

Department of North Dakota
2024
Membership Awards Manual



“Service Matters: Past, Present, Future”

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I. Situation:

- A. The American Legion was founded over 100 years ago, in 1919 by WWI veterans.
- B. The membership of the ND American Legion has been decreasing over a period of many years.
- C. Membership dues provide funding for the American Legion.
- D. An Awards Program was developed to incentivize recruitment, retention, and associated activities.
- E. The awards program recognizes Legionnaires, Posts, and Leaders, who are involved in recruitment and retention activities.

II. Commander's Intent:

- A. To grow our membership
 - a. Membership is the heart of an energized American Legion and active programs. The awards program encourages membership, retention, and training activity.

III. Execution:

- A. Membership recruitment and retention primarily occur at the Post level. Direct personal contact by Legionnaires is the heartbeat of membership.
- B. This manual describes the Department Awards Program and incentives to (a) individuals, (b) Posts, and (c) leaders.

- C. A listing of National awards is also incorporated into this Manual.
- D. Determining eligibility and ensuring that awards are appropriately presented requires diligent reporting by Post Adjutants and Department staff.
- E. Unless otherwise noted, awards will be announced and presented at the 2024 Department Convention in Bismarck on June 26-28, 2024.
- F. Department leaders (Regional Vice Commanders, District Commanders, and District Vice-Commanders) are members of the Membership Team.
- G. The Department Commander and Membership Chair are responsible for this awards program. The Department Awards Program is subject to change annually.
- H. Membership Target Dates and Percentages are listed in Appendix A.

IV. Awards:

A. Post Target Date Awards

1. **Early Bird Certificates** – are presented to all Posts that meet or exceed 40% of their membership goal by the first Target Date (August 7th)
2. **Post Honor Ribbons** – presented to all Posts whose 2024 membership exceeds their 2023 membership by December 31, 2023.
3. **Bellwether Plaque** – presented to all Posts that achieve 100% of their Membership Goal by January 16, 2024.

Target Date. For each subsequent qualifying year after winning the initial plaque, the Post will receive an additional engraved year label to attach to their plaque.

B. Post Category Awards

1. **Category Awards** are presented to Posts within each of four categories that are based on Post size. The categories are as follows:
 - i. Category I – Posts with under 50 members
 - ii. Category II – Posts with 51 to 100 members
 - iii. Category III – Posts with 101 to 400 members
 - iv. Category IV – Posts with over 401 members
2. **\$100 Cash Award** – presented to the Post in each category with the highest percent over their 2024 membership goal by December 31, 2023. A letter and check for \$100 will be mailed to each winning Post in January and will be announced at the Winter Conference.
3. **Retention Award** – Posts that recruited 5 or more new members in 2023 are eligible for consideration. The Post in each category that renews (in 2024) the highest percentage of their new Post members from 2023 (retain them as members by May 21, 2024) will win a \$100 cash award and recognition at the Department Convention. In the case of ties between Posts, each Post shall receive the \$100 cash award and will be recognized at the Department Convention.

C. Individual Awards

1. **Go-Getter Program** – a pin is awarded to each Legionnaire who earns 15 points based on the following criteria:
 - i. 1 point for each Post membership renewal they secure. A maximum of 10 renewals points per recruiter if the Post has not reached 100% of their membership goal by April 15th.
 - ii. 5 points for each recruited new member. A reinstated member is considered a new member. A transferred member is not considered a new member.
 - iii. The recruiter and the recruited must both be a member of a Post in the Department of ND.
 - iv. Post Adjutants will certify to the Department by April 15th the names of Legionnaires who have earned the Go-Getter Pins based on the above criteria.
2. **Go-Getter Club Membership Cards and Awards**
 - i. Silver Star – a Go-Getter who earns 25 points will earn a card with a silver star on it.
 - ii. Gold Star – a Go-Getter who earns 30 points will earn a card with a gold star on it.
 - iii. 50-Year Plaque – a Legionnaire who qualifies as a Go-Getter for 50 consecutive years will receive a 50-Year Plaque.
 - iv. First time Go-Getters will receive a cap patch.
 - v. Every 5 consecutive years a cap patch star will be awarded.

- vi. Every Go-Getter will receive a cap pin and a Go-getter membership card.

3. Recruiter of the Year

- i. Each Post may recognize the Legionnaire who recruits the most new members for 2024 by May 15, 2024 as their Post Recruiter of the Year. Posts will forward their winners to the Department by May 15, 2024.
- ii. **Regional Recruiter of the Year** – each region (East, Central, and West) will recognize the Legionnaire in each Post category who signs up the most new members with a minimum of 5. Winners in each category will receive a specially designed cap pin. Winners must be reported to the Department by May 15, 2024.
- iii. **Department Recruiter of the Year** – regardless of category, the one person who signed up the most new members (minimum of 10) will be recognized as the Department Recruiter of the Year. The Dept Recruiter of the Year will receive round trip mileage allowance to the 2024 Dept Convention, 1-night hotel accommodations, and 2 tickets to the Convention Banquet. They will also receive a plaque from National and will be entered in the National drawing that could win a trip to the National Convention. Winners must be reported to the Department by May 15, 2024.

