



Pursuant to MOP, Sec 222, Delegates and alternates for the District Convention and Meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected a regular meeting in April. Delegate strength will be based on members in good standing as of March 31st. Delegate and alternates of each Post shall serve as delegates throughout the year provided, they remain members in good standing in the respective Post within the District.

3. Eligibility for Officers: All Posts, Districts and Departments should be reminded of the provisions of Sections 215, 415, and 515 of the Manual of Procedure that all members in good standing in a post shall be eligible to hold office given that, officers, elected and appointed, shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted to the respective Adjutant and properly reviewed.
4. Commanders on all levels are reminded that according to Section 105 of the National Bylaws, a member whose dues are unpaid after their anniversary date ceases to be a member in good standing and loses all rights of membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. They shall not attend meetings or conventions and shall not participate in Post, County Council, District, Department or National functions.

/os/

DAN FULLER
STATE COMMANDER

OFFICIAL:

/ os /

Heidi Teeter
Adjutant

Commander Dan Fuller

Greetings Comrades,

I am very proud to announce that the department membership is now over 100 percent, making us 4th in the nation! We are only 2 percent (about 200 plus members) away from achieving the National Commanders' goal of 102 percent for all departments. I am confident that we are able to achieve that goal. I would like to congratulate and thank you to the posts that currently have over 100 percent. I am asking everyone to try their best to recruit 1-2 people within their community by June 1st.

I would like to acknowledge Comrade Josh Starks as the national legislative member for Oklahoma for his work while in Washington. It was a great week. We met with many legislatures and we were able to push the National Commanders' agenda. As we enter spring, make sure to engage with your communities, Guard and Reserve units. If there are any posts that have not adopted a unit, I hope you consider doing so with our hometown heroes. Many units are preparing for the annual training. This would be a great time to support them and their families anyway you can.

Our time and place for the state convention has been set to the last week of June. Quartermaster Teeter has all the details for the convention. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at your district conventions. For those that are running for office, I wish you the best of luck. Thank you for your desire to be a leader within the VFW.

Be careful as we enter Oklahoma's hazardous weather season. Be prepared to assist your neighboring communities and take care of those in your community if the need arises. This is when your relationship with your Guard and Reserve units would pay dividends.

We are about 90 days from our convention and welcoming new leadership. I want to thank everyone for their hard work to date. As well as thank everyone for their work in their Americanism and community service efforts.

Remember to recruit, reinstate and retain our members!

Respectfully,

Dan Fuller

State Commander
Department of Oklahoma

Facta non verba - "Deeds, not words"

Senior Vice Commander *Jeff Harris*

Greeting Comrades

Warmer weather is sure here now and so is the wind. There has been a lot of wildfires like the one in Mannford. I hope everyone there was safe from the fire and did not get hurt. It has been not only in Oklahoma but everywhere.

As April is here, so are post elections. If a post has had the same Commander, see if they need a break and put someone in with new ideals and goals. That could very well help the Post out to the best.

I will be going to Kansas City the 10-13 of April for the Department Senior Vice training where National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Carol Whitmore will be showing us what her goals and programs are during her term. As you know she will be the first female National Commander in the VFW. Also, the other Sr. Vice Commanders from the other Departments will be talking about their programs to help those that that may need help. I have been putting together my program book for Oklahoma and have put some changes in if I am elected State Commander. All State is a great title to go for, but it has to be worked for. There has to be a challenge.

The State Convention will be at the Embassy Suites in Norman again this year. We have been there before, and it is a good hotel. Our meeting rooms will not be so far to walk to this time, so please make plans to attend. I think we can get a lot of things done and will be looking forward to seeing everyone again.

In closing I will be running for the office of the State Commander, and your support will appreciated.

Respectfully,
Jeff Harris
State Sr. Vice Commander

Junior Vice Commander *Tony McGrew*

Comrades,

Spring is in full force in Oklahoma. A time of renewal and new growth. For new growth to occur certain conditions must be present.

First, there must be the proper amount of light for renewal and new growth to occur. The

light should be provided by the leadership in the form of a clear direction and goal to inspire members to work towards that common goal.

Second, the right temperature must be present. The right temperature encourages the older growth to bring forth fruit sprout new growth. The right temperature also encourages current, older members to provide a place for new growth to flourish.

Third, there must be the right amount of moisture, water or communication. Too much water and the older members drown and not enough water it dries up and the fruit falls off. The right amount of water keeps members engaged and productive recruiting new members.

