

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

Every Department has the opportunity to join the Circle of Excellence. The criteria are listed below. National Headquarters will track this information. Consider this a checklist for the Program Year of important items and deadlines that must be met. Membership is an important factor and will be encouraged by the Conference Membership Coaches, who will be working with Department Membership Chairmen to achieve the membership portion of the Circle of Excellence criteria. Log into your MALTA Profile, Duties, Circle of Excellence to complete your criteria form. **Your Department MUST achieve 250 points or more to enter the Circle of Excellence.**

Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence:

1. Growth in Membership:

Membership Standings by June 30, 2026 based on June 30, 2025 final membership statistics. Membership will be based on figures listed on the CMR - Paid, Canceled & Deceased report in MALTA.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
110		Over 101% in membership, not including deaths (current percent)
100		100% Plus in membership, not including deaths (current percent)
90		100% Plus in membership, including paid deaths (paid percent)
80		97-100% in membership, including paid deaths (paid percent)

2. Comply with Bylaws/Administrative Follow-Through:

A) All installation reports MUST be received at National Headquarters by July 31. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date for time to mentor and rejuvenate the Auxiliary.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Installation report received at National Headquarters by July 31.
5		Suspension report received at National Headquarters by July 31.

B) All Auxiliaries MUST be bonded by August 31. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date to allow time to mentor and rejuvenate the Auxiliary.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		All Auxiliaries bonded by August 31 or request for suspension.
5		Suspension report received at National Headquarters by August 31.

C) The Department MUST have submitted a Council-approved audit and budget by October 1 or request an extension on or before that date. Once extension is met, points will be awarded.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Council-approved audit and budget by October 1 or request an extension.

D) Department, District and Auxiliary Officers (Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers) dues MUST be paid by December 31 or submit an email or letter to relieve any non-paid Officers to National Headquarters by January 5.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Dues of Officers at all levels paid by December 31 or email or letter to relieve non-paid Officers to Headquarters by January 5.

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Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence (continued):

- E) The Department **MUST** have submitted the names of their VAVS Representatives to National or request an extension on or before July 31.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Submit VAVS documentation to National Headquarters by July 31.

- F) Auxiliaries must have 10 paid members by February 1.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
5		Departments MUST notify National by February 4 of their plan to handle Auxiliaries with less than 10 members.

3. Department Communication:

- A) The Department **MUST** communicate with every Auxiliary at least quarterly in one or more of the following ways: email, mail, phone, website, newsletter, E-Newsletter or General Orders.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Communicate with Auxiliaries throughout the year.

- B) The Department Chairman of each National Program **MUST** send at least four (4) promotionals and/or communications to their National Ambassador by April 30. 10 points for submitting four (4), 15 points for submitting six (6).

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
15		Six (6) or more promotions of National Programs.
10		Four (4) or five (5) promotions of National Programs.

4. Training:

The Department **MUST** hold at least one training session* on each of the following:

**Training session can take place at a Department School of Instruction, meeting, Convention or other organized training events. These trainings can be combined into one session.*

- A) How to Identify an Unhealthy Auxiliary

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department to host training session on how to identify an unhealthy Auxiliary by November 30.

- B) National Programs and Organizational Knowledge (e.g. Bylaws, Ritual, & MALTA)

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department to host training session on National Programs and Organizational knowledge by November 30.

- C) Hold a training (for items not listed in 4 A & B) to benefit members (e.g., invite an accredited Veterans Service Officer (VSO) to speak at your meeting, etc.).

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Hold a training to benefit members by April 30.

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Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence (continued):

5. Programs Participation and Working Together on a Common Goal:

A) The Department **MUST** complete and submit the online Year-End Report.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
25		Department MUST submit the online Year-End Report by May 10.

B) What did your Department do to engage every Auxiliary in the work of the organization?

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department President MUST describe what the Department did to engage every Auxiliary in the working of the organization on the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

C) All Auxiliaries **MUST** complete at least one project, activity or donation that benefits veterans by April 30.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		All Auxiliaries MUST complete at least one project, activity or donation that benefits veterans by April 30. If not, the Department MUST contact the Auxiliary by that date for explanation.

D) The Department must hold a joint VFW and VFW Auxiliary Department-level project in addition to current National Scholarships programs. Project must be completed by April 30.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		The Department must hold a joint VFW and VFW Auxiliary Department-level project in addition to current National Scholarships Programs. Project must be completed by April 30. Project to be described in the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

E) Any Auxiliary that is below 100% in membership on January 31st **MUST** be contacted by a Department Officer to determine a need for mentoring and/or other assistance. The Department Officer must contact the Auxiliary on or before April 15th. The Department Officer must then report to the Department President by April 30th. The Department President will describe what was done to assist them in the box below.

(If all Auxiliaries and Districts in your Department are at 100% on January 31, you will automatically receive 10 points.)

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		A Department Officer is to contact any Auxiliary below 100% in membership on January 31, on or before April 15. Department Officer is to report to the Department President by April 30. Outcomes are to be described in the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

Circle of Excellence Awards:

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN

1. \$500 to the Department for meeting all of the criteria listed on pages 1-3 and entering the Circle of Excellence information.
2. Circle of Excellence Year Patch for Department Banner Ribbon.

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS

1. Circle of Excellence medallion.
2. Circle of Excellence tie or scarf.
3. Circle of Excellence pin.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARDS

FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN 2025-2026

The Outstanding Performance Awards are given each year to recognize hardworking Departments and Department Chairmen who have given an extra amount of effort.

The Outstanding Performance Award:

- \$200 will be awarded to the one Outstanding Department in each of the ten (10) Program Divisions*.
- A keepsake will be awarded to the Department Chairman of the one Outstanding Department in each of the ten (10) Program Divisions*.

Second-Place Outstanding Performance Award:

- \$100 will be awarded to the one Outstanding Department in each of the ten (10) Program Divisions*.
- A citation will be awarded to the Department Chairman of the one Outstanding Department in each of the ten (10) Program Divisions*.

11 Programs Judged:

- Americanism
- Auxiliary Outreach
- “Buddy”[®] Poppy & VFW National Home
- Extension & Revitalization
- Historian & Media Relations
- Hospital
- Legislative
- Membership
- Scholarships
- Veterans & Family Support
- Youth Activities

The Selection:

The National Program Ambassadors of each Program listed will select the recipients. Department Program Chairmen will be judged on quality, creativity and originality of all communications, promotions and events. When a Department Program Chairman does anything to promote or publicize the Program to the members and the community, they should send a copy of the item or communication or a description of the event or presentation to the National Program Ambassador.

Required to qualify:

The Department Program Chairman must have sent a minimum of four (4) mailed and/or emailed promotions to the members in their Department and must send copies to the National Ambassador by April 30, 2026.

Winners will be announced, and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention. If neither the winner nor Department leadership are in attendance, awards will be mailed to recipients from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters upon return from the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

**Program Divisions will be announced at the start of the Program Year.*