



TO: Chapter Commanders and Adjutants
FROM: Dr. Carl Forkner, Department Adjutant
SUBJ.: NATIONAL HQ ADMINISTRATOR CONFERENCE NOTES
DATE: October 30, 2025

The annual National Administrator Conference took place at DAV National HQ on October 28-29, 2025, and included Commanders, Adjutants, and Judge Advocates from many state Departments across the country. The conference included training from National leaders from each area of DAV operations. These notes provide a recap of information and lessons learned from the conference that may apply at the Chapter level.

AFR. Perhaps the most urgent and repeated direction was regarding Annual Financial Reports (AFRs). This year, the reports were required to be submitted using the online form at mydav.org and emailed, faxed, or USPS mail were not accepted. The National Adjutant briefed that across the country, just over 400 departments and chapters were delinquent in submitting their AFR. As a result, the decision was made to add a one-time, one-month extension to allow those entities to submit their AFR and avoid suspension by National HQ. Any department or chapter that has not submitted their AFR by midnight on Friday, October 31, 2025, will automatically be suspended until such time as their AFR is submitted. Departments and chapters that do not meet the extended deadline will not only be suspended until the QA FR is submitted but will remain suspended until the AFR is approved. Starting next year, there will *not* be an extension beyond September 30th and departments or chapters that do not meet the deadline will be automatically suspended by the National organization—this will be based on a programmed IT tripwire that will identify suspended entities automatically at 12:01am on October 1st. If you meet or exceed the \$500,000 income level for the fiscal year and require a CPA review letter, it is important that you stay on top of progress with your CPA because National HQ will *not* grant extensions based on chapters not having their CPA review letter in time to file the AFR by September 30.

NOTE: For Department of Arizona Chapters, remember that you must have organic (in-house) ability to complete and submit your AFR. The Department office no longer does AFRs for chapters, as briefed at the 2025 Department Convention. This policy remains in force. If chapters require assistance or have questions about the AFR, the Department Treasurer is available to assist you; however, chapters need to start the AFR process early after the June 30th end of the fiscal year—this may be facilitated by making sure that you are reconciling your accounts on a monthly basis, as strongly recommended by National HQ as a best practice.

MyDAV.org. There have been multiple growing pains with implementing the mydav.org site as a clearing house for many reports and information files. This week, attendees at the conference brought these issues up with the Membership staff (IT is embedded in Membership). They were able to identify and fix problems with mydav.org login and errors when navigating reports (OERs, AFRs, Report Repository, etc.). If you run into an IT problem, the best course of action is to email membershipassistant@dav.org and Amber will route the problem report to the right IT Specialist. Membership also agreed to start sending out notifications when all or parts of the website will be down for maintenance or upgrade. Membership also implemented a new login option to allow non-Veteran Department and Chapter administrative staff to be able to log into www.mydav.org and have limited access to administrative tools. Chapter Commanders or Adjutants who have civilian (non-Veteran) administrative staff may email me and request access information for their administrative assistants to acquire login credentials (*this access is not authorized for anyone other than non-Veteran administrative staff*). Enhancements to the www.mydav.org website are in the works right now, including better functionality for member profile updates and records, ability to see a listing of all approved chapter AFRs in a spreadsheet format (for Department users only), and an electronic listing of Erlanger and Washington DC National staff contact information (Department users only).

Lines of Authority. Multiple presenters—in particular, the National Adjutant and National Inspector General—reinforced the need for chapters to follow the DAV lines of authority when elevating issues that require attention or support above the chapter level. Chapters are not to go directly to the National organization staff directly, except in cases such as IT issues with DAV websites or membership registration/application errors/death notifications. All other chapter items that require elevation above the chapter level are to be sent to Department, which will either act on the issue/request or [if necessary] forward the issue to National HQ staff.

NOTE: When forwarding issues or requests to Department of Arizona, all correspondence (email, USPS mail, phone requests) is required to go to the Adjutant. Exceptions to this are (1) if chapters request assistance with their AFR from the Department Treasurer, you may contact him directly and cc: the Department Adjutant, and (2) if chapters request assistance from the Department Judge Advocate for revising the chapter Constitution and Bylaws, you may contact him directly and cc: the Department Adjutant. The Department Administrative Assistants have been instructed that, in accordance with guidance from the National Adjutant and National Inspector General, all communications to Department are to be reviewed by the Department Adjutant. The most effective way to send correspondence to Department is via email because of frequent travel requirements to chapters and government offices.

Business Cards. You can order business cards for your chapter officers, CSOs, administrative staff, and any DAV member by navigating to www.dav.la/37z, which takes you to the part of the DAV store to order DAV-branded business cards, stationery, envelopes, and note pads. One of the options available for business cards is to include your “Recruit a Warrior” QR code on the cards. You will need your member number to obtain your personal QR code—this code will autofill your member data into the membership application of anyone who scans your code to join DAV. This QR code is only available to DAV members (the DAV Auxiliary has a similar function on the DAVA website4).