4. **Other Recruiter Awards**

- i. **Gold Squadron** – a Squadron Baseball Cap will be presented to a Legionnaire who signs up 5 new members by May 15, 2024.
- ii. **Gold Platoon** – a Platoon Baseball Cap and Membership Shirt will be presented to a Legionnaire who signs up 15 new members by May 15, 2024.
- iii. **Gold Division** – a Division Baseball Cap, Membership Shirt, and a Jacket will be presented to a Legionnaire who signs up 25 new members by May 15, 2024.

D. Leadership Awards

1. **District Commander and Vice Commander Awards**

- i. **District Commander and Vice Commander Jackets** – will be presented to each District Commander and Vice Commander whose District achieves 100% of their Goal and 100% of their Consolidated Post Reports for their District by May 21, 2024. To qualify as a 100% District, 70% of the District Posts must have attained 100% of their local Post Goals.
- ii. **\$150 Cash** – will be awarded to the District Commander whose District is first to obtain 100% of its Membership Goal and 100% of their Consolidated Post Reports by March 11, 2024 (Legion Birthday). All other District Commanders who reach their Membership goal by

March 13th will receive \$50 cash. Memberships must be at Dept HQ by March 13th, 2024.

- iii. **Legion Cap and Shirt** – will be presented to the District Commander and District Vice-Commander whose District achieved the highest percentage of their Membership Goal and 100% of their Consolidated Post Report by May 21, 2024. Both the cap and shirt will be embroidered with the designation of the leading District Commanders.
 - iv. **District Commander Achievement Certificate and District Honor Ribbon** – will be presented to the District Commander whose 2024 District Membership by May 21, 2024 exceeds the 2023 Membership by at least the number of Posts in that District. The Commander will receive a framed certificate and the ribbon will be placed on the District Banner.
2. **Regional Vice-Commander Awards** – the Regional Vice-Commander who attains the highest percentage of his/her Regional Goal and 100% of their Consolidated Post Reports by May 21, 2024 will be an automatic delegate to the National Convention and will receive a check for \$100 towards the trip to the National Convention and an Award Jacket. The number of Department Membership Cards with remittance in the amount \$36.50 must be received by Dept HQ to be counted.

E. National Awards

1. **Certificates of Meritorious Service** – will be awarded by National Headquarters to all Posts who, by December 31, 2023, have set a new All-Time-High Membership.
2. **Gold Brigade New Member Recruiter Award** – is a National award who recruits 50 or more new members before May 15, 2024. The award consists of a Gold Brigade Cap Pin, certificate, a Gold Brigade patch, and choice of a jacket or sweater, or polo shirt with the “Gold Brigade” logo. The Gold Brigadier will be entered in a drawing for \$1,000 (5 winners will be drawn).
3. **Silver Brigade New Member Recruiter Award** – is a National award who recruits 25 new members before May 15, 2024. Award a Silver Brigade pin, certificate.
4. **Bronze Brigade New Member Recruiter Award** – is a National award given to any Legionnaire who recruits 15 new members before May 15, 2024. The award consists of a bronze brigade patch and certificate.
5. **District Commander Race to the Top** – is a nationally sponsored award for District Commanders who have the highest percentage over their final 2023 membership on March 31, 2024. Category II (1,500 – 2,999 members), Category III (3,000 – 4,999 members), or Category IV (5,000 – 7,499). The first-place finisher and guest in each category will win a paid trip to the National Convention.
6. **100% Commander and Adjutant Pin** is presented to all Post Commanders and Adjutants whose Post achieves 100% of their Goal by the Department Convention.

Appendix A

2024 Target Dates and Percentages of Goal

Target Dates and Target Percentages were selected to keep in line with the National Target Dates. All 2024 memberships must be received by the Department Headquarters by noon on the Target Date to be counted.

<u>Target</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>% of Goal</u>
No. 1 - Early Bird	August 7	40%
No. 2 - Autumn Festival	September 11	50%
No. 3 - Octoberfest	October 10	55%
No. 4 - Veterans Day	November 13	65%
No. 5 - Pearl Harbor	December 11	75%
No. 6 - Bellwether	January 16	85%
No. 7 - Clean-up	February 12	90%
No. 8 - Legion Birthday	March 11	95%
No. 9 - Children and Youth	April 8	100%
*No. 10 – Convention	May 21	101%

* Note: Membership on May 21st determines Department Convention Delegate Strength at the Bismarck Convention on June 26-28, 2024.