

STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS' HANDBOOK



By

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.
AND
VVA CONFERENCE OF STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS**

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State Council Presidents' Handbook Introduction

This handbook was originally developed for your use by the VVA Conference of State Council Presidents (CSCP). It is based on many years of combined expertise from the CSCP, VVA board members, committee chairs, and staff, and will provide you with as much guidance as is available.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide assistance on a variety of issues pertaining to the proper procedures, operations, and management of a Vietnam Veterans of America State Council. Commencing with the administering of the oath, the handbook will walk the new President through each sequence of events, from the conduct of New Business during the Annual Meeting to the final transition once his or her term is completed.

For leadership to be productive, one must provide a foundation of information to draw from. This handbook will cover many key functions, such as the elements of administration, meetings, disciplinary issues, required forms, and reports. The number of meetings and the State Council bylaws may vary from state to state, but the techniques discussed in this handbook are integral to keeping the State Council in compliance with *The Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America* and will assist the new State Council President in becoming an effective leader.

Please send any recommendations for changes or improvement to the VVA National Office, Attn: Membership Affairs.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Purpose of Guide

Chapter 1: Transition To/From Office.....1-2

Transition To Office–Day of Election

1. Administering the Oath of Office
 2. Immediate Actions
 3. Appointment or Reaffirmation of Committee Chair
- Transfer of Records and Equipment–To and From Office
Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors Meeting
Summary of Pending Disciplinary Actions
Summary of Current Suspensions in Effect

Chapter 2: Administration.....3-7

Duties of Office

State Council Bylaws

Filing of Required Forms and Reports

1. IRS
2. State Income Tax and Registration
3. Annual Financial Report
4. Election Report
5. Household Goods Donation Program
6. Service Representative Grant Financial Report

Maintenance of Fidelity Bonding

Establishing Lines of Communication

1. National
2. Regional
3. State
4. Chapter
5. Membership

Restricted Activities

Conflict of Interest Policy

Chapter 3: Meetings.....8-9

Scheduled State Council Meetings

1. Establishing Dates and Locations
2. Agendas
3. Conducting a Meeting

Conference of State Council Presidents Meetings

National Leadership & Education Conference

Regional Meetings

Chapter 4: National Convention.....10-12

Preamble

National Convention

Delegates

1. Chapter Delegates
2. At-large Delegates

Credentials Committee and Guidelines

Role of State Presidents

Regional Meetings/Caucus

State Council Caucus

Chapter 5: Disciplinary Issues.....13

Preamble

Regional Disciplinary Committee

Financial and Election Reporting, VVA Suspensions

Appendix.....14

VVA Forms: Annual Financial Report, State Council Election Report, HGDP Report, and Service Representative Grant Financial Report

State Reporting Forms

VVA Constitution and VVA National Disciplinary Policy

Example of Tentative Agenda

CHAPTER 1: TRANSITION TO/FROM OFFICE

Transition To Office–Day of Election

Every State Council will hold its Annual Meeting in the second calendar quarter of each even numbered year for the purpose of electing officers. The officers shall serve for a term of two (2) years, per the ***Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Article II: State Provisions, Section 4--Officers, Paragraph A***. The delegates of the State Council will determine the date and location of the meeting. After verification of the prescribed credentials of each candidate, the State Council Nominating or Election Committee conducts the elections in accordance with the National Constitution, the State Council bylaws, and any delegate-approved election procedures.

1. Administering the Oath of Office: There is no requirement for an oath of office in the VVA Constitution, the oath of office is optional and anyone can administer the oath since it is purely ceremonial. The person elected to office takes that office immediately upon announcement of the election results unless the bylaws say differently. No oath has to be administered for an officer to assume his or her position.

2. Immediate Actions: The new State Council President will assume the position of Chairperson and reconvene the meeting under New Business.

3. Appointment or Reaffirmation of Committee Chair: The newly elected President appoints or reappoints the chairpersons of all State Council committees, including any delegate-approved special or ad hoc committees, subject to the approval of the State Council, as defined in ***Article II: State Provisions, Section 7--Committees*** and as per ***Appendix II in The Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.*** The VVA Constitution has no directive to form an election or nomination committee at the state council level and it is really up to each state council. State Councils might want to consider calling this an “election committee” to be consistent with the national and chapter levels in the Constitution. The President administers the Oath of Office to the chairs as per ***Appendix III*** to the ***Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.*** The committee chairpersons then appoint the members of committees subject to the approval of the State Council delegates.

