



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
**UNIT GUIDE BOOK**

Revised June 2014



# UNIT GUIDE BOOK

OF THE

## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guide Book, previously published as the Unit Handbook, provides information and guidance to unit members about the history, mission, programs, membership eligibility, customs, and operations of an American Legion Auxiliary unit, the community-level organization of the Auxiliary.

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Revised June 2014

## Foreword

The community knows The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary by its Posts and Units. This Unit Guide Book is a comprehensive source of information on the American Legion Auxiliary, its programs, Unit operations, procedures, membership eligibility and prescribed ceremonies.

It is provided to assist the Unit's officers in conducting business and directing the activities of the Unit. A successful Unit is a supportive partner to the Post and a positive force in the community.

Additionally, the American Legion Auxiliary Department Operations Guide, along with other publications on various programs and procedures, are available through your Department Headquarters and on the National Auxiliary Website at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

District and/or Department officers are available to assist you. Please contact them if you have questions or need assistance.

## Mission Statement

In the spirit of service, not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

## Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity, the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

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# The American Legion Auxiliary

## CHAPTER I

### History-Mission-Purpose

#### History of the Auxiliary

For nearly every man in World War I who endured the dangers and hardships of camp, shore and battlefield, there was a woman serving at home to help make possible America's victory—his wife, mother, sister, daughter, or granddaughter.

The war was won, and the men and women of the armed forces banded together in The American Legion to carry forward their services to the country in peacetime. It was only natural that the women of their families should desire to continue to serve with them. The result was the American Legion Auxiliary, the largest and most influential women's organization of its kind in the world today.

The establishment of an Auxiliary to The American Legion was provided for by the first National Convention of The American Legion in 1919. By the time of the 1920 National Convention, 1,342 local Units of this Auxiliary had been formed; intensive organizational efforts were authorized. The first National Convention of the Auxiliary was held in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1921. At that time, the name "American Legion Auxiliary" was adopted and the first national officers elected.

The Auxiliary grew from a first year enrollment of 121,000 to approximately 500,000 at the beginning of World War II. After the women of World War II families became eligible, the enrollment rose rapidly to a record of 1,001,545 in 1955, and since has remained around the 800,000 mark. The number of local Units of the Auxiliary is approximately 9,500. The Auxiliary organization (i.e., local, state and national) parallels that of The American Legion. Auxiliary National Headquarters is located in Indianapolis, Indiana.

#### Founding Purposes

The American Legion Auxiliary was founded on the following purposes:

#### **Rehabilitation of Veterans**

One of the major activities of the American Legion Auxiliary is caring for disabled veterans of all wars and conflicts and assisting thousands of other veterans to regain a place in civilian life. Women, who themselves have experienced the sufferings of war, can offer that warmth and understanding which no agency can.



The Auxiliary for the benefit of veterans expends over four million dollars each year. An inestimable amount of personal attention is also given. Our personal contact program seeks to bring happiness and contentment to the veteran and the veteran's family, especially during his/her period of hospitalization. The Auxiliary assists the families of hospitalized veterans or those who are unable to work. It aids disabled veterans in finding employment and helps to market articles made by them in the hospital workshops. Our special Gift Shop Program in many hospitals during the Christmas season is a source of cheer and happiness for veterans and their families.

### **Children & Youth Activities**

Our Children & Youth Program is built upon the pledge to maintain the integrity of the American family. Not a child living, and certainly no veteran's child, should be without the necessities of life required to make a good citizen. Assistance is given to veterans and their spouses to keep their families together. Nurseries for children of the disabled are sponsored at government hospitals; material relief is provided for needy children; educational assistance and spiritual guidance are offered in an effort to curb delinquency, in addition to adequate housing and cooperation with local child welfare agencies and organizations.

### **Serving the Local Community**

Auxiliary Units work in conjunction with their Posts for the betterment of their local communities. Activities include: conducting safety campaigns providing playgrounds, beautifying parks and public buildings, sponsoring Girl Scout troops, aiding Boy Scout troops, sponsoring the establishment of libraries and night schools, conducting health clinics, aiding hospitals in securing equipment, cooperating with safety councils, curbing juvenile delinquency and aiding the homeless.

The extensive nature and scope of this work is widely recognized and has national significance. Through the development of their communities, Auxiliary Units and their Posts are truly making America a better place in which to live.

### **Disaster Relief Activities**

Service in time of disaster has always been a tradition in the American Legion Auxiliary. Through natural disasters the Auxiliary has worked side by side with The American Legion to feed, shelter and clothe victims and to help them restore their homes. Wherever disaster strikes, there are American Legion Auxiliary Units and American Legion Posts organized and ready to go into immediate action to hold the line against chaos and suffering until other relief can be mobilized and sent into the area.

## Peace and Security

From the very beginning, the American Legion Auxiliary saw clearly that the security of America depended upon the nation's ability to defend itself against attack. Support of The American Legion's recommendations for adequate defense preparations has always been a major activity of the Auxiliary. Continuous and effective educational work has been done among the women of America to win their understanding and support for essential defensive measures. One of the Auxiliary's most important services to the nation has been achieved in its efforts for national security.

No organization of women in America is more desirous of peace than the American Legion Auxiliary. The women of the Auxiliary well know what war means -- members of their families have been in war-time service; they themselves have served; and they have witnessed the effects of war through working in rehabilitation and child welfare. This knowledge has given them a resolute determination that America shall be protected from war by adequate defensive forces backed by a strong reserve.

## Auxiliary Ideals and Principles

The Auxiliary believes that the principles and ideals upon which the American republic was founded, and for which American blood has been shed, are still the cornerstones of our democracy and, as such, should be safeguarded for the welfare of future generations.

The Auxiliary is working to keep patriotism a part of the education of every child, a patriotism which teaches love of America through knowledge of the people who made it great, and an understanding of the principles, which have guided its course. The organization endeavors to bring to Americans a fuller realization of their responsibilities as citizens. This will ensure the American ideal of democratic government will not fail. A multiplicity of problems confronts our government, such as the rapid expansion of our population and the world situation in which America must be the guiding force.

The American Legion Auxiliary's program is one of Americanism. What constitutes this program of Americanism? The concern for veterans of all wars and conflicts; the education and welfare of the children of veterans who have given of their lives for our country; the securing of adequate national security against all possible enemies; the betterment and beautification of the communities in which we live; and service through a true spirit of fellowship and cooperation with all people for world development.

## Mission and Purposes

### *Mission Statement*

In the spirit of service, not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

### *Vision Statement*

The vision of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion while becoming the premier service organization and foundation of every community providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace and security.

### *Purposes*

In fulfillment of our Mission, the American Legion Auxiliary adheres to the following purposes:

- To support and advocate for veterans, active military and their families
- To support the initiatives and programs of The American Legion
- To foster patriotism and responsible citizenship
- To award scholarships and promote quality education and literacy
- To provide educational and leadership opportunities that uphold the ideals of freedom and democracy and encourage good citizenship and patriotism in government
- To increase our capacity to deliver our Mission by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities within our communities
- To empower our membership to achieve personal fulfillment through “service not self”

### *Values*

Our statement of values is predicated on the founding purposes....

- Commitment to the four founding principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy, Loyalty
- Service to God, our country, its veterans and their families
- Tradition of patriotism and citizenship
- Personal integrity and family values
- Respect for the uniqueness of individual members
- Truthful open communication in dealing with the public and our members
- Adherence to the adopted policies and rules



## The American Legion Auxiliary Emblem

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is your badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and Country and the highest rights of man. It consists of several parts, and each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, for Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy; dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The unbroken circle of blue represents unity and Loyalty. The field of white exemplifies the hope of Freedom. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. As members of the American Legion Auxiliary, we must preach and teach principles of Americanism. Let us not forget that to each generation comes its patriotic duty and that upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure as those before you have sacrificed and endured, rests the hope of the nation.

### Rules Governing Use

The American Legion Auxiliary emblem is fully copyrighted and patented in the name of the National Organization. The use of the emblem by an individual Auxiliary member is limited to the wearing of the official insignia and to the possession of authorized jewelry or merchandise bearing the insignia. Units are confined to using the emblem or reproduction of the emblem on stationery, Unit publications, notices, posters, place cards, or items of similar character used in the ordinary routine and conduct of legitimate Unit business. Departments are similarly limited. Any other use of the name "American Legion Auxiliary" or the emblem shall be subject to the approval of the Department Secretary and the National Secretary.

## American Legion Auxiliary National Presidents

- \*1921-22 Mrs. Lowell F. Hobart, Sr. (Ohio)
- \*1922-23 Dr. Kate Waller Barrett (Virginia)
- \*1923-24 Mrs. Franklin Lee Bishop (Massachusetts)
- \*1924-25 Mrs. O.D. Oliphant (New Jersey)
- \*1925-26 Mrs. Eliza London Shepard (California)
- \*1926-27 Mrs. J.W. Macauley (Wisconsin)
- \*1927-28 Mrs. Robert Walbridge (New Hampshire)
- \*1928-29 Mrs. Boyce Ficklen, Jr. (Georgia)
- \*1929-30 Mrs. Donald Macrae, Jr. (Iowa)
- \*1930-31 Mrs. Robert Lincoln Hoyal (Arizona)
- \*1931-32 Mrs. Frederick C. Williams (New York)
- \*1932-33 Mrs. S. Alford Blackburn (Kentucky)
- \*1933-34 Mrs. William H. Biester, Jr. (Pennsylvania)
- \*1934-35 Mrs. Albin Charles Carlson (Minnesota)
- \*1935-36 Mrs. Melville Mucklestone (Illinois)
- \*1936-37 Mrs. O.W. Hahn (Nebraska)
- \*1937-38 Mrs. Malcolm Douglas (Washington)
- \*1938-39 Mrs. James Morris (North Dakota)
- \*1939-40 Mrs. Wm. Corwith (New York)
- \*1940-41 Mrs. Louis J. Lemstra (Indiana)
- \*1941-42 Mrs. Mark W. Murrill (Massachusetts)
- \*1942-43 Mrs. Alfred J. Mathebat (California)
- \*1943-44 Mrs. Lawrence H. Smith (Wisconsin)
- \*1944-45 Mrs. Charles B. Gilbert (Connecticut)
- \*1945-46 Mrs. Walter G. Craven (North Carolina)
- \*1946-47 Mrs. Norton H. Pearl (Michigan)
- \*1947-48 Mrs. Lee W. Hutton (Minnesota)
- \*1948-49 Mrs. Hubert A. Goode (Oregon)
- \*1949-50 Mrs. Norman L. Sheehe (Illinois)
- \*1950-51 Mrs. Willis C. Reed (Oklahoma)
- \*1951-52 Mrs. E.A. Campbell (Louisiana)
- \*1952-53 Mrs. Rae Ashton (Utah)
- \*1953-54 Mrs. Harold S. Burdett (New York)
- \*1954-55 Mrs. P.A. Lainson (Iowa)
- \*1955-56 Mrs. Bowden D. Ward (West Virginia)
- \*1956-57 Mrs. Carl W. Zeller (Ohio)
- \*1957-58 Mrs. J. Pat Kelly (Georgia)
- \*1958-59 Mrs. Chas. W. Gunn (Oregon)

## American Legion Auxiliary National Presidents

- \*1959-61 Mrs. Alexander H. Gray (Tennessee)
- \*1960-61 Mrs. Henry Ahnemiller (Washington)
- \*1961-62 Mrs. J. Howard McKay (Pennsylvania)
- \*1962-63 Mrs. Ollie L. Koger (Kansas)
- \*1963-64 Mrs. Luther D. Johnson (Nebraska)
- \*1964-65 Mrs. Walter W. Andrews (Alabama)
- \*1965-66 Mrs. Opal Glynn Hanes (Iowa)
- \*1966-67 Mrs. A.J. Ryan, Sr. (Florida)
- \*1967-68 Mrs. Vernon H. Randall (Maryland)
- \*1968-69 Mrs. Arthur B. Hanell (California)
- \*1969-70 Mrs. H. Milton Davidson (New Mexico)
- \*1970-71 Mrs. Charles C. Shaw (Illinois)
- \*1971-72 Mrs. Robert L. Parker (Oklahoma)
- \*1972-73 Mrs. T.G. Chilton (Arizona)
- \*1973-74 Mrs. B.M. Jarrett (North Carolina)
- \*1974-75 Mrs. Maurice Kubby (Texas)
- \*1975-76 Mrs. Alan M. Schanel (Rhode Island)
- \*1976-77 Mrs. Paul Brown (Idaho)
- \*1977-78 Mrs. Alvin Moltzen (North Dakota)
- \*1978-79 Mrs. Earl Bigalow (Oregon)
- \*1979-80 Mrs. Bernard Kennedy (New York)
- \*1980-81 Mrs. Lyle Seymour (Kansas)
- \*1981-82 Mrs. John J. Roethel (Michigan)
- \*1982-83 Mrs. Walter Stolte (Missouri)
- 1983-84 Mrs. Thomas Gear (Virginia)
- 1984-85 Mrs. Wayne Gardner (Florida)
- \*1985-86 Mrs. Robert Melgard (California)
- 1986-87 Mrs. James E. Starr (Minnesota)
- 1987-88 Mrs. H.B. Behrend (Wisconsin)
- 1988-89 Mrs. Ted Galka (Indiana)
- 1989-90 Mrs. William Calder (Utah)
- \*1990-91 Mrs. Richard Paul (Nebraska)
- \*1991-92 Mrs. Edward D. Yankovich (Pennsylvania)
- 1992-93 Ms. Linda Boone (Oregon)
- \*1993-94 Mrs. Harvey Holcomb (Texas)
- 1994-95 Mrs. T.T. Newsome (Maryland)
- 1995-96 Mrs. I.J. Deshotel (Louisiana)
- 1996-97 Mrs. Robert Bachman (New York)

## American Legion Auxiliary National Presidents

- 1997-98 Mrs. Jerome Kranig (Wisconsin)  
1998-99 Mrs. Billy Hobbs (Kentucky)  
1999-00 Ms. Elizabeth Stewart (North Carolina)  
2000-01 Mrs. George West (New Hampshire)  
\*2001-02 Mrs. Art McLaughlin (Iowa)  
\*2002-03 Mrs. John Bailey (New Jersey)  
2003-04 Mrs. John Morris (Texas)  
2004-05 Ms. Sandi Dutton (Maryland)  
2005-06 Mrs. Jack Van Kirk (Nebraska)  
2006-07 Ms. JoAnn Cronin (Missouri)  
2007-08 Mrs. Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan (Wisconsin)  
2008-09 Mrs. Desireé Stoy (Ohio)  
2009-10 Mrs. Rita Navarreté (New Mexico)  
2010-11 Mrs. Carlene Ashworth (Texas)  
2011-12 Mrs. Kris Nelson (Minnesota)  
2012-13 Mrs. Peggy Thomas (Virginia)  
2013-14 Mrs. Nancy Brown-Park (California)

*\*Deceased*

## CHAPTER II

### Eligibility and Membership

Membership in the Auxiliary is limited to women who have direct personal connection with service in World Wars I and II, the Korean or Vietnam War, or conflicts in Lebanon, Grenada, Panama or Operation Desert Shield/Storm/Gulf War/War on Terrorism. This service is through a member of one's own immediate family who served in the Armed Forces during those wars or conflicts, or through one's own service with the Armed Forces. Upon establishment of eligibility, such women may become members of a local Unit of the Auxiliary. A member of a local Unit is also a member of the Department and the National Organization, just as a citizen of Chicago is also a citizen of Illinois and of the United States. By payment of dues in the local Unit, a member also contributes to the support of the Department and the National Organization.