Fourth, there must be the right type of nutrients, food supply, present so strong roots can develop, support and nurture current and new growth against drought, floods and winds. Of course, training is the food supply that protects the whole organism.

Lastly, growth can only happen in the right type of soil. The right type of soil is a well-educated, trained, committed, and enthusiastic member.

AND THAT'S YOU!

Respectfully,

Tony McGrew

Candidate: State Senior Vice Commander.

*Surgeon
Larry Hurd*

Comrades,

Hello from the paw-paw patch. Well, the clocks have sprung forward, the sun and temperatures are raising so everyone is getting ready for fun in the sun. Boating, swimming, camping and golfing. Just remember to wear hats to shade your eyes and sunscreen for your skin and drink lots of fluids for your body.

Here is some news from Action Corp:

On April 1, the TRICARE Online Patient Portal will no longer be available. The Department of Defense's new electronic health record—MHS GENESIS—has replaced the TOL Patient Portal. As part of the transition, the DOD is decommissioning the TOL Patient Portal. If you want to keep a copy of your legacy health records for personal use, you must download them from the TOL Patient Portal before April 1.

“All military hospitals and clinics have transitioned to MHS GENESIS. We encourage you to take these important steps to save your personal health records before the TOL Patient Portal decommissions,” said Rear Adm. Tracy Farrill, Principal Deputy, Assistant Director for Health

Care Administration, and Military Health System EHR Functional Champion at the Defense Health Agency. “Your medical history is a valuable resource for managing your health, and saving your records now ensures you have access if you need it.”

Here’s what you need to know before the TOL Patient Portal decommissions.

Why is the TOL Patient Portal decommissioning?

The MHS GENESIS Patient Portal has replaced the TOL Patient Portal. As detailed in the TRICARE Choices in the United States Handbook, MHS GENESIS allows you to access your EHR 24/7. You can also book and cancel appointments, request prescription refills and renewals, see clinical notes and certain test results, and exchange secure messages with your military healthcare team.

The change from TOL to MHS GENESIS eliminates the need to maintain two systems and streamlines EHR management.

What will happen to my records?

- **Provider access:** Your provider will continue to have access to your complete health records.
- **Personal access:** You can use the steps below to download your legacy records for personal use before April 1. You can also request a physical copy from your military hospital or clinic’s records management office. To do this, you’ll need to complete a request form in person, and then return at a later designated time to pick up the records. Beginning April 1, if you want your legacy health records, you’ll have to follow this process.

What should I do now?

To keep copies of your legacy health records, follow these instructions:

1. **Visit** www.TRICAREOnline.com.
2. **Log in:** Sign in using your DS Logon, CAC, or DFAS myPay credentials. If you don’t have a DS Logon, you’ll need to create one by clicking “Need An Account.”
3. **Access:** On the TOL homepage, click the blue “Health Record” button to view your personal health data.
4. **Find data:** Select “Download My Data.” You’ll see several data categories.
5. **Customize:** Choose the person, data types, date range, and format for the records you want to download.
6. **Download:** You can choose to download your records in portable document format (.pdf) or as a (.xml) continuity of care document. The CCD format allows you to share your data with family, caregivers, providers, and healthcare systems, or to document data in your preferred personal health record.
7. **Save:** After downloading, you can either open the file or save it securely for future use. You can also print your records and store them in a safe place.

Don’t wait—take action.

Remember: The TOL Patient Portal will only be available until April 1. Take the time now to download and store your health records to ensure you can easily access them if needed.

To get started or learn more, visit the TOL Patient Portal.

Would you like the latest TRICARE news sent to you by email? Visit TRICARE Subscriptions, and create your personalized profile to get benefit updates, news, and more.

VFW Claims Assistance for K2 Troops: Veterans with prior service in Uzbekistan at the Karshi Khanabad Air Base, known as K2, who need assistance with their VA disability claims

should contact a VFW Service Officer. The VFW is ready to assist K2 veterans who currently have health conditions they believe were caused by toxic exposures during their service. This includes veterans who have had VA claims denied, have claims in appeal, or who have never applied. Contact the VFW at vfw@vfw.org or find a VFW Service Officer in your area.