Transfer of Records and Equipment – To and From Office

The outgoing officers of the State Council should turn over all records and equipment after the election is completed unless the by-laws state otherwise or there is a viable reason for a delay. In that case, a verbal or written agreement for the transfer of State Council records and equipment should be noted during the New Business session so that it will be a matter of record in the meeting minutes. The outgoing officers of the State Council shall make appropriate arrangements for the transfer and/or delivery of all State Council records and equipment within a timeframe determined by the State Council from the date of the election and at the expense of the State Council.

A new Treasurer should immediately take possession of checkbooks, credit cards, and any financial records available at the annual meeting. Other records and equipment including, but not limited to, computer(s), printer(s), scanner(s), fax machine(s), file cabinet(s), flags, banners, archival as well as current records, and any inventory of items for sale by the State Council should be transferred and delivered within a timeframe determined by the State Council. The delivery of the above items should be in person or by means of the appropriate postal or delivery service and should be documented by a written inventory signed by both the outgoing and incoming officers responsible for the records and equipment.

Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors Meeting

Depending on the state's corporate statutes and/or individual State Council bylaws, the State Council may or may not have an executive committee composed of the officers elected by the delegates at the annual meeting. State Council bylaws may permit the addition of other elected State Council officials in addition to the elected officers to form a Board of Directors. An Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors meeting may be held after adjourning the annual State Council meeting in order to orient new officers, arrange future meetings, sign signature cards for bank accounts, and conduct any other business requiring immediate attention. The frequency of meetings of the Executive Committee/Board of Directors can be addressed by the State Council bylaws or determined by the Executive Committee/Board of Directors. Meeting(s) should be used to keep State Council Officers informed and to implement, assign, or follow up on any business approved by the State Council delegates.

Summary of Pending Disciplinary Actions

Should there be pending disciplinary actions by the State Council, the outgoing administration should provide to the incoming officers a summary report of the pending cases as well as all files and records associated with those cases. The outgoing officers should also make themselves available to answer questions from the newly elected officers about any particular case in order to prevent confusion and any reciprocal action by an accused.

The outgoing administration, in the person of the Secretary with the assistance of the President, should provide a list of names of the current members of the Regional Disciplinary Committee. The chair of the committee should be identified as well.

Summary of Current Suspensions in Effect

The outgoing administration should provide from their records a summary of all current suspensions of Chapters or members. Any files and records associated with a suspension should be delivered to the incoming Secretary. In the case of a Chapter's suspension due to failure to submit an election report or a financial report on a timely basis, the outgoing administration should apprise the new officers of all actions taken to resolve the suspension of that chapter.

CHAPTER 2: ADMINISTRATION

Duties of Office

The State Council President's duties are stated in the *Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Article II: State Provisions, Section 5--Duties of Officers, Paragraph A*. As the principal executive officer of a State Council, the President presides at all meetings of the State Council and is the official representative of the State Council to the Corporation. Each President of a State Council has the authority to insure that all Chapters and the State Council are in compliance with all governmental statutes, rules, and regulations. Another explanation of the State Council President's duties may also be defined in the individual State Council bylaws, which may provide further requirements pertaining to the duties of the office. Any additional requirements may not be in conflict with the *Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America*.

A State Council President may or may not approve a request for a Chapter start-up kit to be issued to an individual or group of individuals for the purpose of expanding membership recruitment within the state. This authority is given per a VVA National Board of Directors policy. State Council Presidents will verify the completed contents of the Chapter start-up kit before sending it to the VVA Membership Department for charter processing.

State Council Bylaws

During the process of incorporating as a Vietnam Veterans of America State Council, each State Council shall draft a set of bylaws. These bylaws, which may have been amended over the years, provide additional guidance regarding officers, delegates, meetings, and procedures. The State Council bylaws may elaborate on issues such as mailing address, membership in the State Council, number of meetings, attendance by chapters, credentials of delegate(s), the number of delegates to be seated, reporting, correspondence, credentials of candidates, and further requirements of the duties of office for the officers. State Council bylaws may not be in conflict with the *Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America*.

