

MINNESOTA

VFW RIDERS GROUP

Standard Operating Procedure



**Using Concepts Approved by the
VFW National Convention
August 2010**

PURPOSE:

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

FORMATION:

Posts/Districts can sponsor and begin a VFW Riders Group in accordance with the action of the Council of Administration of the Department of Minnesota Individual Post or District Riders Groups will be referred to as the VFWRG Committee (Committee).

If all Riders are from a single Post (comrades, auxiliary sisters, auxiliary brothers), then the Post should sponsor the Group. If Riders from several Posts want to have a Group, then the District should sponsor the Group

In order to sponsor and begin a VFW Riders Group, the sponsoring Post or District must vote to approve the formation on the Post or District floor at a regular meeting. The Post Commander will then forward a letter through the District Commander for his information (District requests go straight to the Department Headquarters) to the Department Headquarters requesting permission to form a Committee. The letter will include the statement that the motion to form was passed by a 2/3 majority at a regular meeting. If all is in order, the Department Commander will approve the Committee formation and inform the Post/District.

As with Clubs/canteens, the State Commander may suspend the activities of any VFWRG for the good of the organization.

In order to dissolve a Post/District Riders Committee, the Post/District must have a 2/3 vote on the Post/District floor at a regular meeting. If dissolved, all Rider designated funds will become the property of the Post/District general fund, and all former Rider members will be forbidden to wear VFWRG distinctive clothing.

NAME:

The abbreviation for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Motorcycle Riders Groups shall be VFWRG.

VFWRG shall be referred to as VFWRG Committees. Under no circumstances will Committees ever be referred to as clubs. The name of each Committee shall be VFW Post (or District) XXXX Riders. Example is VFW Post 6587 Riders.

MEMBERSHIP:

All VFWRG members shall be members in good standing with either the Veterans of Foreign Wars or one of its nationally recognized auxiliaries. Each must be the legally registered owner of a properly insured motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license (military equivalents acceptable as well) or a rider thereto.

In order to participate in any sponsored VFW event or VFWRG event, the rider must additionally sign a waiver holding the VFW Post, District, Department, or National headquarters and all VFW auxiliaries harmless in the event of any accident or incident. These waivers will be maintained on file by the Post/District Adjutant.

In order to be a VFWRG member, a comrade/sister/brother will present to the Committee Chairman proof of insurance and proof of license, and complete the waiver to hold harmless. The Committee Chairman will turn in all member names to the Post Adjutant, who will maintain a list of all VFWRG Committee members.

VFW Rider Supporters are authorized to participate in Committee events. Such supporter classification does not constitute membership in the VFW or any of its auxiliaries nor come with the promise of any material, financial, or political benefit to the VFWRG, its members or committee; nor to any other member at any other organizational level within the VFW; nor there be any similar gains for the honoree through the conferring of "Supporter" status, but is intended as a means to provide recognition to those who show strong support to the VFWRG programs and events.

Prospective supporters must, without exception, be the legally registered owner of a properly insured motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license (military equivalents acceptable as well) or a rider thereto. In order to be a VFWRG Supporter, the person will be invited to participate by the VFWRG Committee events, and will then present to the Committee Chairman proof of insurance and proof of license, and complete the waiver to hold harmless. The Committee Chairman will turn in all Supporter names to the Post Adjutant, who will maintain a list of all VFWRG Committee supporters.

Rider Supporters can be from any location. They do not gain any physical privileges from being a Rider Supporter, to include automatic entry into a Club/canteen. They could, however, be admitted to a Club/canteen as a guest of an actual rider (who must be a comrade/sister/brother).

All Supporters eligible for membership in the VFW or one of its Auxiliaries must become members in good standing, and then become an actual VFWRG member.

Post/District Adjutants are responsible for providing the Department Headquarters with the names, addresses, and designation (comrade, sister, brother, supporter) of all Rider members. The Department Headquarters will provide this information to VFW National Headquarters for the purpose of promoting any VFW national/regional riding events or distribution of VFWRG related material. Knowledge and approval of this practice is required of any prospective Riders member.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

Posts/Districts must appoint a Riders Committee to manage the Riders Group. The committee shall consist of the Post/District Commander, Quartermaster and three appointed members (appointed by the Commander). The three appointed members must be VFW comrades in good standing who are also Riders. The Chairman will be appointed by the Commander and must be one of the three appointed Riders. The three appointed members have a term of one-year, but may be dismissed at any time at the pleasure of the Commander. The names of the committee and its Chairman will be forwarded to Department Headquarters, who will forward it to VFV; National Headquarters, Attn: Admin Operations.

