

Dear Members,

I am Mavis Goodroad, President Elect and Membership Chair. Each year you have heard the words "We need, to recruit more members". Well, it is still the same. If we are going to have this great organization survive, we need to work harder on recruiting and having the members rejoin.

My theme is "GO FOR THE GOAL AND GET A TOUCHDOWN" For each new member we have a touchdown and, also , the same for those who rejoin. We want lots of touchdowns.

All of you are coaches and can help each membership person in your Unit "head coach" with the recruiting and getting those previous member s to rejoin.

Enclosed are some ideas and helpful messages to get us to those TOUCHDOWNS!

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the District meetings. Until then, have a great rest of the summer.

God Bless You and God Bless Our Veterans.

Mavis Goodroad
President Elect
Membership

What is this program, and why do we have it?

The role of the national Membership Committee is to encourage and support the nationwide effort to attract and retain a diverse, active membership and establish new units to ensure the future of the American Legion Auxiliary. Members enable us to carry out our mission to assist veterans, their families, youth and our communities.

National Membership Goal

By honoring our veterans and military through meaningful service, the American Legion Auxiliary will grow to 1 million members by our centennial anniversary. *Note: Our centennial anniversary will be celebrated during the 2019-2020 administrative year.*

What Can You Do?

1. Help retain current members.

Ideas:

Units

1. Offer volunteer ideas in which members can participate to support and deliver the Auxiliary's mission.
 - Examples for members: volunteer at a VA Medical Center, participate in a stand down to provide necessities for homeless veterans, mentor military children with the big brother/big sister concept.
2. Recognize all members for any and all contributions—volunteering, serving as a chairman or officer, preparing food, organizing events, being a mentor to new members, contacting other members to renew, being a good example of Service Not Self, etc.
3. Ensure a positive experience for all members:
 - Be welcoming, kind and respectful to members of all ages and backgrounds.
 - Ask for and be open to new and different ideas.
 - Encourage personal contact with all members at the unit level.
 - Demonstrate Service Not Self in all activities and interaction with others.
 - Don't expect all members to attend meetings, and don't chastise them for not doing so.
 - Promptly address and resolve conflicts in a positive manner.

Departments

1. Establish a membership committee or team to support efforts throughout the department.
 - Deploy active and consistent communication with units and districts/counties.
 - Use membership tools, available on the national website, and ensure all units have access to all membership resources.

2. How to rejoin former members.

Ideas:

Unit and Department

- Identify former members
 - Use the ALAMIS member database, or contact your department headquarters to obtain an Unpaid Roster (information on members who have not paid dues since 2013).
- Reach out to these former members.
 - Set up a committee to establish a phone bank of members to call former members.
 - Send letters.
 - Make phone calls.
 - Meet periodically to make calls – monthly, quarterly, semi-annually.
 - Provide light refreshments.
 - Develop a script to identify reasons for not renewing and what would cause them to consider rejoining.
 - When they did belong, did they find Auxiliary membership meaningful?
 - Did they feel engaged in unit activities and a part of the unit and Legion Family?
 - Are there certain programs or activities in which they are particularly interested?
 - Do they need a ride to meetings and events?
 - Do they need a babysitter so they can participate?
 - Would they like to attend the meeting virtually via Skype, Google Hangout, FaceTime, etc.?
 - Do they have other ideas that would make their Auxiliary experience a positive one?
- Share former members' feedback with the unit; determine what the unit might need to do differently to retain all members.

3. How to attract new members.

Ideas:

Unit and Department

- Positive new-member experience.
 - Personally contact a new member shortly after she joins.
 - Provide a personalized welcome letter from the unit president or Membership chairman.
 - Provide a New Member Packet, available on the national website, and personalize for your unit and department.
 - Find out how a new member wants to be involved, and invite her to participate.
 - Assign a “big sister” or mentor to each new member.
 - Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities in which new members can participate, at times convenient to them, to support and deliver the Auxiliary's mission.
 - Example 1: Mom with young children cannot/will not attend meetings, but may be willing to make phone calls while her children are napping.

- Example 2: Member can't or won't attend monthly meeting but may enjoy participating in the annual gift shop.
 - Example 3: Prepare and donate food for special events.
- Increase the Auxiliary's visibility in the community.
- Increase community involvement by using Auxiliary programs that encourage responsible, active citizenship supporting our military servicemembers and their families.
- Engage other community-based organizations in Auxiliary projects such as welcome-home/deployment events, support of military families and providing services that may include plumbing, carpentry, childcare, etc., for families of those deployed.
- Volunteer at schools, giving flag demonstrations and serving as mentors, with a special emphasis on military children and the issues they face with deployments and transfers.
 - Identify girls to participate in unit events to build Junior membership.
- Encourage Junior members to recruit their eligible friends and relatives.
 - Promote the many Auxiliary opportunities for service, fun and lifelong friendships.
 - Promote how shared patriotic and family values honor the service of veteran family members.
 - Explain Auxiliary benefits, including scholarships.
- Identify recruitment target groups such as women veterans, military families, relatives of American Legion members, ALA Girls State alumnae and local colleges.
 - Waive first-year membership dues for eligible women veterans.
 - The national portion of the 2016 dues (\$9) will be waived for the new women veteran members. Units and departments are encouraged to do the same.
 - To process, send application to your department. Indicate on her application that this member is part of the "Honor Our Female Veterans" program.
- Ensure the Auxiliary is appealing to new members:
 - Share the benefits and value of belonging:
 - "We (American Legion Auxiliary) remain as relevant today as we were in 1919. Our veterans continue to need our support and advocacy to assist them at home and abroad, during war and peacetime, to receive the attention and benefits they deserve."
- Be welcoming, kind and respectful to persons of all ages and backgrounds.
- Exhibit Service Not Self in all activities and interaction with others.

Membership Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Each department Membership chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **January 5, 2016**, to the division Membership chairman at her address found on the front page of this Membership Plan, and copy the national Membership chairman.

Year-End Reports

Each department Membership chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **May 15, 2016**, to the division Membership chairman at her address found on the front page of this Membership Plan, and copy the national Membership chairman. Members and units should follow their department's protocol and deadlines.