



Mentorship Meeting #1

MOCA Purpose, Mission, & Hospital Program

This meeting is designed to help prospective members understand who the MOCA is, why we exist, and who we serve.

Encourage conversation. Ask questions, invite members to share their experiences and ideas, and make sure prospective members feel comfortable asking questions of their own.

Who We Are & Where We Fit

☐ **Discuss the relationship between the VFW, VFW Auxiliary, MOC, and MOCA.**

- The MOC is the Honor Degree of the VFW. The MOCA is the Auxiliary to that Honor Degree; we are not ourselves an Honor Degree.
- Our membership comes from eligible members of the VFW Auxiliary.
- We are part of the larger VFW family and should always work to maintain strong relationships within that family.

☐ **Discuss the importance of supporting the VFW Auxiliary.**

- The MOCA should never be viewed as competition with the VFW Auxiliary.
- We want MOCA members to also be good, involved VFW Auxiliary members.
- Pride in our MOCA service should strengthen—not diminish—our pride in the VFW Auxiliary.
- Strong relationships with VFW Auxiliary members also help introduce more eligible members to the MOCA.

☐ **Discuss the relationship between an Auxiliary and its sponsoring Pup Tent.**

- We work alongside the MOC in support of our shared mission and our Veterans.
- A healthy relationship between the Auxiliary and Pup Tent benefits both organizations.
- We are separate organizations with our own By-Laws, rules, officers, finances, and responsibilities.

☐ **Discuss the purpose and mission of the MOCA.**

- Our primary objective is to assist the MOC in promoting work and programs serving Veterans in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice, and those who are homebound.
- Our purpose also includes social activities and maintaining a spirit of optimism and humor.
- **Hospital and Veteran service is at the heart of why the MOCA exists.**

Discussion Question:

How can being active in the MOCA strengthen your involvement in the VFW Auxiliary?

Key Message:

Together with our MOC and VFW Auxiliary, we can serve more Veterans.

Keep 'Em Smilin' in Beds of White

☐ **Discuss the meaning of “Keep 'Em Smilin' in Beds of White.”**

- Hospital service is more than making donations.
- Writing checks and providing gifts are valuable, but time and presence should not be overlooked when members are able to provide them.
- Sitting with someone, listening, visiting, playing a game, sharing a laugh, or simply letting a Veteran know someone remembered them can be incredibly meaningful.

☐ **Explain that a hospital visit does not have to be a group activity.**

- Members may participate as an auxiliary group.
- Individual members may also make qualifying visits, and that service should be reported to the Auxiliary Hospital Chairman.

Key Message:

Sometimes the most important thing we give a Veteran is letting them know they have not been forgotten.

Mentor Reminder:

Do not teach the Hospital Report line-by-line during this meeting. The purpose here is simply to help members understand that different types of service are reported differently and that they should ask when unsure.

Everyone Can Contribute☐ **Discuss ways members with different abilities or comfort levels can participate.**

- Not every member will be comfortable or physically able to enter a hospital or nursing-home setting. That does not mean they cannot contribute.

Members may:

- Make cards or items for hospitalized Veterans
- Assist with projects before a visit
- Make qualifying phone calls
- Help organize activities
- Support members who are making visits

Key Message:

Bring what you have to give. Everyone has something they can contribute!

Humor, Optimism & AuxSILLYry Spirit☐ **Discuss why humor is part of our organization.**

- Our By-Laws specifically include promoting social activities and keeping alive the spirit of optimism and humor as part of our objective.
- When the MOC was established they recognized Veterans needed more than just medical care. They needed a smile and companionship.

We take our mission seriously, but ourselves—not so much.

☐ **Talk about what fun can look like in their Auxiliary.**

- Every Auxiliary develops its own personality.
- Meetings may include humor, silliness, fun traditions, friendly mischief, or other activities that members enjoy.
- Some Auxiliaries may embrace more traditional Cootie-style chaos than others—and that is okay.
- Fun should build fellowship and participation, not become more important than the mission.

Discussion Question:

What would make this an organization you would actually look forward to attending?

