

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2019-2021**

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**What is a Strategic Plan, and why do we need one?**

A strategic plan sets the direction for moving the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) forward over multiple years. Unlike an annual program or Department Program Action Plan, a strategic plan sets the priorities over a period of years and directs energy and resources to these priorities. Our Department Strategic Plan will help our Department better fulfill the ALA mission in a way that is meaningful and rewarding for new and renewing members. With an eye on the future this document defines our mission focus- who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

As the needs of our veterans and their families continue to grow, our membership continues to decline. The American Legion Auxiliary is needed, and yet there is a threat that we won't be around in 30 years if we do not start planning for our future.

The annual *Programs Action Plan* covers the work that is done at the hands-on, mission-outreach Unit level during the next 12 month period, September – August. The Department Strategic Plan will address the bigger issues of growing and retaining members, engaging members in the grass roots programs of our Units, developing effective leaders, assisting Units in sustaining financial stability, and continuing to foster the family relationship with The American Legion.

**The Strategic Planning Goals for 2019-2020 are:**

- 1.) Cultivate a variety of mission engagement opportunities**
- 2.) Enhance organizational effectiveness of our Units**
- 3.) Recruit and retain members through mission engagement**
- 4.) Ensure financial stewardship of resources to maximize mission delivery**
- 5.) Enhance and foster the family relationship with The American Legion**

***Goal #1: Cultivate a variety of mission engagement opportunities***

**Strategies:**

- a.) Each Unit should review the Program Action Plan and select those programs that are best suited for your members and your community. If your membership numbers are such that you can successfully work all the programs then by all means do so. If your Unit is small then select those you feel you can promote successfully. There are opportunities in every program for every size Unit. You do not have to do it all, but DO SOMETHING.
- b.) If your Unit is large, or small, don't hesitate to reach out to other organizations in your community and ask them to join forces with you to promote programs that benefit our veterans, our military and their families.
- c.) Review the 2019-2020 Public Relations Program Action Plan for ideas and suggestions about promoting your Unit activities.

### ***Goal #2: Enhance organizational effectiveness of our Unit***

#### **Strategies:**

- a.) Each Unit should utilize the abilities of every member. We are all different - different talents, different thought processes and different backgrounds. Unit Presidents have the responsibility of seeking out those members with various abilities and encouraging them to participate in Unit activities utilizing their best strengths. Everyone likes to be asked to participate according to their abilities. Do not expect members to always volunteer – ask!
- b.) Units need to have organized structure in their meetings. Unorganized meetings can be frustrating to members, tend to be long and drawn out, and members walk away. All Units should now be using the new Unit Guidebook as their manual for conducting Unit meetings and working the programs. (The newly revised Unit Guidebook -2019- can be downloaded from the [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org) website under Member Services. Everything a Unit Member needs to know can be found in this book. Unit Presidents can review page 50 for a meeting agenda.)
- c.) Every Unit should give the opportunity to all members to grow as a leader within the Unit and beyond. Encourage and mentor new Unit members to take part in all activities no matter how small the task may be.

### ***Goal #3: Recruit and retain members through mission engagement (working the programs)***

#### **Strategies:**

- a.) Create opportunities for members that will encourage them to renew their membership. This is accomplished by making sure new members get involved in the Unit activities and seasoned members are utilized for their knowledge and ability. Make everyone feel important. (Review the 2019-20 Membership Program Action Plan for ideas and suggestions for retaining and recruiting new members and the many awards available for doing so)
- b.) Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Promote a culture of goodwill within your Unit, District, Division and Department. There is NEVER a good reason to spread gossip or treat anyone with disrespect or rudeness.
- c.) Send personal notes to new members, members who cannot attend meetings, members you haven't seen in awhile. Pick up the phone and call them. If members cannot attend meetings then perhaps they can be your Unit Goodwill Ambassador(s) by calling members who haven't been to meetings, new members to welcome them, and sending note cards just to stay in touch. (Review the 2019-20 Membership Program Action Plan-Week of Caring & Sharing)

***Goal #4: Ensure financial stewardship of resources to maximize mission delivery***

**Strategies:**

- a.) Every Unit needs funds to carry out their programs. Units large or small can raise funds by having bake sales, raffles, and other activities that do not need a large number of people to be successful. (This committee is willing to share some ideas with your Unit).
- b.) Join with other sister Units or organizations to hold a joint fundraiser and share the profits.
- c.) Unit members are entitled to regular reports from the Unit Treasurer. (See Duties of Unit Officers in the Unit Guidebook as mentioned in Goal #2)
- d.) Every Unit should set a budget of some kind to keep an accurate accounting of how your funds will be spent. A budget is a guideline and can be adjusted if necessary.
- e.) Treasurer's books must be audited at least once during the fiscal year. These audits can be conducted by either an outside auditor or a committee as appointed by the Unit President.

***Goal #5: Enhance and foster the family relationship with The American Legion***

**Strategies:**

- a.) Units are encouraged to reach out to their American Legion Post Commander and officers to promote a goodwill atmosphere within their Post home.
- b.) Encourage joint meetings and activities with all of the American Legion Family, including Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Riders.

This committee encourages every Unit to develop a Strategic Plan and set your goals to accomplish those as set out above by our national organization and this committee. Goals are simply statements of what you hope to achieve and Strategies are statements that describe how you will achieve your goals. We are available to assist you with suggestions and recommendations for carrying out the goals and strategies of this plan.