



Department of Hawaii

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
(SOP)**

FOR

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**Approved August 14, 2021
Change 1 October 10, 2021**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)
Legislative Affairs
FOR
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAII
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

PURPOSE

The State of Hawaii Veterans of Foreign Wars, Legislative Committee is charged with the coordination the following programs: National Legislation and State Legislation.

SECTION 1

CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee chair is appointed by the State Commander.

The Committee should be composed of a minimum of 3 people.

The Chair will recommend committee members to the Department Commander who will officially appoint them to the committee or appropriate subcommittee.

The Chair will form the following subcommittees.

1. National Legislative
2. State Legislative
3. Get Out the Vote

SOP REVIEW

The SOP will be reviewed to ensure the following:

1. Contact information is accurate and up to date.
2. The SOP will be updated to ensure compliance with the National Bylaws, and applicable directives and regulations.
3. The SOP with changes will be submitted to the State Adjutant no later than 45 days before the start of the Department Convention.
4. The Chair's required End of Year report will include all changes with justification for the change to the SOP.

After initial approval by the State Commander, this SOP will be reviewed annually. The Senior Vice Commander will review the SOP before the Department Convention. The State Adjutant will present the SOP at the first Council of Administration (COA) after the Department Convention for approval. After approval the SOP will become effective immediately. During the year any updates to the SOP will given to the Department Adjutant for distribution to be voted on at the next COA.

SECTION 2

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE

The National Legislative Committee Member is approved by the National Commander in Chief. The Department Commander recommends the appointment. This appointment is for a minimum of 3 years. Any change in the appointment needs an unanimous concurrence with the State Senior and Junior Vice Commanders in a written letter sent to National Headquarters.

The National Legislative Committee member is tasked with the following: Coordinating Departmental visits with our Congressional delegation, keeping abreast of National Legislation, monitoring Action Alerts, promoting VFW Action Corps, conducting “Get out the Vote Campaigns”, Coordinating town halls, distributing information about the VFW legislative goals (Priority Goals) and obtaining Student fellows for the VFW/SVA Fellowship program. The Committee member is responsible to submit a monthly report to National Legislative Service (NLS) detailing Legislative Committee activities.

The Committee member coordinates with the VFW National Legislative Service Office in Washington D.C. which is tasked with Advocating Quality of Life issues for Military, Veterans and their families, Disability Assistance & Memorial Affairs (DAMA) through legislation and Grassroots Advocacy.

The Committee member is expected to attend the Fall Legislative Committee in September and the Spring Legislative Conference in late February and early March. They are responsible to setup appointments with the members of the Congressional Delegation.

VISIT LOGISTICS

The National Congressional appointment process will need to start at least 45 days in advance.

1. Make appointment using the website. You will need an alternative address to use if you do not live in the Congressional District.
2. Information needed for all attendees (This information is needed to make the appointments)
Name, Title, Position held in Organization, Address, Phone number (for contact in DC), Lodging address in DC
3. Conduct follow-up communications to verify meeting time and place.
4. Verify the date, time, and location of all appointments before traveling
5. Conference attendees are required to attend a legislative briefing on the first day of the Conference.
6. From Crystal City to Capital Area is about 30 minutes by taxi or Ride Sharing and costs about \$25.

7. Members of the Delegation should wear a suit and tie or the equivalent and a VFW Cap (NO Ball caps) for all Congressional meetings.
8. Brief all members of the delegation about the VFW Talking Points and have them discuss any issues they plan to bring up. Remember we are there to discuss the National priorities first. If your next meeting is across the Capitol, when you arrive for the meeting let a Staff member know and they may be able to get you escorted across. This prevents you from having to be screened again.
9. D.C. Trip Organization: Remember that it takes at least 45 minutes to travel from the Senate side to the House side buildings.
10. Remember that everyone must go through security. Keep metal and loose items to a minimum. Also, if we are able to cross under the Capital Building Remember no food or drink is allowed in the Capital Building.
11. Plan to be at the office at least 30 minutes in advance of the meeting.
12. Attend scheduled all meetings. Meetings generally last between 30 minutes to an hour.
13. Meeting Protocol:
 - a. Legislative Committee Member introduces the Delegation
 - b. Discuss the NLS talking points. Leave copies of the Talking Points and priority goals. (get extra copies at the VFW National DC Office)
 - c. Ask Commander for comments
 - d. Open comments up to rest of delegation.
 - e. Cover Local Issues
 - f. Cover Personal Issues
 - g. Thank everyone for their time.
14. Attend Commander in Chief Testimony. Sit together in a group as we will be recognized by Senator Hirono and Representative Radewagon will give us a shout out
15. Remember to be flexible for timing and meeting requests.
16. After meeting follow-up: Send a thank-you note or e-mail detailing your meeting and thanking them for their time and support. Be sure to follow up on any questions or requests made by the office. Follow up on any requests you made of the office.