Filing of Required Forms and Reports

As an incorporated subsidiary of a not-for-profit Veterans Service Organization (Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.), a State Council is subject to the rules and regulations of the Internal Revenue Service and those of the state in which it is incorporated. The State Council President is responsible for ensuring all reports required by Federal or State law are submitted in a timely manner. The State Council President is also responsible for ensuring timely reporting to Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., pertaining to elections, financial matters, chapter, membership, disciplinary issues, and any national program involvement such as Household Goods Donation Program or Vietnam Veterans Service Officer Program.

1. **Internal Revenue Service:** Vietnam Veterans of America State Councils are incorporated as tax-exempt 501(c)(19) organizations. As an incorporated

subsidiary of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., the State Councils are covered by the Internal Revenue Service Group Tax Exemption granted to VVA, Inc. Beginning in 2008, all State Councils are required to file either an Electronic Notice 990-N, a Form 990EZ, or a Form 990, and State Councils with any Exempt Organization Business Income file Form 990T.

- 2. State Income Tax and Registration:** The State Council is issued a Federal Employee ID number and must register with the appropriate office within the state of incorporation. This may be the office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Taxation and Revenue, or some other office. In addition, tax-exempt status may qualify a State Council for state and local benefits, such as exemption from state sales tax. Consult with an attorney familiar with your local law to determine if additional benefits are available and the procedure for application. The IRS Group Tax Exemption Ruling does not relieve a State Council from its federal, state, and local charity registration and reporting requirements. Your exemption is in lieu of the sales tax on taxable items purchased if the items relate to the purpose of the exempt organization and are not used for the personal benefit of a private individual.

- 3. Annual Financial Report:** Annual Financial Reports are due in the National Office no later than **July 15** of the year in which the fiscal year ended. There is only one format for the VVA Annual Report and the form is self-explanatory. Either the IRS Form 990, 990EZ or 990T that was filed with the IRS must be submitted with the State Council Financial Report. Additionally the IRS e-mail acknowledging acceptance of the 990-N submission must be submitted with the State Council Financial Report. The form requires the dated signatures of the State Council President and the State Council Treasurer. Annual Financial Reports should be sent to the VVA Membership Department by certified mail with return card requested. The return receipts should be kept with a copy of the report in the State Council records. VVA could grant a waiver if a legitimate problem prevents the State Council from filing by the deadline. If an extension is granted by the IRS, you must notify the National Office no later than **July 15** of the extension. In odd-numbered years, financial reports must be received prior to the National Convention in order for the State Council delegates to participate in the Convention.

The Charter of any State Council that fails to file its financial report within the specified period automatically will be suspended upon written notice of suspension to the National Board of Directors by the VVA Membership Department. In such cases, no disciplinary charges under the National Disciplinary Policy are required for the suspension to be effective. Written notice of suspension shall be sent to the State Council at its last-known address. Suspension shall continue until (1) the State Council files its financial report for the year that caused the suspension; or (2) the Board of Directors of the Corporation

relieves the State Council of the responsibility for the filing of a financial report for the year in question; or (3) the Charter of the State Council is revoked upon the filing of charges under the National Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

4. **Election Report:** Election of State Council Officers is held in the second calendar quarter of even-numbered years. The Officers serve for a term of two (2) years. ***The VVA Constitution, in Article II: State Provisions, Section 12— Reporting,*** states that the Charter of any State Council that fails to file its election report by July 15th automatically will be suspended upon written notice of suspension to the National Board of Directors by the VVA Membership Department. In such cases, no disciplinary charges under the National Disciplinary Policy are required for the suspension to be effective. Written notice of suspension shall be sent to the State Council at its last- known address. Suspension shall continue until (1) the State Council files its election report for the election year which caused the suspension; or (2) the Board of Directors of the Corporation relieves the State Council of the responsibility for the filing of a report for the election year in question; or (3) the Charter of the State Council is revoked upon the filing of charges under the National Disciplinary Policy.
5. **Household Goods Donation Program:** If your state participates in VVA's Household Goods Donation Program, all questions or concerns relative to the operation of the program should be directed to the VVA's HGDP Manager at this toll free number: 800-882-1316, Ext. 123. All financial reporting requirements are to be directed to VVA's CFO at this toll free number: 800-882-1316, ext. 126. The State Council President is responsible for ensuring that the 6 month and the annual report are filed. The form requires two signatures and the State Council President is responsible for ensuring that HGDP funds are used only for purposes approved under the agreement.
6. **Service Officer Grant Financial Report:** State Councils receiving grants for the Service Officer Program from the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund must submit 6-month and annual reports. Funds received under this program may be spent only in support of the Service Officer Program. The report should reflect ALL of the funds spent on or in support of the Service Officer program, regardless of the source. In-kind expenses such as VA free office space, etc., should NOT be used when determining expenses and the report must be signed by the State Council President.

