicz; Post 3280

Len Hampton; Post 6917

**VAVS Rep Albuquerque** – Don Frias; Post 401

**VAVS Rep Amarillo/Lubbock** – Dale Huft; Post

**VAVS Rep Deputy** – Chris Archuleta; Post 5610

**Veteran-of-the-Year** - Christopher Archuleta, Post 5610

**VMS** – Mark Bowman; Post 3274

**Veterans Service Committee**

Brian Ravak; Post 6917

Victoria "Tori" Haddox; Post 5890

Chris Archuleta; Post 5610

Mark Decker; Post 9517

**VFW Riders Liaison** – Tom Lairson; Post 8703

**Voice of Democracy** – Gary Logsdon; Post 2951

**Ways and Means Committee**

Dave Fouse; Post 7686

BJ Lawrence; Post 7686

Mack Dyer; Post 12184

**Website Manager** – Len Hampton; Post 6917

**Youth Activity Chairman** – Justin "Slick" Knapp; Post 2528

By Order of:



Brian Ravak, Commander  
Department of New Mexico  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Official:



David Fouse, Adjutant  
Department of New Mexico  
Veterans of Foreign Wars