

**Department of Illinois
2026 – 2027 Series
General Order No. 1
July 2026**



State Headquarters Announcements

1. State Headquarters office will be closed on July 3rd for observation of Independence Day.
2. Please be advised that two critical resource documents have been updated and are now available on the State Website (vfwil.org) under the resources section:

- Department Headquarters Communications Guide: This guide highlights and outlines protocols to address organizational communication challenges across the Department.
- Updated Dashboard Instructions: Available under the "Resources" section, as well as behind the "Members Only" section. These updated instructions will assist Post leadership in streamlining internal reporting protocols.


Please ensure your Post and District leadership are aware of these new tools as we begin the new administrative year.

3. **Department Officer Vacancy:** On June 21, 2026, Comrade Gary Holmes submitted his resignation as the State Chaplain therefore Department needs a Chaplain. The position is open to all members in good standing who belong to a post. In accordance with National Bylaw Section 520 in lieu of a special meeting the Council is advised the vacancy exists and Department is accepting names of nominees. Any member eligible who wishes to be nominated send an email to vfwil@vfwil.org and rbaileyvfwil@gmail.com no later than July 16th. Nominations will close at midnight on July 15th. At that time the Commander will notify the Council of all nominations and conduct a ballot vote.

4. **OMS:** The Online Membership System (OMS) will be offline starting Monday, June 30th at 6:00 p.m. for annual membership processing. Post Quartermasters must ensure all pending transactions are finalized prior to this deadline. New QM's who have not established an account must visit vfw.org/login.aspx and select "Create Account" to set up their administrative credentials.

5. **Department Resources:** Comrades are encouraged to utilize our state website at vfwil.org to access the new Commander's Leadership Manual, submit online program reports, and review upcoming district and state events. For direct assistance, contact State Headquarters at (217) 529-6688.

6. The Department of Illinois VFW and its Auxiliary invite all Posts, Districts, and members to celebrate the election and installation of State Commander Rob Bailey and Department President Danielle Krull by placing an ad in the 2026 Illinois Fall Program Book.

Ad sizes and pricing are structured as full page (\$200), half page (\$125), and quarter page (\$75). To participate, please download the official order form from vfwil.org under Resources  Reports and Forms. Completed forms, along with any included imagery, can be mailed with payment to the Editor, Illinois VFW Fall Program Book, 3300 Constitution Dr., Springfield, IL 62711, or emailed directly to barb.wilson2@outlook.com. Payments can be enclosed in full or processed online via credit or debit card at vfwil.org. All program books will be distributed at the Department Commander's and President's Joint Homecoming on August 8, 2026.

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Membership

1. State total 100.19%
2. 5 Districts have reached 101%
3. 98 Posts have achieved 101% or more

Post Announcements

1. Special Order No. 04: Post 8821 charter suspended for a period of 90 days
2. Special Order No. 05: Post 2153 charter suspended for a period of 90 days
3. Special Order No. 06: Post 8890 charter suspended for a period of 90 days
4. Special Order No. 07: Post 7535 charter suspended for a period of 90 days
5. Special Order No. 08: Post 7537 charter suspended for a period of 90 days
6. Special Order No. 09: Post 2859 charter suspended for a period of 90 days

In accordance with National Special Orders 288, 289 and 290, three members have been removed from the membership rolls.

Bylaws

⚠ Critical Notice: Upcoming Bond Expirations

Be advised that all current Post Officer bonds purchased through State Headquarters will officially expire on **August 31, 2026**. To ensure continuous, mandatory compliance and prevent any gap in required coverage, all Posts must submit their renewal applications immediately. Online bond applications for Post Commanders and Quartermasters are readily available for submission. Bonds purchased directly through State Headquarters strictly cover the positions of Commander and Quartermaster only, up to a maximum limit of \$1 million.

