

## September 2020

So, you are a Pandemic President at your Local Auxiliary. What does it mean to you and your members? How do you work on projects and put forward your best effort to help veterans, their families, and your community when you have social distancing and group size meeting restrictions? Are your members worried about meeting in-person? Or, are they wondering what all the fuss is about and why the restrictions are in place? What are your responsibilities to them as their President?

If you are struggling with any or all these issues, you are not alone. As Department President, I feel an intense direct responsibility for our Department Officers. In a normal year, we are mandated by our by-laws to have certain meetings during the year and to fulfill certain obligations. Membership expects us to serve in our positions and duly represent their best interests. Well, as we all know, this year has been anything BUT normal.

To ensure a fulfilling, productive year for you and your members, try to stick as best as you can to your normal meeting schedule. Your meeting does not need to be in-person unless you are voting on by-law changes. At the Department level, we have used conference calls to try to keep up-to-date on important issues. There are pros and cons to using conference calls; but they may work very well for a small group. Department conference calls have sometimes been loud and chaotic, making it exceedingly difficult to take notes. Reminders to keep phones muted does not always work as well as expected. If you think conference calls will work for you, try setting up a free account through [www.FreeConferenceCall.com](http://www.FreeConferenceCall.com).

We are currently working on various web-based technologies to determine which best suits our needs. Many of you are probably more familiar than am I with Zoom, Google Meeting, or Microsoft TEAM. I am currently working with PDP Faye Richardson-Green to evaluate which is most appropriate for Department needs. I will share our experiences in next month's bulletin.

In whichever meeting type you use, encourage members to share ideas about how to help others from the safety and comfort of home. Maybe you can have a drive to donate to the local food pantry with everyone dropping off their own donations, or maybe having someone volunteer to pick up from a few members and drop items off for them. Mask-making is extremely popular right now. We are doing a Bakeless Bake Sale at my local auxiliary to raise needed funds. Put your thinking caps on, ladies!

If you can meet safely in-person while abiding by the Governor's Executive Orders, practicing social distancing, and wearing masks, it certainly is the best option. If you cannot, try one of the suggestions above. Whatever way you decide to meet, encourage your members to do individually what we are currently unable to do as a group. Look at our restrictions as an opportunity to find new, creative ways to help our veterans from a distance.

Until we can safely meet again, I wish you all good health and happiness.

*Yours in service to Veterans and their Families,*

*Bert*

I have started contacting Local Auxiliary President's with a goal of sharing information and answering questions. If you have not yet received a call from me but have questions, call me! I am currently my granddaughter's virtual school "learning guide" so am unavailable by phone during the day. Leave a message at 586.214.1019 or email me at [lema81@wowway.com](mailto:lema81@wowway.com). I will respond as quickly as possible, usually within 24 to 48 hours.