MISSION OF CVMA CHAPTER 28-5

*Our mission* is to support our fellow Combat Veterans who have defended our country and our freedoms: the other members within Chapter 28-5, other members of the Association, and other Veterans and Veterans groups.

*Our focus* is to help Veteran care facilities provide a warm meal, clothing, shelter, and guidance, or simply to say “Thank You” and “Welcome Home.”

Birmingham provides us that opportunity with multiple homeless shelters that provide services strictly for Veterans, the Birmingham VA Hospital, and the Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home in Pell City.
WHO WE ARE

We are an Association of Combat Veterans from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces who ride motorcycles as a hobby. Our membership is comprised of Full Members (those with verified combat service), Auxiliary Members (spouses, widows and widowers of Full Members) and Support Members (those with non-combat military service). Many members continue to serve in our Armed Forces.

WHO WE ARE NOT

We ARE NOT, nor do we intend to ever be, a motorcycle club. We DO NOT have “colors”. We DO NOT prospect. We DO NOT claim territory.
WHAT WE DO

- Create and maintain camaraderie amongst Combat Veterans from all branches of the United States Armed Forces.

- We sponsor and/or participate in many motorcycle-related charity events each year and, as a non-profit organization, donate to various veteran care facilities and veteran charities.

- Support Veterans Charities and Veterans Organizations.

- Raise awareness for the plight of POWs, MIAs, and their families.

- Conduct Association functions and activities in a manner befitting the members of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association as well as the association’s Auxiliary Members.

- Promote interest in various forms of motorcycle activity associated with Veterans.

- Encourage a better understanding of motorcycle riding as a constructive sport among members of the public, the press, and law enforcement agencies.
HISTORY

- In 1999, the Combat Vets Motorcycle Club was introduced to the internet.
- In early 2001 it was discovered that CVMC was merely an internet scam to take money from Combat Veterans. Forty-five members decided to form a Combat Veterans Association.
- The CVMA first appeared as a non-profit association in May 2001.
- The original 45 members adopted a patch to wear, indicating that they are the original founding members of the CVMA.
In May 2001, the CVMA adopted the CVMA/VFW patch, however, many meetings with the VFW National BOD failed to define a permanent relationship between the VFW and CVMA.

In December 2002, the CVMA membership voted to move towards becoming its own association, separate from the VFW or any other organization. With this, VFW membership was no longer required. This opened the CVMA to all Combat Veterans who rode motorcycles.

On 15 December 2002, the membership voted that the CVMA would wear a combination of the CVMA/VFW background and the old CVMC skull logo as a one piece patch.
MC PROTOCOL

Respect

Because your CVMA membership is fundamentally influenced by motorcycles, you are part of the motorcycle community. Besides this area's dominant MC and their support clubs, there are also Veterans Clubs, Motorcycle Ministries, Motorcycle Rights Organizations, Riding Clubs (RC), Fireman & Cop Clubs, and Independents. Of all the types of organizations within this community, the 1% MC stands apart and ranks highest in stature.

Those who are properly informed recognize the deep level of personal commitment and self-discipline that a man has to demonstrate in order to wear a 1% MC backpatch. We will respect patch-holders for what they have accomplished by being able to earn and keep the patch they wear. In most cases patch-holders were required to have a long-standing association with a club member before being a “hang around” with the club for at least a year. They then spent time as a “prospect” for the club, usually one to two years, before they were awarded their patch. An MC member has devoted a great deal of time and effort to earning his patch and will demand the respect that he feels he, his patch, and his club deserve.
Respect

There is always a natural hierarchy that is recognized between motorcycle clubs themselves. The strongest and most established club will assume charge of the particular area or state in which they ride. For reasons that are beneficial to all, the dominant club will:

- Authorize the establishment of new clubs within the state.
- Act as mediators to resolve problems between existing clubs.
- Step in & enforce their own solution if the feuding clubs cannot come to terms on their own.
- Disband clubs that cause continual problems.
- Provide a communications link and coordinate intra-club events.
MC PROTOCOL

Interaction

If you are formally introduced to a MC member, make sure the person doing the introduction knows you are a member of the CVMA and what position you hold if you are a Chapter officer. Do not interrupt to correct a mistake while that person is introducing you. Wait until the introduction is done and then introduce yourself correctly by your name, not your “roadname”:

“Bob Smith, CVMA Chapter 28-5, Treasurer.”
“Bob Smith, Treasurer, Chapter 28-5 of the CVMA.”

