

The American Legion Department of Michigan



2024 – 2029 MEMBERSHIP PLAN

YOUR GUIDE TO SUCCESS & REWARDS

Every Post in the Department should have a “Membership Plan”

There are two Types of Plans:

PASSIVE PLAN – Relying on the direct renewals to get our members and hoping new members find us.

ACTIVE PLAN – A Plan that calls for “Membership Teams” to make personal contact with our members to renew and reaches out to eligible veterans in our community. A plan that calls for “Action” and gets results!!

We, as Legionnaires, must take a look at what type of plan we have had for MEMBERSHIP in the past. Keep the things that have worked and try new things to build for the future! The Department Membership Awards Program can provide the rewards for the Posts and Legionnaires that make an “Action” plan and work that plan.

Membership Teams are a key part of any successful “Action” plan!

Membership Teams are needed at every level!!

A group of Legionnaires that will:

RECRUIT - We must make every effort to reach all veterans that qualify for this great organization. Recruiting drives and simply asking our friends, our family, and all veterans to join us, as members of The American Legion.

RETAIN - Veterans join The American Legion with the intention of remaining a member, because they believe in what the organization stands for; *Personal contact is the key* to renewing all your Post members, just ask them to renew.

RE-NEWAL - We must keep our new members interested in what we do and who we are. Give them some responsibility to help out in their Post. How many members would renew if we “just asked” them? They joined because they believed in our mission. So why haven’t they renewed? Care enough to ask them and help them work through whatever that problem may be. There is **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS** --- and we need them.

MEMBERSHIP PLAN 2024 – 2029

The Department Membership Awards program can provide the rewards for the Posts, Districts and Zones that make those personal contacts and give that extra effort to keep our organization strong.

The Department can assist you at all levels in forming your membership plan and can provide training for your membership teams. Now is the time to take that first step!

OVERVIEW:

Increasing membership is the goal of any organization, to accomplish this; the Department of Michigan will begin a 5-year plan consisting of four main elements:

Education of the general Legion membership and the community at large of The American Legion's purpose and programs.

Increase use of public relations exposure through social media, the television, radio, and print media and to the government at all levels.

Target training of selected Legion leadership in membership training, public relations, sales techniques, and Legion administrative requirements, then utilizing these Legionnaires as trainers from the Department through Post level.

Creation and publication of job descriptions, training aids, media guides and award categories for distribution to membership.

FIRST YEAR:

Appoint a membership team, create job descriptions, develop training aids and guides, and begin training of team. Provide continual analysis and update plan as needed.

Membership Team Job Descriptions

The "Department Membership Team" will consist of the Department Commander, Department 1st Vice Commander (Dept. Membership Director), Department Adjutant, the five appointed Membership Committee members, the five Zone Commanders, the Training Committee Chairman, Post Development Chairman, and the DMS Coordinator

The Department Commander will be responsible for:

Appointing The Membership and Post Activities Committee, the Sub-Committee Chairman, Training Committee Chairman, the DMS Coordinator, and the Post Development Chairman; overseeing of the membership training program and the membership program.

The Membership Committee will be responsible for:

Setting the membership goals for the Districts and all Posts; creation/revising of an awards/incentive program each year.

The Department Legion and SAL Membership Coordinator (Deanna) will be responsible for:

Assisting with processing of Post transmittals, providing weekly membership reports (National and Department) to the Post, District, and Department Membership Committee, ordering of the awards/incentives, and distribution of information from National and Department, and any other duties as directed by the Department Adjutant.

The Membership Director will be responsible for:

Development and delivery of the membership training program, assist with the writing/revising of an awards/incentives program, distribution of information from National and Department, and any other duties as assigned by the Department Commander.

The Training Committee will be responsible for:

Development of a training program covering Leadership Development, Membership, and all Programs of The American Legion; distribution to team members any new program or training information received from the National or Department. This Individual must be knowledgeable in all The American Legion Programs.