Maintenance of Fidelity Bonding

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. will secure and maintain fidelity bonding which is a 3 year policy for State Councils up to the amount of \$10,000 at no expense to the State Council. Additional bonding over that amount may be secured by the State Council at its expense. Such bonding is for the purpose of restitution or reimbursement of, State Council funds due to dishonesty, fraud, deceit, forgery, embezzlement, theft, or any

other act of moral turpitude, which could result in a monetary loss to the State Council. For further detail you can consult the ***Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Article II: State Provisions, Section 5--Duties of Officers, Paragraph E.***

Establishing Lines of Communication

Numerous means of communication are available to insure that contact among every level of Vietnam Veterans of America and the general membership is continuous. The Internet and the use of E-mail or a cell-phone has advanced every day communication, but mail correspondence and fax are still used to a great extent.

- 1. National:** The State Council must maintain lines of communication with National regarding membership, election & financial reporting, and disciplinary issues. Other communication regarding information on Veterans' benefits, legislative matters, national programs, training, and committee work are also important. *The VVA Veteran* and the VVA web page are also essential tools of communication for National. Each State Council should insure that information regarding resources at National is available to their membership.
- 2. Regional:** The State Council must maintain communication with its Regional Director regarding election reporting, disciplinary issues, advocacy at the National Board meetings, and updates on policy or procedural changes. The Regional Director will also facilitate the sharing of information among the states within the region.
- 3. State:** The State Council President is responsible for communication within the Executive Committee/Board of Directors in order to keep all State Council Officers updated on Council business matters. Updates to your Committee Chairs will keep their committees current with breaking news, and updates to a group e-mail contact list of their chapters will keep the members current.
- 4. Chapter:** The State Council President is responsible for maintaining communications with all Chapters within the State. This may be directly to Chapter officers or through State Council delegates. Enforcement of election-reporting requirements will keep contact sources current. Updates between Council meetings could help streamline your Council meetings.
- 5. Membership:** Use of a State Council Newspaper as a communication tool will help to keep your membership updated. Your availability by e-mail, phone, and fax will keep you in tune with the members you represent.

Restricted Activities

State Councils are prohibited by the ***VVA Constitution*** from certain activities such as: telephone solicitation; direct mail; work-place donations; regular and continuous sale of alcoholic beverages; and/or the solicitation of household goods. A detailed interpretation of restricted activities is in The ***Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America, Article***

IV: General Provisions, Section 3--Restricted Activities, Paragraph A-G.

Conflict of Interest Policy

In 1998, the VVA Board of Directors adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy which acknowledges that "[t]he mere existence of a conflict of interest is neither inherently illegal nor necessarily a reflection on the integrity of the director or officer" and that "[i]n a situation involving corporate decision-making, it is the manner in which the director or officer and the board deal with a disclosed conflict that determines the propriety of a transaction."

The Policy provides that, "[s]ince board members and officers owe the corporation a duty of loyalty, actual or potential conflicts of interest are best addressed by prior disclosure and abstention from decision-making in the area in which a conflict exists." To implement the requirement for prior disclosure and abstention when necessary, the Policy mandates that all national board members and officers annually complete, sign, and submit a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Report Form.