### **Eligibility**

#### Eligibility Requirements

All women who are eligible for membership in the Auxiliary fall into one of the following categories.

1. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of members of The American Legion.
2. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of those who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the eligibility periods listed on the next page and who died in the line of duty during such service, or who, having received an Honorable Discharge, died after such service.
3. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of those who were citizens of the United States and who served during any of the eligibility periods listed on the next page in the Armed Forces of any of the governments who were allies of the United States and who died in the line of duty during such service, or who, having received an Honorable Discharge, died after such service.
4. Women who are eligible for membership in The American Legion in their own right.



## Eligibility Periods

World War I	April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918
World War II	December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
U.S. Merchant Marines	December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
Korea	June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955
Vietnam	February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975
Lebanon/Grenada	August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984
Panama	December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990
Gulf War/War on Terrorism	August 2, 1990 until cessation of hostilities

Information on a veteran's service record can be obtained by contacting:  
National Archives and Records Administration  
Telephone: 1-866-272-6272  
[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

## Questions and Answers on Eligibility and Acceptability

### Unit Questions

- Q. May Juniors be refused membership in a Unit?  
A. Junior members cannot be excluded.
- Q. Is a Unit compelled to accept a transferring member?  
A. A Unit is judge of its own membership in the case of a transferring member just as it is for a new member, on the grounds that eligibility does not constitute acceptability.

### Husbands

- Q. Would the husband of an ex-servicewoman be eligible to membership in the American Legion Auxiliary?  
A. No, this is not allowed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the American Legion Auxiliary.

### Adopted Relatives

- Q. Is an adopted daughter eligible for Auxiliary membership on The American Legion membership of a veteran relative?  
A. She is eligible. In all cases where legal adoption exists, she is eligible through a mother, father, daughter, son, sister, brother, grandmother or grandfather who has served during the eligibility periods of The American Legion.

### Relatives of Members of the Sons of The American Legion

- Q. Are the female relatives of members of the Sons of The American Legion eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary?  
A. Yes, if the member of the Sons of The American Legion is also a member of The American Legion. If the SAL member is not eligible for membership in The American Legion, the applicant must secure eligibility through the service of an eligible veteran.

### Age Limit

- Q. Is there an age limit in the Auxiliary?  
A. No such limit is determined by the National Constitution.

### Service with Allied Armies

- Q. Are relatives of a veteran in service of one of the allied countries, who has since become a naturalized American citizen, eligible?  
A. They are not eligible, as the veteran was not an American citizen at the time of his entry into the service.
- Q. Does eligibility exist in the case of a man who, at the time of his enlistment in the Canadian Army, had taken out his first citizenship papers but who did not become an American citizen until after the war?  
A. One of the stipulations for eligibility in The American Legion is that the person must have been a citizen of the United States at the time he or she entered the service. Citizenship is not granted until the completion of the necessary proceedings (first papers merely signify an intention), and, therefore, eligibility does not exist.

### American Citizens

- Q. Are the relatives of an American citizen who served with the Allied forces during the war eligible?  
A. They are eligible if the service relative was an American citizen at the time of his war service and, if alive, is a member of The American Legion. If deceased, the service record must be obtained from the War Department of the country where the veteran served.

### Non-Americans

- Q. Must an applicant be a citizen of the United States to be eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary?  
A. No. United States citizenship is not a prerequisite in the establishment of eligibility for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

### Non-American Office Holders

- Q. May a woman who is not an American citizen hold office in the Auxiliary?  
A. As citizenship does not affect eligibility, and there is no provision in the Constitution, which requires office holders to be citizens of the United States, a non-American relative of an American veteran eligible for membership may hold office.

### Civilian War Workers

- Q. Are women who performed active service during the war in the Red Cross or a base hospital dietitian eligible for Auxiliary membership?

- A. Red Cross workers, welfare workers, and other civilian and contract employees, even though on duty in war zones and under the discipline of the Army and, in some instances, subject to that discipline by Army court martial under that Article of War which extends military jurisdiction to the followers of the Army in the field, are not eligible.

### Still in Service

- Q. Can a woman join under the eligibility of a relative who has remained in the service?
- A. Servicemen serving honorably during any of the previously mentioned eligibility periods may remain in the service and be members of The American Legion. Therefore, a woman can join under such a relative provided he is a member of The American Legion.
- Q. Can a woman join under the eligibility of her husband who served on active duty with the National Guard during the Gulf War/War on Terrorism?
- A. Yes. If the spouse is living, then he must be a member of The American Legion. A copy of the military ID card in addition to a copy of the Federal Orders or other appropriate documentation may prove eligibility. A woman can also become a member through her own eligibility if she served with the National Guard on active duty in the Gulf War/War on Terrorism.

### Divorcees

- Q. Is a woman eligible through the war service of a divorced husband?
- A. A divorced woman does not occupy the status of wife and, therefore, has no eligibility. But the fact that a member of the Auxiliary has become divorced from the man through whom she gained eligibility does not force her to surrender her Auxiliary membership, even though she may be married to another man. However, if she becomes delinquent, she may reinstate her membership only by payment of back dues for all years of delinquency.

### Annulled or Illegal Marriages

- Q. Is a woman eligible who joined through the war service of a husband, with whom the marriage is annulled or was illegal?
- A. Annulment, unlike divorce, places the parties in the same position as they were prior to marriage and does not recognize the marriage as having been valid. Therefore, the woman would not be eligible. Likewise, a woman whose membership is based on eligibility of her husband through an illegal marriage would not be eligible.

### Common Law Wife

- Q. Is a common-law wife eligible through the war service of her common-law husband?
- A. If the state in which a common-law marriage was consummated recognizes common-law marriage, then the wife is eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary through her common-law husband if he is a member of The American Legion or a deceased veteran.

### Foster Daughter

- Q. Does the adoption, after the veteran's death, of a foster daughter by the widow entitle the child to Auxiliary membership?
- A. As the child, during the veteran's lifetime, stood in the relationship of a foster daughter and not an adopted daughter, the Counsel General has ruled that the eligibility requirements were not met and, therefore, the widow's adopted daughter is not eligible.

### Foster Mother

- Q. Is a foster mother eligible through the war service of a foster son whom she reared from infancy?
- A. Not unless the foster son was legally adopted. There is no provision in our Constitution whereby the person who stands in the position of a parent is recognized as such, in the absence of legal adoption, even though the government may consider the status of the foster father and foster mother to be that of parents.

### Married – under eighteen years of age

- Q. Is a wife under eighteen years of age eligible for senior membership in the Auxiliary?
- A. Yes, a wife under eighteen years of age is eligible to be classified as a senior member.

### Missing Veterans, Relatives, etc.

- Q. Is a wife eligible whose husband disappeared several years ago and whose existence or whereabouts is unknown?
- A. In cases of veterans who have disappeared, legal death must be established by court (if no proof of death exists). As state laws vary, an attorney should be consulted.

### Neuropsychiatric Veterans, Relatives of

- Q. Are relatives of mentally ill veterans (not members of The American Legion) eligible for membership in the Auxiliary?
- A. Relatives of veterans who, as a result of service disability, became mentally ill prior to the formation of The American Legion are eligible.

Relatives of other veterans who had an opportunity to join The American Legion but failed to do so must obtain American Legion membership for the veteran before they are eligible to the Auxiliary.

The fact that the mentally ill veteran was at one time a member of The American Legion (if not a member when the female relative is making application for membership) has no bearing on the situation.

Once membership is secured for a mentally ill veteran as a basis of eligibility for his female relative, the veteran's membership in The American Legion would not need to be kept up, so long as the female relative paid her dues.

The above decisions are rulings of the Counsel General of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, and this would apply to World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and conflicts in Grenada, Lebanon, Panama and Gulf War/War on Terrorism.

### Nieces, Granddaughters, and Great-granddaughters

Q. Are nieces, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters eligible?

A. By constitutional action of The American Legion in 1970, granddaughters were made eligible for membership beginning in the year 1970-71, by constitutional action of The American Legion in 1987; great-granddaughters were made eligible for membership beginning in the year 1987-1988. Nieces are not eligible for membership.

### Orphans of Veterans

War orphans are sons and daughters of those who were killed in action, or died of wounds, disease or other cause prior to the legal

Termination of World War I, II, Korean or Vietnam Wars, or conflicts in Lebanon, Grenada, Panama or the Gulf War/War on Terrorism.

Postwar orphans are the sons and daughters of veterans who have died from any cause since their war service. (The term "war orphans" or "post-war orphans" applies to children whose mothers are still alive, as well as those who have lost both parents.)

### Time Limit

Q. Must application for membership be made immediately after the death of the veteran?

A. There is no limit as to the time when prospective members may make application for membership. They may join at any time.

### Unit, Choice of

Q. Must a woman join the Unit to the Post of which her service relative is a member?

- A. A woman whose service relative is a member of a Post of The American Legion is eligible for membership in any Auxiliary Unit.

### Widows

- Q. Is the wife of a non-serviceman eligible for membership on the war service of a former husband who died either during the war or following discharge?
- A. The fact that the widow of a serviceman remarried does not deprive her of her right to belong to the Auxiliary. Under these circumstances the wife of a non-serviceman is eligible for membership in the Auxiliary if her former husband was an ex-serviceman and died either during the war or following his discharge, and a woman who was the widow of an ex-serviceman and later remarried a person who was not an ex-serviceman would be eligible for membership in the Auxiliary.

### Interpretation of "Women Eligible in Own Right"

- Q. What constitutes eligibility in own right?
- A. A woman is eligible in her own right if she meets the eligibility criteria for membership in The American Legion.

### Legion Membership

- Q. Must a woman who is eligible to The American Legion in her own right affiliate with The American Legion to be eligible for Auxiliary membership?
- A. No, a woman in that class is eligible for Auxiliary membership, regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, daughter, granddaughter or great-granddaughter) depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

### Nurses

- Q. Are nurses eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary?
- A. Nurses who meet the eligibility criteria for membership in The American Legion are eligible for Auxiliary membership in their own right.

### Status of Relatives

- Q. Are the mother and sister of a nurse who died in the service before cessation of hostilities eligible to become Gold Star members of the Auxiliary?
- A. They are.
- Q. Are mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-

granddaughters and grandmothers of men or women who have died in service in World Wars I and II, The Korean or Vietnam War, or in conflicts in Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, or the Gulf War/War on Terrorism eligible for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary?

- A. They are; also, the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of men and women who have been honorably discharged from service and have become members of The American Legion.

## **Membership**

The only authorized form of membership is active membership, of which there are two classes — Senior and Junior. Granting special or honorary membership for any purpose or reason whatsoever is prohibited.

Junior members are defined as that group under the age of eighteen years. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, Junior members shall automatically be admitted into senior membership with full privileges. However, a member under the age of eighteen years who is married shall be classified as a senior member.

Once accepted as Senior Auxiliary members, these women may continue their membership from year to year whether or not their veteran relatives continue membership in The American Legion. The fact that a member's service relative is no longer a member of The American Legion does not compel the Auxiliary member to lose her Auxiliary membership.

The phrase "died in the line of duty," applies to all those persons who were killed in action, died of wounds or disease, were killed by accident or otherwise came to their death other than as a result of their own misconduct. In case of doubt, the Adjutant General of the Army, or the Navy Department, Washington, D.C., can advise if the person was considered to have died in the line of duty.

The term "wife," as used in the eligibility clause, does not necessarily mean the wife occupied that status at the time her husband was in war service. Any woman who marries a member of The American Legion at any time is eligible for membership in the Auxiliary. The term "wife" also includes widows.

In 1970, by Constitutional action of The American Legion, granddaughters were first admitted to membership.

In 1987, by Constitutional action of The American Legion, great-granddaughters were admitted to membership.

In 1995, by Constitutional action of The American Legion, grandmothers were admitted to membership.

## Applications for Membership

Every applicant for membership in the Auxiliary must fill out an individual membership application form as proof of her eligibility. The application must be typed or printed in black ink and must be legible.

## Instructions for Completing Individual Membership Application

**Note:** *The information requested below should be typed or printed on the corresponding line(s) on the sample application.*

1. Print or type full given name, e.g., Mary Ann Jones rather than Mrs. John Jones.
2. Mark with "X" the appropriate box for Junior (birth - 17 years old) or senior (18 - over) member. If Junior, date of birth is required.
3. Complete home address of applicant as well as telephone number. Designate if this is a work (W) or home (H) number.
4. State the Unit number and location where applicant is applying for membership.
5. State the name of the person through whom the applicant is eligible for membership.
6. If the person through whom the applicant is eligible for membership is living, he/she must be a current member of The American Legion. Complete the entire line by marking the "living" box, and by stating the person's Post name, Post number, city and state.
7. If the person through whom the applicant is eligible for membership is deceased, designate by "X" at "deceased."
8. Whether living or deceased, mark with "X" the correct period of military service for the person through whom the applicant is eligible.
9. Mark with "X" the appropriate box designating the applicant's relationship to the veteran. If eligibility is through her own service, mark the "Self" box.
10. Applicant certifies by her signature that the person through whom she is eligible for membership did indeed serve during the period so designated in #8, along with the date on which the application is being certified.  
*If the application is for a junior member a parent or guardian must sign it.*
11. The signature of the Post Officer should be on every application of those applying for membership by reason of relationship to an American Legion member or a deceased veteran. If the Post Officer's signature cannot be obtained after a reasonable effort, a letter from the Department Adjutant of the Department in which the service relative has his/her American Legion membership will be accepted



in lieu of the Post Officer's statement. Copy of this letter attesting to the relative's American Legion membership must be attached to the application.

