



IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

Calendar of Events

2026

July 4, 2026: Independence Day.

July 25-29, 2026: National Convention, Reno, NV

August 7-9, 2026: Council of Administration Meeting, Joliet, IL

August 8, 2026: State Commander and Auxiliary Presidents' Homecoming Banquet, Joliet, IL

September 11, 2026: Patriot Day

September 18, 2026: Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Recognition Day

September 19, 2026: Illinois Day at the National Home (Eaton Rapids, Michigan)

October 15-18, 2026: Big 10 Conference, Kalamazoo, MI

November 11, 2026: Veterans Day

December 7, 2026: Pearl Harbor Day

2027

February 5-7, 2027: State VOD Banquet and Council of Administration, Springfield, IL

February 6, 2027: State Voice of Democracy & Patriot's Pen Banquet, Springfield, IL

February 28-March 4, 2027: National Legislative Conference, Washington DC

May 1, 2027: Loyalty Day

May 31, 2027: Memorial Day

June 10, 2027: District Commander-Elect Training, Springfield, IL

June 10-13, 2027: State Convention, Springfield, IL

June 14, 2027: Flag Day

July 31-August 5, 2027: National Convention, Milwaukee, WI

2028

June 8-11, 2028: State Convention, Springfield

August 5-10, 2028: National Convention, San Antonio, TX

Deadline Dates to Remember for 2026-2027

June 25, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (July issue)

July 1, 2026: Fall Program book ads due to State HQ

July 31, 2026: Audit for quarter ending June 30 due to State HQ

August 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Sept. issue)

August 31, 2026: Quartermaster bonds issued through State HQ expiration

October 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Nov. issue)

October 31, 2026: Audit for quarter ending September 30 due to State HQ

December 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Jan. issue)

January 31, 2027: Audit for quarter ending December 31, 2026, due to State HQ

February 15, 2027: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (March issue)

April 15, 2027: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (May issue)

April 15, 2027: Ads for Convention Book due to State HQ

April 30, 2027: Post Election Reports due

April 30, 2027: Audit for the quarter ending March 31, 2027, due to State HQ

May 15, 2027: Any proposed IL VFW bylaw amendments or proposed resolutions for State Convention due to State HQ

June 1, 2027: District election reports due to State HQ

VFW PROGRAMS DEADLINE DATES

(by program)

NOTE: Updated for the 2026-2027 VFW Program Year

Membership

December 31, 2026: Post achieving 75% retention of their annual members will receive a certificate and \$100

February 1, 2027: Districts who reach 75% in membership will receive \$200

February 28, 2027: Post membership of 100% plus one-member will receive a certificate and \$150

April 30, 2027: Deadline to determine winner of Cramer-Soden Award

April 30, 2027: Deadline to complete All-State Post Criteria to receive award at State Convention

April 30, 2027: Post with the largest increase of Legacy Life Memberships (minimum 5) receives a \$100 gift certificate to VFW National Store

April 30, 2027: Deadline for Districts to receive \$10 per post for 100% approved post inspections.

June 1, 2027: 100 new or reinstated members to receive \$500 to attend 2027 National Convention

June 30, 2027: Posts membership at 100% will receive a 100% Membership Pennant

June 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for All State Post/District

June 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for All American Post/District

Public Relations/Marketing

February 28, 2027: Deadline to submit nominations for State Publication Contest to State HQ

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit nomination for News Media Professional of the Year to State HQ

Community Service

March 15, 2027: Deadline to submit Community Activities Report to State HQ to qualify for National Certificate of Recognition

April 1, 2027: Deadline to submit nomination of Volunteer of the Year to State HQ

June 30, 2027: Community Service Reports deadline (National Dashboard)

July 1, 2027: National Community Service Posts of the Year (NCSP). The National Programs

office will determine the top National Community Service Post of the year. Each

Conference will have a ONCSP Winner based on total impact from July 1 to June 30 of the previous year

Americanism Program

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit reports for Americanism Program to State HQ for awards at State Convention

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit reports for POW-MIA Program to State HQ for awards at State Convention

Safety Program

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit reports for Safety Program to State HQ for awards at State Convention

Public Servant Recognition

January 1, 2027: Deadline to submit nominations for Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, Paramedic, Dispatcher of the Year to State HQ

February 1, 2027: Deadline for State to submit Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, Paramedic, Dispatcher of the Year to National

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit nominations for Outstanding Legislator, Outstanding Patriotism, Government Service, Clergy, Citizen, News Media, Employer, JROTC Cadet of the Year and Life Saving Award to State HQ

Veteran's Assistance

April 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for National Home Awards