Since VVA State Councils are separate corporations, they should be aware of the possibility that potential or actual conflicts of interest by one or more delegates or officers could directly or indirectly influence the State Council's decision-making. VVA has not required that VVA State Councils adopt the same conflict of interest policy VVA uses, however, since one of the hallmarks of good governance of a nonprofit corporation is the existence of a conflict of interest policy, State Councils that do not already have one would be well advised to develop and adopt one.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has recently indicated its interest in having nonprofit organizations seeking recognition as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code adopt a conflict of interest policy. Although a new war veterans organization seeking tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(19) would use an IRS Form 1024 (not a Form 1023), that distinction alone doesn't erase the handwriting on the wall: The IRS thinks it's smart for a tax-exempt organization to have a conflict of interest policy and, although the IRS has not yet said a conflict of interest policy is mandatory, it has provided a sample Conflict of Interest Policy as Appendix A <http://www.irs.gov/instructions/i1023/ar03.html> to the revised instructions for IRS Form 1023. If a state's nonprofit corporation law requires, now or in the future, a nonprofit corporation incorporated in that state to have a conflict of interest policy (or a conflict of interest provision in its corporate bylaws), a State Council in such a state should comply with the state law.

CHAPTER 3: MEETINGS

Scheduled State Council Meetings

A minimum of two (2) State Council meetings are required by *The Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America* in **Article II: State Provisions, Section 6--Meetings, Paragraph A**. A State Council may have as many meetings in addition to the two required as it deems necessary.

- 1. Establishing Dates and Locations:** A standard practice is to schedule State Council meetings at least one (1) year in advance and when the meetings are scheduled is up to the State Council. The location can vary from meeting to meeting or be at a fixed site established by the State Council. Some may ask chapters to volunteer to host, thus showcasing that chapter and its community. Some may have a rotation system for hosting the State Council meeting. No matter what system the State Council uses (fixed or rotating), it takes planning in advance to insure that each meeting is productive.
- 2. Agendas:** The State Council President, with input from the Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors, will establish a tentative agenda following a set format. Some State Councils establish a timeline for the items on the agenda; others are more informal. The VVA Constitution states notice of meeting is to be out 20 days prior to the meeting and the State Council by-laws may have a timeframe for mailing the tentative agenda to the chapters/delegates prior to the meetings. **An example of an agenda is contained in the Appendix.**
- 3. Conducting a Meeting:** Meetings should be conducted in accordance with *The Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America*, the *State Council Bylaws*, and conduct-of-business and parliamentary procedure as addressed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. The agenda is a guideline for keeping the meeting in sequence and the chairperson, the State Council President controls the tempo of the meeting and has the responsibility of maintaining order during the meeting. Distribution of written committee reports and the setting of a time limit on chapter reports and updates may also keep the meeting moving. Adding seminars and guest speakers on veteran-related issues could be informative and valuable as training tools.

Conference of State Council Presidents Meetings

The Conference of State Council Presidents (CSCP) provides a mechanism for the State Council Presidents to meet to discuss issues pertinent to the State Councils. The Chair of the Conference of State Council Presidents, elected in even numbered years is a member of the National Board of Directors. Membership, election of officers and number of meetings are stated in the *Constitution of Vietnam Veterans of America*, **Article I: National Provisions, Section 11--Conference of State Council Presidents Meetings, Paragraph A & B**. The Conference has the opportunity to meet, not less than

twice per year, to share information and to discuss matters of common concern. Each State Council should have representation at the CSCP meetings. If the President is unable to attend and a substitute is necessary, that individual's name should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the CSCP.

Meetings in April and October are in conjunction with the National Board of Directors and are funded by National. For these two meetings, each State Council President is responsible for scheduling his/her transportation to the meetings through Let's Travel (800-659-4441), the travel agency designated by the National office, or a method of their choice, as long as the cost does not exceed Let's Travel's costs. The VVA Travel Policy (amended October 11, 2013) can be found on the VVA web site under Strategic Documents in the VVA BOD Policies Reference Guide and the policy states these reservations should be made at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the meetings. State Council Presidents who do not schedule transportation through the VVA National designated travel agency should submit an Expense/Reimbursement form, available from the Secretary of the Conference of State Council Presidents, to the Chief Financial Officer. A hotel reservation form for the two meetings, in conjunction with the National BOD meeting, must be submitted using the e-Reservation form on the VVA web site.

The other meetings of the Council of State Council Presidents are held at a time and site to be determined by the Council and could be in conjunction with the National Convention (odd numbered year) or the National Leadership Conference (even numbered year). It is the State Council's responsibility to provide funding for the other meetings. The chair of the CSCP will establish the agenda for meetings with input from the other State Council Presidents. All motions made during the meeting require a completed State Council Presidents Motion form. The National Standing Committees have at least one (1) State Council President as a member, and all the Presidents are encouraged to attend the committee meetings.