*If the applicant is eligible in her own right, then the Unit Secretary signs and dates the application.*

12. Applicant specifies program(s) in which she is particularly interested.
13. Applicant checks member benefit(s) on which she would like to receive more information.
14. If a member of The American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary has recruited the applicant, complete this line with the recruiter's name, Unit/Post, city and state.
15. List the names and mailing addresses of other eligible individuals who might be interested in membership information from the American Legion Auxiliary.

**Note:** *The original membership application must be forwarded to the Department with the applicant's dues.*

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION APPLICANT INFORMATION	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	
Name (First) (M.I.) (Last)	Eligible Through-Name of Veteran (If App., must be American Legion member) <input type="checkbox"/> Living <input type="checkbox"/> Deceased	 <b>DUES RECEIPT</b> <i>(Please Print)</i>  Date _____ Received From _____ _____ for \$20.00 Dues Recruiter's Name _____ Recruiter's Signature _____ Recruiter's Phone # _____
Address	American Legion Member ID Number	
City State Zip	Veteran's American Legion Post Name Post # City State	
Home Phone Cell Phone	<b>Veteran Served: (check all that apply)</b>	
Email Address Unit # and Location	<input type="checkbox"/> WWI (48717-151150) <input type="checkbox"/> WWII (120164-120168)	
Date of Birth (Required) <input type="checkbox"/> 17- <input type="checkbox"/> 18 and over	<input type="checkbox"/> Merchant Marines (120741-120146) <input type="checkbox"/> Korea (82550-131650)	
Have you been a member before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam (120281-120779) <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon/Grenada (801449-70164)	
Signature of Applicant (or legal guardian if under 18) Date	<input type="checkbox"/> Panama (120289-120190) <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War/War on Terrorism (80290 until cessation of hostilities)	
<small>Mail completed application to American Legion Auxiliary Department/State headquarters. Annual dues must accompany completed application. Ask local contact for amount due. For current Department address go to: <a href="http://www.ALAlexternet.org/membership">www.ALAlexternet.org/membership</a>. Dues include a yearly non-refundable allocation of \$3.40 to American Legion Auxiliary magazine. Membership pending approval of application.</small>	<b>Applicant's Relationship to the Veteran:</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Wife <input type="checkbox"/> Daughter <input type="checkbox"/> Sister <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother <input type="checkbox"/> Granddaughter <input type="checkbox"/> Great-Granddaughter <input type="checkbox"/> Self	
	I certify that the above named individual served at least one day of active duty during the dates stated above and was honorably discharged or is still serving honorably.	
	Post Adjutant/Officer Membership Verification (A.L.A. 100101) Date _____	

Each Unit should retain, as part of the Unit's permanent records, the list they receive each year with their membership cards. They should also record on the listing the date a member has paid her dues, and add the name, address and the date a new member has joined the Unit as well.

### Membership Rights—Standing Rule IX

A new member joining the American Legion Auxiliary prior to the annual National Convention must pay full current annual dues to be eligible for full membership rights, privileges and benefits.

A new member joining after the National Convention may be given her Unit full membership rights, privileges and benefits from the date the dues are received through December 31 of the following year.

*(National Executive Committee, March 25, 2000)*

### Payment of Back Dues

When it is necessary for a Unit to remit back dues, please use the Payment

of Back Dues Form, or similar Department-authorized form, provided by your Department Headquarters. The Payment of Back Dues Form should not be used at any other time and a separate form is required for EACH year for which dues are submitted.

List members' names alphabetically by last name with complete addresses and indicate if the member is a junior or senior. The completed form and appropriate amount of back dues should be forwarded to the Department Secretary.

### Member Data Form or Similar Department-Authorized Form

These forms should be used for reporting name changes, address changes, continuous year changes, Unit transfers, and deceased member(s).

### Transfer of Membership

Transfer from one Unit to another is a privilege granted to any paid-up Auxiliary member ONLY with approval of Unit to which member wishes to transfer.

**Note:** *Transfer decisions are the sole responsibility of the Unit, based upon Unit's regulations. National Headquarters cannot become involved or mediate disputes concerning transferring members.*

### Transfer Regulations

1. No transfer shall be made unless member requesting transfer has a membership card showing she is a member in good standing at time transfer is requested. Members whose dues for current calendar year are not paid by January 31st of that year are suspended, are not in good standing, and are NOT eligible for transfer.
2. No charge shall be made to members for privilege of transfer and no dues shall be transferred from one Unit to another. The new Unit may require payment of the difference in dues amounts, on a pro-rata basis, when dues of new Unit are higher than those of former Unit from which the member is transferring.
3. An Auxiliary member wishing to transfer her membership must first secure approval from the Unit to which she wishes to transfer. The member may make her request verbally or in writing. The Officer of new Unit must complete, sign and route a Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form as discussed in "2c" below.
4. When a member transfers from one Unit to another, the Unit to which dues were paid receives and retains credit for the membership through December 31st of that year. The transferring member, however, is entitled to all the rights and benefits of membership in the Unit to which she is accepted as a transfer, including that of voting in the Unit (Opinion of Counsel General, March 24, 1965).

### Transfers Without Dues

When a member has already paid dues for current membership year to her old Unit and wishes to transfer to a new Unit, dues should not be submitted again.

1. Transferring member's responsibilities:

- a. Submit her membership card to new Unit to which she wishes to transfer.
2. New Unit's Officer's responsibilities after member is accepted:
  - a. Completes and signs Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form.
  - b. Retains a copy for Unit files.
  - c. Forwards two copies of form to Department Secretary.
  - d. Prepares a new membership card indicating she is a member of that Unit.

**Note:** *Verify member signs data form.*

### Transfers With Dues

1. Transferring member's responsibilities:
  - a. Present her membership card to new Unit to which she wishes to transfer.
  - b. Provide payment for dues.
  - c. Sign Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form.
2. New Unit's responsibilities:
  - a. Collect dues payment.
  - b. Complete and sign Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form.
  - c. Forward Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form and dues payment to appropriate Department Headquarters.
  - d. Prepare a new membership card indicating she is a member of that Unit.

**Note:** *Verify member signs data form.*

### Transfers for Members of a Cancelled Unit

1. Members of a cancelled Unit will be automatically transferred to the Department Headquarters Unit, unless previously transferred as discussed below.
2. Prior to cancellation of Unit, Unit leaders need to complete a Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form for all members wishing to transfer to another Unit.
3. Such forms must be completed and forwarded to Department Headquarters prior to providing written authority to Department Secretary to cancel Unit. (Otherwise they will automatically be transferred to Department Headquarters Unit).
4. A Member Data Form or similar department-authorized form does not need to be completed for members of the cancelled Unit who do not wish to transfer to another Unit prior to the cancellation, as they will automatically be transferred to Department Headquarters Unit.

### Executing Transfers on Member Data Form or Similar Department-Authorized Form

1. Member Data Forms or similar department-authorized forms are sent to

- your Department Secretary.
2. To ensure all essential information is given, the Unit Officer must review all documents carefully, making sure member and Unit Officer sign the Member Data Form or similar department-authorized forms before submitting to Department.
  3. Member Data Forms or similar department-authorized forms should be available in every Unit. (Units may obtain forms from Department Headquarters.)
  4. A transferred member will be credited to the Unit that secures membership dues until December 31st of the dues year. After January 1, member must pay her dues to the original Unit; then a transfer can be processed. The transferring member is entitled to all the rights and benefits of membership in the Unit to which she transferred (and is accepted), including that of voting in the Unit.

### Withdrawal of Membership

A Unit member may withdraw her membership from a Unit. However, upon withdrawal, she shall be prohibited from joining any other Unit as a new member during the remainder of the current year for which said dues are paid. In the event a member wishes to change her membership from one Unit to another during the current year, she may do so by transfer.

### Reinstatement of Membership

Dues are collected in advance and are payable annually for the succeeding calendar year. A member failing to pay annual dues by January 31st shall be classed as delinquent and suspended from all membership privileges which include voting on Unit business, holding office, participation in Unit activities, receipt of member benefits and all other privileges of membership.

Payment of current dues after suspension and before December 31st of the dues year shall reinstate the member to active membership. Any member who is still under suspension at December 31st of the year of delinquency shall automatically be dropped from the rolls and the continuity of her membership is broken. A member dropped from the rolls may reinstate her membership by either of the following methods:

1. If she is unable to establish eligibility as a new member, her membership may be continued by paying dues for the period of delinquency and for the current year (and by vote of the Unit, where the Unit Constitution requires a vote on applications for membership). By this procedure she may be reinstated even though her service relative is not in good standing in The American Legion at the time of her application for reinstatement.
2. If she prefers not to pay back dues and can establish eligibility as of the date when she applies for reinstatement, she may submit a new membership application, which is subject to acceptance by the Unit, and payment of dues for the current year only.

Reinstatement of membership by either #1 or #2 above does not count as continuous membership. Continuous membership is the payment of dues

annually without interruption. Once continuous membership has been broken, it cannot be reinstated.

## Honorary Life Membership

Created for Units who confer Honorary Life Membership on outstanding members. Each Department shall establish its own rules for conferring Honorary Life Memberships and certification of these memberships. Special Note: Honorary Life Memberships may not be transferred from Unit to Unit; nor Department to Department; nor from one member to another member.

## PUFL Membership

Any member in good standing whose membership dues are paid for the current year may become a Paid Up For Life Member (PUFL). The Unit Secretary on the application must verify the membership status. PUFL applications are available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters							
PAID UP FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP							
<i>(Please type or print - see instructions on reverse)</i>							
<b>SECTION 1 - To be completed by APPLICANT</b>							
FULL NAME: _____ <small>(First) (Middle) (Last)</small>	DATE OF BIRTH: <i>(required)</i> ____/____/____						
_____ <small>(Address)</small>	PUFL MEMBERSHIP FEE: \$ _____ <small>(see rate chart on reverse side)</small>						
_____ <small>(City) (State) (Zip)</small>	DAYTIME TEL # ____-____-____						
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: * _____ <small>*can only be omitted if membership is a gift; if a gift, please refer section below</small>							
Date Application Submitted to Unit Secretary: ____/____/____	<table border="1"><tr><td><b>*FOR GIFT</b> Mail Card to:</td><td>Name: _____ Tel #: ____-____-____</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Address: _____</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____</td></tr></table>	<b>*FOR GIFT</b> Mail Card to:	Name: _____ Tel #: ____-____-____		Address: _____		City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
<b>*FOR GIFT</b> Mail Card to:	Name: _____ Tel #: ____-____-____						
	Address: _____						
	City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____						
Indicate Payment Method:							
<input type="checkbox"/> Check or Money Order - - Make payable to: <i>National Treasurer, American Legion Auxiliary</i>							
<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard Card # _____	Expiration date: ____/____/____						
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa Card # _____	Expiration date: ____/____/____						
Daytime Tel # ____-____-____	Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____						
<b>SECTION 2 - To be completed by UNIT SECRETARY</b>							
With my signature below, I certify that applicant is a member in good standing, has a valid membership card (has paid dues) for the current year, that application is completed in full, that the PUFL fee listed above is accurate, and that the application is ready for processing at National Headquarters. <i>Note: After January 1, a member whose dues for the current year are not paid is considered delinquent and such member must pay her current dues to the Unit before she is eligible to purchase a PUFL membership. (see information on back)</i>							
Membership ID #: _____	Last year, this member paid dues to Unit: _____						
Unit #: _____ Department: _____	Annual Unit Dues (Unit + Dept + Nat'l): \$ _____						
*Is Unit waiving its portion of dues for this applicant? Yes ____ No ____							
Signature of Unit Secretary: _____	Date application certified: ____/____/____						
Address: _____							
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____	Daytime Tel #: ____-____-____						
Note: Send this form, along with payment to: <table border="1"><tr><td>American Legion Auxiliary, National Headquarters ATTN: Membership Division - PUFL 8945 North Meridian Indianapolis, IN 46260</td></tr></table>		American Legion Auxiliary, National Headquarters ATTN: Membership Division - PUFL 8945 North Meridian Indianapolis, IN 46260					
American Legion Auxiliary, National Headquarters ATTN: Membership Division - PUFL 8945 North Meridian Indianapolis, IN 46260							
<i>*for explanation, see "COST" section on reverse side</i>							
<b>SECTION 3 - To be completed by NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS</b>							
NATIONAL per capita: \$ _____	DEPARTMENT per capita: \$ _____	Balance for UNIT: \$ _____					
Date card sent ____/____/____							

PUFLmembershipform.pdf

A PUFL pin is also available from American Legion Emblem Sales:  
1-888-453-4466  
[www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).

### Member Benefits

American Legion Auxiliary members are automatically receiving the following benefits at no additional cost:

Subscription to *Auxiliary* magazine

Prescription Discounts

Eye Care Discounts

### Voluntary Insurance Programs

The American Legion Auxiliary offers various voluntary purchase insurance plans for members. These include:

Life Insurance

Medicare Supplement

Hospital and Medical

Dental

Brochures are available from your Department Headquarters with more information about member benefits.

### Membership Years Pin

Proof of continuity of membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for a period of every five years up to seventy-five years entitles the member to wear a special pin displaying the number of continuous years of membership. Pins may be purchased through American Legion Emblem Sales by calling 1-888-453-4466 or by placing an order online at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).

### Auxiliary Grave Marker Emblem Requests

In order for an Auxiliary member to have permission to place an American Legion Auxiliary emblem on her grave marker/headstone, one of two conditions must be met:

1. If the request is for pre-need use, i.e., the Auxiliary member is not yet deceased, she must have been a continuous member of an Auxiliary Unit for 20 years or more (not necessarily the same Unit), or a PUFL (Paid Up For Life) and/or Life Member of a Department having its own life membership plan, regardless of the length of her consecutive membership.
2. If the member is deceased and the request is made by her family, etc., the member must have been a paid-up member at the time of her death.

All requests for use of the Auxiliary emblem on a grave marker must be sent to Department Headquarters. After approval there, it will be forwarded to the National Secretary for consideration.

The name and address of the grave marker manufacturer must be included with the request. If the emblem is not to be part of the grave marker, and no manufacturer is known, the name and address of the place of interment must be sent.

## CHAPTER III

### The Unit

The basic organization of the American Legion Auxiliary is the local Unit. All Auxiliary members must hold membership in a local Unit. Local Units implement the work of the Department and National programs. Through local Units, the Auxiliary develops volunteers to provide service to The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and the nation. The primary purpose of an Auxiliary Unit is to aid The American Legion Post to which it is attached in accomplishing The American Legion projects in the community. The Unit is an auxiliary to The American Legion Post and takes its name, location and number. A Unit can be organized only at the request of, and in connection with, an American Legion Post. However, if a Post is no longer active, a Unit may continue to function as a “widow Unit” and in all such instances the Department Adjutant of The American Legion should make certification, which would otherwise be made by a Post Officer.

