



VFW Riders Groups

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FORMS

Statement of Policy

VFW National By-Laws, Sec. 709 (excerpt)

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States shall not be responsible for the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions nor the contractual obligations or debts of any Post, County Council, District or Department nor for the negligent or wrongful acts or omissions or contractual obligations or debts of any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or on behalf of any Post, County Council, District or Department. Any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or in behalf of a Post, County Council, District or Department shall be at all times under the direct control of such Post, County Council, District or Department and all funds derived there from shall be at all times under the direct control of such Post, County Council, District or Department.

All money, property or assets of any kind or nature, as well as all books and records, owned, held or used by any activity, clubroom, holding company or unit sponsored, conducted or operated by, for or in behalf of a Post, County Council, District or Department shall be the property of such Post, County Council, District or Department and must be placed in the care and custody of the respective Quartermaster. Such money, property, assets, books and records shall be subject to the same rules and under the same procedure as any other Post, County Council, District or Department money, property, assets, books and records.

VFWRG Advisory Committee (National)

A VFWRG Advisory Committee may be appointed by the Commander-in-Chief and consist of a minimum of one member, from four different Departments, who enjoy the pastime of motorcycling and monitor trends in motorcycling, policy, practices at the local, state and national levels; and other members as may be appropriate.

The committee shall advise on topics relating to group riding; assist in the coordination and execution of sponsored ride activity, to include the annual Vander Clute Memorial Motorcycle Ride; provide guidance to groups and their sponsoring unit (a Post, County Council, District or Department) to promote safe riding.

VFWRG Advisory Committee (Department)

It is encouraged that Departments, with multiple VFWRG's, form a Department Riders Group Advisory Committee utilizing the principles established above.

Registration

Each Post, County Council, District and Department shall register its riders group, using a form designated by the Adjutant General, and be required, from time to time, to update group contact information. Information provided will be used to promote and disseminate information regarding VFW organized riding events and VFWRG policy recommendations.

In addition, any unit adopting a uniform utilizing registered marks of the VFW, shall register and seek approval of said design in accordance with section 803 of the National By-Laws/Manual of Procedure and this policy.

Post, County Council, District and Department Suggested Guidelines for a Veterans of Foreign Wars Riders Group (VFWRG)

1. DEFINITIONS

- a. **Motorcycle:** Two or three wheeled vehicle manufactured for use on public roads and highways.
- b. **President:** Presiding officer of the VFWRG. Elected by the members of VFWRG as a leader of VFWRG.
- c. **Vice President:** Assist the Presiding officer of the VFWRG. Elected by the members of VFWRG as a leader of VFWRG.
- d. **Secretary:** Term for the designated individual made responsible for maintenance of meeting minutes or other pertinent documents related to the VFWRG.
- e. **Treasurer:** Sponsoring unit's Quartermaster or person authorized by the Quartermaster to handle the receipt and disbursement of funds related to VFWRG.
- f. **Road Captain:** Term for an individual within the VFWRG designated as a ride leader within the VFWRG. Typically assigned to an individual with extensive riding experience and planning abilities for events and rides.
- g. **Sergeant-at-Arms:** Term for the VFWRG individual assigned or appointed to maintain order within the By-Laws of the VFW or policies within the VFWRG.

2. GENERAL COMMENTS

- a. VFWRG is not a Motorcycle Club (MC)
- b. VFWRG is a family oriented group.
- c. Discrimination based on race, religion, gender, or any other protected class will not be tolerated.
- d. VFWRG will abide by the laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

3. MISSION

- a. To promote and support the programs of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.
- b. To promote motorcycle safety programs.
- c. To provide a social atmosphere for VFW members who share the same interest.

4. VFWRG MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Motorcycle Riders Group is a motorcycle group made up of members in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), VFW Auxiliary and invited participants who enjoy the pastime of motorcycling.
- b. Members and participants must be the legally registered owner of a street-legal motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license in their state of residence, and maintain proper levels of insurance; or passenger thereto; or non-riding persons volunteering on behalf of the group in an active supporting role.
 - i. **Participants**
 1. Persons, otherwise not eligible for the VFW or VFW Auxiliary, will be permitted to become VFWRG participants provided such policy is adopted by the sponsoring unit.
 2. Such participant classification does not constitute membership in the VFW or VFW Auxiliary nor come with the promise of any material, financial, or other benefit to the VFWRG, its members or committee; nor to any other member at any other organizational level within the VFW or VFW Auxiliary; nor will there be any similar

gains for the honoree through the conferring of "participant" status, but is intended as a means to provide recognition to those who show strong support to the VFW/VFWRG stated purpose.

