

National Area Vice President's Responsibilities & Guidelines

Thinking about being an Area Vice President for FMCA? It is an adventure. Being an AVP is truly a rewarding experience. In your travels, you will meet many new people and make many new friends. The input of AVPs will determine many decisions that will affect the future of FMCA.

You have a dual title – President of your Area and National Area Vice President (AVP) of FMCA.

This document is designed to guide you through the expectations and responsibilities of the position of AVP. Note, this is a guide, and once you are in office, you will discover that it does not cover everything. Nevertheless, you will find that your fellow AVPs, National Officers, and FMCA Staff are only a phone call, email, or text message away.

Job Description: AVP's act as a liaison between Area members and National FMCA – manage the business of the area – support chapters – communicate with general membership of region – organize and conduct the area annual rally. Other duties include:

- attending National FMCA Board Meetings
- overseeing the communication between FMCA office and Presidents of each Chapter to assure there is a quorum of delegates at the annual Governing Board meeting;
- serving on committees as appointed by the National FMCA President;
- participating in video conferences for workshops, committee meetings, or meetings
- In addition to these responsibilities, the AVP also manages the business of the Area and serves as the President of the Area Board, which consists of a Senior Vice President, Regional Vice Presidents, (if existing in the Area) a Secretary, and a Treasurer.
- Presides over Annual Area Executive Board meetings.
- The AVP is responsible for communicating with the general membership of the Area via newsletters, website, or any other communication tool of your choosing.
- Organizes (or appoints a rally master to organize) and conduct a yearly Area Rally.

All of these responsibilities are conducted under the FMCA Constitution, National Bylaws and FMCA Policy and Procedures (P&Ps). Each Area has their own set of Bylaws and Standing Rules. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee of FMCA review the Area Bylaws periodically. You are elected for a two-year term with the option of being elected to one additional two-year term. Four years is the maximum lifetime limit for serving as an AVP.

An AVP needs a good understanding of the operations of FMCA. The organizational documents are available from FMCA for your review. They detail the beginnings and operations of FMCA. Hopefully, you have served on local chapter level, Area level, and even better, National Committees. Holding an office in a Chapter or Area adds to your knowledge to be an effective AVP.

FMCA's Policy and Procedure documents are the guidelines and road maps to the functions of Areas and FMCA. They are constantly changing. You should have a good understanding of these documents before you take office.

National Board Meetings: There are four National Board Meetings per year. Two National Board Meetings are held in conjunction with the FMCA International Conventions. The fall and

spring Board meetings are traditionally held in Cincinnati at FMCA Offices. Although, the FMCA President has the privilege of choosing the locations of these Board Meetings. On rare occasions, there may be a need to have a called National Board Meeting outside the normal timeframe. These are usually conducted as a video conference meeting. The AVPs are expected to drive their RVs to the National Board meetings. There are few exceptions (i.e. flying to Cincinnati meetings) which must be pre-approved by the National FMCA President.

Governing Board Meetings: There is one Governing Board meeting annually. This is held in conjunction with the Summer FMCA Convention. The AVP is responsible for communicating with the Chapter President and/or Chapter National Director or voting representative of the time and place of the Governing Board meeting. Your responsibility is to ensure active representation of your area. There are guidelines in the P&Ps related to time of notices, substitute chapter voting delegates, and quorum deadlines. It is your responsibility to become familiar with these and make clear communication to your Area chapters.

Area Annual Meetings: Each Area is required by the National Bylaws to have one annual meeting per year. This meeting is traditionally associated with the Area Rally, but not always. There are exceptions in case no Area Rally is held, or your Bylaws dictate a different timeframe. As AVP, you should have an Executive Board Meeting to assist in setting an agenda and discussing important issues needing to come before the Area membership. The Area Bylaws and Standing Rules will determine whether the Area officers serve a one-year or a two-year term, and whether your officers have staggered terms. There is a Policy and Procedure outlining the National Area Vice President's election. (P&P #2005.) This election is conducted separately from the Area Association Officers' election.

Chapter Visits: Chapter visits are a very enjoyable part of your responsibilities. AVPs should make an effort to attend each chapter that is celebrating a special anniversary. The chapters feel very special when the certificates are presented by the AVP.

You do not need an anniversary as a reason to visit Chapters. Visiting Chapters is one of the best ways to establish good working relationships with the members. Notification of the visit is best, as chapter rallies have limited space, certain side trips requiring reservations, dining arrangements needing a final count, etc. Advance notice should be given to the chapter rally master or officer in charge.

At this time, they will usually inform the AVP of their agenda and let them know their expectations for the rally. This is an opportunity for AVPs to present the Member Benefits Seminar and talk about upcoming International Conventions and Area Rallies.

It should be the AVPs intent to remain for the entire rally, unless it is just a one-day event as in Christmas luncheon, installation of officers' luncheon, etc. It is difficult to make new friends and establish rapport with members by just visiting for a few hours.