Post/District Trustees cannot be on the Committee.

Committees are allowed to hold separate meetings and individual Riders may attend Riders Committee meetings at the invitation of the Committee Chairman. Riders not on the Committee will only be allowed to speak "with the permission of the Committee Chairman. Only the Committee is allowed to vote on Rider decisions, and the Committee may be overruled at any Post/District regular meeting by a floor vote. The Committee will report to the Post/District floor at every regular meeting, as do all committees.

The Post/District Quartermaster shall handle all funds of the Riders. Riders Committees will not have officers. The Quartermaster will create a designated account in his Post/District ledger for the Riders and all designated Rider income and expenses must be accounted for in that column. All Rider expenditures and income producing events must be pre-approved by a Post/District floor vote, as presented to the floor by the Riders Committee. Designated Rider funds can only be expended for Rider activities.

Riders may hold designated fund-raisers (such as poker runs) for their Post/District with approval of the Post/District floor. When fund-raisers are held, the purpose of the fund-raiser must be clearly stated and advertised, such as for the Post/District General Fund, or the Minnesota VFW Programs, etc. Monies secured from such fund-raisers must be accounted for by the Post/District Quartermaster in the appropriate fund. For example, funds raised for the Minnesota VFW or the Wounded Warriors Project would be accounted for and a report on that fundraiser would be given at a Post/District Meeting. Funds from VFWRG events can be transferred to other Post/District funds upon recommendation of the Committee and approval of the Post/District floor.

Expenditure and receipt of funds (to include solicitation of and fundraising activity) shall be in accordance with the VFW National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure.

The Committee Chairman will exercise such supervision over VFWRG members as will insure the protection of the VFW name and property. Disciplinary actions will be handled in accordance with Post/District, Department or National By-Laws. The Committee may adopt rules and regulations governing the structure and conduct of their VFWRG as do not conflict with those issued by higher authority. Such rules and regulations shall become effective upon their approval by the sponsoring Post/District.

District Commanders will include VFWRG's in their post inspections to insure they are complying with this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

LOGOS, APPAREL and PATCHES:

The back patch of a jacket or vest will be a single patch. Comrades will wear the VFW Cross of Malta, sisters will wear the Ladies Auxiliary Cross of Malta, and brothers will wear the Men's Auxiliary Cross of Malta. The words "VFW Post/District 9999 Motorcycle Riders Group" will be wrapped around it. Under no circumstances will three-piece patches or "rockers" be used. The name of the post town and the words "Minnesota or MN may also be included on the patch. A copy of the patch will be forwarded to Department Headquarters, which will forward along with the Committee name to VFW National Headquarters, Attn: Admin Operations, for approval by the Commander-in-Chief.

Supporters will wear the words "I Support VFW Post/District 9999 Riders Group or VFW Post/District 9999 Riders Group Supporter". Non members are not allowed to wear the Cross of Malta. (See sample patch design that has been approved by the Department of Minnesota, VFW.)

Members will be dressed in a manner that promotes a positive image for The Veterans of Foreign Wars, particularly when operating in group activities or interacting with the community. No VFWRG shall allow the use of patches or apparel using offensive or political language in conjunction with any patch or apparel using any VFW logo or trademark. The Post/District Commander or Committee Chairman may forbid individual Riders from participating in any single VFW sponsored event if their apparel is inappropriate.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Each VFW subordinate organization operating a Riders Group must adhere to the policies herein and those passed down from proper authority. Failure to comply with these issued standard operating procedures will cause the group to be disbanded. Under no circumstances will VFW comrades/sisters/brothers operate under any

other rules than this SOP and the approved Post/District additional rules, if applicable. Posts/Districts will not support, operate, or provide assistance to any subordinate motorcycle organization unless governed by this SOP and the approved Post/District additional rules, if applicable. All Post/District additional rules are subordinate to this SOP, Post By-Laws, District By-Laws, Department By-Laws, National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure.

Riders units may cooperate in functions with other like-minded motorcycle organizations for patriotic purposes, such as the Patriot Guard or Rolling Thunder. Post/District floor approval must be obtained prior to any multi-organization function. Under no circumstances will Riders units participate in functions operated by or participated in by "outlaw" clubs.

This SOP may be amended by Department Headquarters from time to time.

APPROVED by the Department of Minnesota, VFW Council of Administration on this 12th day of September, 2014.