Mentor Follow-Up

Following the meeting, the Mentor will submit a brief summary to the Supreme President addressing:

- Member participation and engagement
- Concerns raised by prospective members
- Areas that may need additional explanation or education
- Mentor's overall observations

Mentorship Meeting #2

Leadership, Meeting Structure & Programs

This meeting is designed to help prospective members understand the importance of shared leadership, the basic structure of an Auxiliary meeting, and the programs that help us accomplish our mission.

Encourage conversation. Ask questions throughout the meeting and make sure prospective members feel comfortable discussing their interests, abilities, and concerns.

Leadership – It Takes More Than a President

☐ Discuss why a strong leadership pool is important to the health of an Auxiliary.

- An Auxiliary cannot depend on one or two people to do everything.
- Leadership should be shared among members.
- Members should be willing to learn new responsibilities and eventually step into different positions.
- When the same people must continually hold every office and perform every task, the long-term health of the Auxiliary is at risk.
- Developing future leaders should begin from the start.
- Recruiting new members from the start ensures a deep pool of potential leaders.

Discussion Question:

What skills or experience do you already have that might be useful to the Auxiliary?

☐ Discuss the difference between accepting a title and accepting a responsibility.

Every officer has specific duties established in the MOCA By-Laws and Ritual. Encourage members to read them.

- Before accepting an office, read and understand the duties of that position.
- Ask questions before saying yes.
- Accepting an office means accepting the responsibility that goes with it.
- Officers should work together rather than operate independently.
- Members should be willing to learn so the Auxiliary develops more than one generation of leaders.

Key Message:

An office is more than a title. Know what you are agreeing to do before you accept it.

Our Meetings Have Structure

☐ Introduce the MOCA Ritual and Order of Business.

- MOCA has an established Ritual for conducting Auxiliary meetings.
- The Ritual provides structure and an Order of Business so required business is handled consistently.
- Officers should learn their parts and members should become comfortable with how an Auxiliary meeting operates.

☐ Discuss the difference between conducting necessary business and allowing business to become the purpose of the Auxiliary. We did not form an Auxiliary simply to hold another monthly meeting.

The meeting gives us a place to:

- Conduct necessary Auxiliary business
- Plan our Veteran service
- Share information
- Make decisions together
- Build fellowship
- Have some fun

Key Message:

The meeting supports the mission. The meeting is not the mission.

Discussion Question:

What can we do to conduct our required business while still making meetings somewhere members want to be?

Understanding Our Programs

□ Introduce the programs and resources of the MOCA.

- The Supreme Program Book provides information, guidance, goals, and resources for our programs.
- Encourage members to look through the Program Book and become familiar with our programs.

The goal is for prospective members to understand our programs give us different ways to serve Veterans, support our members, strengthen our Auxiliary, and ultimately support the MOCA mission.

Hospital

Our core mission program. Our hospital work involves Veterans in the both VA and private hospitals, long term care facilities, hospice facilities, and Veterans receiving ongoing medical care who are confined to their homes.

Remember Meeting #1: This is at the heart of why we are here.

Chaplain

Provides care and support during illness, loss, and difficult times and helps us remember and honor members and Veterans who have passed. Caring for people is part of our service.

Membership

Never stop recruiting it is essential to our organization and allows us to serve more Veterans.

National Home

Supports the VFW National Home and its families through established MOCA projects and activities.

Scholarship

Supports educational opportunities for eligible students pursuing approved fields of study.

Supreme President's Special Project

Each year the Supreme President selects a project that gives members an additional opportunity to support Veterans through a focused national effort.

Programs are not just reports we complete. They are tools that help us accomplish our mission.

Choosing Chairmen & Getting Members Involved

□ Discuss the importance of matching members with areas that interest them.

Ask prospective members:

- What interests you?
- What are you good at?
- Is there a particular program you would enjoy helping with?
- Is there something you would like to learn?

Members are more likely to remain involved when they feel useful, included, and connected to something they care about.

Key Message:

Don't build an Auxiliary around one leader. Build an Auxiliary where everyone has a place to contribute.