3. Persons, otherwise not eligible for VFW or VFW Auxiliary, who subsequently become eligible for VFW or VFW Auxiliary membership, must join.

5. BY-LAWS/STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/ADOPTED RULES & REGULATIONS

- a. Sponsoring units shall establish By-Laws, a standard operating procedure, or adopt additional rules and regulation for the governance of their VFWRG. Such By-Laws, procedures, or rules shall be subordinate to and consistent with the By-Laws of the sponsoring unit.
- b. VFWRG may propose By-Laws, a standard operating procedure, or propose additional rules and regulation for the governance of the unit. Such By-Laws, procedures, or rules shall only become effective upon the approval of the sponsoring unit by a majority vote of members present at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose.

6. OFFICERS

- a. Each VFWRG will annually elected/appoint officers from within its ranks as follows:
 - i. President: Elected
 1. Must be a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and a member of the sponsoring unit.
 2. Duties: Presiding officer of all VFWRG meetings. The President will act as a liaison between the VFWRG and the sponsoring unit and community organizations. The President will request, from the sponsoring unit, approval for all events, expenditures of VFWRG dedicated funds. The President will give a monthly report of the unit's activities.
 - ii. Vice President: Elected
 1. Must be a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and a member of the sponsoring unit.
 2. Duties: Will perform the duties as presiding officer in absence of the President. Assists in the planning of VFWRG events. Coordinates the flow of information provided to VFWRG members and advises the President of concerns of VFWRG members.
- b. Secretary: Appointed
 - i. Must be a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and a member of the sponsoring unit.
 - ii. Duties: Responsible for keeping all the VFWRG records, written reports and correspondence between outside organizations. The Secretary will maintain all applications and Waivers of Liability forms. They call role at VFWRG meetings and responsible for recording the meeting minutes. It is the Secretary's duty to notify all members of special meeting times and dates other than the normally scheduled meetings. The Secretary will maintain the By-Laws of the VFWRG noting any changes as voted on and approved by the Sponsoring unit.
- c. Treasurer: Ex-Officio
 - i. Held by the sponsoring unit Quartermaster or their authorized representative in accordance with VFW By-Laws.

- ii. Duties: Maintains financial records of the VFWRG. The Treasurer collects monies from all fundraising events and coordinates disbursement of funds. The Treasurer shall give a detailed report of all receipts and disbursement of funds at all VFWRG meetings. Shall provide a monthly financial report to the sponsoring unit Quartermaster for inclusion in the sponsoring unit's financial report. The Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining all the VFWRG patches that are un-issued as well as a record of the patches each member has in their possession. The Treasurer collects all VFWRG dues, if any, from the VFWRG members.
- d. Sergeant at Arms: Appointed
 - i. Must be a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars or Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary.
 - ii. Duties: Makes certain to uphold rules of the VFWRG and keeps order at all meetings and events. Reports actions of its members, who do not conform to rules of VFWRG, or its sponsoring unit, to the President.
- e. Chaplain: Appointed
 - i. Open to any member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary or participant of VFWRG.
 - ii. Duties: Provides spiritual guidance to VFWRG members.
- f. Road Captain: Appointed
 - i. Open to any member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary or participant of VFWRG that meets criteria as ride leaders, capable of executing rides and functions pertaining to the VFWRG.
 - ii. Duties: The Road Captain is responsible for route planning and if needed the coordination of Support Vehicles for events. When on an event, they are the ranking officer if the President and Vice-President are not present and therefore leads the VFWRG formation on the ride. If the President is on the ride, the Road Captain rides at the front of the group with the President. The Road Captain will give a pre-ride safety briefing to all participants on the event including Support Vehicle drivers and passengers.