Report from the OKC VAMC Director: Director Vlosich: Provided an email update. Spoke on the Possible delay in email communications. They have seen an increase of 500 new veterans in the past three weeks, and in response to the continued increase in patients they are expanding primary care physicians at several of the clinics. Dermatology surgery is now being completed at the hospital. They are in talks with OU Medicine to get more doctors trained in dermatology. They will be starting an orthopedic express clinic soon. The Lawton clinic's expansion has been approved by the DOD. They hired another provider for the Enid Clinic and are in the process of hiring one for the Shawnee Clinic.

The Women's Clinic is scheduled to open soon. The mobile van is now being used to treat homeless veterans. Report from Jack C. Montgomery VAMC: Director Denning: Shane Glover provided an email update: The Tulsa hospital building is going great; the weather so far has not delayed construction.

Eagle Ops: Johnathon Shepard provided a handout. Spoke on OK Veterans Calendar, the OKC Vet Fest is scheduled for September 6.

FEDERAL ISSUES: Scott Ellis: The Honorable Douglas A. Collins was sworn in as the 12th secretary of the VA on February 5, shortly after the Senate confirmed him for the position by a vote of 77-23. Secretary Collins represented Georgia's rural Ninth Congressional District for nearly a decade before attempting an unsuccessful run for the Senate. He has served in the military since 2002 and is currently a colonel in the Air Force Reserve. In his message to veterans and VA employees, Secretary Collins pledged to take great care of America's veterans by first putting them at the center of everything VA does. He also promised to deliver timely access to care and benefits to those who are eligible to receive them, celebrate the vast majority of VA employees who do a great job every day, and hold employees accountable when they fall short of the mission. He pledged to also challenge the status quo in order to find new and better ways of helping VA beneficiaries.

STATE ISSUES: Chairman Peterson: Update on state legislation. The Senate Public Safety Committee approved Senate Bill 780, which creates a felony for any person found to have removed the United States flag on public or private property owned by another person or entity without permission and puts up the flag, standard, colors, or ensign of any other entity. "Our flag is not only a symbol of our great nation, but an embodiment of the sacrifices made by those who fought to protect the freedoms it represents," Jett said. "Senate Bill 780 ensures that the United States flag is protected from those aim to defile it by increasing the criminal punishment for such acts."

Respectfully,

Larry Hurd

State Surgeon
Department of Oklahoma

Adjutant/Quartermaster

Heidi Teeter

Greetings Comrades,

I want to start this with a request from Programs Director Lynn Rolf. If you are looking at the All-American Dashboard you will notice that your "Community Service" column is red, this is because we are in a new quarter. That column resets every quarter. If you click on the square, it will tell you what quarters have been reported. The community service reports are put in on the Department dashboard and then National will pull it over. If you have any questions on this or anything else please reach out to me.

COMMANDERS & ADJUTANTS: Pursuant to **MOP, Sec 222**, Delegates and alternates for the District Convention and Meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected a regular meeting in April. Delegate strength will be based on members in good standing as of March 31st. Comrades, on 31 March 25, I will go into the Online Membership System (OMS) and obtain the members in good standing for each Post within our department. Shortly after, I will be publishing a delegate strength roster showing the number of delegates for each Post. This will be your delegate strength for all conventions at District, Department, and National Level. Included on the form will be the Department Delegate Dues owed by each Post. A delegate worksheet is also available with these General Orders. Delegate worksheets must be mailed, emailed, or turned into the Department registration table prior to convention voting.

Pursuant to **VFW-Oklahoma Bylaws, Article 5,**

Section 2, *Delegates and alternates for the District Convention and Meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Delegate strength will be based on members in good standing as of March 31st.*

Section 3, *A delegate registration fee established by the Council of Administration will be paid by each Post for every delegate to which it is entitled and by others authorized to cast a vote as defined by the national Bylaws. This fee may be increased/decreased at each succeeding convention by the Council of Administration. Said fees shall be paid to the State Quartermaster 15 days prior to the opening session of the Department Convention. Anyone wanting to register after this date will be assessed an additional fee of \$1.00 for each delegate registered. Post delegate fees are due and payable regardless of convention attendance. Posts that do not pay prior to the convention will be assessed the delegate fees at the plus \$1.00 rate.*

In the links with these general orders, you will find the DEPARTMENT delegate worksheet. As stated above, your delegates should be elected at the same meeting in which you elect post officers. This worksheet should be filled out and sent back to me at vfwqhokqm@outlook.com, vfwokadj@outlook.com, or mailed to the Department at PO Box 1126, OKC, OK 73101. Please try to have these back to me before the State Convention so that the delegate badges can be prepared in advance.

