

# MOWW® | CHAPTER COMMANDER GUIDANCE & CHECKLIST

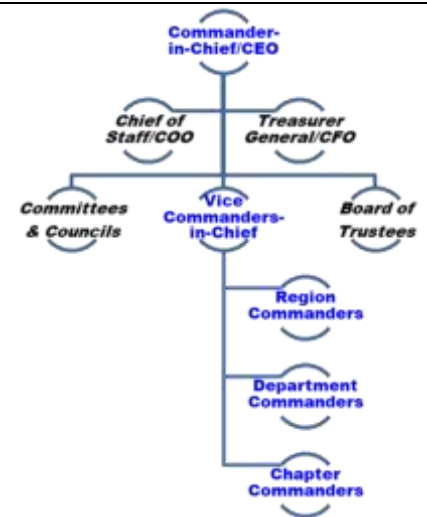
Facilitating robust & sustainable chapter performance “for the good of the chapter”

- ★ **MOWW STRATEGIC PLAN VISION:** “TO BE A PREEMINENT UNITED STATES VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION”
- ★ **MOWW STRATEGIC PLAN MISSION:** “TO UNITE IN SELFLESS SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES”
- ★ **COMMAND ASSIGNMENT:** TO LEAD, LISTEN & INNOVATE, COMBINING THE ART & SCIENCE OF COMMAND IN A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION WHILE COMMUNICATING A VISION & INSPIRING COLLABORATIVE, RESULTS-ORIENTED ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**NOTE:** THIS GUIDANCE & CHECKLIST IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE, E.G., LOCAL CHAPTERS MAY HAVE OTHER THINGS THEY CONSIDER OR TRACK AND IF SO, SUCH THINGS SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED IN LOCAL GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CONTINUITY WITHIN THE RESPECTIVE CHAPTER.

## A. RE-THINKING LEADERSHIP

1. Great things are done by a team of people using self-reliance, the chain of command and staff activities (e.g., GSOs, committees, HQ MOWW)
  - a. David Allen: “You can do anything, but you can’t do everything”
  - b. We must rely on other Companions (e.g., “team of teams”) to thrive as a chapter and prevent Companion burn-out
2. Our success depends on our perseverance
  - a. We must believe in our Strategic Goals 1-5. Believing we can achieve them locally and that they are within our reach are essential to success
  - b. As we achieve goals, we will be more confident that we can achieve other goals—and we’ll be more capable
3. Our success can benefit others
  - a. Our success is a model for others to emulate because it proves success is actually possible—to them and to ourselves
  - b. Success generates excitement, confidence & interest, and inspires more involvement
4. If we always do what we’ve always done, we’ll always get what we’ve always got
5. Our success depends on whether we’re looking backwards or forward
  - a. Are we inclusive?
  - b. Do we communicate effectively up and down the chain—and laterally?
  - c. Do we listen to and make a place in the Order for our newest and youngest members?
  - d. Do we motivate idea generation and results, e.g., “What do you think we should do next?” or do we say, “That won’t work” or “We tried that once.”
6. We all in sales. Our best sales pitches are our motto and tagline delivered with sincerity with a local focus
  - a. Motto: “It is nobler to serve than to be served”
  - b. Tagline: “Serving youth, community & nation”



## B. PRE-COMMAND

1. Ensure the predecessor provided all material needed by chapter commander-elect, e.g.,
  - a. This checklist (with your predecessor commander’s notes and comments)
  - b. Chapter commander continuity notebook (and access to electronic Word.doc, Excel, etc., copy)
  - c. Chapter charter and flags (US and chapter)
  - d. Chapter Bylaws
  - e. Chapter bank/investment statements; tax filing/certification documents; Employee Identification Number
  - f. Chapter Annual Financial Review (AFR) Committee Report
  - g. Chapter organization chart & key personnel listing (including position descriptions and continuity files)
  - h. Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised)

2. Become familiar with chapter commander’s roles & responsibilities (all items below at [www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org)):
  - a. MOWW Constitution & Bylaws
  - b. MOWW Strategic Plan
  - c. MOWW Policy Manual
  - d. MOWW National Directory
  - e. MOWW website ([www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org)), with special emphasis on “Companions Only” material
  - f. Region commander’s annual reports (MOWW Convention Books, which are at [www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org))