#### eUnits

Electronic Units (eUnits) allow members to communicate and hold meetings via teleconferencing, email, a Yahoo Group and facsimiles. Designed for working women and students attending college, the eUnit format also provides a great opportunity for those unable to leave their home to remain involved in the American Legion Auxiliary. In addition to electronic communication eUnit members do meet in person occasionally as required by their Unit Constitution and Bylaws. For more information on how to start your own eUnit visit [www.alaunit472.org](http://www.alaunit472.org).

#### How to Organize a New Unit

The first step in the organization of an Auxiliary Unit is to create interest among women in the community who are eligible for Auxiliary membership and to secure authorization for the creation of an Auxiliary Unit from the Post. Charter application forms, individual membership applications, suggested Constitution and Bylaws and any other needed supplies or information may be obtained from the Department Headquarters. Department officers are always ready to assist in installations and in providing their expertise when needed.

The Post Commander and Department Auxiliary officers should attend the organizational meeting to outline the nature and purposes of the Auxiliary. The following procedure is suggested protocol for the organizational meeting.



1. Elect a temporary chairman and secretary to preside over the organizational meeting.
2. Adopt a temporary Unit Constitution.
3. Establish dues amount sufficient to cover Unit administrative expenses plus assessment amounts due to National, Department and, on occasion, District or County.
4. The temporary chairman asks for nominations for the following officers: President, one or more Vice Presidents, Chaplain, Historian, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms. Immediately following election the newly elected officers will assume their duties. The President should act to establish unit committees that parallel those standing committees in the National Constitution and Bylaws as soon as possible.
5. When the applicants for membership in the new Unit have completed their individual membership applications with signature from Post Adjutant (who attests eligibility), and those transferring to the new Unit have been identified, the application for the Unit charter must be completed in triplicate. The three copies of the charter application are then forwarded to Department Headquarters.
  - a. A minimum of ten senior members is required to form a Unit. Any number of transferred members may sign the charter application and will be designated as charter members. Junior members may be charter members but cannot be counted toward the ten senior members required to form a new unit.
 

***Note:** Ten (10) senior members is the minimum number required to hold a charter. The sole exception is the Department Headquarters Unit, which has no minimum membership requirement.*
6. After organization, the newly elected secretary will forward to the Auxiliary Department Headquarters the following:
  - a. All three copies of the charter application all signed by the Post Commander and attested by the Post Adjutant.
  - b. The individual membership applications for any new members and a data form for transferring members.
  - c. Payment due to the Department and National for Junior and Senior members. Senior members' dues includes a subscription to the American Legion Auxiliary national magazine.
  - d. The charter fee, as designated by the Department Headquarters.
  - e. Completed unit data form (available on the National website at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)).
7. The Department Secretary will then forward the necessary documents to the Auxiliary National Headquarters for processing.
8. National Headquarters will forward to the Unit form SS-4, application

for EIN, along with instructions for completing. NOTE: Copy of IRS letter verifying EIN must be forwarded to National Headquarters immediately upon receipt by Unit. See section “Federal Compliance and Tax Laws” in this chapter for more information.

When the applications and dues for new members in the new Unit are received at the Department Headquarters, the Department Secretary will forward to the Unit Secretary the correct number of membership cards. Since the cards for the first year of membership are blank cards, it is necessary for the Unit Secretary to prepare a membership card for each new member. The cards should then be signed and distributed immediately to all paid-up members. Once the member’s data has been entered into the national membership database, the member will automatically receive a pre-printed membership card the following year.

*If you have questions relative to completing the membership applications contact your Department Headquarters.*

## The Unit Charter

### Issuing of the Charter

The Unit charter will be issued by the National President and National Secretary upon receipt of the charter application, duly attested by the Department President, accompanied by individual membership applications for any new members and National dues. With the charter, the Unit will receive a copy of the charter application bearing the endorsement of the Department and National Officers. An inscribed membership roll, which lists the charter members, is available for a nominal fee. The charter may be presented informally or with an appropriate initiation ceremony by an American Legion official or Department or District officer of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The National Constitution provides that the charter of a new Unit must be closed thirty days after it has been signed by the Post Commander, which means that only members joining within that time can be classed as charter members.

National Headquarters maintains facilities for inscribing names of charter members on charter rolls at a nominal charge per name. A typewritten list of names in the exact order desired, together with payment of the fee in full, must be forwarded by the Unit through Department Headquarters to the National Headquarters.

### Payment of Per Capita

The National Executive Committee regarding the payment of per capita dues and the issuance of charters took the following action:

By action of the 1975 National Executive Committee meeting, National Headquarters was instructed to issue all charters immediately upon

receipt of proper application form and payment of dues - irrespective of which year's dues are paid. However, if succeeding years are paid, the charter is dated January 1, of the succeeding year. Example - if a charter is granted in July 1990, and 1991 dues are paid - the charter would be dated January 1, 1991, and mailed immediately. If the charter is granted in July 1991, and 1991 dues are paid, the charter would be dated July 1991, and mailed immediately.

### Charter Lost or Destroyed

When a charter has been lost or destroyed, a duplicate can be secured through a request to the Department Secretary and payment of the charter fee. Duplicate charter rolls can also be obtained by the same procedure.

### Charter Cancellation

A Unit voting to relinquish a charter for cancellation shall vote at a regular meeting of the Unit, with advance written notice to the membership. The Unit charter cancellation shall be voted on by the Department Executive Committee and then forwarded to National Headquarters for vote by the National Executive Committee.

### Cancellation, Suspension and Revocation of Charter

Under the National Constitution, Unit charters may become non-operative either through cancellation, suspension or revocation. Cancellation is in order when two or more Units merge or when a Unit voluntarily ceases to function.

A Unit charter may be revoked upon failure of the Unit to surrender its charter at the call of the Department President, such a call being authorized in the following cases: a Unit fails to meet the obligations imposed on it by the Constitution, Bylaws, or by ruling of convention or executive committees; a Unit ceases to function from one Department Convention to the next; or a Unit refuses to pay the per capita tax due the Department and National organizations.

The Department Executive Committee may order the suspension of a charter for a period not to extend beyond the closing of the next succeeding Department Convention as a disciplinary measure or pending action relative to final revocation.

Units suffering revocation of their charters may appeal to the National Executive Committee the decision of the Department President and the Department Executive Committee. Upon notice of appeal, the National President will appoint a committee to review the action of the Department and make recommendations to the next meeting of the National Executive Committee.

*(Refer to Uniform code of Procedure for the Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Unit Charters- Chapter XI.)*

When a Unit ceases to function or its charter has been revoked or cancelled, the charter and all Unit records and funds must be forwarded immediately to Department Headquarters.

### Reorganization of a Disbanded Unit

A Unit cannot be reinstated under a charter, which has been cancelled or revoked. It may, however, reorganize and apply for a new charter following the procedure outlined for the organization of new Units.

### Naming the New Unit

The Unit must take the exact same name, number and location of The American Legion Post to which it is attached, and these appear on its charter.

### Change of Name of Legion Post

If the Post to which an Auxiliary Unit is attached changes its name, location or number, it is mandatory that the Unit take the same action. In such a case, the Unit should forward its charter to the Department Secretary for cancellation requesting a new charter bearing the new Post name, location, number, date of change and names of current officers. The charter fee must be paid, but no charter application is required.

### Relationship Between Unit and Post

The relationship between the two organizations is one of cooperation rather than regulation. The American Legion Posts and American Legion Auxiliary Units are related but independent organizations each with separate EINs, financial records, Bylaws, etc. (see section “Federal Compliance and Tax Laws” in this chapter for more information).

The National Judge Advocate of The American Legion has issued the following ruling:

“It is crystal clear that The American Legion Post has no authority to control the Unit related to it.”The Post may not revoke nor threaten revocation of its Unit’s charter.

The Unit should regard its connection with the Post as a distinct honor. It should strive unceasingly to carry out the National Constitution’s pledge “to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.”

### Auxiliary Units Without Posts

The cancellation or revocation of a Post charter does not invalidate the charter of its Auxiliary Unit. The Unit may continue to operate, bearing the name, location and number of the Post to which it was attached. The number of such Post shall not be reassigned so long as the Auxiliary Unit continues to be active.

## Consolidation of Posts and Units

When two or more American Legion Posts surrender their charters and consolidate into a new Post, their Auxiliary Units may follow one of several courses. The Units may continue as “widow” Units under their original charters. They may surrender their charters for cancellation and consolidate as an Auxiliary Unit to the new Post. They may also choose to surrender their original charter and through securing a new charter attach themselves to some Post not having an Auxiliary Unit, or they may surrender their charter and disband. In a “widow” Unit, the Department Adjutant certifies the members.

Where several Posts consolidate and one Unit of one Post is involved, the Adjutant of the consolidated Post certifies the members. In a “widow” Unit, the Department Adjutant certifies the members.

## Federal Compliance and Tax Laws

American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Units are separate entities that operate independently as affiliates of the ALA National Organization. All ALA Units are permitted by the National Organization to use the name and trademarks of the American Legion Auxiliary and must comply with the national legal requirements for use of same. As independently operating not-for-profit organizations, Units must duly report to their respective state governments and to the federal government via the applicable IRS Form 990.

Units that have maintained their exempt status by complying with IRS requirements and that are in good standing are tax exempt under the ALA National Organization Group Exemption Number (GEN).

Units that have had their tax exempt status revoked by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for failure to file, or in some instances due to IRS error, need to initiate appropriate steps to regain tax exempt status.

Unit leaders should be knowledgeable about the following information.

### **Not-for-Profit Corporation**

Incorporation provides legal protection for an organization by limiting the liability of the individual members of the organization. The American Legion Auxiliary’s Counsel General strongly recommends incorporation. It should be noted that the act of incorporating as a not-for-profit corporation does not automatically confer tax exempt status. A not-for-profit corporation may exist and operate according to the purpose of its articles of incorporation without being tax exempt. Also, if a not-for-profit corporation loses its tax exempt status, it may still otherwise continue its operations; however, it must pay appropriate federal, state and local taxes, and donations it receives are not tax-deductible to the donor.

## **Federal Tax Exemption 501(c)(19)**

Exemption from federal income taxes is granted to the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization. Therefore, by virtue of the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization Group Exemption, ALA Units that request inclusion in, or that are included in the ALA National Group Exemption roster, are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

The IRS confirmed the ALA National Organization's tax exempt status via its Letter of Determination to the American Legion Auxiliary National Secretary dated March 26, 1973.

To stay current on federal tax-exemption matters, visit IRS.gov to subscribe to "Exempt Organization Updates": <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USIRS/subscriber/new>

## **ALA Federal Group Exemption Number (GEN) GEN 0964**

The American Legion Auxiliary National Organization's IRS Group Exemption Number is GEN 0964. Units, when applicable, are included in the National Organization's Group Exemption. When proof of tax exempt status is requested, a photocopy of the 1973 IRS Letter of Determination is generally sufficient. The 1973 IRS Letter of Determination can be obtained by contacting ALA National Headquarters, Attention: Membership Division.

Note: The purpose of the IRS federal group exemption is to exempt the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization and those falling under the ALA's National Group Exemption (GEN 0964) from federal income tax. The Auxiliary at all levels is otherwise subject to other federal taxes such as payroll taxes and tax on unrelated business income. Units may also be subject to certain state and local taxes, including hotel, hospitality, service, and sales taxes. All states are different; be sure to consult with a tax adviser knowledgeable about your state's not-for-profit tax requirements to determine if not-for-profit organizations in your state are afforded any state tax exemptions.

## **Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN)**

### **Employer Identification Number (EIN)**

Both the federal TIN and the federal EIN are unique 9-digit identification numbers. If Units have or will have employees, an EIN is required; otherwise, a TIN is sufficient. While Units are strongly advised to incorporate, Units should apply for and obtain a TIN/EIN whether or not incorporated. Each TIN/EIN is on file with the IRS and should be used on all tax returns and correspondence, and should be retained permanently for ready reference.

The federal TIN/EIN does NOT indicate tax exempt status. An organization can be incorporated as a not-for-profit and have the required TIN/EIN but still NOT be tax exempt. The IRS's discretion to grant not-

for-profits exemption from paying federal income taxes is an entirely separate federal filing and determination process. For Units, the ALA National Organization Group Exemption provides tax exempt status unless the IRS has specifically revoked a Unit's exempt status. See information about exempt status revocation elsewhere in this document.

### IRS Form 990, 990EZ, 990N

Generally, Units must file IRS Form 990 or 990EZ when their annual gross receipts are greater than \$50,000. The IRS Form 990 is required when gross receipts are greater than or equal to \$200,000 or total assets are greater than or equal to \$500,000. The IRS Form 990EZ may be used when the gross receipts are less than \$200,000 and total assets are less than \$500,000.

IRS Form 990N (e-Postcard) may be used when a Unit normally has gross receipts of \$50,000 or less. For those with gross receipts of \$50,000 or less, please see instructions for filing the Form 990N (e-Postcard) that follow in this document.

The federal filing due date for the IRS Form 990, 990EZ, or 990N (e-Postcard) is the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of the organization's tax year. For example, if your fiscal year ends June 30, your filing due date for whatever version of the IRS Form 990 you are required to complete is November 15. If your fiscal year ends September 30, your federal filing due date is February 15. If your fiscal year ends December 31, your federal filing due date is May 15.

### IRS Form 990T

Not all receipts are exempt from Federal income tax. Gross income in excess of \$1,000 from business unrelated to the organization's exempt purpose must be reported on Form 990T. Form 990T must be completed in addition to Form 990.

Tax exempt organizations that file IRS form 990 and 990-EZ (including extensions) must make available for public inspection or copying its annual return(s). The IRS provides access to filings of all versions of the IRS Form 990 available online to charity rating and watchdog organizations, and to the news media. To view the Exempt Organization Public Disclosure and Availability Requirements, visit the following: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organization-Public-Disclosure-and-Availability-Requirements>.

Form 990 is not just a disclosure of a nonprofit's financial statements, but also serves as a tool for compliance and accountability reporting that meets the diverse needs of both the regulatory community and the public. The Form 990 asks specific questions about your governance policies and program achievements. Lack of adequate governing and oversight policies increases the chance for an audit or scrutiny of your tax-exempt organization.

It is strongly recommended that Units have written policy and procedures that document the organization's 990 Review process. Although no 990 Review Policy is legally required, having one written increases the accuracy and transparency of the organization's 990 return.

### Public Scrutiny of IRS Tax Documents

As a general summation of the IRS's rules regarding public inspection of tax documents, when a member of the public makes a request to inspect tax documents or obtain copies, your Unit must comply in a reasonable time and manner. Your Unit can make compliance with these rules easier by posting PDF files of required documents on the Unit website.