SECTION 3

STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE

State of Hawaii Legislative

Be aware of all bills and pending legislation that concerns veterans in the State Legislature. Keep Department aware of the status of bills. Attend hearings and submit testimony as requested to support or oppose legislation as directed by the Department Commander or Council of Administration. Report to the COA on the status of current legislation.

SECTION 4

VETERANS VOTE

VETERANS VOTE:

Get Involved in the Election Process It's your right and your responsibility. VFW members truly know what words like citizenship and patriotism mean and the obligations that come with them. We must continue to play a role as patriotic citizens and get involved in the elections. We Must Elect Pro-Veteran Candidates. Veterans and military quality of life issues must be a priority of Congress and the Administration. The only way to ensure this is to vote for those candidates who believe in our issues. With continued talks about cuts in spending programs that affect veterans, the military, and their families, it is doubly important that we support candidates who understand and support VFW Priority Goals. Register to Vote: As a citizen and VFW advocate, you should be registered to vote! Contact your local board of elections or visit the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission at eac.gov for more information or voter assistance. Uniformed Services members and their families can find more information about absentee voter registration from the Federal Voting Assistance Program at fvap.gov. Find Ways to Get Involved Although VFW members cannot endorse candidates on behalf of the VFW, there is nothing preventing you from working on behalf of your favorite candidate. Campaigns are always looking for volunteers, and offering a helping hand can be a great way to help candidates in their election bids. See if the candidate has a veteran's council or advisory panel and provide input. Subscribe to the Action Corps Weekly to stay informed on issues facing our veterans, service members, and their families that your federal legislators should be tracking and addressing. To sign up, visit vfw.org/ActionCorps. Arm yourself with the VFW's latest talking points and the VFW Priority Goals brochure, available to download at [vfw.org/Legislative Priorities](http://vfw.org/LegislativePriorities).

VFW Involvement in Elections and Political Activities VFW members can make a difference in any election by getting involved in the political process. Hold voter registration drives, town hall meetings, and other events featuring candidates for public office. Veterans are a strong voting block and a constituency that most candidates want on their side. As we approach the next election cycle, here are a few items to keep mind as you get involved and attend or host candidate functions and town hall meetings:

DO's

- Do attend candidate town hall meetings and other events and ask candidates where they stand on our issues.
- Do set up voter registration drives /Get Out the Vote Campaigns on the local level.
- Do provide carpool service on Election Day to help the elderly and disabled get to the voting booth.
- Do support and work for your favorite candidates as an individual voting constituent.
- Do wear your VFW cap at public events such as town halls, rallies, forums, or debates.

DON'Ts

- Don't endorse candidates on behalf of the VFW National Organization, Department or Post.
- Don't wear your VFW cap when actively campaigning for a candidate, such as soliciting donations or knocking on doors asking people to pledge their vote for a candidate. The key is to stay informed on veterans' issues and use your influence to urge new candidates and those up for reelection to support veterans. It does not matter which candidates you support as long as they know you are a VFW member and are concerned about your fellow veterans, service members, and their families.

For more information on how to get involved, read the VFW's Veterans Vote brochure. Stay informed by reviewing the VFW's Legislative Priority Goals. If you have questions, please contact the VFW at vfwac@vfw.org.

Remember:

VFW members cannot endorse or actively campaign against candidates on the behalf of the VFW, Department of Hawaii or your Post. Don't wear your VFW cap when actively campaigning for or against a candidate; such as soliciting donations or knocking on doors when asking people to pledge their vote for a candidate. This includes using mailing lists obtained while in the VFW to either campaign for or against candidates.