## C. DURING COMMAND

1. Contact the department and region commanders for guidance, etc.
2. Meet with chapter staff to address near-term, mid-term and long-term issues, then do the same with the chapter membership
3. Publish/update the “Chapter Action Plan” and supporting “Program Engagement Plans”
  - a. Appoint Outreach Program Coordinators. Publish in chapter newsletter; advise national committee chairs
  - b. Appoint Committee Chairs for internal programs. Publish in chapter newsletter
  - c. Ensure program coordinators, committee chairs, assistants, etc., reflect a mix of Companions with a range of experience, backgrounds, MOWW tenure, etc.
4. Prepare the Chapter Schedule. Include activities such as: (1) National Convention, (2) Region Convention, (3) Department Convention & meetings, (4) Tax-filing & reporting to the MOWW Treasurer General, (5) YLCs (one-day & multi-day), (6) Massing of Colors, (7) special events, e.g., Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Armed Forces Day, Flag Day, and key outreach activities
5. Confirm current authorized signers for all bank accounts, funds, etc., as listed by the financial institution(s), are currently serving, elected chapter officers, i.e., valid signers. Ensure there are at least two valid signers for each bank/investment account
6. Install officers and new/upgraded members in a timely way in a dignified way with families present. (See the *MOWW Policy Manual* at [www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org))
7. Assign mentors to more junior Companions to develop future chapter and Order leaders. Identify and mentor chapter Companions to assume leadership positions in the chapter and in the Order
8. Track Chapter Action Plan (CAP) progress in all staff and general membership meetings
9. Attend annual MOWW Convention and Region Conferences. Provide “Summary Report” to chapter Companions
10. On a monthly basis, check contents of MOWW website (“Companions Only,” “Leadership & Management,” etc., frequently for changes/updates to policy/guidance, best practices, etc.
11. Invite the chapters department & region Commanders, the region’s Oversight VCINC and the CINC to significant chapter activities

## D. SUBSEQUENT TERMS OF COMMAND

1. Each term of office should be treated as the initial term. (*Note: second terms can help continuity but “endless” continued terms are a sign the chapter is struggling with involvement & leadership progression*)
2. Get updated guidance from department & region commanders, the Oversight VCINC, committee chairs and HQ MOWW, as appropriate

3. Refresh awareness of the MOWW Constitution, Bylaws, Strategic Plan, Policy Manual & the MOWW website
4. Validate or re-baseline chapter goals, objectives, plans, schedules & budgets
5. Preserve or raise expectations so the chapter progresses
6. Reset the chapter team by making key positions also available to Companions who seek to become involved for the first time or desire to increase their involvement—regardless their “seniority” in the Order
7. At the end of each term of office, leave the chapter better than when you found it

## E. RELINQUISHING COMMAND

1. Provide pre-command material and notes to this checklist to the chapter commander-elect
2. Brief successor chapter commander on issues and provide needed training. Report to department and region commanders that the successor’s command orientation & training is complete

## F. REPORTING

1. Review MOWW Membership Database at [www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org) during chapter staff meetings and submit online MOWW Forms 5, “Membership Update,” as changes occur. Likewise, review the MOWW National Directory at [www.moww.org](http://www.moww.org) during chapter staff meetings and submit online MOWW Forms 6, “New Officer Report,” as changes occur. Note: Where information is missing, e.g., email, cell phone, etc., research and update that too.
2. Not earlier than (NET) 1 July but not later than (NLT) 31 July, submit the online MOWW Form 27, “Chapter Activity Report,” covering each Operating Year (OY), i.e., 1 July through the following 30 June.
3. NLT 60 after each FY ends, verify the treasurer successfully filed the chapter’s “e-Postcard” via the IRS website. Likewise, NLT 60 days after each chapter FY ends, verify the chapter treasurer emailed a copy of IRS filing acceptance to the MOWW Treasurer General at [treasurergeneral@moww.org](mailto:treasurergeneral@moww.org)

*NOTE: Terms such as “verify,” “confirm,” etc., involve physically viewing documentation, products, etc., that demonstrate the required actions were successfully done on-time IAW requirements, and that any information and/or documents required to be retained on permanent file in chapter records has been done.*