#### Rules for Public Disclosure of Tax Documents:

1. By law, the public has a right to view and receive copies of any 990 (including 990T) forms filed by a tax-exempt organization for the last three (3) years plus the IRS exemption application and award letter.
2. Tax-exempt organizations are required to make these documents available for inspection, without charge, at its office during regular business hours.
3. If your organization only fills out the form 990N (e-postcard) online, you can direct all requests for inspection to the IRS website, [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), where it can be downloaded for free.
4. If a tax-exempt organization does not have a place of business or its office hours are limited, it must make the documents available for inspection at a reasonable time and location of its choice within two (2) weeks of the request being made.
5. If a tax-exempt organization does not have an established place of business or its office hours are limited, requests to inspect documents in person may be satisfied accommodated instead by mailing the copies of the documents within two (2) weeks of receiving the request copies of the documents to the requester. This may substitute for an in-person inspection. In such a case, however, fees for copies and postage may only be charged if the requester consents. No fee for services or access may be charged.
6. Should a requester contact your Unit in writing (by mail, email, or fax) and request that you send written copies of documents to them:
  - You must mail the copies requested within thirty (30) days of receiving the request.
  - If you require prepayment for copy and postage costs in advance, the documents must be sent within thirty (30) days of receiving payment. No fees for services or access may be charged.



- If you receive a request without payment and require payment (for copy and postage costs), you must notify receiver of prepayment policy within seven (7) days of receiving the request.
  - If you receive consent from requester, you may provide electronic rather than paper copies of the documents.
7. If your Unit has made your documents widely available on a website, then you are not required to provide copies requested through the mail, email, or fax, but must notify the requester of the availability of the documents online. An organization must still provide a copy if a request to do so is made in-person.
- The IRS deems documents to be widely available if:
    - they are available to all readers on a website and the website clearly informs readers of the documents’ presence;
    - the document can be easily viewed, downloaded, and printed without special software or charge; and
    - the documents are exact reproductions of the images of the original documents and are not subject to loss, destruction, or alteration.
8. If your Unit has a permanent place of business, and a requester appears in person during office hours, the following guidelines apply:
- You may have an employee/volunteer in the room with the requester while he/she examines the documents.
  - The requester may take notes freely.
  - Should the requester bring his/her own portable photocopy equipment (such as a camera, scanner, etc.), your department/unit must allow the requester to photocopy the document at no cost.
  - Should the requester ask for copies, you may charge a reasonable fee for actual copy costs only. No fee for services of access may be charged.
  - Copies must be provided to the requester the same day a request is made, except in unusual circumstances.

#### Form 8822-B Change of Address or Responsible Party – Business

The IRS recently added a new form required for every enterprise with a TIN/EIN. This applies to all incorporated and non-incorporated Units. Beginning January 1, 2014, the IRS requires organizations to file IRS Form 8822-B “Change of Address or Responsible Party – Business” if an organization has had a change of address and/or a change to the organization’s responsible party. Form 8822-B and its instructions can be found at the following IRS link: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8822b.pdf>

This is a basic form that looks like a “Change of Address” form.

A “Responsible Party” is typically the person that signs your IRS 990/990EZ/990-N, going forward, Form 8822-B must be filed within 60 days of the date of change.

## State Taxes

Federal tax exemption does not automatically grant state tax exemption(s). Each state has its own tax laws and rulings regarding state tax exemptions, including sales tax. State tax exemptions may only be granted by the state in which your Unit is located. Sales tax exemption is only recognized in the state where it is granted.

Most states require a specific not-for-profit status tax return form be filed annually. State tax returns for a not-for-profit corporation may be required for that organization to maintain any state and local tax exempt status which a state may grant. Some states regulate charitable organizations’ fundraising activities. Be sure to consult with knowledgeable legal and/or tax professionals in your state to ensure you are meeting all the requirements for filing and maintaining any state and local exemptions granted by your state.

## Tax-Exemption Revocation

Following the Internal Revenue Service’s adoption of the completely revised IRS Form 990 series for FY2010, the IRS began vigorously conducting federal reporting compliance reviews of not-for-profits across the United States. As a result, approximately 800 ALA Units had their tax exempt status revoked.

Consequences of losing your federal tax-exemption may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Your Unit is no longer exempt from federal income tax and will be subject to corporate income tax on annual revenue.
2. Your Unit should proactively communicate with your donors explaining that the organization’s tax-exempt status has been revoked. The Unit should communicate the reason for the revocation, consequences of the revocation, and that all steps are being taken to have the organization’s tax-exempt status reinstated.
3. Any state tax-exemption dependent on federal tax-exempt status your Unit had is also now revoked.
4. Your organization will not be listed in IRS Publication 78, Cumulative List of Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, which is a list of organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. Donations to non-tax-exempt Units are not tax deductible.
5. Private foundations are unlikely to give a grant directly to nonprofits that are not tax-exempt.
6. The revocation date is the date set by the Secretary of Treasury.

Please see Revenue Procedure 2014-11 IRS website at [http://www.irs.gov/irb/2014-3\\_IRB/ar08.html](http://www.irs.gov/irb/2014-3_IRB/ar08.html).

Note: Units that have lost federal (and/or state) tax-exempt status may still remain chartered entities in good standing with the American Legion Auxiliary. ALA National Headquarters does not require chartered entities to be tax-exempt, although, units who have lost tax-exemption should communicate with department headquarters concerning applicable department requirements.

### Recommended Reinstatement Process for ALA Units

1. If an American Legion Auxiliary Unit has had its exempt status revoked by the IRS, it is the responsibility of the Unit to handle the matter. American Legion Auxiliary Units must deal directly with the IRS. Since each Unit is separately organized, incorporated, and has its own separate Tax Identification Number/Employer Identification Number (TIN/EIN), the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization is prohibited from providing assistance, per IRS directives.
2. Units can contact the IRS in Cincinnati, Ohio, at a specific toll-free number developed for the tax exempt status revocation process. This IRS group is specially trained in tax exempt issues and may be able to help answer questions and give direction for Units that have had their tax exempt status revoked by the IRS. The standard IRS telephone numbers reach people who have not been specially trained and may not give the proper information. The toll free number to call in Cincinnati is (877) 829-5500.
3. Units should confer with legal and/or tax professionals concerning revocation particulars.
  - Filing for reinstatement for a 501(c)(19) tax exempt status requires the use of IRS Form 1024.
  - Reinstatement of tax exempt status is for each individual Unit. Units requesting reinstatement as tax exempt organizations under these circumstances will now be required to obtain their own unique exempt status from the IRS, applying to the IRS using their own TIN/EIN to request a Letter of Determination for Exempt Status from the IRS. The IRS will require a Form 1024 Application for Recognition of Exemption under Section 501(a) be filed. The IRS will not allow the Unit to be reinstated under the ALA National Organization Group Exemption (GEN).
4. If tax exempt status is desired, Units are strongly recommended to retain a legal and/or tax professional knowledgeable in not-for-profit tax matters and exemptions to review the situation and handle reinstatement of tax exempt status. Revoked Units have the option of being a taxable entity.

- Units might be able to retain legal and/or tax professionals pro bono, or they may consider working with other Units to retain legal and/or tax professionals at a discounted group rate.
  - b. If a Unit loses its tax exempt status and chooses to remain a taxable entity, the Unit is responsible to file the appropriate tax forms with the IRS relative to the Unit organizational structure (e.g. 1120 Corporate Tax Return).
5. If a legal and/or tax professional's review of the details regarding a Unit's tax exempt status revocation determines that the revocation was due to IRS error, the Unit may send documentation that supports the error to ALA National Headquarters, Attention: Membership Division. The ALA National Headquarters staff will forward the documentation disputing the IRS error to the National Judge Advocate for review and appeal assistance when appropriate.

### Privacy Protection for Unit Members

Officers and members of the American Legion Auxiliary are forbidden by National Convention resolution to distribute the names and addresses of any Units or members of the Auxiliary, except in carrying out the duties of their offices. This action was taken at the Fourth National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, September 15-19, 1924. The resolution adopted by the National Convention reads:

“That the Executive Committee recommended that no officer or individual of local, Department or National Organization shall circularize the Units or membership of the American Legion Auxiliary outside her immediate jurisdiction, and no committee chairman shall circularize all or any portion of the Units or membership of the American Legion Auxiliary for donations to special funds, or relative to any phase of activity without the consent of the National Executive Committee. When such authority is given, all funds and accounting shall be through the National Treasurer of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

### Legal Opinions/Rulings

A Counsel General has been provided to rule on all legal questions. The Counsel General is not, however, an officer of the Auxiliary, and his relationship to the National Officers is obviously in an advisory capacity. Therefore, all requests for information from and rulings by the Counsel General must come through the Department Secretary or Department President to the National Secretary, and thence referred to the Counsel General for his decision. Requests for such information and any rulings received shall be made out in triplicate form. The applicant should retain

one copy, one copy should be kept in the Department office and one copy should be forwarded to the National Secretary.

### Supplies and Promotional Material

For information and prices of supplies available, Units may contact Department Headquarters, National Headquarters or American Legion Emblem Sales.

American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters  
8945 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis IN 46260  
317-569-4500  
F: 317-569-4502  
[www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org)

American Legion Emblem Sales  
1-888-453-4466  
Order online at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).

**Do not combine Emblem Sales orders (or payment) with orders for supplies furnished through American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. These are two separate entities housed in different locations.**

## CHAPTER IV

### Unit Constitution and Bylaws

The formulation and adoption of a Constitution and Bylaws should be one of the first acts of a new Unit. A committee of three or more members, with the Unit President as an ex-officio member, should be appointed by the President to draft a Constitution and Bylaws.

The Unit Constitution and Bylaws should make provisions for government of the Unit which are not already determined by the Department and National Constitution, usually including the following: amount of Unit dues, frequency of Unit meetings, what constitutes a quorum at meetings, how vacancies of offices shall be filled, the procedure for admittance of applicants for membership, the method of amending the Constitution and Bylaws, discipline of members and similar matters.

The National Constitution, the acts of the National Conventions, and the National Executive Committee constitute the fundamental law of the Auxiliary. Just as the acts of the Department Convention and the Department Executive Committees must conform to them or be rendered null and void, the Constitution of a Unit must conform to the Constitution of the Department in which it is located. Any provision of a Unit Constitution which conflicts with the Constitution of the Department or with any action of the Department Convention or Department Executive Committee is invalid and without effect. In a few Departments the adoption of a uniform Unit Constitution and Bylaws prescribed by the Department is mandatory.

#### Suggested Format—Unit Constitution and Bylaws

##### Preamble

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association during the Great Wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

## Constitution

### Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be American Legion Auxiliary, \_\_\_\_\_ Unit

No. \_\_\_\_\_, Department of \_\_\_\_\_

### Article II - Nature

Section 1. The American Legion Auxiliary is a civilian organization of women.

### Article III - Object

Section 1. The object of the American Legion Auxiliary,

Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ shall be as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution.

### Article IV - Eligibility

Section 1. Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of members of The American Legion, and to the mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods:

April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918

December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946

June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955

February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975

August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984

December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990

August 2, 1990, to the date of cessation of hostilities as determined by the Government of the United States, all dates inclusive, or who, being citizens of the United States at the time of their entry therein served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of said periods, and died in line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion.

Section 2. There shall be two classes of membership, Senior and Junior.

- a. Senior membership shall be composed of members over the age of eighteen years; provided, however, that a wife under the age of eighteen years, who is eligible under Section 1 of this article, shall be classed as a Senior member.
- b. Junior membership shall consist of that group under the age of eighteen years, whose activities shall be supervised by the

Senior membership. Upon reaching the age of eighteen years, Junior members shall automatically be admitted into Senior membership with full privileges.

- c. Dues of both classes shall be paid annually or for life.

#### Article V - Unit Officers

Section 1. The Unit shall elect annually a President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Historian and Sergeant-at-Arms who shall serve until their successors are duly elected or as otherwise provided.

#### Article VI - Executive Committee

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee, which shall consist of the officers, and additional members-at-large elected by the Unit.

#### Article VII - Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Unit meeting, provided the proposed amendments shall have been read at the previous meeting.

Section 2. This Constitution shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.

### Bylaws

#### Article I - Executive Committee

Section 1. Between meetings the government and management of this Unit shall be entrusted to the Executive Committee and all proceedings of said committee shall be presented to the Unit at the next meeting for approval.

Section 2. A vacancy existing in the Executive Committee from any cause other than the expiration of a term shall be filled by a majority vote of the entire committee. A person so elected shall hold office for the unexpired term of the member she succeeds.

Section 3. One-third of the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by order of the President or on written request of at least three members of the Executive Committee. Uniform notice of such special meeting shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee; and, except in extreme emergency, shall be given at least forty-eight hours in advance. At special meetings only business specified shall be transacted.

#### Article II - Duties and Powers of Officers

Section 1. *Duties of the Unit President:* It shall be the duty of the



President to preside at all meetings of the Unit and Unit Executive Committee; to enforce strict observance of the Constitution and Bylaws; to appoint members of the standing committees; to create such other committees and appoint members thereof as she deems advisable; to perform such other duties as custom and parliamentary usage require; and to appoint all officers not otherwise provided for.

Section 2. *Duties of the Vice President:* The First and Second Vice President in the order named shall, when called upon, assist the President and in her absence, perform her duties, and shall succeed her in office in case of death, resignation or removal.

Section 3. *Duties of the Secretary:* It shall be the duty of the Secretary to record the proceedings and transactions of all the meetings of the Unit; to act as custodian of all books, papers, and records; to keep a record of names and addresses of the members, showing the source of their eligibility; to send out such notices as are directed by the President; to process the correspondence of the Unit; to keep on file in a comprehensive manner copies of all the correspondence sent and received; and perform such other duties as shall be required of her by the President.

Section 4. *Duties of the Treasurer:* It shall be the duty of the Unit Treasurer to receive all money belonging to the Unit and to account for them. She shall maintain two separate funds, namely a general and a Poppy fund. All Poppy donations shall be placed in the Poppy fund and be used to assist the veteran and his/her children. She shall keep an accounting of her receipts and expenditures, making a monthly report thereon, and such other reports as may be deemed necessary by the Unit Executive Committee. Her accounts shall be audited annually. She shall pay all current bills before transferring all funds, books, and papers belonging to the Unit to her successor.

Section 5. *Duties of the Chaplain:* It shall be the duty of the Chaplain to offer prayer at the opening and closing of each meeting, and to perform such other duties as the President may direct.

Section 6. *Duties of the Historian:* It shall be the duty of the Unit Historian to compile historical records of the Unit and to make a report to the Department.

