



Vietnam Veterans of America Incarcerated Membership Information Guide

Membership Eligibility

Veterans incarcerated may be eligible to join Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) or Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA). Veterans incarcerated who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975 are eligible to join VVA. Veterans incarcerated who served during other periods are eligible to join AVVA. NOTE: All AVVA annual dues are \$7 as of August 1, 2012. In cooperation with each state and territory, VVA has established reduced dues prices for veterans incarcerated:

Category A: VVA annual dues: \$0 (membership category IVI)
AVVA annual dues: \$7 (membership category IVA)

These annual dues prices are effective in the following states:

Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California
Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Dist. of Columbia	Florida
Georgia	Idaho	Iowa	Indiana	Kansas
Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine	Maryland	Massachusetts
Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Montana	Nebraska
Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey	New Mexico	North Carolina
North Dakota	Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Puerto Rico
Rhode Island	South Carolina	South Dakota	Tennessee	Texas
Utah	Vermont	Virgin Islands	Washington	West Virginia
Wyoming				

Category B: VVA annual dues: \$1 (membership category IVI)
AVVA annual dues: \$7 (membership category IVA)

These annual dues prices are effective in the following states:

Illinois Missouri New York Ohio Wisconsin Virginia

Category C: VVA annual dues: \$0 (membership category IVI)
AVVA annual dues: \$0 (membership category IVA)

These annual dues prices are effective in the following Florida Chapters:

VVA Chapter #195 VVA Chapter #1080 VVA Chapter #1114 VVA Chapter #1097

Over

Membership Eligibility (continued)

These reduced dues prices are for one-year memberships only. Eligible VVA members may apply for VVA life membership for \$50.

Eligible AVVA life membership costs are:

\$175 (59 years of age and below)

\$100 (60 years of age and above) Proof of age is required

\$50 VVA Member becoming a Dual AVVA Lifetime member

Each application for VVA or AVVA incarcerated membership must include a DD Form-214 to verify the applicant's status as a veteran. This requirement applies to new memberships submitted on a chapter transmittal, as well as to individual applications sent directly to VVA or AVVA.

Membership Administration

Incarcerated VVA and AVVA members are encouraged to affiliate with a VVA chapter. Members may affiliate with a chapter located in their institution, or a nearby outside chapter, if such affiliation is allowed by the state or federal prison system. The institution usually appoints an employee as a staff advisor to the chapter. As a liaison between the chapter and VVA & AVVA, the staff advisor can help the chapter with membership questions or problems.

We do not send a membership ID card to veteran incarcerated members because some institutions do not allow inmates to possess these cards. In place of an "ID card", we send a letter to each member acknowledging the membership.

Veteran incarcerated members in Categories B and C must renew their membership each year. For veteran incarcerated members in Category A, the term of membership is "DOC" (Duration of Confinement) and the membership continues as long as the veteran remains incarcerated. Because inmates are frequently transferred to other institutions, we depend on the chapters to provide us change of address information when an inmate transfers.

Chapters may pay the dues on behalf of members who cannot afford to do so. This is done on a case-by-case basis, at the chapter's discretion.

Contact Information

VVA and AVVA membership questions can be directed to the VVA national office at 301-585-4000, or 1-800-882-1316. Our fax number is 301-585-3019. Our web address is <http://www.vva.org>. Membership questions can be sent via email to membership@vva.org.

Membership applications and chapter transmittals must be sent to:

VVA

PO Box 64299

Baltimore, MD 21264-4299

AVVA Monument Bank

8602 Colesville Road

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Other correspondence may be sent to VVA at:

8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3710

* If this agreement is renewed the bank information must be updated to Sandy Spring Bank.

STATEMENT OF FACTS: BYLAW AMENDMENT ARTICLE III

(See next page for amendment form)

AVVA has included incarcerated members since the beginning of the organization. During the first 14 years, incarcerated membership increased from 12 to 102. The AVVA policy has always been that incarcerated members were to be **veterans of military service** during times other than the Vietnam War years. From the beginning, verification of service has been required, but not always verified properly. The lack of verification has increased from one-third of these members to almost one-half of them. In 2015, the incarcerated numbers began increasing by an average of 90 members per year, to the current incarcerated membership totaling 656.

In 2020 the Membership Committee chair started a project to contact each of the 22 states holding AVVA's incarcerated membership, to verify veteran status. To date, all the states have responded to the request for verification except Florida, Missouri, and Ohio. The unverified members in these three states total 294, or almost one-half of all those incarcerated.

When the board voted this past year to change the policy related to "**Veterans in the Justice System**" to allow non-veterans to also be members, it caused us to look at the bylaws concerning membership, as well as the DC Code under which we are incorporated, and the general laws for nonprofits.

The bylaws state that we have only two classes of membership, yet we have consistently maintained lower dues for the incarcerated veterans without consideration of the implications this might have on the rest of the regular members who are expected to pay full dues. It also does not consider that there are non-veteran members who are incarcerated, even though by policy there should not be, benefiting from the same reduced dues.

In April of 2003, a motion was brought before the Board to allow incarcerated persons who are non-veterans to join AVVA. **The motion was tabled indefinitely** and there is no further evidence that it was ever discussed again.

Because the Board of Directors voted to delete one sentence in one section of the policy stating incarcerated members had to be veterans, and because that action cannot be resolved without other changes in policy and in bylaws, it is now being brought to the convention delegates as to what actions should be taken regarding incarcerated members.

A decision must be made considering the following 3 areas:

1. To create an incarcerated member class that **only includes Veterans and who pay reduced dues, OR**
2. To create an incarcerated member class that **includes non-veterans**, which would give non-veteran members the right to significantly lower dues than other regular members (those NOT incarcerated), **OR**

3. To keep the current two classes of regular and dual members, and all incarcerated members pay regular membership dues?

DUES

First it must be pointed out that the national board of directors decides what dues will be paid to AVVA. (Bylaws 3.05.) However it must also be pointed out that the convention delegates had a very serious debate several conventions ago that incarcerated **Veterans** could pay lesser dues than other members. Having said that:

The history of the current dues structure is:

August 1999: The Board moved and passed a motion that the incarcerated dues structure would mirror VVA's incarcerated members for each individual state. *We have no documentation available that specifies what that amount was.*

April 2006: The Board moved and passed a motion to establish the membership dues as follows: **For Associates, Vietnam Veterans, Incarcerated Veteran Associates:** 1 year \$20.00, 3 years \$50.00 and Life Membership as follows: \$250.00 (49 and under); \$225.00 (50-55); \$200.00 (56-60); \$175.00 (61-65); \$150.00 (66+). Incarcerated Veteran Associates dues become effective on August 1, 2006, however an amount was not specified.

August 2010: The Board moved and passed a motion to maintain the incarcerated dues at the "current rate". (No specification of what that is.)

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

INFORMATION GUIDE given to the VVA/AVVA Membership Department with a revision date of 02/2016 states:

"Veterans Incarcerated may be eligible to join AVVA." "All AVVA (**incarcerated veteran**) annual dues are \$7.00 as of August 1, 2012." (See attached agreement, updated in 2019.)

Additionally the AVVA policy says that "incarcerated members may apply for life memberships at the same rates established for regular members. Each application for AVVA incarcerated membership must include a DD form-214 to verify the applicant's status as a veteran".

There has never been a time in our history were it has been voted to allow non-veterans to join AVVA as incarcerated members.