April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit reports for Hospital/VAVS Program to State HQ

June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$125 min.) for National Veterans Service via the Programs Dashboard NVS Donation link

Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen

October 31, 2026: Student entries to the Post

November 15, 2026: Completion of Post judging

December 1, 2026: Sponsorship money due at State HQ for Posts or Districts wishing to sponsor VOD/PP Scholarships, Pizza Party, or Ice Cream Social

December 15, 2026: District winners due to the State Headquarters

January 10, 2027: State Judging will be completed

January 10, 2027: District Participation Report due to State Headquarters

January 15, 2027: Department winners due to National

January 31, 2027: Department reports due to National

Smart/Maher Citizenship Education Teacher Award

October 31, 2026: Entries to the Post

November 15, 2026: Completion of Post judging

December 15, 2026: District Winners due to State HQ

December 29, 2026: District participation reports due to State HQ

January 10, 2027: Completion of Department judging

February 1, 2027: Department winners and reports due to National (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation)

Scout of the Year

March 1, 2027: Scout entries to the Post

April 1, 2027: Post entries to Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs

May 1, 2027: Department entry to National

Legislative Advocacy

May 15, 2027: Resolutions to be considered at State Convention due to State HQ

Poppy Display Contest

April 30, 2027: Deadline for Convention Awards for Poppies

May 29, 2027: District judging of Poppy displays completed

June 10, 2027: District winners' Poppy Displays delivered to State Convention

June 30, 2027: State winners list due to National

Illinois Specific Programs

June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$50 minimum) for Commander's Special Project to State HQ

June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$75 minimum) for Service Office Support to State HQ

“Required deadline (by VFW National Headquarters.) All other deadlines are suggested, and can be internally set at the discretion of the VFW Department leadership. Post Chairperson, be sure to communicate with your District Chairperson to find out their official deadlines, and District Chairperson need to communicate with their Department Chairperson to find out their deadlines.

VFW PROGRAMS DEADLINE DATES

(by months)

June 2026

June 25, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (July issue)

July 2026

July 25-29, 2026: National Convention, Reno, NV

July 31, 2026: Audits for quarter ending June 30th due to State HQ

August 2026

Aug. 7-9, 2026: Council of Administration Meeting, Joliet, IL

Aug. 8, 2026: State Commander and Auxiliary President's Homecoming, Joliet, IL

Aug. 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Sept. issue)

Aug. 31, 2026: Quartermaster bonds issued through State HQ expiration

Aug. 31, 2026: Fall Program book ads due to State HQ

September 2026

Sept. 18, 2026: Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Recognition Day

Sept. 19, 2026: Illinois Day at the National Home (Eaton Rapids, Michigan)

October 2026

Oct. 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Nov. issue)

Oct. 15-18, 2026: Big 10 Conference, Kalamazoo, MI.

Oct. 31, 2026: Audit for quarter ending September 30th due to State HQ

Oct. 31, 2026: VOD/PP entries to the Post

Oct. 31, 2026: Teacher of the Year entries to the Post

November 2026

Nov. 15, 2025: VOD/PP post-judging completed

Nov. 15, 2025: Teacher of the Year post judging completed

December 2026

Dec. 1, 2026: Sponsorship money due for Posts or Districts wishing to sponsor VOD/PP Scholarships, Pizza Party, or Ice Cream Social

Dec. 15, 2026: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (Jan. 2027 issue)

Dec. 15, 2026: District VOD/PP winners due to State HQ

Dec. 15, 2026: District Teacher of the Year due to State HQ

Dec. 29, 2026: District Participation reports due to State HQ

Dec. 31, 2026: Post achieving at least 75% retention of their annual membership will receive a certificate and \$100

January 2027

Jan. 1, 2027: Nominations for Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, Paramedic, and Dispatcher of the Year due to Department HQ

Jan. 10, 2027: Smart Maher Teacher of the Year judging completed

Jan. 10, 2027: VOD/PP State judging completed

Jan. 10, 2027: VOD/PP District Participation Report due to State HQ

Jan. 15, 2027: Department VOD/PP winners due to National

Jan. 31, 2027: Department VOD/PP reports due to National

Jan. 31, 2027: Audit for quarter ending December 31, 2026, due to State HQ

February 2027

- Feb. 1, 2027: District Membership at 75% to receive \$200
- Feb. 1, 2027: Department Smart/Maher winners and reports due to National
- Feb. 1, 2027: Deadline for State to submit Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, Paramedic, Dispatcher of the Year to National
- Feb. 15, 2027: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (March issue)
- Feb. 5-7, 2027: State VOD Banquet and Council of Administration, Springfield, IL
- Feb. 6, 2027: State Voice of Democracy & Patriot's Pen Banquet, Springfield, IL
- Feb. 28, 2027: Post achieving 100% plus one-member will receive a certificate and \$150
- Feb. 28, 2027: Deadline to submit nominations for State Publication Contest to State HQ
- Feb. 28-March 4, 2027: National Legislative Conference, Washington DC

March 2027

- March 1, 2027: Scout entries to the Post
- March 15, 2027: Deadline to submit Community Activities Report to State HQ to qualify for National Certificate of Recognition.

