

Virginia Association of First Responders (VAFR)

2024-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

The Virginia Association of First Responders is committed to supporting and empowering First Responders across the Commonwealth

VISION

Striving to be a nationally recognized leader in serving Virginia's First Responder community through exceptional training, fostering collaboration developing leaders, and advocating system needs.

VALUE STATEMENTS

R-Respect: We honor diverse backgrounds, skills and contributions of every first responder.

E-Excellence – We strive for the highest standards to achieve an optimal state system.

S-Service – We put the needs of first responders and their communities at the center of all that we do.

P-Professionalism – We lead with integrity, accountability and ethics in every endeavor.

O-Opportunity – We create pathways for growth leadership, and innovation within the first responder community

N-Network – We strengthen connections across providers, agencies and disciplines fostering collaboration and community.

D-Dedication – We commit fully to advocating

Achieve Training Excellence

Initiatives

1. Recruit and retain exceptional trainers to strengthen instructor network.
2. Develop and review courses that meet the needs of the Association.
3. Increase opportunities for cross-discipline training.
4. Invest in equipment.

Action Items

1. Develop a plan to recruit and retain instructors.
2. Monitor the recent restructure and changes to the chain of command for instructors, for effectiveness.
3. Develop quality improvement for all training programs.
4. Make a concerted effort to build relationships and foster training opportunities with VOEMS, VDFP, VSFA, and other first responder stakeholders.
5. Develop a plan and budget for inventory and future replacement of equipment.
6. Review the needs and budget of the Association in regards to acquiring a complete Learning Management System, to include online education opportunities.
7. Revise training policies as needed align with current by-laws and practices.

Strengthen and Unify Communications

Initiatives

1. Appoint / hire a Public Information Officer that will utilize technology to provide accurate and timely communication to membership
2. Investigate and implement a marketing plan.
3. Increase the communication frequency to all members.
4. Provide a platform for clear, accurate, and concise information sharing and improved interagency communications between the first responder groups and agencies.
5. Promote collaborative activities between defined first responder entities to increase recruitment and retention of certified EMS providers.

Action Items

1. Develop and implement a plan to integrate a Public Information Officer.
2. Research, create and enact a marketing plan utilizing all available media.
3. Define our audiences and what we want to communicate to them.
4. Design a schedule to disseminate coordinated information to all first responder stakeholders.
5. Utilize available and create additional data in making decisions regarding information dissemination to all first responders statewide.to evaluate frequency and reach.

Enhance Member Services

Initiatives

1. Improve association and agency recruitment and retention.
2. Develop youth recruitment and programs.
3. Identify available member resources.
4. Survey the needs of first responder agencies at a minimum of annually.
5. Continue to evaluate current membership structure.

Action Items

1. Develop programs for recruitment and retention.
2. Develop youth components to our programs. (i.e. -training, Jr. Squads, membership, explorer program)
3. Communicate the benefits and resources available to our member agencies.
4. Ensure the membership committee meets at least annually to assure goals are being met.
5. Determine what benefits member and non-member agencies would like to see the VAFR provide.

**Be Fiscally
Responsible
Initiatives**

1. Maintain sound financial policies and procedures.
2. Identify alternate funding.
3. Review and evaluate the Death Benefit Plan.
4. Provide financial training.

Action Items

1. Establish a monthly meeting schedule for the Finance Committee.
2. Review and evaluate financial policies and develop new policies and procedures as needed.
3. Assess and evaluate financial procedures and budget management to include procedure for submitting budget requests.
4. Develop a financial training program for officers and committee chairs.
5. Set up and identify funds for capital fund replacement.

Promote Leadership and Accountability

Initiatives

1. Require leadership training.
2. Encourage leadership and others to participate in development and implementation of new and innovative ways to recruit new dedicated leaders.
3. Increase leadership accountability to include extensive use of detailed position descriptions.
4. Establish officer nomination credentials.
5. Offer means for officer candidates to showcase their qualifications and abilities to the membership prior to elections.
6. Develop, improve and utilize accountability policies such as Fiscal Policies, Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest.
7. Develop mentorship and internship opportunities.

Action Items

1. Update and revise (or replace) leadership training program as needed.
2. Continually promote leadership opportunities throughout the year. Encourage new ideas to recruit potential leaders.
3. Update (and create where needed) detailed position descriptions for all leadership positions.
4. Establish minimum qualifications for all elected leaders.
5. Utilize the website, Lifeline and other publications, and other innovative means to allow officer candidates to showcase themselves. Develop ways for members to “get to know” the candidates prior to elections.
6. Update and enforce all accountability-related policies including but not limited to Fiscal Management, Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest.
7. Assign all new officers, committee chairs and others in positions of leadership to an experienced mentor who will provide guidance to new leaders in undertaking their new roles. Identify potential new leaders and develop an internship program to allow them to become familiar with the inner-workings of the Association and the responsibilities of its leaders.

Implement Needed Change Initiatives

1. Review board governance.
2. Develop organizational structure.
3. Align bylaws to meet the needs of the organization.
4. Align staff resources to meet the needs of the organization.
5. Improve district organization.
6. Evaluate branding and image.
7. Invest in technology to better serve our members.

Action Items

1. Align Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and organizational changes.
2. Identify the needs, focus and direction of the organization and align our staff resources to meet them.
3. Address district restructuring and district related concerns. Look at possible regional training and meetings.
4. Evaluate need for rebranding to maximize our reach and to provide services to all first responder entities.