SECTION 5 LINKS AND FORMS

VFW Department of Hawaii Links:

[Department of Hawaii on Facebook](#)

[VFW Department of Hawaii Website](#)

VFW National Links:

[VFW Legislative Advocacy](#)

[Where the VFW Stands On the Issues](#)

[Visit our VFW Youth Scholarships](#)

Bill Tracking Websites:

[Congress.Gov Bill tracker](#)

[GOVTRACK Bill tracker](#)

[Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs](#)

[House Committee of Veterans' Affairs](#)

[Track Hawaii Legislative](#)

APPENDIX A

The VFW National Legislative Staff, located in Washing DC is composed of:

Patrick Murray, Director
pmurray@vfw.org, (202) 608-8365

Tammy Barlet, Deputy Director
Health Care, Women Veterans
tbarlet@vfw.org, (202) 608-8363

Ann Markel, Office Manager
amarkel@vfw.org, (202) 608-8351

Kristina Keenan, Associate Director
Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
kkeenana@vfw.org, (202) 608-8368

Emily DeVito, Associate Director
Economic Opportunity
edevito@vfw.org, (202) 608-8352

Brittany Dymond, Associate Director
Military Retirement and Service Member Affairs
bdymond@vfw.org, (202) 608-8353

Katherine Cassell, Associate Director
Action Corps
kcassell@vfw.org, (202) 608-8372

APPENDIX B

House of Representatives Contacts:

1. Congressional District 1: Representative Case

- a. Website: <https://case.house.gov/>
- b. Scheduler: Wisdom Matsuzaki wisdom.matsuzaki@mail.house.gov
- c. Legislative Aide:
- d. Washington D.C. Office

2443 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2726

e. Hawaii Office

1132 Bishop Street, Suite 1910
Honolulu, HI 96813
(808) 650-6688

2. Congressional District 2: Representative Kahele

- a. Website: <https://kahele.house.gov/>
- b. Executive Assistant/ Office Manager: Bonnie Casilas
bonnie.casilas@mail.house.gov
- c. Senior Policy Advisor: Serena Li
- d. DC. Office

1205 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-4906
Fax: (202) 225-4987

e. Hawaii Office

99 Aupuni St
Suites 113,114,118
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

3. American Samoa At Large District: Representative Amata C. Radewagon

- a. Website: <https://radewagen.house.gov/>
- b. Scheduler: Nancy Dehlinger Nancy.Dehlinger@mail.house.gov
- c. Legislative Aide: Jared Christel jared.christel@mail.house.gov

d. DC. Office:

1339 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-8577
Fax: (202) 225-8757

e. American Samoa Office:

APPENDIX C

Senate Contact Information:

1. Senator Hirono

- a. Website: <https://www.hirono.senate.gov/>
- b. Scheduler: Blaine Nolan scheduling@hirono.senate.gov
- c. Legislative Aide: Carlos Santana (He is based in Hawaii)
- d. Legislative Aide: Meghan O'Connor
- e. Washington D.C. Office

713 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6361
Fax: (202) 224-2126

- f. Hawaii Office

300 Ala Moan Blvd. Rm. 3-106
Honolulu, HI 96850
Phone: (808) 522-8970
Toll Free: 844-478-3478
Fax: (808) 545-4683

2. Senator Schatz

- a. Website: <https://www.schatz.senate.gov/>

Scheduler: Diane Miyasato diane_miyasato@schatz.senate.gov
 - i. (C)(202) 228-1057
- b. Deputy Legislative Director: Will Rogers will_rogers@schatz.senate.gov
- c. Military Legislative Aide: Catherine (Catie) Shutters
- d. Legislative Aide: Seth Clicker
- e. Washington D.C. Office

722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
PHONE: (202) 224-3934
FAX: (202) 228-1153

f. Hawaii Office

300 Ala Moan Blvd., Rm 7-212
Honolulu, HI 96850
PHONE: (808) 523-2061
FAX: (808) 523-2065

RECORD OF CHANGES

Change 1(October 10, 2021):

Index: Updated to reflect change 1

Entire SOP was updated to correct grammatical and formatting errors.

Section Titles were move to be on the same page as the beginning of the section

Entire SOP was reformatted to reflect addition of Appendixes A, B, C.

Contact information was updated in Appendixes A, B, C.