

How to Work the Recruiting List

In late March or early April of each year, national MOAA provides to each of its chapters a recruiting list, which can serve as the foundation for the chapter's annual recruiting campaign. Because the 2018 Chapter Recruiting Program focuses on recruiting and retaining chapter members, the recruiting list contains the names of current national MOAA members (active duty, retired, and former officers and surviving spouses) who live in the chapter's catchment area, but who do not belong to your chapter. In addition, we periodically ask national MOAA (non-chapter) members to share their email addresses with their local chapter. Each recruiting list will incorporate all the national MOAA (non-chapter) member email addresses that have opted in for this correspondence from those living within a chapter's geographic area for membership.

Two additional times a year (July and October), an update will be sent to each chapter. This list will be much shorter and only contain the names of national MOAA members in good standing who moved into the chapter's catchment area after the recruiting list was sent or whose contact information has changed.

Depending on where you live, the annual recruiting list can contain dozens or even hundreds of names — especially if your chapter resides near a military base. This list is sent out via ShareFile email to all chapter presidents and membership chairs. You'll need a copy of Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Works software to open and use this file. (You can [download a free trial version](#) at Microsoft's website.) You'll want to leave the original list with your annotated corrections untouched for reference. Make a copy to form your own recruiting list by cutting and pasting the material you need into one or more Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

As you move through your list, please identify any incorrect names, addresses, phone numbers, or other contact information you might find and send your annotated list to MOAA via email (chapters@moaa.org) or send a hard copy via mail to: MOAA, 201 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314, ATTN: Council and Chapter Affairs Department. We will note your changes so they don't appear on the next recruiting list sent to you. Your feedback is vital to make the recruiting lists more accurate and we appreciate your efforts.

Listed below are tips and best practices gleaned from MOAA's best chapter recruiters to use when working the recruiting list.

When you open this document, you will notice three categories of non-chapter MOAA members — BASIC, PREMIUM, and LIFE. Begin by targeting the members who are easiest to recruit. Next, sort the data into manageable segments.

Sort the list based on whether you are an urban chapter or a rural/large geographic area chapter.

- If you belong to a chapter in an urban area, sort the list by ZIP code, paying attention to the last four digits of the ZIP code. Example: A prospect's ZIP code is 65810-2510. The "2510" part lets you know what part of the city the prospect lives in.
- Rural chapters and chapters that cover a large geographic area have better success if they sort the list by town.
- Use your knowledge of the area to determine what prospects are most likely to join. Look at the prospect's ZIP code or see what town they live in. If it will take the prospect

more than an hour one way to attend chapter meetings in an urban area or the prospect lives more than 60 miles away from where the chapter meets, he or she probably is less likely to join. Focus on the prospects whose geographic location makes them more likely to join.

Make recruiting a team effort. Once you've done the initial sort to the recruiting list, divvy it up among members of the board of directors or members of your recruiting committee.

- Board members who share the same ZIP code as a prospect should call the prospects.
- Chapters in rural areas or those that cover a large geographic area should divvy up the list by town, assigning board members to contact prospects who live in their same town or the immediate area.
- If no one lives near someone who is a prospect, a same-service member should call that person. Likewise, have a surviving spouse member call a prospect who is a surviving spouse.
- Look for people you know. Have board members look for people they know or have served with in the past. If a board member knows someone on the list, have them contact that person — even if they live in a different ZIP code or town.

Continue sorting the list to identify your best prospects.

- Target MOAA LIFE members first. These prospects often are easier to recruit because they are already sold on the benefits of being a MOAA member.
- Look for younger officers. Some chapters target prospects in the 50- to 70-year-old age range. Remember, you're not just looking for new members. You're looking for new members who will participate in the chapter and be willing to hold leadership positions.
- If the prospect is older, provide information about your chapter's ride-sharing program to meetings, if one exists. Some older members find it difficult to participate in a chapter, particularly if they have to drive to a chapter meeting that's held at night.
- Look at where the person resides, as well as their age. If the prospect is older and lives more than 60 miles from where the chapter meets, and your chapter meets at night, odds are you won't be able to recruit that person.