The Zone Commanders will be responsible for:

Setting up training, sending out information and follow-ups for their Districts. The Zone Commanders will assist the Districts with membership drives and perform performance analysis of each District and assist any District that needs help and shall assemble a report to be presented to the 1st Vice Commander each quarter.

The District Commanders, the District 1st Vice Commanders and/or Membership Chairman will be responsible for:

Delivery of training, information, and follow-ups for Posts in their District. The District Membership Chairmen will assist Posts with membership, coordinate membership drives, perform performance analysis of Post, and assist any Post that needs help.

The Post Development Chairman will be responsible for:

Identifying potential areas for new post, revitalization projects in each district including growth potential estimates for all posts utilizing available information from State, County, and VA

reports of veterans in the area, and to follow-up with newly created posts identifying any needs and training the new Post requires.

Each Post will appoint a Post Membership Chairman who will be responsible for: Training, information, membership drives, performs Post analysis and follow-up for their Post.

Training Aids

The Training Committee Chairman will develop training aids - utilizing available information from the National and Department organization, other veteran, and nonveteran organizations, Government and private sector agencies. These aids will be available to the Department Membership Team for training and distribution to each level.

Team Training

Team training will begin with a 1- or 2-hour training session, to be held at the Department Fall Conference and the Winter Meeting, and at other prescribed times, followed up by more training sessions for the Membership Committee members.

A "Membership Training Manual" will be completed each year and distributed to all members of the Membership Team and Post Membership Chairman with more training on membership fundamentals.

The current year membership theme will be discussed early each year. A team uniform or pin, and a theme will be selected for that year.

Follow-up at each level will be on a regular basis and each District Commander is expected to conduct a membership workshop in their district and each Post is encouraged to conduct a workshop within their Post.

The Department 1st Vice Commander and the Zone Commanders will check with each District Commander a minimum of once a month to get status update of programs and membership, offer encouragement and assistance, review plan for needed changes, assess if any additional training is needed.

Each District Commander shall check with each Post Commander or Membership Chairman in their District every month.

Each member of the membership team will keep a log and develop a package to assist whoever replaces the team member the following year. Each member of the Membership Team is expected to mentor a Legionnaire to replace them.

Analyzes

In addition to the monthly contacts, the Membership Committee will evaluate the entire membership program each year and assemble a report to be presented to the DEC or the Convention Body.

SECOND YEAR

Appoint membership team, adjust job descriptions as needed, evaluate training aids and guides and train new membership team members at or before convention meeting to evaluate year's performance and to suggest needed changes to the Membership Director. Returning team members to mentor new members, outgoing Post Chairman are to mentor newly appointed Post Membership Chairman. All findings and program changes (including yearly membership theme, uniform, and pins) will be announced, first to Department Officers and then (pending Commander's approval) to the membership at the 30-day meeting or the National Membership Workshop.

All other first year instructions and timelines are to be followed.

THIRD & FOURTH YEAR

Continuation of years one, two or three with a full Department analysis by the Membership Team and Department Officers.

LEADERSHIP FOR MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

POST

At the Post level, the Commander and Membership Chairman should establish a Membership Team whose responsibility is the Post Membership Program. The team should divide the Post's membership into equal parts making each member of the team responsible for contacting and renewing their Post Membership.

The more team members that are working in a Post, the smaller of each member's share. If an individual team member has too many members to contact, the job won't get done! The team members should contact each member on their list during the membership campaign. (Even though a member has already paid their dues, contact from the Post members, merely making follow-up calls (buddy Checks) to the members will have a long-range impact on that individual member's retention).

The Post Commander and Membership Chairman should receive a status report from

each member of their Membership Team indicating how many members were contacted and which ones have renewed. The Post Commander will share this information with the District Commander on a monthly basis.

DISTRICT COMMANDERS: District Commanders are to contact each of the Post Commanders in their District each month. The District Commanders should look at any weak spots in their District and report this to the Zone Commander by the end of each month.

Personal contact on a monthly basis with the Post Commander and Post Membership Chairman will make this team strong and keep information flowing throughout the Department.