Posts requiring coverage exceeding \$1 million, or requiring administrative bonding for additional positions, must secure an independent policy through an outside insurance source. If an outside bond is utilized, a complete and legible copy of the policy must be forwarded to State Headquarters immediately to be maintained on official file.

National Convention Registration Fees: Pursuant to Section 222 of the National Manual of Procedure, each Post **shall** pay, in advance, a Registration Fee of \$25. This mandatory fee entitles the Post to a convention information and materials packet, as well as one (1) identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Comrades are reminded that each additional delegate attending the National Convention will be required to pay an additional \$10 delegate fee. All Posts must ensure compliance with this requirement within the prescribed timelines established by National Headquarters.

Events

1. August Council of Administration Meeting

Dates & Times: Friday, August 7, 2026, 3:00 pm and Saturday, August 8th, 9:00 am.

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Location: Clarion Hotel and Convention Center, 411 S. Larkin Ave. Joliet, IL 60436
Hotel Information: Room cost is \$109 plus tax per night. Use code **AS50J8** to book your room.

2. All Officer and Program Reports **must** be submitted to Erin at HQ no later than July 24, 2026. This includes District Commander reports on their respective districts. Any handouts you require printed must also be submitted by July 24th. The following are called to the Council Meeting:

Matt Claussen – National Council Member	Jay Hoffman – Judge Advocate
David Long – Chief of Staff	Damon Arnold – Surgeon
Cathy Stubbs – Inspector	Alonzo Skipper – Membership
Barb Wilson – Marketing/Public Relations, News Editor	Steve Eller Community Activities
Jennifer Glenn – Women’s Veterans	Sean Conner – Service Officer
Phil Maughan – Budget & Finance	Arnold Taylor – Photographer
Kenneth Eddy – VAC Liaison	Fritz Mihelcic – Parliamentarian, Advisor
Antonio Munoz IV – State Legislative	John Lawson – State Legislative
Paul Bezazian – Homeless Veterans	Rob Bland – Youth Activities
Dave Darte – Voice of Democracy	Ron Milton – Scouting
Kyna Simpson – National Home	James Reeves – Assistant National Home
George Sanon – Student Veterans Liaison	Clarence Caraker – POW/MIA
Adam Abdul – MAP/Military Services	Glen Goodrich – Safety
Bobby Welch – State Historian	R Tim Schultheis – Sergeant at Arms
All District Commanders	

3. State Commander and Auxiliary Presidents Homecoming Celebration
Location: VFW Post 9545, 323 Old Hickory Rd, New Lenox, IL 60451
Times: Cocktails 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:30 pm
Cost: \$25.00 per ticket. To purchase go to vfwil.org donation tab, make a note for Homecoming or call Headquarters at 217-529-6688. **Deadline** is July 31, 2026.

4. September 19, 2026: Illinois Day at the National Home (Eaton Rapids, Michigan)
 Early Agenda
 Friday, September 18, 2026, VFW Post 2406, 695 Lansing Rd., Charlotte, MI 48813
 5:00 pm cocktails and camaraderie
 6:00 pm Dinner, suggested donation of \$15 per plate.
 Saturday, September 19, 2026, Tribute/Memorial at Rosehill Cemetery.
 Immediately after travel to the VFW National Home.
 Further details will be announced.

Our National Home Chairs have reserved hotel blocks at a discount price.
 ➤ Comfort Inn Charlotte: Rooms must be reserved by Saturday, September 12, 2026, to receive the special group rate.

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- **Holiday Inn:** To obtain a reduced rate, guests must call the hotel directly and use the code DOI/Dept of IL.

Convention

State Convention

1. The following State Officers were elected at the 107th Annual State Convention on June 13, 2026.
 - ◆ Commander: Robert Bailey, Post 7452-19
 - ◆ Sr Vice Commander: Ryan Higginbotham, Post 4226-13
 - ◆ Jr Vice Commander: Doug Jameson, Post 1739-14
 - ◆ Quartermaster: Scott Swinford, Post 4168-11
 - ◆ Judge Advocate: Jay Hoffman, Post 4763-10
 - ◆ Surgeon: Damon Arnold, Post 311-16
 - ◆ Chaplain: Vacant
2. A list of all appointments for the 2026 – 2027 year can be found on the State website (vfwil.org) in the About section under Officers.