Motorcycle Riders Groups

This document is intended to serve as a standard for Veteran of Foreign Wars Motorcycle Riders Groups/Associations, henceforth referred to as VFWRG, pursuant to mandate of the 111th National Convention, Resolution 308, adopted August 23, 2010.

This document may be amended from time to time by the Commander-in-Chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Purpose

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

Formation

Each VFWRG will be presented as an activity, managed by a VFWRG Committee, established by its sponsoring Department, District or Post. No VFWRG will represent itself as, or be a Motorcycle Club (MC) or part of any MC Confederation / Organization at any level.

Name

Each VFWRG may adopt a name of its choosing, subject to rules and regulations adopted by the Department having jurisdiction and the approval of the sponsoring unit and that of the Commander-in-Chief. The use of the name "VFW Riders" is recommended.

Membership

All VFWRG members shall be members in good standing with either the Veterans of Foreign Wars or one of its nationally recognized auxiliaries. Each must be the legally registered owner of a properly insured motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license in their state of residence (military equivalents acceptable as well) or a rider thereto.

Subject to the rules and regulations of a Department, a Department, District or Post VFWRG may allow Supporters (aka "Supporting Riders" or "Guest Riders"). Such supporter classification does not constitute membership in the VFW nor come with the promise of any material, financial, or political benefit to the VFWRG, its members or committee; nor to any other member at any other organizational level within the VFW; nor there be any similar gains for the honoree through the conferring of "Supporter" status, but is intended as a means to provide recognition to those who show strong support to the VFWRG programs and events. Prospective supporters must, without exception, be the legally registered owner of a properly insured motorcycle and must possess a valid motorcycle driver's license in their state of residence (military equivalents acceptable as well) or a rider thereto. All supporters eligible for membership in the VFW or one of its Auxiliaries shall become members in good standing.

VFWRG Committee

Each VFWRG formed shall be managed by committee, appointed by its respective Commander. All committee chairmen/members will be selected from those VFW members in good standing who are also members of the VFWRG. In addition, the Commander and Quartermaster of the sponsoring unit, by virtue of their offices, shall be members of the committee. Trustees of the sponsoring unit shall not serve on the committee.

The committee shall exercise such supervision over VFWRG members as will insure the protection of the VFW name and property.

The committee chairman shall seek approval and report its activities, at each regular meeting of the sponsoring unit.

Expenditure and receipt of funds (to include solicitation of and fundraising activity) shall be in accordance with VFW National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure.

The committee may adopt rules and regulations governing the structure and conduct of their VFWRG as do not conflict with those issued by higher authority. Such rules and regulations shall only become effective upon their approval by the sponsoring unit.

Logos, Apparel and Patches

The use of the VFW logos and VFW trademarks are protected under Sections 803 and 805 of the National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure.

Each VFWRG may adopt a one-piece back patch or other apparel that will promote its group in a safe and respectable manner. The patch(s) may use the member's appropriate logo (i.e. VFW Member wears VFW logo; auxiliary member wears the appropriate auxiliary logo. All articles of clothing worn by "Supporting Riders" using any logo or trademark, when authorized by the VFW, shall contain the word(s) "I support" or "Supporter".), Post/District/Department affiliation or be of creative design. In all instances, the design shall be subject to the approval of the Department having jurisdiction and that of the Commander-in-Chief, with the authority to manufacture in accordance with Section 803 of the Manual of Procedure. Under no circumstance shall a VFWRG adopt a three-piece patch; the use of "rockers" is deemed unacceptable.

It is strongly recommended that members dress in a manner that promotes a positive image for The Veteran of Foreign Wars, particularly when operating in group activities or interacting with the community. No VFWRG shall allow the use of patches or apparel using offensive language in conjunction with any patch or apparel using any VFW logo or trademark.

Miscellaneous

Each VFW subordinate unit currently operating a Riders Group, M/C or like organization, must adhere to the policies herein and those passed down from proper authority. Failure to comply with these issued guidelines will cause the group to be disbanded.

Each existing or newly formed VFWRG shall forward immediately (within 30 days), through proper channels to the Adjutant General's office, the name/membership number of all committee members and/or any changes thereto, for the purpose of promoting any VFW national/regional riding events or distribution of VFWRG related material.

These guidelines are hereby adopted, this 14th day of September of 2010.

By Order of
Richard L. Eubank
Commander-in-Chief
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US

Official:



Allen "Gunner" Kent
Adjutant General