The District Commander should communicate the progress in the membership program from each of their Posts to their Zone Commander and the Department 1st Vice Commander on a monthly basis.

ZONE COMMANDERS & 1st VICE COMMANDER:

Weak spots should be immediately identified, and assistance rendered by the Department Membership Committee early to keep Posts from falling behind. The Department 1st Vice Commander (Membership Director) should contact the Zone Commanders on a regular basis.

The Department Commander should make regular contact with the Department Membership Director and have strategy sessions with the Department Membership Committee to resolve problems and work toward meeting the Department & National Membership Goals.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP GOALS

COMMITMENT – The District membership goals were evaluated and determined to best comply with the requirements of the National Organization and the required growth of our Department.

The 2025 Department Goal – set by the National Organization, based on the 2024 Delegate Strength Target Date membership number, plus the DMS members acquired this year and one new member per Post.

The 2025 Post Membership Goal – The 2025 Membership Goals for each Post will be set by the District Commander based on the Posts prior years Membership Roster, as per the Department recommendations that are received from National.

National Target Dates

<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>National</u>
EARLY BIRD CONTEST	50%	Sept 13, 2024
FALL MEETINGS	55%	Oct 18, 2024
VETERANS DAY	65%	Nov 15, 2024
PEARL HARBOR DAY	75%	Dec 13, 2024
MID-WINTER	80%	Jan 18, 2025
PRESIDENT'S DAY	85%	Feb 14, 2025
LEGION BIRTHDAY	90%	Mar 13, 2025
CHILDREN & YOUTH	95%	Apr 10, 2025
ARMED FORCES DAY	100%	May 15, 2025

DELEGATE STRENGTH Set 30 days prior to beginning of National Convention

National Target Dates fall on the second Wednesday of the month unless there is a holiday on that day or at the beginning of the week. In those situations, the target date will be moved to Thursday. The November target date falls on the third Wednesday of the month.

ALL POSTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PERSONALLY CONTACT ALL MEMBERS OF THEIR POST, EITHER IN PERSON OR THROUGH A TELEPHONE CALL!

There are five important avenues that must be covered for a successful membership year in each Post.

1) Attitude – The most important aspect of any program! Find members within your Post with a POSITIVE ATTITUDE, get them on your team, train them, have fun and you will be successful in any endeavor that you undertake.

2) Retention/Renewal – The Post Membership Team should commit to obtaining a 100% retention/renewal rate.

3) New Member Enrollment – The Post Team should obtain a commitment from every member to enroll all eligible veterans into this great organization.

4) Transfer of Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) Members (Post 225)–

The Post should institute a plan with a coordinated team effort in transferring these members into local Posts. (Let's commit to a 100% effort on this.)

5) Expired Legion Members - Previous Legion Members, who have not renewed their dues for 2024, or prior to that, are considered "expired" members. Renewing these members should be done by phoning or visiting each expired member at home.

Posts Membership teams can acquire an expired member list in MyLegion.

MEMBERSHIP NEVER TAKES A BREAK!!

MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

The 2025 membership drive for Department Awards will run until 30 days before Department Convention (unless otherwise noted). It is imperative that we promote membership throughout the Department as often as possible. Posts should be encouraged to process membership as they come in in order to meet the Department Target Dates.

The Department will give special recognition to those Post who meet or exceed the target date percentage.

Monthly recognition should be given to Post Commanders, Post Adjutants and Membership Chairman as well as the Post Membership Team Members upon meeting or exceeding membership target.

To keep the Department membership teams heading in the right direction, each Post should encourage its Membership Team and measure its progress with some sort of competition.

Individual Post membership recruiters should be recognized often. Pictures in the Post Newsletter or other special recognition should be awarded monthly. The membership drive should be fun and exciting.

Membership should be encouraged and talked about at **every** meeting.

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Every member of the Post should be encouraged to participate in the awards program. It is the responsibility of the Post Adjutant to verify their Post Members awards and submit the request to the Department Membership Director by the proper deadline date for all awards earned.

Consult the Department Website for this year's awards and for the certification forms.