Post Quartermasters should have received a packet from National Headquarters last month. This packet includes an election sheet and delegate worksheet for National. Election reports and National Delegate reports can be submitted through OMS.

As a reminder whether your Post attends the State Convention or National Convention or not the delegate dues are required to be paid. National dues are \$25 for the first delegate and an additional \$10 for each added delegate. The Department dues for each post can be found in the “Post Delegate Dues” link. These dues should be received by the Department by June 12th. Any dues not received by this date will incur an additional \$1.00 fee.

The 2025 Oklahoma State Convention will be held June 26-29, 2025, at the Embassy Suites – Norman Conference Center and Hotel. The official announcement and hotel room reservation information is included in the links. The agenda and banquet information is forthcoming.

Any Post that wishes to submit proposed bylaw changes must have them sent to the Department NO LATER THAN April 29, 2025, for advancement to the Bylaws Committee. The proposed bylaw changes that have already been submitted and reviewed by the committee are also included in the links for these General Orders along with the recommendations of the committee for each.

As always, if anyone has any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Charlie Mike,
Heidi Teeter
State Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of Oklahoma

Judge Advocate
Randy Traxler

Understanding Our Bylaws: A Guide to Success, Not Punishment

As members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, we take pride in the traditions and structure that make our organization strong. One of the key tools that guide our success is our bylaws. Unfortunately, many members see the bylaws as something to fear—a set of rules that lead only to discipline and punishment. But in reality, our bylaws are a source of empowerment, ensuring fairness, accountability, and the smooth operation of our Posts.

Think of the bylaws as a roadmap rather than a trap. They are designed to help us, not hinder us. They outline how we conduct meetings, manage finances, and support our fellow veterans and communities. When we take the time to understand them, we gain confidence in our roles and strengthen our ability to lead.

However, no one expects you to navigate the bylaws alone. One of the best ways to deepen your understanding is to seek guidance from those with experience—mentors beyond your own Post. District and Department officers, past commanders, and fellow advocates can provide valuable insight and perspective. They have likely faced the same questions and challenges and can help you interpret the bylaws in a way that benefits your Post and members.

If you're ever uncertain about a bylaw or procedure, don't hesitate to reach out. A simple conversation can prevent misunderstandings and open the door to solutions you may not have considered. By embracing the bylaws as a resource, seeking guidance when needed, and working together, we strengthen not just our Posts, but the entire VFW Department of Oklahoma.

Let's shift the mindset from fear to empowerment—because when we understand the rules, we don't just follow them; we use them to build a better, stronger VFW.

V/r

Randy Traxler

Judge Advocate

Department of Oklahoma

989-482-3876

Historian *Richard Elsheimer*

Woodward, Oklahoma Post 1335 was chartered on April 8, 1945. Later that same year on June 26th, an auxiliary was also chartered. On October 16, 1977, a Cootie unit (currently defunct) was chartered. The possible reestablishment of another Cootie unit has recently been under consideration. Member meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the post location at 519 Main Street in Woodward with Post Commander Jack D. Day presiding. The Woodward post was recognized as a Diamond Jubilee unit in 2020 (75th anniversary). They are currently serving in their 80th year. Long-time member Curtis (Doc) Bohlman has served many times as the National Surgeon, greatly enhancing the post.

Among the awards presented to this unit are National All-American, All-State, State Community Affairs, and many others. Post Senior Vice Commander Kimberly Cloutier was instrumental in providing most of the information for this report.

Richard Elsheimer

State Historian

richelsh@att.net or text 918-371-6632

***Voice of Democracy/Patriot Pen
Teacher of the Year
Jim Bassett***

Congratulations to Lydia Kent, from Edmond, OK, she represented the VFW Department of Oklahoma, and was awarded the \$1,000 Department of Kansas and Auxiliary Robert R. Whipple Memorial Scholarship.

The themes for the upcoming year are as follows:

Voice of Democracy:

“How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?”

Patriot’s Pen:

“How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Next year we will be using the Scholars App (<https://scholarsapp.com/>) again. As posts and district are enrolled, the Quick Response codes will be available. Remember that in addition to resources for student, the website also has resources for parents, teachers, and counselors.

Use this resource and the scholarships as a recruiting tool. And don’t forget the programs offered by the Auxiliary. All of them combined show parents, friends, and family members that the VFW cares about our youth and our future.

