



# AVVA BASICS FOR VVA MEMBERS

AVVA is a [legally] separate organization with different rules and policies. It is important that those VVA members who want to encourage their AVVA members be familiar with these differences.

**IF YOU ARE A PRESIDENT OF A CHAPTER OR STATE** you could sign up for the AVVA Flash Notice email list. This is the means by which we send out information from the AVVA national level. Go to the AVVA website news page to use the sign-up form ([www.avva.org/news.html](http://www.avva.org/news.html)) if you would like to stay in touch.

It is important that VVA chapters have local entities who can and are sympathetic enough to be their legacy. If VVA wants to leave any of their assets to anyone, you should carefully consider your AVVA group becoming incorporated. You probably know that the VVA constitution does NOT allow you to give any assets to anyone other than a 501(C)3, or a 501(C)19. If AVVA is not incorporated, VVA will be unable to support AVVA in their efforts to continue the mission.

## **AVVA MEMBERSHIP ROSTERS**

Having AVVA members associated with your chapter does not guarantee VVA access to the AVVA membership rosters.

AVVA policy states that the rosters go to the AVVA representative, president, or POC (Person of Contact – **appointed by the AVVA State rep. or president**). ALL others must request it from the National Membership Committee Chair whose information is on the CONTACT US page of the AVVA.org website. These AVVA members are free to share the rosters with their associated VVA chapter if they choose. AVVA will only provide rosters to VVA when there is no AVVA rep., president or POC available.

## **WHO CAN BE A MEMBER OF AVVA?**

Anyone of any age can be a “Regular” member of AVVA, as long as they do not qualify for membership in VVA. VVA members who join AVVA are known as “Dual Members”.

Our membership applications are designed so that the differences in ages and dues amounts are clear to all those joining. All we ask is that the person’s birthdate be given. Applications for membership can be found on the AVVA website: [www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms](http://www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms).

Changes in name, address, phone number, and email address are important information and must be sent to the membership office using the "Change of Information Form" found at [www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms](http://www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms).

Printed AVVA Membership Application Brochures can be requested at the National Office, by contacting [membership@vva.org](mailto:membership@vva.org). They are packaged in bundles of 25.

## **RENEWING AVVA MEMBERSHIPS**

AVVA members receive a renewal letter in the mail, **IF** they have kept their mailing address current with our membership department. (See changes in name, etc., above.)

There is only one group form still used by AVVA for renewals. It is available on our website. We ask that you only use the individual membership renewal forms, or the forms that are mailed to our members for the purpose of renewing their membership. We cannot keep changes in information current when using the group form. If a VVA chapter is sending in renewals in groups because they are paying for them together, please have the renewing members fill out and give



# AVVA BASICS FOR VVA MEMBERS

you the proper forms, which can then be sent in together. Checks for AVVA renewals, group or individual, must be made out to AVVA, not VVA

Renewals of AVVA memberships need to be sent so that they are received and posted before the expiration date on the member's card. *Example:* If the renewal date on the card is March 30, the renewal should be mailed in before the end of March to assure the member stays current. It can take up to two weeks for renewals to be received and posted to the new roster. These members could be denied voting rights because their renewal is not posted in time.

This is true of all levels. When a delegate registers for a convention, if they are not a life member and their renewal date is shortly before the convention, their renewal is watched until it is updated. If it is not updated before the date of the convention **neither that member nor their alternate will be seated as a delegate and will lose their representation.**

## **INCARCERATED VETERAN MEMBERS**

A new application for AVVA incarcerated members was created in 2020. This form is to be used for *all* incarcerated veterans. This form requires prisoner numbers be included and asks for verification of military service. You can access this form on the AVVA website: [www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms](http://www.avva.org/forms.html#membforms).

The biggest problem we have with incarcerated members is tracking releases. Every document that mentions incarcerated members states they *must* renew annually. This is because when they are released, they no longer qualify for reduced dues or incarcerated status, and they must renew as regular members. It is the responsibility of those working with the incarcerated members to notify the National Membership Department of the release. This may be done simply by specifying the names of those who *are* renewing that year.

AVVA written policy states "AVVA will accept no less than the maximum amount a State or Facility will allow" [up to the normal \$20]. In 2020 we contacted the state Departments of Corrections and most individual prisons where our members are located and none of them have limitations on what organizations may charge for dues.