Mentor Follow-Up

Following the meeting, the Mentor will submit a brief summary to the Supreme President addressing:

- ☐ Member participation and engagement
- ☐ Interest in leadership positions and whether a sufficient leadership pool appears to exist
- ☐ Concerns raised by prospective members
- ☐ Areas that may need additional explanation or education
- ☐ Mentor's overall observations

Mentorship Meeting #3

Expectations, Financial Accountability & Q&A

This final pre-institution meeting is designed to make sure prospective members understand the basic expectations and financial responsibilities that come with operating an Auxiliary and, most importantly, to give them an opportunity to ask questions before moving forward.

What Is Expected of a Healthy Auxiliary?

☐ Discuss the basic expectations of the Auxiliary as a whole.

A successful Auxiliary requires more than obtaining a Charter. Members should understand that they are committing to building and maintaining an active organization.

- Hold regular meetings and conduct required business.
- Follow the MOCA By-Laws and Ritual.
- Maintain enough active members and leaders to keep the Auxiliary healthy.
- Meet financial and reporting responsibilities.
- Participate in Hospital and Veteran service.
- Support the programs and mission of the MOCA.
- Maintain a positive relationship with the sponsoring Pup Tent and VFW Auxiliary.
- Create an environment where members want to participate.

Discussion Question:

What do you believe will be the biggest challenge for your new Auxiliary during its first year?

Financial Accountability

☐ Discuss why financial accountability belongs to the entire Auxiliary.

- The Treasurer handles the day-to-day financial records, but the money belongs to the Auxiliary, not to an individual officer.
- Members make financial decisions through the business of the Auxiliary, and officers are responsible for carrying those decisions out properly.

Key Message:

Auxiliary money belongs to the Auxiliary. No one person controls it.

☐ Introduce the General Fund and Hospital Fund.

The By-Laws require an Auxiliary to maintain at least two funds:

- **General Fund**
- **Hospital Fund**

Both funds are maintained within one checking account, with the Treasurer maintaining the accounting records for each.

Explain briefly that money designated for Hospital purposes must be properly accounted for and used accordingly.

☐ Discuss authorization of expenditures.

- The By-Laws require expenditures to be authorized by a motion made and passed at a meeting and to fall within the approved budget allowance.

Key Message:

Financial decisions are Auxiliary decisions.

☐ Discuss bonding.

The President and Treasurer must be properly bonded. The President is responsible for ensuring that bonding is in place, and copies of the bonds become part of the Auxiliary's records and are submitted through the appropriate channels. **Bonding is required and is not optional.**

☐ **Discuss the importance of audits and financial records.**

Key Message:

Good financial procedures protect everyone.

Let's Talk About Your New Auxiliary

Open the floor for questions about officer and member responsibilities.

Possible discussion prompts:

- Has anyone identified an office they may be interested in holding?
- Is there a responsibility you don't understand?
- Is there an office for which you are concerned the Auxiliary does not currently have a willing or qualified member?
- What are you excited about?
- What are you still unsure about?
- What questions haven't we answered?
- Do you feel like you understand what the MOCA is and why we exist?
- Do you feel like you understand what will be expected of this Auxiliary?
- Do you believe there are enough members willing to share the work and leadership?
- Is there anything you think the group needs more education on before moving forward?

Looking Ahead to Institution

☐ **Briefly explain what happens next.**

- The Charter Application process moves forward.
- An Instituting Officer should be selected.
- After the Auxiliary is instituted officers are elected and installed.
- The new Auxiliary will continue receiving mentorship during its first year.

Key Message:

Institution is the beginning not the finish line.

Mentor Follow-Up

☐ Submit a brief meeting summary to the Supreme President

☐ Complete the Auxiliary Readiness Assessment

☐ Identify any areas where additional mentoring or education is needed

☐ Make a recommendation:

☐ **Ready to Proceed** ☐ **Additional Mentoring Needed** ☐ **Additional Education Needed**

The purpose of the readiness assessment is not to determine whether the prospective members know everything. They won't.

The question is whether they understand what they are committing to, have a sufficient leadership base, understand the MOCA mission and basic responsibilities, and appear prepared to begin building a healthy Auxiliary.