As a side note, if you are interested in adding your post or district to the program, contact me and I will add. I need a name and valid email address. Send me the information at bassettj15@yahoo.com. And for the posts that have already enrolled, your posters with the QR codes are still valid.

Jim Bassett

State VoD/PP/ToY Chair
Department of Oklahoma

***VMS
Jim Bassett***

The SportClips Help A Hero is one of the main points that I talk to potential members interested in joining the VFW. \$191,900 to 46 military recipients in Oklahoma as part of the Help-A-Hero Scholarships. When you tell them that this can be used in conjunction with other scholarships nor do need to be a VFW member. Education is something important to most military, Active, Reserves, or Guard. Talk to them about Help-A-Hero scholarships, or the VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship program, Voice of Democracy, or Patriot’s Pen. The VFW

Auxiliary even offers a continuing education scholarship as well as Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest.

I have been given permission to set up permanent tables at four locations on Tinker AFB. I will be setting them up soon. Details will be coming. I have requested some special documents and waiting on a decision.

Jim Bassett

State VMS Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Training and Development

Randy Traxler and Jim Bassett

Call to Action

As leaders, we often face challenges that seem like people problems but are, in reality, process problems—or the lack of a process altogether. This concept aligns with the leadership framework **OIL: Observations, Insights, and Lessons Learned**. By focusing on what we see, what we learn, and how we apply it, we can strengthen our districts and posts.

For the April General Orders, I want to incorporate your perspectives by gathering real-world examples of leadership challenges and solutions. Below are a few key questions designed to capture your experiences. Please choose at least one to answer:

- **Observations:** What common challenges do your posts face in executing their programs or initiatives?

Example: A post may struggle to organize community service events due to inconsistent volunteer turnout. How have you addressed similar challenges in your district?

- **Insights:** Have you noticed any patterns in successful posts that others could learn from?

Example: Some posts have seen increased participation by hosting family-friendly events or partnering with local businesses. What strategies have you seen work well?

- **Lessons Learned:** What is one leadership or operational lesson you've learned that could help other commanders improve post management?

Example: A commander implemented a structured mentorship program for new officers, leading to better continuity and leadership development. What lessons have you learned that others could apply?

- **Process vs. People:** Can you share an example where an issue initially seemed like a people problem but was actually a process issue? How was it resolved?

Example: A post was struggling with late or incomplete reports, which seemed like a personnel issue. However, after introducing a checklist and deadline reminders, compliance improved. Have you encountered a similar situation?

- **Best Practices:** What processes or systems have you implemented at the district level that have led to measurable improvements?

Example: A district established a quarterly leadership workshop to share best practices and troubleshoot challenges, leading to increased post efficiency. What systems have worked for you?

- **Communication & Engagement:** How do you ensure effective communication and engagement between district leadership and individual posts?

Example: A district improved engagement by using a structured email and social media strategy, ensuring timely updates and responses. What methods have helped you enhance communication?

- **Sustainability:** What strategies have worked for recruiting and retaining engaged members at the post level?

Example: One post started a “buddy system” where longtime members personally welcome and check in on new recruits, leading to higher retention. What approaches have you found effective in keeping members involved?

Your input will help shape a leadership-focused article that benefits leaders across our organization. Please send your responses to me by 23 April for consolidation. Your insights will provide valuable guidance as we work together to build a stronger and more effective VFW.

Thank you for your time and leadership—I look forward to your responses.

Respectfully,

Randy Traxler

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Jim Bassett

State Education Co-Chair
Department of Oklahoma

Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services

Tony McGrew and Jim Bassett

Veterans Affairs Volunteer Services are looking for volunteers. They need drivers, book carts, popcorn or, well almost anything to include just visiting. To volunteer, contact Tony McGrew, tony.vfw8706@gmail.com.

The process is simple, fill out the application, get fingerprinted, and a quick TB blood test and you are in. If there is a particular skill that you would like to take advantage of, let them know. They are looking for volunteers at the VA Center in Muskogee, Tulsa, on Fort Sill, and the OKC VA Center.

So, if interested, contact Tony McGrew, tony.vfw8706@gmail.com. Or Jim Bassett, bassettj15@yahoo.com. Let us know where you would like to volunteer.

They hold meetings on a regular basis so information will be released about events at each location.

Tony McGrew, tony.vfw8706@gmail.com.

Tony McGrew
Jim Bassett
State VAVS Chair
Department of Oklahoma

VFW Foundation

Jim Bassett

The foundation is trying to move forward. We have a lot of work ahead of us. We need to write the documentation that will govern the foundation. If you are interested in utilizing your skills to help us, please let me know.