National Leadership & Education Conference

In even numbered years, Vietnam Veterans of America conducts the National Leadership & Education Conference at a predetermined site. This Conference presents seminars on a variety of topics which will enlighten or provide information that will benefit State Councils and Chapters. Additional seminars may pertain to National Standing Committee work, which usually includes useful information.

Regional Meetings

Some regions hold periodic meetings or conferences for the states/chapters within that region. Others do not. State Presidents who wish to participate in regional conferences should discuss this with their Regional Director.

CHAPTER 4: NATIONAL CONVENTION

Preamble

This chapter is designed to assist the State President in understanding what he or she should or should not do during a National VVA Convention.

National Convention

The National Convention is the highest authority of the Corporation. It should be treated with full respect and taken very seriously. It is at the National Convention that the membership has the opportunity for input on what direction they would like the organization to take during the following two (2) years. This is the time when all the changes to the Constitution and Resolutions are made and VVA national officers/directors are voted into office. The State Presidents have a big responsibility during this time. National Conventions have been held every two years since 1983. Refer to **Article I, Section 7--National Convention** of the **VVA National Constitution** for a full understanding and entitlements of the National Convention.

Delegates

1. Chapter delegates: Each Chapter selects or elects delegates based on the number of members the Chapter has. If a Chapter is not able to fill all of its delegate slots from within its membership, the Chapter may, but does not have to, transfer the delegate vote(s) to another eligible VVA member within their state or to the State Council president. Transfer authority must be in writing and signed by two (2) of the chapter officers. A State President cannot put someone in a vacant Chapter delegate seat without the concurrence of the Chapter.
2. At-large delegates: The State Council President is entitled to one vote at the National Convention. Other delegates are apportioned to the State Council based on the number of at-large members in the state. With the concurrence of the other State Officers, the State Council President appoints the at-large delegates.

Credentials Committee and Guidelines

At each convention, a Credentials Committee, consisting of the nine (9) VVA Regional Directors and a chairperson appointed by the National President, is responsible for ensuring the proper credentialing for all VVA delegates to the National Convention. Rules are issued before each convention but generally remain consistent on certain points. The 2013 rules are listed below to provide information on the types of rules the Credentials Committee will establish.

Rules:

1. The VVA member strength as of February 28 of the Convention year shall determine both the chapter and state council delegate count for that year's convention in accordance with Article I, Section 6, paragraph E – National Conventions of the VVA Constitution.
2. No transfers of VVA members shall be authorized between 90 days prior to the start

of the convention and the end of convention. Transfers for the purpose of starting new VVA Chapters or transfers into a different chapter when the member changes their residence may continue.

3. If national has not received a copy of a State Council's or a Chapters annual financial report, that State Council or Chapter's delegates will not be credentialed. They will not be allowed on the Convention floor until the annual financial report has been received. Annual financial reports may be turned in at Convention. (Suggestion – Have a copy of your financial report with you.)
4. If national has not received a copy of a State Council's or a Chapters annual election report, that State Council or Chapter's delegates will not be credentialed. They will not be allowed on the Convention floor until the annual election report has been received. Annual Election reports may be turned in at Convention. (Suggestion – Have a copy of your Election report with you.)
5. All Chapters and State Council's will have filed with the appropriate state agency or office in their state, commonwealth or territory any report(s) necessary to maintain their corporate status as a non-profit corporation in good standing. This will have been confirmed by the respective State Council President. If there is any delinquency in any required filings, that State Council or Chapter's delegates will not be credentialed until all required filings have been brought current.
6. New delegates who are attending their first VVA Convention must attach a copy of their DD Form 214 to their convention registration form. Delegates who attended VVA conventions in 1999, 2001, 2003 2005 2007 and 2009 or are Life Members or are State Council Presidents do not need to attach a copy of their DD Form 214. All delegates are encouraged to have a copy of their DD Form 214 with them at the convention to assist in answering any potential credentialing questions.
7. When a chapter elects not to send a delegate, they may transfer the delegate vote(s) to another eligible VVA member in good standing from any chapter within their state or to their state council. If a state council elects not to send a delegate, they may transfer the delegate vote(s) to another eligible VVA member in good standing from any chapter within their state. Transfer authority must be in writing and signed by two of the chapter officers or in the case of a state council signed by two of the state council officers."
8. All challenges are to be brought to the attention of the Credentials Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson will then seek the applicable regional director, state council president, and VVA membership staff for clarification of any delegate's credentials. If a challenge cannot be resolved at that level, a meeting of the Credentials Committee will convene and arbitrate.
9. The Credentials Chair will make an oral report each morning to the assembled delegates notifying them of the total number of delegates seated that day.