Section 7. *Duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms:* It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to preserve order at the meetings of the Unit and to perform such other duties as may be requested by the President.

Section 8. Where deemed necessary, a Recording Secretary and a Corresponding Secretary may be elected to carry on the duties normally performed by the Secretary.

Section 9. The office of Secretary may be combined with that of Treasurer and called "Secretary-Treasurer."

### Article III - Dues

Section 1. The annual membership dues of this Unit shall be \$\_\_\_\_, paid annually or for life, and shall include the Department and National per capita.

Section 2. A member failing to pay annual dues, including the Unit, State and National assessments, by January 31, shall be classed as delinquent and shall be suspended from all membership privileges. Payment of back dues, after suspension, shall reinstate such member to active membership. Any member delinquent to December 31, of the year of delinquency shall automatically be dropped from the rolls and may be reinstated only by paying all back dues or by re-establishing eligibility and making application as a new member.

### Article IV - Unit Meetings

Section 1. The regular meetings of the \_\_\_\_\_ Auxiliary Unit shall be held on the \_\_\_\_\_ of each month, unless otherwise specified, and shall be called to order at \_\_\_\_ p.m.

Section 2. An Annual meeting of this Unit shall be held in the month of \_\_\_\_\_ each year for the purpose of electing officers and receiving annual reports.

Section 3. Special meetings of this Unit may be called by the President, by a majority of the Executive Committee, or upon written request of members of the Unit.

Section 4. \_\_\_\_\_ members shall constitute a Quorum at any meeting of the Unit.

### Article V - Election

Section 1. Election may be by voice vote if there is only one candidate; but where there is more than one candidate for the same office, election shall be by ballot and the majority of votes cast shall be necessary to elect.

Section 2. Delegates and alternates to a Department Convention shall be elected at a Unit meeting duly called for that purpose not less than two weeks prior to the convention. Alternates shall have priority in the order of their election.

Section 3. All officers and executive board members shall be elected annually at a meeting duly called for that purpose. The Secretary may be either elected or appointed according to the rules prescribed by the Department.

### Article VI - Committees

Section 1. A nominating committee composed of three members shall be elected for the purpose of presenting a slate of Unit officers for the ensuing year.

Section 2. An auditing committee composed of three members shall be appointed by the Unit President for the purpose of auditing the Treasurer's accounts at the close of each term, and making a report of the audit to the Unit.

#### Article VII - Transfers

Section 1. Transfer of membership from one Unit to another in the \_\_\_\_\_ Department shall be upon application of the member to, and acceptance by, the other Unit, in conformity with National and Department Constitutions and Bylaws.

#### Article VIII - Discipline

Section 1. For any violation of the Unit, Department or National Constitutions, or for conduct improper and prejudicial to the welfare of the Auxiliary or of The American Legion, any member may be expelled from membership or any officer removed from office by two-thirds vote at a Unit meeting duly called for that purpose, said expulsion or removal to be binding only in the event said member or officer shall have been given at least fifteen days notice in writing by the Unit Secretary of the charges and the hearing thereon. Either party has the right of appeal to the Department Executive Committee, or the action thereon shall be final. Any expense related to said appeal shall be the responsibility of the appellant.

Section 2. Neither this Unit in the Department nor any member thereof shall circularize any other Unit or member thereof without the consent of a Department Executive Committee.

Section 3. Liabilities: No member or group of members shall subject this Unit to liability without authorization of the Unit.

#### Article IX - Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The Unit organization shall be governed by the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised," on all points not covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

#### Article X - Amendments

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Unit meeting, provided the proposed amendments shall have been read at the previous Unit meeting.

Section 2. These Bylaws shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitutions and Bylaws and standing rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.

# CHAPTER V

## Unit Officers

The success of the Unit depends to a large degree upon the efficient and businesslike administration of all of its activities. Each Unit officer and committee chairman shares in this responsibility. Each should familiarize herself with the duties of her office and fulfill such obligation to the best of her ability.

### Duties of the Unit President

The Unit President must be an able and qualified leader, for she represents the Auxiliary in her community, and its success or failure depends largely upon her. She should be familiar with the duties of all officers and committee chairmen and encourage and inspire them in their work. It is the responsibility of the President to see that all officers are supplied with all available information and material from Department and National Headquarters for efficient promotion of their various activities.

The Unit President has many duties. She should preside at all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee; require strict adherence to the Constitution and Bylaws, and rules and regulations established by the National and Department Convention, National and Department Executive Committees and the Unit itself; appoint members of standing committees and create such other committees as are necessary; appoint all non-elected officers, and perform all duties which are assigned to her office.

### Duties of the Unit Vice President

The Vice President is given the responsibility, with the President, for complete development of the Unit program. The Vice President should be prepared to preside at meetings in the absence of the President.

### Duties of the Unit Secretary

The duties of the Unit Secretary are administrative, and she occupies a pivotal position around which all the activities of the Unit revolve. She should be efficient and well informed on all phases of Unit, Department and National activities and requirements and be capable of giving authentic information on organization matters. The Unit Secretary:

- Makes a record of all business transacted at each meeting, and of the executive board and presents her minutes for approval at the next meeting.
- Counts a rising vote when requested by the President.

- Prepares for the use of the presiding officer a statement of unfinished business to come before the meeting.
- Has on hand for reference at each meeting a list of the names of members of all standing committees, a copy of the local Bylaws, and correspondence sorted for reading.
- Is responsible for forwarding all name and address changes to Department Headquarters. Receipt of the national magazine by Unit members is dependent upon her efficiency in keeping membership contact information current.

## Minutes

In writing the minutes, the following outline is generally used:

1. Kind of meeting - regular or special.
2. Name of Unit, etc.
3. Date, place and hours of meeting.
4. List of officers and committee chairmen (if applicable) present.
5. Statement concerning the minutes of the previous meeting - whether they were approved or corrected or their reading was dispensed with.
6. All motions (except those withdrawn); points of order, whether sustained or lost; and the name of the member who introduced the main motion.
7. Hour of adjournment.
8. Program topic; method of presentation; names of participants; and important points covered.

Minutes may be neatly typewritten and then inserted in a binder. All officers' reports and committee reports should be included in the minutes to ensure that they are part of the permanent record.

## Unit Permanent Records

It is the responsibility of the secretary to maintain a permanent file for the unit, which should include the following:

1. The Unit charter and charter roll.
2. Complete membership lists for every year.
3. Individual membership applications, filed alphabetically, for everyone who is or has ever been a member of the Unit.
4. Complete record of members lost by death, transfer, nonpayment of dues, resignation or expulsion.
5. Record of individual member identification numbers.
6. Complete file of the local Post and Unit's publications should be saved for history purposes.
7. Complete file of Department's current year bulletins arranged by subject.

8. Unit, Department and National Constitutions of both Legion and Auxiliary.
9. Latest edition of emblem catalog. Write directly to American Legion Emblem Sales, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).
10. Correspondence file, including all letters received and copies of replies.

Units are responsible for retaining their own records. Supplies such as Unit Guide Books, individual membership applications, Member Data Forms, etc., may be secured through each Department Headquarters and should be kept on hand at all times.

### Duties of the Unit Treasurer

An efficient Unit Treasurer is essential to the smooth functioning of the Unit and to ensure that proper accounting practices and internal controls are maintained.

The Unit Treasurer is responsible for handling all Unit funds, including the collection of dues from members and donations to special funds. Department and National dues, as well as special fund donations, should be remitted to Department Headquarters on a monthly basis. A receipt should be issued for all monies received.

The Unit Constitution and Bylaws should include that the Treasurer is responsible for providing a monthly financial statement to the Unit, Finance Committee and others as required.

Upon completion of an annual audit of the Treasurer's books, the Unit Treasurer should provide the audited financial report. If the Bylaws do not state how the audit is to be conducted, the Unit may hire an outside auditor or appoint an audit committee of two or more persons. The Treasurer is to make available to the auditor or audit committee all financial records and related data which may include the following: cash receipts and disbursement ledgers, bank statements and reconciliations, itemized statements of disbursements, etc.

The Unit Treasurer should be present to facilitate the audit. Once the final audited financial report and Treasurer's report are formally adopted by the Unit, these documents should become part of the Unit's permanent records.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires all nonprofits to file a Form 990 annually. (See "Federal Compliance and Tax Laws" section for further information.) To ensure compliance, Units should review the current IRS 990 filing regulations, listed on the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov), or consult with a Certified Public Accountant or Tax Professional.

Donations to the American Legion Auxiliary at all levels of the organization are tax exempt to the donor under Section 501(c)(19) of the IRS Code. The American Legion Auxiliary Group Exemption Number

(GEN) is 0964. The IRS also requires that an acknowledgement letter from the nonprofit organization be sent to donors. Refer to the IRS website for current regulations.

By provision of the National Constitution and Bylaws, Unit officers having custody of organization funds shall be bonded. The National Organization maintains a blanket position bond whereby all Unit officers are bonded. Departments reimburse National for this coverage based upon the number of Units in the Department. Contact your Department Secretary for more information about bond coverage and instructions on filing a claim.

### Duties of the Unit Historian

The Unit Historian is charged with the responsibility of recording the activities and accomplishments of her Unit during her terms of office.

The writing of a Unit or Department history is a very important assignment. Through the years the recorded experiences of those women who served before us have guided the footsteps of those who followed.

Unit Historians are encouraged to present the factual running story of the accomplishments in each program. The description should be simple and concise.

The quality and artistic value of the work depends upon the enthusiasm of the individual historian. Upon the Unit records, the history of a Department is written; upon the Department records, that of the National Organization.

### Duties of the Unit Chaplain

The Unit Chaplain will express, by word and action, our founding principal of service to God and Country. She will encourage the Unit to celebrate the diversity amongst its members and their faiths. She will provide spiritual and emotional guidance to members, or their families, as needed or requested and with respect, always maintaining confidentiality. The Unit Chaplain is responsible for pronouncing the invocation and the benediction at Auxiliary meetings, as well as performing such other acts as would fall within the realm of her office as the spiritual leader of the Unit including, but not limited to: installation, initiation of new members, dedication of halls, monuments or colors, Four Chaplain Services, POW/MIA recognition programs and the memorial service of a member, always lending dignity and respect to the occasion. The Chaplain should stay in close contact with the President and other officers of the Unit and should attend all meetings of the Unit and the Unit Executive Committee.

### Duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for keeping order at Unit meetings,

for the advancement and retirement of the Unit colors and their proper care, and for such other duties as may be assigned to her by the Unit President.

### Installation of Officers

Unit officers should be installed immediately following their election or as soon thereafter as possible.

While installations of officers are desirable, they are not mandatory. An officer takes possession of her office immediately upon her election unless the bylaws or other rules specify a later time.

### Initiation of New Members

Initiation of new members is an important function of the officers of each Unit. Every new member should be invited and encouraged to participate in this ceremony. As important as the initiation is to demonstrate the responsibilities of membership, it is not mandatory; nor is it mandatory for a member to have been initiated before holding office.

*Note: Suggested ceremonies for the initiation of members and installation of officers can be found in the “Manual of Ceremonies” provided in the appendix of this handbook.*



# CHAPTER VI

## Unit Meeting

### Conducting a Unit Meeting

The manner in which a Unit meeting is conducted has a great bearing on its success or failure. Unless a meeting is well planned, intelligently conducted, and subjects are presented and discussed interestingly, members cannot be expected to be faithful in attendance. Routine business should be transacted in an efficient manner, yet the opportunity should be presented for active participation of members in the program.

It is most important that Unit elections and all Unit business be conducted in accordance with Unit Bylaws, the current edition of “Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised,” and Department and National Constitution and Bylaws. All Unit Presidents must remember to be impartial while presiding and not participate in discussion. The majority vote rules, but the minority has the right to be heard.

Committee members and officers may transact detailed business and should only bring important matters before the Unit for decision. Special monthly activities should be stressed, and District and Department officers as well as local speakers should be asked to add interest to the programs. Variety should be introduced in music and entertainment.

### The President as Presiding Officer

- a. Calls the meeting to order at the designated time and, if a quorum is present, proceeds with necessary business.
- b. Preserves order throughout the meeting.
- c. Follows the accepted order of business.
- d. Refers to herself as “the Chair.”
- e. Decides parliamentary questions. The President states the motion clearly after it has been seconded and before allowing discussion.
- f. Takes no part in any discussion while presiding; refrains from expressing a personal opinion on questions before the house; avoids all personal bias when giving information to the organization.
- g. Calls upon the Vice President to preside if she wishes to speak on a motion or leave the chair. Remains out of chair until the vote on the pending motion is taken.
- h. May vote according to local Bylaws.
- i. Recognizes a member who has not spoken previously on the question in preference to one who has spoken.

## Suggested Order of Business

While this suggested order of business for Unit meetings includes items that will not be used at every meeting throughout the year, this may be of some assistance to presidents of new Units and to others who are not entirely familiar with the business to be transacted. The order should be modified to fit the circumstances of the particular occasion.

1. Call to Order
2. Advancement of Colors (optional) Salute to the colors if colors are not advanced
3. Prayer
4. Pledge of Allegiance to Flag
5. National Anthem or other patriotic song
6. Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary
7. Roll call of officers
8. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
9. Treasurer's Financial Report
10. Initiation of candidates (quarterly, biannually, or annually, as is the Unit custom)
11. Reports of:
  - President
  - Secretary
  - Unit Officers
  - Executive Committee
  - Membership Committee
  - Standing Committees
  - Special Committees
12. Reading of communications, including those from National, Department and District officers
13. Unfinished business
14. New business
15. Election and installation of officers
16. Announcements
17. Program - educational and entertaining (optional)
18. Adjournment of business meeting
19. Closing prayer
20. Retirement of Colors (optional)

The American flag and the banner of the American Legion Auxiliary in miniature and in a small stand should not be used for the advancement or retirement of colors, as the stand of colors was not intended to be used for this purpose.

## Unit Meeting Terminology

**Call to Order:** The presiding officer first calls the meeting to order.

**Reading of the Minutes:** The President asks the Secretary to read the minutes of the previous regular meeting. If special meetings have been held, these minutes should be acted upon after the regular ones. The presiding officer asks for any corrections or additions to the minutes, she then declares the minutes “approved as read” or “approved as corrected” if any corrections have been made.

**Statement of the Treasurer:** After the reading of the report by the Treasurer, the report is entered into the minutes and filed for audit. At the annual meeting the annual report is read; the auditor’s report is read. The report of the auditor including the Treasurer’s report is accepted.

**Reading of Communications:** The Secretary reads all communications from Department and National Headquarters, local organization notices and matters of general interest. Any action, which may arise from the reading, is deferred until unfinished business or new business is considered.