The foundation wants to be transparent to the members of the VFW and Auxiliary. Our next public accessible meeting will be held at the State Convention. We also plan on holding one at each of the three events, Fall-Fest, Mid-Winter, as well as convention. So that you know, we are trying to build the infrastructure needed to be successful. If you have concerns, comments or suggestions, we are more than interested in hearing them. You can contact the foundation at okvfwfoundation@outlook.com or bassettj15@yahoo.com>

Your Foundation <https://okvfwfoundation.org>



District Happenings

District 14

Ardmore Post 4574:

- Poker Run and Raffle April 5th.
- April 9th is The Medal of Honor Ride in Gainesville that the Post and Riders Support.

DISTRICT MEETING INFORMATION

- District 1
 - TBD
 - TBD
 - TBD
- District 3
 - May 3rd 11 am
 - Stigler, 10396 HWY 9 West
 - TBD
- District 4
 - May 3rd 11 am
 - Durant, 123 S 2nd ST
 - TBD
- District 5
 - May 4th 2 pm
 - Claremore, 1717 W DuPont
 - TBD
- District 7
 - May 3rd 11 am
 - Okmulgee, 1427 N Okmulgee
 - TBD
- District 8
 - May 10th 11 am
 - Stillwater, 5505 W 6th Ave
 - TBD
- District 9
 - May 17th 10 am
 - Guthrie, 5223 S Division St
 - TBD
- District 10
 - May 10th 10 am
 - Shawnee, 811 E Macarthur ST
 - TBD

- District 13
 - April 19th 11 am
 - Clinton, 1705 ½ US 183
 - TBD
- District 14
 - April 12th 10 am
 - Marlow, 305 W Arapahoe
 - TBD
- District 15
 - May 17th 11 am
 - Lawton, 926 SW 2nd ST
 - TBD

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Gold Star Spouses Day >> April 5th

National Former POW Recognition Day >> April 9th

Dept Sr Vice Training (for Dept Sr Vices only) >> April 10th – 13th >> Kansas City, MO

Air Force Reserve Birthday >> April 14th

Army Reserve Birthday >> April 23rd

NVS Accredited Representative Proficiency Training Conference >> April 27th – 30th >> Annapolis, MD

Cinco de Mayo >> May 5th

Mother's Day >> May 11th

Armed Forces Day >> May 17th

National Maritime Day >> May 22nd

Memorial Day >> May 26th

US Army's 250th Birthday >> June 14th

Juneteenth >> June 19th

2025 Oklahoma State Convention >> June 26th – 29th >> Embassy Suites, Norman, OK

VFW National Home 100th Anniversary Celebration >> June 28th >> Eaton Rapids, MI

EMAIL PHISHING

Randy Traxler

Scammers are working harder than ever to steal personal information through phishing emails and text messages (smishing). As part of the **VFW Oklahoma** community, we want to ensure you stay informed and protected.

How to Recognize and Handle Phishing Attempts

◇ **If You Receive a Phishing Email:**

- **Do NOT click on links or open attachments**—they may contain malware.
- **Verify the sender**—look for misspellings or unusual addresses.
- **Report the email:**
 - Use your email provider's "Report phishing" option.
 - Forward it to **reportphishing@apwg.org** (Anti-Phishing Working Group).
 - If it appears to be from a trusted company, report it directly to them.
- **Mark as spam and delete** the email.
- **Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)** on your accounts for added security.

◇ **If You Receive a Phishing Text (Smishing):**

- **Do NOT click links or reply**—this confirms your number is active to scammers.
- **Report the text** by forwarding it to **7726 (SPAM)** and to the **FTC at reportfraud.ftc.gov**.
- **Block the sender** on your phone.
- **Check with the company directly** if the message claims to be from your bank, service provider, or another organization.
- **Keep your phone updated** to protect against security threats.

What to Do If You've Already Been a Victim

If you've clicked on a phishing link or shared sensitive information, take action immediately:

- ☒ **Change your passwords** for any affected accounts.
- ☒ **Contact your bank or credit card company** if you shared financial information.
- ☒ **Report identity theft** to the **FTC at www.identitytheft.gov**.
- ☒ **Scan your devices for malware** if you clicked on a suspicious link.

By staying vigilant, we can protect ourselves and each other from cyber threats. If you suspect a phishing attempt targeting VFW members, please report it immediately.