Area Communication Tools: We live in the generation of multiple methods of speedy communications. However, it may seem that only 50% of your members are getting the information. It is easy for people to miss items using multiple email addresses and devices. This can limit your ability to communicate with your area members.

Newsletters continue to be an effective tool. These can be monthly, quarterly, three times a year, annually, etc. You decide the frequency. The more you can put important FMCA and/or Area information out to members, the better. The FMCA office will work with you on electronically

distributing your newsletter to the Chapter Officers of your area. Some Areas have the luxury of a newsletter editor. FMCA will edit and proofread your communication piece and/or newsletters. However, you do not have to rely on FMCA to distribute the letter. You may be able to do this within your Area.

Other means of communication are a website or a blog. Whatever type of communication you choose, keep it current and make it informative.

Hosting Responsibilities for Area Rally:

A major responsibility as an AVP is to organize or oversee an Area Rally. The following steps are necessary for a successful Rally. This list is not all encompassing. You may find things that you will need to cover. Being co-Rally Master would also benefit your knowledge.

Timelines are subject to change based on the area's specific needs.

Reference the following P&Ps for rally planning: #3001 - #3007.

- Site location- an ongoing process. Rule of thumb is the AVP stays two years ahead on the site for planning purposes. Planning that far ahead will be to your advantage. All contracts are to be reviewed by the FMCA attorney prior to signing. Questions that you need to be answered before choosing the site:
 - number of full hook ups
 - number of partial hook ups
 - electricity 30 amp/50 amp
 - adequate seminar rooms
 - RV exhibit space
 - entertainment facilities (indoor or outdoor)
 - cost of facilities
 - vendor space
- What is included in the facilities contract? Paying for chairs, tables, electrical drops, stages, sound, podiums, and pipe and drape can become very expensive. Are there options for catering companies? Is there an option to contract with other caterers or must you use the facility caterers?
- Budget and registration forms need to be established nine months prior to the rally date. Registration forms should be available to members a minimum of six months prior.
- Choosing or using existing committee chairs or captains. Key committees are: Rally Master, Safety, Security, Chapter Fair, Entertainment, Seminars, Registration, Community Services, Program, Program Advertising, Ice Cream, Activity Carts, Facilities, Vendors, Coffee & Donuts, RV Sales. This list should be ongoing. If replacements are needed, these should be done at least six months prior to the Rally.
- Golf Cart contract should be signed at least six months ahead of Rally.
- Entertainment contracts should be signed nine to twelve months prior to the Rally.
- Obtaining Vendors is an ongoing process. You cannot start too early in obtaining verbal commitments. Ideally the vendors should be contracted at least three months prior to.
- Display RVs should be contracted at least three months prior to. Be aware that some states limit vendor participation to instate dealers. Each state has different laws. FMCA's

Executive Director wrote an article outlining FMCA's convention criterion. Please see the September, 2018 issue for this information.

- Having an Ice cream social is an area choice, but the provider of ice cream should be established six months prior to the rally.
- Resource for coffee and donuts should be established three months prior.
- A site planning meeting involving chairs needs to occur six months prior.
- FMCA allows three Family and two Commercial promotional email blasts at no cost. These usually happen four months and two months prior to the Area Rally. (Reference P&P #3001.) Additional email blasts are available for a nominal fee from the Events Department at the FMCA Headquarters. Commercial blasts should go out earlier to try and attract potential vendors.
- Reference previous rally registration forms in preparation for the current year form. Additional information and previous forms can be obtained from the Events Department of FMCA.
- Area Rally Registration forms can be published in *Family RVing* magazine in three issues prior to the date of the rally.
- Art work (rally theme) for the program may be provided by FMCA art department or you may have a member that provides this. The artwork is used many places and should be completed early in the rally planning process.
- The program is a very important part of the rally. It requires numerous hours of preparation. It will include the rally schedule, seminars, advertisement, etc. It will need to be proofed by a number of individuals. FMCA can do the printing. They require at least three weeks prior to the rally for printing. FMCA offers an Office Depot and/or Staples discount card as a member benefit, which can be used to reduce printing costs for the rally.

AVP Travel Reimbursement:

The amounts and specifics that an AVP are reimbursed by FMCA are spelled out in P&P #2031. When considering an AVP position, it would be advisable to have a discussion with the current AVP related to expenses. Not all expenses will be reimbursed. Also, consider: 1) Monies coming out of personal budget to cover non reimbursable expenses; and 2) Extra mileage on RV required for the travel that comes with the position. As you can tell, the AVP position is a full time job that reaps numerous rewards and creates life-long friendships.

Remember, you are working with volunteers.

FMCA Reference Materials:

FMCA Constitution, National Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Risk Management Guide, Organizational Chart.

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