Role of State President

The State President should provide guidance to the delegates from the state and help them understand issues and procedures. The State President may suggest and inform the members on issues that pertain to convention business, including qualifications of candidates. However, the State President should never pressure any delegate to vote a certain way on any Constitutional amendment, resolution, or candidate.

Regional Meetings/Caucus

During the convention, each Regional Director may call the delegates from that region together one or more times to review and discuss the issues of the Convention. These are informative sessions to help delegates understand what is going on throughout the convention and to give the delegates the opportunity to discuss their concerns and ask any questions they may have. Candidates for national offices usually appear and give delegates an opportunity to ask questions of them.

State Council Caucus

State Council caucuses also may be held should the State delegates wish to meet with their State President and other delegates within their state to discuss issues. State Council caucuses are not required.

CHAPTER 5: DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

Preamble

*One of the duties of a State Council President is managing disciplinary issues, whether this involves trying to resolve possible disciplinary matters or filing of charges. It is an unpleasant task, and each President must be prepared to deal with issues that may result in disciplinary action. All State Council Presidents are encouraged to use every resource available to resolve issues. **The National Disciplinary Policy** is meant to be the option of last resort after all other means of resolution have been exhausted.*

Regional Disciplinary Committee

Each VVA Region has a Regional Disciplinary Committee. The Regional Disciplinary Committee consists of ten (10) members from within the Region and serves for a term of two (2) years.

1. The Committee consists of the State Council Presidents or State Council Vice Presidents within the region.
2. The remaining positions are appointed by the Regional Director.
3. The Chair is appointed by the Regional Director.

When charges are referred, the Chair of the Regional Disciplinary Committee will select a Hearing Panel of no less than three (3) members, nor more than five (5) members of the committee to hear the complaint.

Financial and Election Reporting VVA Suspensions

If a Chapter is suspended by VVA National as a result of failure to file election or annual financial reports in a timely manner, the State Council President should make contact with the chapter leadership at once and seek resolution of the suspension.

APPENDIX:

Annual Financial Report, State Council Election Report, HGSP Report, and Service Representative Grant Financial Report

VVA Forms, such as the Annual Financial Report, State Council Election Report, HGSP Report for State Councils, and Service Representative Grant Financial Report for State Councils, are available to download from the VVA web site at <http://www.vva.org> These forms may also be obtained by fax and mail by contacting the VVA Membership Department at 1-800-585-4000.

State reporting forms are available from the appropriate state office.

VVA Constitution and VVA National Disciplinary Policy

VVA Corporate Documents such as the *VVA Constitution*, *VVA National Disciplinary Policy*, and current *Resolutions* are available at the VVA web site <http://www.vva.org> or from the VVA Membership Department at 1-800-585-4000.

Example of Tentative Agenda

7am- 8am	Registration
8am- 10:30am	State Council General Session Opening Ceremony/Presentation of Colors/Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation/POW/MIA Ceremony Roll Call/Quorum Approval of Meeting Agenda (President) Acceptance of Minutes (Secretary)
10:30am- 10:45am	Break
10:45am - 11:55am	State Council General Session Treasurer's Report (Treasurer) Acceptance of Budget (Treasurer and Finance Chair) Chapter Reports (2 min.) Committee Reports (5 min.--w/written report) Membership Affairs, Public Affairs, Government Affairs, Veterans Affairs, Employment, Training and Business Opportunities, Minority Affairs, Constitution, Veterans Benefits, Finance, Women Veterans, and POW/MIA Scholarship (Chair)
11:55am - 1:15pm	Lunch
1:15pm - 2:30pm	Unfinished Business
2:30pm - 4pm	New Business