

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

CODE OF ETHICS POLICY



2022-2023

AS APPROVED BY THE VFW, DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

CODE OF ETHICS FOR VFW, DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA POSTS

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California, is a non-profit organization governed under the laws of the State of California. VFW members and the general public look to the VFW to provide strong leadership on veteran's issues and to develop and implement effective programs to promote patriotism, community service, youth development and a strong national defense. In order to fulfill those important responsibilities, the organization must maintain a reputation that is above reproach.

To sustain the organization's reputation and assure its continued success, Post officers, and employees, as well as members put in leadership positions (e.g. committee chairman and other appointees), are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and in accordance with the admonition in the Ritual to live lives of stainless integrity. To maintain the trust and confidence of the members and the public, the officers, employees, and others in leadership positions must adhere to the highest standards of honesty, integrity and professional conduct and comply with the Code of Ethics.

This Code of Ethics is the policy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California, and is intended to foster an environment that promotes ethical conduct in carrying out the mission of the organization by its leaders, volunteers and employees.

CODE OF ETHICS

Officers, employees, and other persons in leadership positions in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California shall be governed by the following Code of Ethics Policy:

PERSONAL CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

All officers, employees and other persons in leadership positions shall:

1. Display personal integrity, avoid misrepresentation and always be honest with others;
2. Act in a professional manner at all times;
3. Promote an environment where honesty and open communication are valued;
4. Resolve differences of opinion in a professional and mature manner;
5. Respect the confidentiality of privileged information;
6. Refuse to engage in or tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment toward members, employees, volunteers, guests or other officers;
7. Exhibit respect and fairness toward all people;
8. Speak highly of the organization and its members; and
9. Promote the VFW and support the activities of the organization.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Members and donors have placed their trust in the leadership of the organization to use funds to best fulfill the mission of the VFW. The officers, employees and others in leadership positions shall:

1. Refrain from using VFW resources for any purpose that does not benefit the organization;
2. Ensure that travel, entertainment and related expenses incurred on behalf of the VFW are for the benefit of the organization and not for personal gain or interests;
3. Make objective and informed decisions concerning the proper use of funds or assets of the organization; and
4. Regard the assets of the organization with the same consideration and same care as personal assets when making decisions.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest which would tarnish the image of the organization, no one serving as an officer, employee or in any leadership position shall take personal advantage of his or her leadership role by allowing a situation to exist that is, or may be perceived to be, a conflict of interest. All officers, employees and others in leadership positions must:

1. Make all decisions based upon the best interests of the VFW;
2. Refrain from the use of VFW resources for personal gain;
3. Timely disclose any direct or indirect relationship with a person, or interest in a business or other entity, that may benefit from a decision in which they have a vote or over which they have an ability to influence;
4. Refrain from influencing the selection of vendors who are relatives, personal friends or persons who are affiliated with, employ or are employed by, a person with whom such officer, employee or other person in a leadership position has a personal or professional relationship;
5. Avoid any conduct that could directly or indirectly benefit the officer, employee or other person in a leadership position and refrain from using such positions, directly or indirectly, for private gain or to advance personal interest or that of any family member, personal friend or other person with whom a personal relationship exists;
6. Decline any extravagant gift, travel, entertainment, gratuity, favor, or extraordinary discounts on merchandise in the performance of VFW duties from anyone, and, under no circumstances, should any of the aforementioned affect business decisions; *
7. Ensure that outside employment and other activities do not adversely affect the performance of VFW duties; and
8. Avoid any situation that may have an appearance of a conflict of interest.

* Any Officer or Staff who questions the appropriateness of the gift, travel, entertainment, favors or discounts must disclose it to the Post Commander and Quartermaster.

CODE OF ETHICS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California, Code of Ethics Policy. I understand that I am responsible for adhering to the principles and standards of this Code, including, specifically, those provisions concerning conflicts of interest. I am not aware of any interests or relationships that could give rise to a conflict of interest or otherwise violate the Code of Ethics. I will disclose any such interests or relationships as soon as I am aware of it. I confirm that I will conduct myself in accordance with the principles and standards of the Code.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Post: _____

Date: _____

RATIFICATION

Except as modified and amended by subsequent action of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California Council of Administration, the Code of Ethics Policy is hereby ratified by majority vote and confirmed in full force and effect in accordance with its terms by the 2020-2021 Council of Administration on June 12, 2022.

Martin Yingling
State Commander

OFFICIAL:



Rodger W. Meier
State Adjutant