**Unfinished Business:** Any business postponed from the previous meeting or any matter introduced at the meeting on which action of the Unit was deferred is unfinished business. The Secretary from the minutes of the last meeting prepares a list of such unfinished business for the presiding officer. Only when the unfinished business has been disposed of may new business be brought forward, unless the regular order of business has been modified by vote of the members present.

**New Business:** Any business brought forward for the first time.

**Announcements:** The date of the next meeting or special event is announced. If a social hour is to follow, this should be announced at this time.

**Program:** The President asks the program chairman to take charge.

**Closing Prayer:** The President asks the Chaplain to offer the closing prayer.

**Charge:** The President states, “Till we meet again let us remember that our obligation to our Country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members. Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy.”

**Adjournment:** The President states, “If there is no further business to come before this meeting, the meeting is adjourned.”

**Retirement of the Colors:** The color bearers will retire the Colors. (Optional) If colors are not retired the President should say, “Colors in place, hand salute.”

# CHAPTER VII

## Unit Protocol

### Advancement of Officers

All Past Department Presidents precede the current Officers. The Department President, if present, is always last in line. The National Executive Committeewoman precedes the Department President.

### Advancement of Guests

The Distinguished Guest Chairman should meet the guest at the door of the meeting room. The guest is then escorted down the aisle on the Chairman's right upon receiving a signal from the chair.

The guest should have been notified in writing as to whether the meeting is formal or informal, the time and place of the meeting, amount of time allocated for her speech, and whether or not she is to respond to the introduction.

### Seating of Guests

The guest of honor is always seated at the right of the presiding officer; the second most important guest is placed at left of the presiding officer.

### Outside Speakers

As a matter of courtesy, when outside speakers are engaged, they should be given a check for expenses as agreed upon immediately after they leave the platform. A podium should always be provided for outside speakers.

### Wearing of the Auxiliary Pin

The American Legion Auxiliary pin should always be worn over the heart; this is as necessary as the proper display of the flag.

### Function of National Executive Committeewoman

The National Executive Committeewoman functions as a National Officer representing her Department. As such, she is given all the courtesies at meetings and social events that are accorded to a National Officer. When a National Officer or National Executive Committeewoman pays an official visit to a Department or Unit, the National Executive Committeewoman often acts as a special hostess along with the Department President and/or Unit President.

## Manual of Auxiliary Ceremonies

A “Manual of Ceremonies” is provided in the appendix section of this handbook. It includes suggested guidelines for the opening and closing meetings, installation of officers, initiation of members, dedication of memorials, draping of the charter, funeral service, and observance of special days. We believe that the use of a ritualistic service can be very effective as it helps to sustain the members’ interest through its creation of beauty and dignity.

## Relationship Between Unit and Department

The Unit is an integral part of the Department and close contact must be maintained at all times between the Unit and Department Headquarters. Immediately following the election or appointment of a Unit officer or committee chairman, her name should be reported to Department Headquarters so that she may receive information and guidance in her work from the corresponding Department officer or chairman. Dues for membership should be remitted to the Department promptly, and reports of activities should be made as requested by the Department.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Unit Committees/Programs of the American Legion Auxiliary

The National Organization has the following National Committees: Americanism; Auxiliary Emergency Fund; Cavalcade of Memories; Children & Youth; Community Service; Constitution & Bylaws; Education; Finance; Girls State; Junior Activities; Leadership; Legislative; Liaison to Child Welfare Foundation; Membership; National Security; Past Presidents Parley; Poppy; Public Relations; and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

Most Departments follow this plan of committee organization. It should also be followed by Units to facilitate the coordination of Unit programs with Department and National programs. Each year the National Chairman of each standing committee publishes a Plan of Action outlining the purpose, goals and “best practices” of each program. The National Plan of Action, along with the Department Plan, should be used as a guideline for the Unit. It is available for free download on the Auxiliary website at [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org), and you can obtain a copy from your Department Headquarters.

#### Duties of Unit Committees

The Unit President should appoint a Chairman and members for each of these committees, recognizing that varying conditions and circumstances will, of course, control the committees necessary in different Units. It is the duty of the committee chairman and members to become familiar with their respective program and to encourage Unit members to participate in program related activities.

*Following is a short explanation of the purpose and goals of each National Standing Committee.*

#### Americanism

The purpose of the Americanism program is to promote patriotism and responsible citizenship.

The Americanism work of the Auxiliary includes all activities tending to perpetuate American ideals and to uphold the principles of American democracy. The security of America lies in a citizenry in whose minds and hearts is ingrained a true understanding of and love for those ideals and principles upon which the nation was founded; a citizenry awake to the duties of citizenship and willing to perform these duties even at the

cost of great personal sacrifice. Americanism work is largely educational in character and is usually divided into three phases: work with the youth, the adult, and the community. All matters pertaining to the flag or patriotic education are rightly classified as Americanism activities.

### Patriotic Education

Every citizen should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States. Therefore, the Auxiliary has a very definite objective in emphasizing through its Americanism program the teachings of good citizenship (i.e. promotion of the Oratorical Contests and Americanism Essay contests).

### Five-Point Program

The five points of the program refer to active Americanism in the home, in the Unit, in youth groups and schools, in adult groups, and in our community.

### Home

Revitalize our personal patriotism. Be able to answer, "What kind of an American am I?" Take an interest in our country's affairs. Express our belief in our love for America in our words and deeds. Inspire children and young people in our homes and schools to develop fine characters, high ideals and a sincere appreciation of our heritage. Be tolerant in thought and deeds towards others. Vote intelligently after careful study of candidates and issues. Proudly fly our nation's flag in front of your home on all patriotic holidays.

### Unit

Appoint an active Americanism chairman. Sponsor study classes for the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Flag Etiquette, and great American characters, using *Know Your America*, a 90-page study guide. Plan a patriotic conference. Observe patriotic holidays. Display the flag, keep it clean, and fold it properly. Distribute flag etiquette brochures.

Instill in members the responsibility of voting, attend local caucuses and mentor members to be informed voters.

### Youth Groups

Present Americanism awards in schools. Sponsor debates and essay contests. Work with the Legion to sponsor local Oratorical contests. Present flags to schools and encourage the Pledge of Allegiance be recited daily. Present copies of *Let's be Right on Flag Etiquette* to all classrooms. Encourage formation of student councils in elementary schools and student learning using the comic book series, *Our Country's*

*Flag, I Pledge Allegiance* and *Light of Liberty*. Present records and/or tapes of “The Star-Spangled Banner” to schools. Present the *For Which it Stands* (DVD) and *America’s Veterans* (video) to local schools. Sponsor Boy and Girl Scout Troops; encourage participation in Eagle Scout achievement awards. Work in partnership with your school district on Kids Voting mentorship programs.

### Adult Groups

Sponsor citizenship classes and present flag codes, American Creed, and small American flags to new citizens. Hold Americanism meetings and community forums. Place flag study course in night schools for foreign-born.

### Community

Plan Town Meetings and other study groups, presenting both sides of a question. Host “Meet the Candidate” nights and encourage citizens to be informed voters. Help with community observance of patriotic holidays; write open forums encouraging citizens to proudly display the flag on all patriotic holidays. Present flags where needed and send certificates of appreciation to community businesses that fly the American flag. Use both printed and electronic media when presenting Americanism programs. Watch for subversive group activities and report to proper authorities. Visit local government groups in action and show interest in school boards, City Councils, County Boards, and Town Meetings.

### Cooperative Effort

The Americanism program of The American Legion embraces a multiplicity of activities. It necessitates real, honest, unselfish effort on the part of all members of The American Legion. The members of the Auxiliary can effectively make patriotism a personal matter and they can select and successfully carry out projects adaptable to the needs of their communities. Work as an American Legion Family to promote these activities at home, in your schools and throughout your communities.

### Spirit of Youth Fund

This fund was established by the American Legion Auxiliary to support programs for young people. Tax-deductible contributions from individuals, organizations and estates are the basis of this permanent endowment fund for youth. The funds are expended for programs that benefit the youth of our nation and to enrich those programs, which already exist. One such program is the four-year Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members. The fund also provides annual scholarships for the ALA Girls Nation President and the Honorary National Junior President.



## Auxiliary Emergency Fund

The purpose of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund Committee is to raise funds for and awareness of the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, to promote knowledge about the program, to disseminate information to members about the application process, and to assist members in need.

### Overview

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) was established in 1969 through a bequest from the estate of Auxiliary member Helen Colby Small, of Burlington, Wisconsin. The Fund was designed to assist eligible Auxiliary members who have suffered a financial setback and is meant to be a bridge offering a helping hand until financial stability is re-established. In 1981 the Fund was expanded to include educational grants for qualified members.

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund provides eligible members with temporary assistance for:

1. Financial crisis; to pay for food, shelter and utilities. Funds are not available to settle existing or accumulated debts, or to help with catastrophic illnesses.
2. Food and shelter; due to weather-related emergencies and natural disasters.
3. Educational training; due to life changes such as death of a spouse, divorce, or separation, necessitating the Auxiliary member to assume the role of primary source of support for her family.

*In each case, as a first course of action, applicants are encouraged to make every effort to secure financial assistance through local, state and federal agencies.*

### Who is Eligible?

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have maintained membership for at least the immediate past two years and who have paid their dues for the current year (three consecutive years of membership) are eligible to apply.

### How Much Can a Member Receive?

The maximum amount of any grant is \$2400.00 and may be disbursed as determined by the Grant Committee. Payments may be made directly to the member, or at the discretion of the Grant Committee, to the Mortgage Company or utility company. In the case of educational grants, payments may be made directly to the educational institution.

## How to Apply

Applications can be obtained from your Department Secretary or found online at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org)

## How to Promote and Support the AEF

Each Unit should appoint a Unit AEF Chairmen whose responsibility it is to creatively publicize the program and to educate Unit members regarding the availability of the AEF in a time of need. Including an AEF brochure with each new membership card is an easy way to inform members of this important benefit. Assure members that assistance is provided in a quiet, personal manner, free from embarrassment.

The American Legion Auxiliary maintains the confidentiality of all applications, reviews, and supporting documents, and will neither disclose nor release AEF applications, files, or cases to anyone outside of the American Legion Auxiliary AEF Review Committee.

Units should support the AEF by raising funds, as grants are made possible through the generous contributions of members helping members. Financial gifts may be donated by Departments, Units or individuals. Perpetual Memorials may be established in the name of a family member or special Auxiliary member. Bequests for donations to the AEF in wills are also welcome. All contributions to AEF are tax-deductible.

## Cavalcade of Memories

The purpose of the Cavalcade of Memories Committee is to collect, chronicle and preserve the history of the American Legion Auxiliary through photographs, documents, personal mementos and other artifacts.

In 1972 the American Legion Auxiliary established a Cavalcade of Memories museum at National Headquarters to display memorabilia of the Auxiliary's history. Members are invited to tour the cavalcade when visiting Indianapolis.

Please contact the National office regarding the guidelines for historical contributions. Each Department and Unit is encouraged to participate by creating their own Cavalcade of Memories.

## Children & Youth

The purpose of the Children & Youth Committee is to work collaboratively with The American Legion to promote programs that protect, care for, and support children and youth, especially those of our military and veterans.

The purposes and principles of the American Legion Auxiliary's Children & Youth Program are in general the same as those of The American Legion. Although the program is derived from mandates of

The American Legion, the Auxiliary augments it through its continuing support of the overall program as well as through the sponsorship of special assignments and activities.

### Purposes

1. To assure care and protection for children of veterans eligible for membership in The American Legion.
2. To improve conditions for all children.

### Principles

1. To preserve the integrity of the family home.
2. To maintain a “whole” child program, with due regard for all needs of children - physical, spiritual, emotional, and educational.
3. To strengthen the Children and Youth program by adhering to the guidelines as outlined in the Department Children and Youth Chairman’s Plan of Action. To cooperate with and strengthen other sound organizations and agencies for children.

### Method of Operation

1. Direct cash assistance and service, primarily to individual children or families of veterans.
2. Education of the membership and the general public on the needs of children and recommended ways of meeting those needs.
3. Support of needed federal, state and local legislation for children in accordance with resolutions adopted by:
  - National Convention
  - National Executive Committee of The American Legion
  - Department Convention
  - Department Executive Committee
  - Local American Legion Post(s)

### Organization

Every American Legion Auxiliary Unit should have a Children & Youth Chairman, and if the Unit is of sufficient size, a Children & Youth Committee. Working under the general guidance of the Unit President, it is the responsibility of the Children & Youth Chairman to help achieve the two primary goals of the Children & Youth program within her community:

1. Care and protection of children of veterans;
2. Improved conditions for all children.

Each American Legion Post should also have a Children & Youth Chairman. The National Headquarters of The American Legion strongly recommends that the Post and Unit Chairmen work in the closest cooperation. A local coordinated Children & Youth Committee can often help achieve this end. Some device for coordinating the efforts of Post and Units is particularly needed in those communities, which have more than one American Legion Post and Auxiliary Unit.

### Duties of the Unit Children & Youth Chairman

The duties of the Unit Children & Youth Chairman are in general the same as those of the Post Chairman. The duties are:

1. Make sure that the pledge of care and protection for children of veterans is carried out through service work, through direct cash assistance to needy families from Unit funds, and through the use of Department or National funds for temporary aid to children of veterans.
2. Provide leadership for the Unit on all matters pertaining to children.
3. Cooperate with other responsible organizations and agencies of the community whose work is in the interest of children.
3. Make regular reports of Children & Youth activities and plans to the general public, to the membership of the Unit, and whenever a formal report is requested, to the District or Department Children & Youth Chairman.

### Direct Aid and Service to Children of Veterans

Much of the Children & Youth work of the Unit will be concerned with helping or getting help for individual families of veterans who are in need. It has never been the intention of the Children & Youth Program that an Auxiliary Unit should take over full and continuing responsibility for the financial support of dependent families.

Our federal, state and local governments have established a number of different agencies for this purpose. They are: Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Service Agencies, Social Security offices, etc. One of the first things to be considered in attempting to help a family is the question of whether or not the family is eligible for aid from one of these sources. It cannot be recommended too strongly that the Unit Children & Youth Chairman is to work in close cooperation with both the Service Officer and the Children & Youth Chairman of The American Legion. Both of these officers should be able to give valuable aid in obtaining help from these outside sources.

We do have to recognize that while the various governmental agencies do have the major responsibility for helping families in need, there are frequently delays in obtaining such aid. There are cases when the aid

furnished is inadequate. And there will be a few cases where, for one reason or another, there just doesn't seem to be any agency, which can provide the needed assistance. These are the instances when the Unit will want to use its own welfare funds.

For more information on this subject, contact your Department headquarters for publications available without charge.