Greet an MC member as you would anyone else and wait until the offer is made to shake hands. DO NOT be offended if they do not offer to shake your hand. Many times they will want to get to know about you and your Association a little better before they will offer to shake your hand.

DO NOT call a MC member “Bro” or “Brother.” Their “brothers” are the members of their MC.
MC PROTOCOL

Interaction

Never lie or BS. This will be seen as disrespect by the entire Chapter and cause major issues for us all. If you're wearing the CVMA patch, you are considered by everyone to be a representative of this Chapter. If anything were to go south, the whole Chapter would wind up with problems.

You can politely refuse to answer a question by saying something like, “I should refer that to one of my Chapter officers to ensure that you get the correct information.” However, be prepared to answer questions about what your Association is about (supporting veterans and vet charities).

Club members will not discuss club business – whether it's about membership numbers, club activities, or any member's personal information – with anyone outside the club. Do not expect them to and do not ask.

If you already know a MC member, don't walk up to him and interrupt if he is with other MC members. Wait until he acknowledges you first. Don't put your hand out to shake his hand. Wait for him to extend his hand first. If he doesn’t acknowledged you, just keep walking.
Even if you know a MC member, don't throw the member’s name, roadname, or the name of his MC around like you're a great buddy of his (even if you are). “Name dropping” is considered major disrespect towards him and his Club.

Always watch where you are when speaking about a club. Never say anything about them in public because you never know if a club member, family member, or a “support member” is within listening distance. By the time the story gets back to the dominant club it will have changed several times and gotten worse with each change. There’s really no reason for any of us to be discussing an MC or an MC member in public anyway.

If someone from a MC requests that you remove your vest, don’t argue. The best reply is "No Problem" and take it off, then let a Chapter officer know what MC it was so they can reach out and attempt to deal with any potential problems. They will normally only ask once and failure to comply will result in an ass-whipping for you and major issues for the Chapter.
MC PROTOCOL

Respect

If an establishment has a sign indicating “No Colors,” even though your patch is not considered “colors” your vest should be removed out of respect for any MCs present and the policy of the establishment. MCs that honor the “house rules” will be deeply offended that you didn't. Remember, many establishments choose to have this policy and it applies to all organizations that use any kind of patch.

Be aware of the behavior and attitude of other CVMA members that are with you, especially if anyone has been drinking. Take action to avoid problems before they happen. If someone appears to be getting too loud, angry, or possibly disrespectful, take them aside and go somewhere else until things settle down. If an incident should occur in spite of your efforts and no Chapter officers are present, make sure to let a Chapter officer know as soon as you can.

Be aware that problems created in one part of the country by a CVMA member or issues with the chapter in one area can potentially affect CVMA members in other areas and/or states. State-wide and/or Region-wide “no-fly zones” caused by one member are not unheard of.
The public often does not draw a distinction between different group’s patches or their meaning (MC, RC, Vet group). In most cases, the public does not know the difference between a MC, an RC, or CVMA, therefore EVERYONE needs to be aware that their actions reflect on the entire motorcycle community.

If one club causes a problem, the offending club's identity is either confused or ignored and the heat comes down on all clubs and motorcycle riders (Waco, TX).

The MCs tend to police themselves to avoid such incidents and will, if need be, police other organizations as well (“No-fly zones”).

Don't ever touch any part of an MC member's colors, which includes the vest or jacket it's sewn on. Also, do not ever touch him or his motorcycle.
We are an Association, not a MC. We have no intention of ever trying to become a MC. Our primary purpose is a source of continued brotherhood for Combat Veterans and to serve as a charitable organization supporting veteran homes and veteran charities.

We are a member of the Alabama Confederation of Clubs (COC).

We do not prospect. The CVMA patch is bought and remains Association property.

We are a neutral Association and do not wear any MC support patches.

Women Combat Veterans are welcomed and in many cases are Association officers.