## **DUES FOR INCARCERATED VETERANS**

Through an agreement with VVA, most AVVA incarcerated **veterans** should only pay \$7.00 per year. There are 4 chapters in Florida for whom there is an agreement for \$0 dues. There are no other dues agreements that are less than \$7 per year for incarcerated AVVA **Veterans**. Those who are not veterans must pay regular annual dues. AVVA's primary income is our dues. Therefore, it is important that the dues structure be followed. AVVA has over 600 incarcerated members that should be paying \$7.00 which is over \$4,000.00 lost per year, when it is not received. Please see AVVA policy section 7 for details. [www.avva.org/policy.html](http://www.avva.org/policy.html).

## **AVVA ELECTIONS - GENERAL**

Election policies may be found in Section 5 of the AVVA Policies & Procedures Manual. [www.avva.org/policy.html](http://www.avva.org/policy.html). (*\*They are **very different** from VVA's election policies.*)

## **CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES AND PRESIDENTS**

AVVA has both unincorporated **AND** incorporated chapters, unlike VVA. An unincorporated chapter can have as few as one (1) member, or as many as they wish. An unincorporated chapter



# AVVA BASICS FOR VVA MEMBERS

can have an elected *chapter representative*. An incorporated chapter must have at least 10 “regular” members, and would elect a *president, V.P., secretary and treasurer*.

AVVA **does not** allow nominations from the floor at any level, therefore, candidate names cannot be added at the election meeting. Only those who have properly submitted a letter of intent as stated in AVVA policy can run for office.

## AVVA CHAPTER ELECTION MEETINGS

AVVA chapter elections are **ONLY** held in **April of even numbered years**, unless a special election has been justified and approved by the National Elections Committee Chair.

Unincorporated chapters of any size may hold an election for a representative to speak for their chapter at state and national levels. (\*Even if they have only one AVVA member.)

## WHO CAN VOTE?

Only **regular** members in good standing vote in AVVA elections. The membership roster should be available so that members can be verified as current before a member votes. There must be a person selected as an Election Chair, or someone appointed to oversee the election. See AVVA policy for details.

## BALLOTS MUST BE USED

Ballots must be used in all AVVA elections. Each person running for a position will be listed on the ballot.

Persons running for a position **must** be at the meeting when the election is held or have submitted a valid reason for being absent. If not excused from attending, their name will be crossed off the ballot.

Sign-in sheets must also be used. Forms are available on the AVVA website. ([www.avva.org/forms.html](http://www.avva.org/forms.html)).

## REPORTING ELECTION RESULTS

AVVA election results must be reported properly and before deadlines, in order to be valid. VVA DOES NOT REPORT AVVA ELECTION RESULTS!

Election Result Forms will be sent by the new AVVA representative or president to the person specified on the results form, by the deadlines indicated! AVVA election results **never** go to the National office. Please follow the directions on the AVVA Election Results Form or the election might be invalidated. [www.avva.org/forms.html#electionforms](http://www.avva.org/forms.html#electionforms).

## STATE ELECTIONS

AVVA also has unincorporated and incorporated State Associations. Please refer to the AVVA policy for details. [www.avva.org/policy.html](http://www.avva.org/policy.html) section 5.I and 5.V.



# AVVA BASICS FOR VVA MEMBERS

## **INCORPORATION OF AVVA CHAPTERS AND STATES**

Chapters with 10 or more members should be encouraged to become **incorporated** and elect officers. States with 50 or more members within the entire state should also strongly consider becoming incorporated.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

First, you need to know that incorporation allows the AVVA group to solicit donations, which are deductible for the donor, and it will allow them control over their own money and events. It does NOT mean that they cannot work together with VVA anymore.

Do not depend on VVA processes to know what AVVA should be doing. They are very different. Becoming incorporated once you are able is the way in which your AVVA will be strong enough to carry on the VVA mission far into the future. Please read through the AVVA Policy Manual, Section 2, for the details of this process. It is not nearly as intimidating as it might seem, but the process must be followed.

If you need or want further information about incorporation, or other topics, please contact the appropriate committee chairs or board members using the contact information found on the AVVA website contact pages:

<http://www.avva.org/committees.html> Committee Chairs

<http://avva.org/statechapter.html> State Reps and Presidents & Incorporated Chapter Presidents

<http://www.avva.org/region.html> Regional Directors

<http://www.avva.org/officers.html> National Officers

If you should like, you may think about copying these pages, and sharing them with your chapter members, or the chapters in your state who were unable to attend convention.