April 2027

- April 1, 2027: Deadline to submit nomination of Volunteer of the Year to State HQ
- April 1, 2027: Post entries to Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs
- April 15, 2027: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (May issue)
- April 15, 2027: Ads for Convention Book due to State HQ
- April 30, 2027: Post Election Reports due.
- April 30, 2027: Audit for quarter ending March 31, 2027, due to State HQ
- April 30, 2027: Deadline to determine winner of Cramer-Soden Award
- April 30, 2027: Post with largest Legacy Life Memberships (minimum 5) receives \$100 gift certificate to VFW Store
- April 30, 2027: Deadline for Districts to receive \$10 per post for 100% approved post inspections.
- April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit nomination for News Media Professional of the Year to State HQ
- April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit nominations for Outstanding Legislator, Outstanding Patriotism, Government Service, Clergy, Citizen, News Media, Employer, JROTC Cadet of the Year and Life Saving Award to State HQ
- April 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for National Home Awards
- April 30, 2027: Deadline for Convention Awards for Poppies
- ***April 30, 2027: Deadline to complete All-State Post Criteria to receive award at State Convention.
- ***April 30, 2027: Deadline to submit all dashboard reports in order to receive awards at State Convention

May 2027

- May 1, 2027: Department entry to National from Scouting Chairman or State HQs
- May 15, 2027: Any proposed Illinois bylaw changes or resolutions for State Convention due to State HQ
- May 29, 2027: District judging of Poppy displays completed

June 2027

- June 1, 2027: District election reports due to State HQ
- June 1, 2027: 100 new or reinstated members to receive \$500 to attend 2027 National Convention
- June 10, 2027: District winners' Poppy Displays delivered to State Convention
- June 10, 2027: District Commander Elect Training, Springfield, IL
- June 10-13, 2027: State Convention, Springfield, IL
- June 15, 2027: Deadline to submit articles for Illinois VFW News (July issue)
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for All State Post/District
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to qualify for All American Post/District
- June 30, 2027: Community Service Reports deadline (National Dashboard)
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$125 min.) for National Veterans Service via the Programs Dashboard NVS Donation link
- June 30, 2027: Department sends State Poppy winners list to National HQ
- June 30, 2027: Posts achieving 100% membership will receive a membership pennant
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$50 min.) for National Home to State HQ
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$50 minimum) for Commander's Special Project to State HQ
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$75 minimum) for Service Office Support to State HQ
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$50 min.) for MAP Program to State HQ
- June 30, 2027: Deadline to submit donation (\$50 min.) for Homeless Veteran donation to State HQ

July 2027

- July 1, 2027: National Community Service Posts of the Year (NCSP). The National Programs office will determine the top National Community Service Post of the year. Each Conference will have a ONCSP Winner based on total impact from July 1 to June 30 of the previous year
- July 31-August 5, 2027: National Convention, Milwaukee, WI

2028

- June 8-11, 2028: State Convention, Springfield, IL
- August 5-10, 2028: National Convention, San Antonio, TX

OUR VFW STATE HEADQUARTERS



Our State Headquarters is located at 3300 Constitution Drive in Springfield. If you are ever in the area, please stop by to say hello.

Our dedicated staff is there daily to help make your year easier and to answer questions that might arise throughout your term of office. Our State Adjutant, Scott Swinford is always available via e-mail or telephone and makes serving veterans his top priority.

All communications to State Commander Robert Bailey shall be mailed to our State Headquarters, 3300 Constitution Drive, Springfield, IL 62711.

Correspondence dealing with VFW procedures shall be directed to the State Adjutant at State Headquarters.

All money due to State shall be made payable to the State of Illinois, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and shall be transmitted to the State Quartermaster.

Poppies: All correspondence having to do with Poppies should be directed to the State Quartermaster.

STATE HEADQUARTERS

3300 Constitution Drive

Springfield, Illinois 62711

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E-mail: vfwil@vfwil.org • State Website: <http://www.vfwil.org>