Do not offer forum links or web sites. It is better to refer questions to a Chapter officer.

Do not volunteer information. You can answer questions about the local chapter if asked.

Do not discuss or brag about how large the local or national membership is.

Treat your patch with the same respect an MC member would be expected to show theirs. Do not put your vest on the floor or leave it unattended, even only for a minute or two. Respect what that patch represents.
- Do not wear your CVMA vest or jacket while driving or riding in a car. Wait until you arrive at your destination and put it on once you are outside of the vehicle.

- Take care of your vest. Never lay it on the floor or on the ground.

- Do not leave your vest on your bike while you are inside a building.

NEVER DO THIS!!

Have enough respect for the CVMA and for what that patch represents to treat your vest properly.
The Alabama Confederation of Motorcycle Clubs exists to provide for a coming together of motorcycle clubs, organizations and associations within the state for the specific purpose of combating discrimination and harassment through judicial means.

Membership is open to all motorcycle clubs, organizations, and associations. There are currently 56 member clubs and organizations including MCs, Veteran Associations, Motorcycle Ministries, and other Riding Clubs.

The COC meets quarterly in different locations around the state to provide members the opportunity to present complaints of harassment or discrimination, as well as socialize.

The COC helps facilitate inter-club communication and the establishment of consistent standards and practices throughout the state.

The COC Attorney, present at all meetings, represents the member clubs and groups in claims of harassment or discrimination.
The CVMA emblem is the trademarked property of the CVMA and cannot be reproduced without license from the National BOD.

The emblem of the CVMA is in the shape of a skull consisting of the following colors:

- **Red**, representing the blood that has been shed on the battlefield.

- **Military Gold**, representing all branches of service of the United States military.

- **Black**, representing the heavy hearts possessed for those who gave their lives and for those considered Missing in Action or Prisoners of War.

- **The skull and the ace of spades** representing the death that war leaves in its wake.
APPROVED PATCHES

No other patch should be placed above the U.S. Flag. Whether worn on the front left or front right of the vest, the flag’s stars should be closest to the vest’s inside.

Conflict bars from the CVMA store are to be worn centered below the CVMA backpatch.

The same applies to the “Vets Helping Vets” bar or any custom bars ordered.

Patches from the CVMA National Meeting and Region 1 Rally are approved for wear for those who attended the event.
Anything purchased from the CVMA store has been approved by the NBOD for wear with the CVMA backpatch.

“Alabama’s Fifth” has been approved by NBOD.

All 28-5 members WILL BE REQUIRED to wear the Alabama COC patch on the front of their vest.
NO Top or Bottom Rockers

NO percent (%) signs AT ALL

NO Rib or Side Rockers

NO diamonds or “turned cubes”
These are okay for wear on front or back, but if on back must be below the backpatch.

**NO** diamonds or “turned cubes” allowed, however, these type of military unit patches are permitted on front or back.

**NO** 5th ID or 1st Marine diamonds front or back.

Alternative patches for 5ID and 1st Marine Division can be worn to display unit pride.
These are okay for wear on front or back, but if on back will be below the backpatch.

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State outlines & state flags are **NOT** permitted on any vest or jacket with the CVMA backpatch. The **ONLY** exception is the Alabama COC patch.
These are inappropriate patches and do not represent what the CVMA is about. Imagine yourself at a Veteran’s funeral or a fundraising event with these.
THE BOTTOM LINE

- We are a Veteran’s Organization, not an MC.
- Comply with National and Chapter Bylaws.
- Your public behavior reflects on the entire Chapter and the motorcycle community as a whole. Don’t be “that guy.”
- Chapter meetings will be conducted in a disciplined manner and IAW Bylaws.
- Chapter business is Chapter business. What’s said here should stay here.
- Participation is not mandatory, but you will only get out of it what you put in to it.
- A quorum for conducting business shall be those present at any given meeting.
- No chapter money will be spent without a vote.
- Support and watch out for each other. Our priority for helping veterans should begin with the members of Chapter 28-5, then other CVMA members and chapters, then other veterans and veterans organizations.
- Handle problems / issues at the lowest level.
- Showing respect costs you nothing.
- You are responsible for your AUX / SUP member.