Public Service Announcements. DAV PSAs are available for departments and chapters to use. These are short video pieces highlighting what DAV can do for Veterans, service programs, and so forth. You can also make contact with local media sources to see if they will play PSAs for you (each TVZ and radio station donates time each year to run non-profit organizations' PSAs. The PSAs can be found at www.davpsa.org.

Member Leader Resources. On the dav.org website, the “Member Resources” section has a special section for “Member Leaders” that has handbooks, guides, instructions, award materials, event planning checklists, and more. There are also sections for Member Leader Memos, Commander & Adjutant Conference Presentations, and Department Admin Training Presentations.

Member Advantages. There are many companies and vendors that offer special deals to Veterans. First, go to www.dav.org/join-2/member-advantages/ and then click on the “click here” link in the second sentence under the Member Discounts banner. This takes you to www.dav.enjoymydeals.com where you can navigate through dozens of deals that save you money.

Veteran Advantage DAV Guide. This guide provides guidance for employers in hiring and retaining Veterans with disabilities. You can share the guide either by emailing or printing the guide for potential employers of disabled Veterans. The Guide is found at www.dav.org/get-involved/hire-veterans/hiring-guide/. This is a great resource for presenting the advantages of hiring disabled Veterans in talking to companies, chambers of commerce, local business associations, and so forth.

News and Media. There are many media resources across different platforms available here, including podcasts, videos, the DAV magazine in online form, speeches you can edit and use for various holidays and events, and posters. Also featured in this section is “Member News,” which is where most of the department and chapter submissions of events that they participated in will be published. These resources may be found at www.dav.org/news-media/. The page also has a link to resources for outside media, called the “Press Room.”

Voluntary Services. Probably the most important point made during this presentation was that departments and chapters are mostly underreporting their LVAP and VAVS hours—in fact, many chapters are not reporting any numbers at all! There are other issues, like grants, awards, and partnerships that these numbers help support. The online page includes guides for VAVS, Community Impact Day, VTN driver recruitment, the Volunteer for Veterans website, scholarship programs (an additional \$30K was added this year in the form of two more \$5K and two more \$10K scholarships), and best practices presentations. This page also has links to the monthly volunteer reporting forms. The page is found in the Member Resources sections at www.dav.org/member-resources/voluntary-services/.

Service Officer Program. There are suggestions by some leaders that the CSO/DSO training and certification program should be eliminated and that DAV should no longer have CSOs and DSOs. National HQ is fiercely opposed to this because DAV had the only structured and managed department/chapter level training and certification program recognized by the American Council on Education (ACE). Those wanting to eliminate the program base their argument on the cost of carrying the \$500,000 per instance indemnity insurance that covers DSOs/CSOs in the claims process. Even though National HQ will support any service officer who is doing their best, in good

faith, following the Service Officer Guide, and submitting claims immediately (or ASAP in some cases), two instances exist for which the indemnity insurance will NOT cover a Service Officer: (1) making errors on claims that make the claimant lose money (errors on items that your training and the Service Officer Guide clearly provide), and (2) failure to submit the claim to the NSO Office in a timely manner resulting in the claimant losing money due to the delay. In those two cases, National HQ indemnity insurance *will not cover* the DSO/CSO, and that Service Officer may be individually liable for damages claimed by the claimant. Regarding certification, if a DSO/CSO is consistently demonstrating a lack of acumen or attention to detail in processing claims, they may be decertified—which would also prohibit them from being certified again in the future. For this to occur, the NSO Supervisor makes a report and forwards it with evidence to the National Service Director at DAV HQ, who then reviews the case and makes the determination whether the DSO/CSO should be decertified or potentially retrained in the problem areas. Because the Chapter Commander or Department Commander are responsible for nominating [known and capable] candidates for DSO/CSO training and certification, Department or Chapter Commanders are also responsible for observing DSO/CSO performance and, if deficient, reporting it to the NSO Supervisor along with evidence of the deficiency(ies).

National Service Foundation: Columbia Trust. The Columbia Trust is all about ensuring that DAV has the chapters, volunteers, and program resources to serve disabled Veterans and their families. If a chapter or department is having a shortfall of funds that renders them less than able to provide service to Veterans and their families, they can apply for a grant through the Columbia Trust; however, the Trust will only provide grants for service needs—grants will not be awarded for operating expenses, officer travel or other non-service purposes. The department or chapter's AFR from the previous fiscal year must have been submitted *and approved* to receive a grant. This is also the portal through which departments apply for purchase of vehicles for department or VTN transportation programs. The site is at www.nsf.dav.org/columbia-trust/.

Bar, Lounge, Bingo or Thrift Operations. Chapters must remember that when they submit their AFR it *must* show at least 10% of your gross intake going to free services to Veterans. Additionally, 60% of utility expenses are to be charged against bar/lounge gross income. Failure to have at least 10% of the gross income going to service programs *will* result in the chapter having its privilege to have a bar/lounge, Bingo, or Thrift Store operation revoked permanently by the National Commander—these are fundraisers and are a privilege, not a right.

This encapsulates the main points brought out in the conference. I encourage chapter officers to explore the resources presented and use them to enhance your programs.

Sincerely,



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