7. MEETINGS

- a. Each VFWRG will hold regularly scheduled meetings at a date, time, and location as set by the VFWRG and its sponsoring unit.
- b. Meetings will be conducted in an orderly manner.

8. UNIFORM

- a. VFWRG Back Patch
 - i. All VFWRG Back Patches shall be approved by the Commander-in-Chief and consistent with the requirements of the VFW.
 - ii. At no time will any VFWRG utilize a 3-Piece Patch design, nor display patches identifying their group as a "MC." In addition, the use of rockers, or appearance thereof is deemed unacceptable.
 - iii. The VFWRG Back Patch may be worn by all VFWRG members and participants in good standing when approval is obtained consistent with the requirements of the VFW. Each Back Patch may contain the VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark (or VFW Auxiliary logo for Auxiliary members, if so adopted.) All invited participant wearing the back patch utilizing the VFW logo must carry the designation "supporter" within or just below the patch.

- iv. VFWRG approved Back Patches will be the only patch to be worn on the back of jackets or vests to identify a unit.
- v. The VFWRG Back Patch and other related articles of clothing incorporating the VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark must be worn in a manner consistent with the VFW requirements.
- vi. The VFW reserves the right to revoke authorization granted to a VFWRG, or any VFWRG member or participant, to wear or display any VFW logo, emblem, name, or other protected mark.

9. DRESS:

- a. The VFWRG is a representation of the VFW, and as such, members shall dress in a manner that promotes a positive image of the VFW, particularly when operating in group activities or interacting with the community.
- b. No patches with profanity, depicting acts of a sexual nature, or otherwise not within the keeping of the standards set forth by the VFW will be worn.

10. GENERAL CONDUCT

- a. VFWRG members and participants will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values and mission of the VFWRG and of the VFW.
- b. Alcohol consumption during VFWRG sanctioned riding activities is prohibited.
- c. VFWRG policies should address General Conduct of VFWRG members and participants, and outline steps in correcting misconduct.
- d. VFWRG members and participants may be dismissed from a meeting or activity/ride as a result of inappropriate behavior.
- e. VFWRG members and participants are responsible for the actions of their guest(s) at a VFWRG event. Actions of a guest of the member or participant can be grounds for dismissal of the guest and/or the VFWRG member and participant.

11. REPORTING

- a. VFWRG's shall make a monthly report to its sponsoring unit.
- b. VFWRG's will report annually to the National VFWRG Advisory Committee
 - i. A full accounting of VFWRG members and participants to include VFW Members, VFW Auxiliary Members, and invited participants.
 - ii. Their activity, which should include a number of VFWRG events, mileage, and hours.
 - iii. An accounting of funds raised and disbursed by the VFWRG for the year.

12. WAIVERS AND LIABILITY

- a. All VFWRG members and participants will complete a yearly membership application. This application will include verbiage outlining a release of liability which will be signed by the individual, or guardian thereto. The yearly application will include language indicating the member carries liability insurance for themselves if a rider, which also implies that their passengers are covered by the minimum state, city, and or local requirements. Those individuals not meeting the criteria to sign a yearly waiver as a legal adult will be required to have a parent/legal guardian sign for that individual. The application and release will include, to the fullest extent permitted by law, language that requires the VFWRG to indemnify and hold the Post, District, County Council, Department, and National VFW, and the officers and employees of each, harmless from any and all claims arising from or in connection with (i) the conduct or management of the VFWRG; (ii) any act, omission, or negligence of the VFWRG or any VFWRG member or participant; (iii) any accident, injury, or damage

whatsoever occurring during or related to any VFWRG event. This application and release shall be retained by the sponsoring unit for seven (7) years.

- b. Ride activities by the sponsoring unit will be required to have liability release waivers for each participant outside of the VFWRG, regardless of age or status, if those individuals will be participating in or on a motor vehicle for the event.
- c. Waivers and liability release forms will comply with the National Policy as well as guidelines from the American Motorcycle Association (AMA).
- d. Sponsoring units will be required to have proof of general liability insurance to protect such units and must name, as additional insureds, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and the Department in which the sponsoring unit is located.

This policy is hereby effective, this 20th day of December, 2017.

By Order of
Keith E. Harman
Commander-in-Chief
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US

Official:



Brian J. Duffy

Adjutant General