

Voice for the Poor Regional Leader Role Description

December 2025

As with all levels of leadership in The Society, a Voice for the Poor (VFP) Regional Leader is at first a servant leader to and for those we serve, both internally and externally. As such, he or she should hold the strong value that advocacy adds to the spirituality of our Society. Divisiveness is never the goal of our work.

Voice for the Poor Mission

In the spirit of Christian love and justice, the Voice for the Poor Committee upholds Catholic values by researching, validating, documenting, advocating, and promulgating issues related to the condition of the poor and disenfranchised for the purpose of helping Vincentians to live their faith by acting knowledgeably and credibly as a unified body speaking with one voice for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God.

Appointment: Each SVDP Regional Vice President should recommend two regional VFP representatives to the national SVDP President for appointment to the National VFP Committee as a VFP Regional Leader.

Recommended skill sets for VFP Regional Leaders

- Formed Vincentian in good standing.
- Peer leader in a conference, district, or council.
- Knowledgeable about Catholic Social Teaching.
- Technical skills to maintain email alerts and advocate lists.
- Good written and oral communication skills.
- Flexibility and willingness to analyze, discuss and communicate facets of social concerns in the spirit of Vincentian friendship.
- Exhibit openness to others and their opinions.

Time Commitment (approx. 10-15 hours per month)

- Monthly national VFP committee conference call.
- Local or regional VFP meetings (suggested quarterly), to encourage local VFP committees and to better understand issues emerging in the region for which VFP might advocate through Voter Voice.
- Attend the SVDP annual regional meeting for your region, and attend the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering every other year in Washington, DC.
- Any additional time commitment is driven by activities to grow and strengthen advocacy in the region. Those can be conference calls, newsletter editing, conducting workshops, and organizing projects and committees. Templates for these activities are available from the national VFP web site (<http://www.svdpusa.org/members/Programs-Tools/Programs/Voice-for-the-Poor>) and are performed in consultation with local leadership to prioritize and implement.

Be careful not to use political categories to speak about faith. The Church does not belong to any political party. Rather, she helps form your conscience so you can think and act with wisdom and love."

—
POPE LEO XIV
NOVEMBER 21, 2025
TO VATICAN AT THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC

Responsibilities of VFP Regional Leaders (some of these responsibilities may be done in conjunction with, or delegated to, State/Diocesan VFP leaders where appropriate)

1. Grow the VFP presence within the region.
2. Work with SVDP Regional Vice President and local leadership to identify and train VFP members and committees at all levels of the region (Councils, Districts, and Conferences).

3. Identify region and state-wide advocacy opportunities and identify collaborating organizations. Regional VFP Leaders should have regular contact with organizations that advocate for poverty issues. Examples include Catholic Conferences, Bread for the World, Catholic Climate Covenant, Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services.**
4. Support the SVDP Regional Vice President to adopt and execute initiatives.
5. Seek creative ways to involve and organize the people we serve to advocate for themselves and increase their voice in our communities.
6. Communicate with VFP members in the region, including forwarding VFP and SVDP national news and policy updates to VFP members.
7. Provide education to expand VFP efforts and expertise in the region.
8. Encourage systemic change and grassroots efforts in the region, with the support of the National VFP Committee as described below.

Responsibilities of the National VFP Committee (composed of Regional VFP Leaders)

1. **Support Mission and Charism.** Support the National Council and the Society's mission and charism by educating Vincentians on Catholic Social Teaching subjects, to better equip Vincentians to effectively respond to issues that affect the poor.
2. **Recommend Key Advocacy Issues.** Investigate and recommend social justice/advocacy issues to the SVDP National President and National Council. Draft and update national position papers on key issues to educate and encourage Vincentian action.* (Position papers are to be reviewed and updated every 5 years.)
3. **Educate.** Regularly update FAQs for position papers, and provide education through webinars that the SVDP National Council and VFP members may use for advocacy (e.g., FAQs for position papers).
4. **Collaborate.** Work with national and local like-minded organizations.
5. **Support D.C. Office.** Provide Support for the SVDP Washington D.C. office and initiatives.
6. **Encourage Systemic Change.** With the VFP Regional Leaders, encourage systemic change--of structures, policies, mindsets and cultural norms that produce inequity- in our communities, conferences, districts, and councils. Work with those in need in advocacy by developing and delivering tools for listening to their stories and experiences. This is best done by facilitating local VFP committees in person to person contact.
7. **Grassroots Efforts.** With the VFP Regional Leaders, encourage VFP members to contact legislators at the federal, state and local levels on issues affecting the poor (including via Voter Voice). Coordinate advocacy on national, state and local issues with appropriate SVDP leaders and council members.***

If indeed “the just ordering of society and of the state is a central responsibility of politics”, the Church “cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice”. (EVANGELII GAUDIUM, Pope Francis, No. 150)

Footnotes:

*VFP work is political but never partisan. The Society's advocacy focus is on issues related to the condition of the poor. The Society does not support individual political campaigns. Doing so may jeopardize the Society's tax status. **The National President, alone, is the official National spokesperson for the Society. Local elected leaders are the only spokespersons for local issues. The Society should not lend its name to any effort that could have member agencies who would be engaged in any activity not supported by Catholic teaching.

*** Local issues need council president approval. State issues need approval of a majority of the diocesan council presidents in that state. National issues need approval of the SVDP National President.