



**American Legion**  
**Department of Maine**  
**Membership Plan**  
**2023-2024**

**“Make a Difference, Pay It Forward”**

## 2023-2024 Membership Plan

This year our focus is **'MAKE A DIFFERENCE, PAY IT FORWARD'** we are on a mission this year to make a difference and support those who may be unable to pay their membership due to hardships.

Our organization needs **YOU** to make this membership year a success. As you know we are stronger together and need to work to make this happen. We are, "Strength in Numbers"!

Membership is not one person's responsibility! If you carry a Legion Membership card, membership is your responsibility as well. If each of us takes on this responsibility to ensure our fellow members are current with their membership then life would be so much easier for everyone involved. It's time to **STAY** involved!

Last membership year we ended up in **28th** position at the National level.

**Retention: The Key to Membership Is Growth!**

**I challenge each and every one of you to retain your membership you currently have and also to sign-up one or two new 2024 members! Actually, I challenge you to sign up THREE new members.**

**It is important that you develop a MEMBERSHIP TEAM to complete tasks and also follow up on membership plans.**

**Lastly, I also challenge each of you, your Post, and your District to PAY IT FORWARD for a member that is going through a hardship, in a nursing home, on active duty or, just because! Find a veteran in your community that could use a pay it forward membership. You don't have to do this out of your own pocket. You CAN pass the hat at Post and District meetings. You CAN put a donation container out at your Post. You CAN hold a supper with proceeds going to the Pay it Forward campaign! Why do I ask you to do this? I ask this because, "MEMBERSHIP MATTERS".**

**Don't stop there! Remember to stay in contact with the new member you sign up. Ensure they are feeling welcomed and informed. Remember to take them from where they are at with the level of involvement they are comfortable**

with. It's up to us to retain the new member that has been given a "pay it forward" membership.

Yearly challenge! Membership teams should attend a resource fair or event in your area. Do this a few times throughout the year. Have a table with the American Legion information and most importantly, ensure you have information on why they should belong. The pamphlets "Why You Should Belong", "This Is The American Legion", and "Troop Support" are excellent examples of what you should have when sitting a table for membership. Be ready with applications to sign up new members. Ensure you have membership applications for all prospects of the American Legion Family.

We are sometimes our own best kept secret. You may already send out newsletters letting your members know what your Post has been doing but don't stop there. It is important that you publicize all you do at your Post and in your community by submitting pictures and stories to newspapers, post on facebook, and by sending info to the Department for submission in The Maine Legionnaire. Please share unique ideas you may be using with others to get the word out about our organization. We need to also educate the public on who we are and what we do. Use American Legion informational pamphlets to create info to submit to your local newspapers on what the American Legion is about and, how we help our veterans, their families and our communities.

## September

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 50% by September 13, 2023
2. Communication is the key whether it is by Post Newsletters, E-mail or phone calls, keep your membership informed of the importance of meeting membership target dates. Meeting those dates could mean money for the Department.
3. Attend Fall Conference and promote to your Post members to attend the conference. Fall Conference is normally training on the latest membership tactics, plus learning what works at other Posts within the Department.
4. Conduct Buddy Checks on 20% of your membership. Buddy Checks are very important, start with checking on their well-being then remind them of their membership status. There may be a hidden issue with the member that without the phone call it would never be known. **Be The One to check in on any WWII, Korean and Vietnam Veterans.**
5. Once you make contact, update them on the things the Post/Department has been and will be doing in the future. Invite them to join in the fun.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold an Open House/Membership Drive while recognizing Patriots Day on 9/11 or POW/MIA Day on 9/15. Offer snacks! Be ready to sign up new members. Advertise this event in your local paper.
- Write an article for your local paper explaining information on the American Legion history or more current events.. Example the Four Pillars, the Pact Act, Be The One, Why, You Should Belong.
- Celebrate the Air Force's Birthday by having a pot luck and birthday cake and invite the community to join you. Remember to have a resource table with membership material and someone to sit the table and answer questions.
- Begin working towards target date of 55% by October 18.

## **October**

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 55% by October 18, 2023.
2. Contact 20% of the Post members that have not paid to date. Stress the fact that paying on-line will be quicker.
3. Contact 20% of your DMS expired list of 2020, 2021 and 2022.
4. Create a news release and invite all to Post Veteran Day events.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold an event for Halloween. Invite all veterans and especially our younger veterans with families to bring their children to a fun, safe and friendly costume party.
- Hold a "Trunk or Treat".
- Ensure there is a membership table at all events with knowledgeable people to sit it. Ensure you have publications and membership applications.
- Reach out by doing a buddy check on any WWII or Korean veterans in your community.
- Celebrate the U.S. Navy's Birthday
- Launch an all-out membership campaign/program. Have a friendly competition with all members in your Post to bring in the most members.
- Begin working towards target date of 65% by November 15.