127th VFW and 112th Auxiliary National Convention

Location: Reno, Nevada

Dates: July 25th – July 29th

National Convention Housing: General convention information and housing reservations for Reno, Nevada, are now available online. Please visit vfw.org/convention to access the registration form, tentative agenda, and local attraction links. Be advised that hotels are strictly first-come, first-served this year, with no allocations by state blocks; early booking is highly recommended.

Calendar and Deadline Dates

July 2026

July 25-29, 2026: National Convention, Reno, NV
Audits for quarter ending June 30th due to State HQ

August 2026

August 7-9, 2026: Council of Administration Meeting, Joliet, IL
Aug. 8, 2026: State Commander and Auxiliary President's Homecoming, Joliet, IL
August 31, 2026: Quartermaster bonds issued through State HQ expiration

September 2026

September 18, 2026: Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Recognition Day
September 19, 2026: Illinois Day at the National Home (Eaton Rapids, Michigan)

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Commander Town Halls

1. October 10, 2026, 10:00 am
2. October 11, 2026, 10:00 am
3. October 24, 2026, 10:00 am
4. October 25, 2026, 10:00 am

Locations to be Announced

2026 VFW Calendar Raffle

The 2026 Calendar Raffle is officially underway, running daily through December 31, 2026. With approximately \$21,500 in total prizes, winning tickets are returned to the drawing after each selection, giving participants multiple opportunities to win throughout the year. Please note that this will be the final time raffle winners are published directly in the General Orders; all future weekly winners will be posted exclusively on the Department website at vfwil.org under the "News" section.

Daily Winners		
Date of Drawing	Winner	Amount
06/01/2026	Nick and Audrey Tsatsis	\$25.00
06/02/2026	Ron Garwski	\$25.00
06/03/2026	Cheryl Cravens	\$25.00
06/04/2026	Dennis DeJarlais	\$25.00
06/05/2026	Jim Kretch	\$25.00
06/06/2026	Dave Smith	\$25.00
06/07/2026	John Vixaychack	\$50.00
06/08/2026	Richard Crabtree	\$25.00
06/09/2026	Chris Bailey	\$25.00
06/10/2026	Bart Gutheridge	\$25.00
06/11/2026	Mike Westfall	\$25.00
06/12/2026	Alexandria Willey	\$25.00
06/13/2026	Eric Morales	\$25.00
06/14/2026	Terri Elder	\$500.00
06/15/2026	George Phillips	\$25.00
06/16/2026	Johnathan Cooper	\$25.00
06/17/2026	Jerriann Byrd	\$25.00
06/18/2026	Janice Bleeke	\$25.00
06/19/2026	Randy Butts	\$25.00
06/20/2026	Scott Bartlett	\$25.00
06/21/2026	Jim Kopjo	\$100.00
06/22/2026	Thomas Richardson	\$25.00

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06/23/2026	Dane Wilson	\$25.00
06/24/2026	Dennis Davidson	\$25.00
06/25/2026	Max Trotter	\$25.00
06/26/2026	Julie Grant	\$25.00
06/27/2026		\$25.00
06/28/2026		\$50.00
06/29/2026		\$25.00
06/30/2026		\$25.00

New Century Raffle

The New Century Raffle has officially ended for the year. Congratulations to all the winners.

Date of Drawing	Winner	Seller
6/5/2026	Branden Vega	Branden Vega
6/12/2026	Edward Cummings	Edward Cummings
6/19/2026	Robert Holland	Robert Holland
6/26/2026	Jim Burrows	Jim Burrows
6/5/2026	Branden Vega	Branden Vega