Now that you've identified the best targets, decide how to contact them. Do you have many people to contact? Are you getting help from other members? If you're the only person who is doing recruiting for the chapter, or have very large list to work even after dividing it up among members of the recruiting committee or board of directors, the easiest approach may be to mail out invitations to join.

First-class Mail vs. Nonprofit Standard Mail

Some chapters use first-class mail when sending out invitations to join the chapter. If you use first-class mail, you will be given several options — called ancillary service endorsements — on what you would like to have happen if the letter is undeliverable as addressed.

Most chapters choose the "Return Service Requested" option. This option costs nothing when letters of invitation are sent via first-class mail. If the prospect's address is bad, the letter is returned to the chapter, along with the prospects' correct address. (Please note that incorrect address information always should be given to MOAA at the end of the recruiting effort.)

Sending out invitations to join the chapter via first-class mail is not cheap — particularly if your prospect list contains hundreds of names. You might want to consider sending invitations to join the chapter via Nonprofit Standard Mail. The minimum amount needed to qualify for a Nonprofit Standard Mail rate is 200 pieces or 50 lbs. per mailing.

Larger chapters, which already have purchased a Nonprofit Standard Mail permit, usually use this method to mail out invitations to join the chapter. However, if you've never used Nonprofit Standard Mail before, this might not be your best or cheapest option. Why? For starters, you'll need to prove you're a nonprofit veterans' organization and purchase a Nonprofit Standard Mail permit that costs around \$200. Also, be prepared to do some work. Nonprofit Standard Mail costs less because you do some of the post office's work. This means you'll need to learn how to sort and prepare the letters of invitation prior to mailing. If you are mailing a few hundred pieces at a time several times a year, or if you plan to make a large one-time mailing, Nonprofit Standard Mail might be a good deal.

However, Nonprofit Standard Mail is not forwarded or returned unless you print an ancillary service endorsement, such as "Address Service Requested" underneath your chapter's return address on each mail piece. Be aware that forwarding and return services will result in additional fees or postage, and MOAA does not currently reimburse chapters for this expense. Before using Nonprofit Standard Mail to send out invitations, do the math and see which option is more cost-effective. You also can contact your local postmaster to see if they can help you decide if Nonprofit Standard Mail is the right choice. It also is highly recommended you have the chapter personnel who will be responsible for processing the nonprofit standard mail attend the free training courses offered by most regional post offices. If not properly prepared (and the regulations are quite involved and specific), Nonprofit Standard Mail may be rejected and given back to you for rework. Note: You should check with your local post office for current fees and pricing.

Some chapters use the personal touch and call each prospect, if a phone number is given. Not only is it cheaper to call prospects, it also might help increase your success rate and give you an opportunity to gain information you can use for future recruiting efforts. Make notes on who is not responding and why. After several contacts, it's obvious some people just don't want to join a MOAA chapter. However, many prospects are receptive to the idea — but want to be contacted at a later date. Be sure to note that information.

If you call prospects, ask for their email address — just so you can let them know if a terrific speaker is slated to talk at an upcoming meeting or if an interesting event happens in the chapter. Recruiters in the St. Petersburg Area (Fla.) Chapter ask prospects for this information. This provides the chapter with a direct link for contacting potential members in the future. The chapter also generates interest by periodically emailing their newsletter— at no cost — to prospects.

Follow up. If you decide to call prospects but can't reach someone or no phone number is listed, follow up by mailing them an invitation to join the chapter.

Be sure to note bad addresses and phone numbers on your recruiting lists, and email or snail mail that information to MOAA so changes can be entered in the association's database.

Keep a copy of your annotated recruiting list when you're done. Match it against future recruiting lists — just to make sure your corrections were made. Keeping the old list also will help you identify who the best prospects are to contact in the future.