## **November**

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 65% by November 15, 2023.
2. Conduct Buddy Checks around Veterans Day of at least 20% of your unpaid members. Remember that contact may be the only person they have had communication with in a while. Be a Comrade that cares.
3. Invite them to your Veteran Day events if the call is prior to November 11. Hold an open house with a membership table setup. Ensure you have members to sit the table for questions.
4. If after your Veteran Day events, invite them to any holiday events in December.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold a Veterans Day Ceremony.
- Hold a veterans coffee
- Celebrate the Marine Corp's birthday November 10<sup>th</sup>
- Be The One to check in on any WWII, Korean and Vietnam Veterans.
- Begin working towards target date of 75% by December 13.

## December

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 75% by December 13, 2023.
2. Hold a Pearl Harbor ceremony with an open house and membership table. Ensure you have members to sit the table for questions.
3. Contact an additional 20% of the DMS expired lists from 2020, 2021 and 2022.
4. Contact 10% of the names from Post 178 that are in your area zip code.
5. Promote attendance at Mid-Winter Conference in January.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Celebrate the Space Force's birthday
- Hold a ceremony to honor Pearl Harbor and the many we lost on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Acknowledge Pearl Harbor as "a day that will live in infamy". Invite the community.
- Visit veterans who are ill or in the hospital. This is a perfect time if you are able to Pay It Forward for those who are struggling. Remember to check in on any WWII, Korean and Vietnam Veterans. Show them we care and that they do matter.
- Begin working towards target date of 80% by January 18.

## **January**

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 80% by January 18, 2024.
2. Contact remaining members on your Post delinquent list.
3. Conduct Buddy Checks and remind members that their membership has expired and next month they will lose any Legion Insurance Trust (LIT) policy they may have. (Reminder to not start the conversation that dues are overdue) Check in first then ease in on the dues conversation.
4. Invite all members to your Post Four Chaplains' Ceremony being held next month.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold an Initiation Ceremony for all new members. Invite all Legion Family members and community members. Ensure you have photos taken to get information in the newspaper.
- Mail postcards to all unpaid members as a reminder.
- Begin the new year with a Veterans Coffee, have Post Service Officers in attendance.
- Hold a Veterans Luncheon or Supper inviting all Veterans in your community to attend.
- Begin working towards target date of 85% by February 14.



## February

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 85% by February 14, 2024.
2. Continuing contacting members on your Post delinquent list.
3. Contact an additional 10% of the DMS expired list from 2021, 2022 and 2023.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold a Four Chaplains Ceremony inviting the community and all Legion Family members. Provide membership table.
- Plan a gathering to honor Presidents Day.
- Begin planning the American Legion's birthday. Get a committee together to ensure nothing is forgotten. Example: birthday cake, (most local grocery stores will donate towards the event), meal, invite scouts to participate, give a tour of your Post, send an invite to your local paper inviting the community and all members to join you. Most importantly remember membership table and resources. Follow up with a story for the paper.
- Begin working towards target date of 90% by March 13.

## **March**

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 90% by March 13, 2024.
2. Conduct Buddy Checks on or around the American Legions' Birthday.
3. Contact remaining members on your roster who has not renewed their membership.
4. Contact an additional 10% of the DMS expired list from 2021, 2022 and 2023

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Follow through with the planning of an Open House to celebrate the American Legion's Birthday. Make it a huge event with a membership table. Ensure you have members to sit the table for questions. Publicize!
- Begin publicizing Dirigo State by putting an article in the paper. Send out solicitation letters to help with delegate tuition.
- Hold a Vietnam Veterans Day celebration with a lunch or supper.
- Begin working towards target date of 95% by April 10.

## **April**

1. Post Commanders/Membership Chairs work on the 2023-2024 membership target date of 95% by April 10, 2024.
2. Contact remaining members on your roster who has not renewed their membership.
3. Contact an additional 10% of the DMS expired list from 2021, 2022 and 2023.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold a community supper with proceeds going to support Dirigo State, ensure a membership table is ready with applications, resources, and knowledgeable people to sit the table.
- Get a group of members to complete a community service event, (some towns hold a community clean-up day, clean up your local Veterans Memorial Park) wear Legion logo shirts and caps. Remember to have membership applications not only for Legionnaires but for their family members as well.
- Moving forward to the May 15<sup>th</sup> target date for 100%. Give all that you have to make this target date!

## May

1. Achieve 100% membership goal target date of May 15, 2024.
2. Complete the follow-up calls or send out postcards for members who have not renewed.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Conduct further Buddy Checks and invite all to your Post Memorial Day events. Have an open house/meal with a membership table setup. Ensure you have members to sit the table for questions.
- Hold a Mother's Day breakfast. If you are able offer a discounted membership to any veteran bringing their mother to the breakfast.
- Hold a Blue Star Banner presentation to mothers of service members.
- Invite veterans and community members to support getting flags out on all veteran's graves. Have membership applications available.
- WE CAN DO THIS TEAM MAINE!

## June/July

1. Continue to track 2023-2024 membership through July 2024 30 days prior to National Convention.

### **Monthly Challenge!**

- Hold another community service day!
- June 14<sup>th</sup> is Flag Day! Hold a Dignified Disposal Ceremony. Invite the community and scouts. Provide a meal. Provide history books, pictures and videos of your Posts for all to see. Membership, membership membership! Ensure applications are available.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia Thurston

American Legion Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander

**We Are American Legion Strong And We Have Strength In Numbers!**