### Special Assignments

The American Legion Auxiliary frequently undertakes special assignments in the field of Children & Youth in cooperation with The American Legion.

### The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation

In 1954 The American Legion's National Executive Committee authorized the creation of an American Legion Child Welfare Foundation with broad powers to use such funds as it might receive to benefit the children and youth of America. The Foundation was incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.

It is the hope of the founders of this Foundation that, through it, funds may become available to finance research, special projects, demonstrations, and public education regarding children over and above the existing program. Through such activities, it is hoped that solutions may be found to some of the problems of child welfare.

The primary source of funds to the Foundation has been from individual members of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary and from investments. In 1956 the Board of Directors of the Foundation, with the approval of the National Convention, established a Memorial Fund within the Foundation. Through the Memorial Fund, a Unit or individual may, through a contribution to the Foundation, memorialize a deceased member. A fitting memorial card sent to the family of the deceased acknowledges such memorial contributions.

For more information on the Child Welfare Foundation, visit [www.cwf-inc.org](http://www.cwf-inc.org).

### Community Service

The purpose of the Community Service Committee is to work in cooperation with The American Legion to direct and sponsor programs and services that provide care and protection for our nation's children, especially those of our military and veterans.

Community Service has been a major activity of The American Legion and Auxiliary since 1926. It has resulted in the completion of a vast number of projects designed to make American communities where the American Legion Auxiliary Units are located better places in which to live.

Every Auxiliary Unit is expected to implement or cooperate in at least one project for community improvement annually. It is the duty of the Unit Community Service Committee to study community needs, give careful thought in recommending projects to the Unit, take the lead in the accomplishment of the designated projects, and report the work to the Department Community Service Committee.

Support of Community Service projects of The American Legion Post is a first responsibility of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit. In almost every American Legion project there will be phases in which the Post, Unit and Squadron can work together as the American Legion Family.

Cooperate with other organizations on practical, worthwhile projects for community improvement, and solicit their cooperation with Auxiliary projects as well. The greatest achievement is made when the interest and efforts of the entire community are enlisted in support of a project.

“Initiate, cooperate, but do not duplicate,” has long been the goal of the American Legion Auxiliary in Community Service. It is imperative that the Unit make sure that no other local organization is at work in the field before selecting a project, thus avoiding competition. Experience will teach the Unit the type of projects which the community will support and which are within the ability of the Unit to accomplish. Start small, plan well, work your plan, carry projects through to completion and always publicize your results!

### Suggested Projects

The American Legion Auxiliary Units across the nation have successfully completed a variety of Community Service projects through the years. Here are just a few of the projects that might help you get started.

*Health:* Cooperate with national health organizations in their local fund-raising and educational activities. Sponsor clinics, purchase needed equipment for local hospitals or for those suffering from disease or disability to loan to local families.

*Beautification and Safety:* Conduct or take part in clean-up campaigns and improvement of parks and other public grounds. Encourage the planting of flowers, shrubs, lawns, and memorial trees. Sponsor or cooperate in traffic safety, home safety, and fire prevention programs. Purchase life-saving equipment for Sheriff, Police, or Fire Departments. Aid in school safety patrol programs.

*Libraries:* Working for adequate appropriations, if necessary. Establish and maintain a memorial bookshelf. Present copies of the American Legion Auxiliary History or give books in honor of or memory of members. Collect and donate books.

## Constitution & Bylaws

The success of any nonprofit organization depends on a sound governance structure that relies on efficient governance documents to frame the organization's fundamental policies for driving its mission. Governing documents must be carefully developed, properly written, and periodically reviewed and updated in order for an organization to accomplish its goals and objectives. Everything done well, including volunteering and serving the Auxiliary's mission in communities across the reach of the United States, requires written, reasonable parameters for conducting the mission.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee is to inform members about having proper governing documents at all levels.

### **Ensuring Sound Governance**

Updated documents allow questions about the Auxiliary, its governance, its programs, and eligibility to be answered easily. And that is a benefit to all members. Our constitution, bylaws, and standing rules ensure we are operating according to our agreed-upon rules. We believe that is the best environment in which to accomplish our goals and objectives.

## Education

The purpose of the Education Committee is to promote quality education for children and adults through classroom activities, literacy programs, scholarship promotion and support of education beyond high school.

### **Objectives**

The education of all of America's children is essential for the future of our nation. The American Legion Auxiliary joins with The American Legion to aid and support the basic rights of all children to receive an appropriate education. The pattern followed in the development of the program corresponds with the following objectives and policies adopted by The American Legion.

1. To help make it possible for any student, who has the ability or the desire, to receive an education beyond high school.
2. To encourage the membership of The American Legion and its affiliated organizations to take an active part in the development and maintenance of a school system that will serve the needs of all children at every level of education.
3. To encourage students to select careers where personnel shortages exist.

## Policies

1. To explore and summarize existing scholarship sources.
2. To make known to potentially eligible students the sources of scholarships that exist.
3. To develop new scholarship opportunities for the increasing number of students who will reach college age in the years ahead.
4. To cooperate with established organizations in the recruitment of students for careers where personnel shortages exist.

Progress of the Education program depends upon the close working relationship between national, state, and local levels of our organizations. As an aid to all Education Committees to participate in the program's progress, we have drawn up the following suggested duties.

## Duties

1. To initiate and support state legislation and national mandates which would establish scholarship opportunities for students and maintain a summary of such scholarships that exist within their state.
2. To inform the membership of the American Legion Auxiliary of the program's objectives.
3. To encourage students to plan for college and to apply for scholarship opportunities early in their senior year.
4. To cooperate with established organizations to encourage students to select careers that will provide the knowledge necessary for our nation's economic growth and national security.
5. To inform The American Legion's National Education Committee of changes in state laws, new scholarship opportunities, and general development of the program.
6. To promote literacy programs for students, pre-kindergarten through college, and adults.
7. To instill in students a sense of patriotism and Americanism by promoting veterans' participation in the classroom. By providing first-hand accounts of their experiences, veterans engage students and bring history to life.

It is suggested that the Unit Education Committee thoroughly familiarize itself with existing sources of scholarships available in their own states and communities.

Units should join with the Education Committee of the local American Legion Post to give cooperation and support to the expansion of legislation or development of legislation, which would establish new scholarship sources for the increasing numbers of students reaching college age.



The American Legion Auxiliary national organization annually awards the following scholarships:

- Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship (for children of veterans)
- Spirit of Youth Scholarship (for Junior members)
- Non-traditional Student Scholarship for Legion, Auxiliary or SAL members who have interrupted their college education or are beginning their education at a later stage in life.

For information and applications for these scholarships, contact your Department Headquarters or visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

## Finance

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to oversee the general financial policy of the organization and to prepare and monitor the annual budget and its expenditures.

The matter of finance is one of great importance to the Unit. To that end, it is recommended that the Finance Committee ensure that proper internal controls are designed, implemented and maintained.

A successful month-to-month program depends, to a large degree, on the ability to pay the expenses incidental to it. Therefore, it is essential that a well-planned budget be one of the first objectives of the administrative year. An adequate budget ensures there will be funds earmarked for all purposes necessary to participate in the various Auxiliary programs throughout the year. A close review should be made each month to make sure that operating expenses are kept within the budget. Please note that the revenue from distribution of poppies should be carried as a separate item in the books, as such revenue is to be used solely for programs benefiting Veterans and their families.

Units should have an annual audit as described in the "Duties of Unit Treasurer" section and must file an annual tax return. (See Federal Compliance and Tax Laws, page 32 for further information.) It is recommended that the Unit procure a CPA or tax professional to assist in financial matters of the Unit. Units may wish to consult with their Department Headquarters for a recommendation.

By provision of the National Constitution and Bylaws, Unit officers having custody of organization funds shall be bonded. The National Organization maintains a blanket position bond whereby all Unit officers are bonded. Departments reimburse National for this coverage based upon the number of Units in the Department. Contact your Department Secretary for more information about bond coverage and instructions on filing a claim.

It is important that the Finance Committee is familiar with the Federal Compliance and Tax Laws. (*See Chapter III*)

## ALA Girls Nation

The purpose of the Girls Nation Committee is to provide an outstanding, unique and coveted educational opportunity to the young women of our nation that instills the basic ideals and principles of American government through the Girls State and Girls Nation citizenship training programs.

The 1937 National Convention organized Girls State as a national Americanism activity. Girls State is a practical application of Americanism and good citizenship. The program is a non-partisan, non-political attempt to teach and inculcate in the youth of America a love of God and country. A national committee to direct the program was created by the 1946 National Convention.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of ALA Girls State is to provide citizenship training in every Department of the American Legion Auxiliary for girls who have completed their junior year of high school; to afford them an opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens; to inform them about the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship, in order that they may understand and participate in the functioning of their government; and to help them grasp the meaning of some of the responsibilities which they must assume when they become adults.

### **Selection**

Girls State is a highly selective program designed for young women with above average academic standing, outstanding character and exemplary leadership qualities. Administered by the individual states, Units follow the guidelines established by their respective Departments regarding selection and participation. Units select delegates in conjunction with the local high school educators. It is crucial to continually cultivate the relationship with school personnel to ensure recruitment of qualified candidates.

### **Sponsorship**

Typically funds for Girls State are raised through Unit activities. A Unit interested in promoting the program but experiencing difficulty raising the funds is encouraged to seek community support from local businesses, organizations or individuals. A clear explanation of the benefits of the program is often a strong selling point when soliciting additional support. However, the American Legion Auxiliary remains the sponsor, and shall be known as such. After attending the Girls State session, each delegate should be expected to appear before her local Unit, the contributing organizations, and her local high school to present a report on her impression of Girls State.

### **ALA Girls Nation**

Girls Nation is a continuation of Girls State that began in 1947 in

Washington, D.C., with a focus on national government. Two girls are selected from each Girls State program and these “Senators” meet in Washington, D.C. for a week to campaign for political office, debate national legislation, visit national monuments and meet with their representatives and senators. The week is often capped with meeting the President of the United States at The White House.

The national Girls Nation committee supervises the activity of Girls Nation and provides materials to Departments regarding selection and representation at Girls Nation. A compulsory registration fee is required from each Department for participation in Girls Nation.

### Junior Activities

The purpose of the Junior Activities Committee is to promote volunteerism through community based programs and services that involve veterans and to teach the principals of loyalty to God and country, justice, freedom and democracy to our young members.

### Juniors

The enrollment in the Auxiliary of many daughters of American Legion members too young to take part in the regular meetings and activities prompted the formation of Junior groups within many Units.

Junior members are defined in the National Constitution as follows: “Junior membership shall consist of that group under the age of eighteen years, whose activities shall be supervised by the Senior membership. Upon reaching the age of eighteen years, Junior members shall automatically be admitted into active membership with full privileges.” The voting age of eighteen years for members of the American Legion Auxiliary was adopted at the National Convention in Boston in October 1930.

Junior members do not form a separate organization but are members of the American Legion Auxiliary, grouped separately so they may be given a program within the scope of their years and understanding. Junior membership is the training ground for active Auxiliary membership. When properly implemented Junior activities inculcate in Junior members the ideals of the Auxiliary and present opportunities to teach the principles of justice, freedom and democracy.

Junior groups function under the guidance of an advisor and committee from the Senior members. Organized as a committee of the Unit, Juniors conduct their own meetings and carry out their own activities. The Junior officers shall be known as Honorary Junior officers. Their work should be coordinated with the work of the Senior group and they should have a role in the regular Unit activities whenever possible so they will feel they are truly a part of the Auxiliary.

Americanism should be a major focus for Juniors and presented in such a manner that they are taught patriotism, citizenship, and loyalty to American ideals and principles. Most Auxiliary activities can be adapted to allow Juniors some level of participation in all phases of the year's program. The Juniors should be kept active and interested.

Success of the Junior group is largely dependent on the leadership provided by the Unit. The Unit Junior advisor should be a woman capable of managing and teaching children of all ages and possessing the ability to keep interest alive while directing activities designed to carry out the purposes of the organization.

Junior members may not be counted in the minimum of ten members necessary to organize a Unit, as it is believed that it takes at least ten Senior members to efficiently carry on the work of the Unit. In determining delegation representation however, Senior and Junior memberships are treated without distinction; all are counted in Department membership.

### **Tiny Tots**

The enrollment of Junior members from birth to six years of age is known as Tiny Tot enrollment. Tiny Tot certificates are available through Department Headquarters. Upon reaching the age of six, certificates of promotion to Junior membership are available. A parent or guardian must sign the application of a Junior member.

### **Junior Patch Program**

Junior members are encouraged to participate in the Junior Activities Patch Program. Completing required criteria for patches affords Junior members the opportunity to increase their knowledge of the various aspects of the American Legion Auxiliary. Patches are available on topics such as patriotism, health, fitness, and leadership. Regardless of their location Juniors can be involved with the program as part of their active Junior group or as an individual member. For more information visit [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org).

### **Junior Activities Handbook**

The Junior Activities Handbook contains details for organizing and directing a program for Junior members, as well as information on eligibility, ceremonies for initiations, installations and graduations, contests, meetings and programs. The Junior Leadership Course is available from:

American Legion Emblem Sales

Toll free at 1-888-453-4466

Online at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).

## Junior Leadership Course

The Junior Leadership Course is included in the Handbook and is available from Department Headquarters or from The American Legion National Emblem Sales (see contact information above) and provides a means for Junior members to increase their knowledge about the American Legion Auxiliary.

## Leadership

The purpose of the Leadership Committee is to develop and prepare knowledgeable and capable leaders to carry on the growth and success of the Auxiliary by promoting activities and resources that educate, motivate and mentor members of all ages on all levels and phases of our programs.

Milestones or goals are established in order to identify the product of good leadership. If a unit exceeds membership goals, financial success, volunteerism and other goals and objectives of the American Legion Auxiliary, these are reflective of good leadership; however, they are actually identified as the goals and objectives of the various committees that administer them.

Some leaders are born, but most are trained to be good leaders. No matter what the experience, education or technical skills, most anyone can be trained to be a leader if they are willing to make a commitment, devote their time and energy to listen, learn and communicate.

Start by visiting the Leadership page at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org), and encourage others to do the same. Basic principles of effective leadership are found in many articles and writings on the Web and in how-to guides at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). Leadership and motivational literature can be found in libraries, bookstores and on the Internet. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* is a great tool to use.

Contact Department Headquarters or the National Leadership Chairman for more information.

## Legislative

The Legislative Program provides information and assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion. American Legion and Auxiliary members are interested in legislative measures, which come before the United States Congress and the state legislatures. Through lobbying efforts The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are able to influence legislation of benefit to veterans, the community and our nation.

## National and State Legislative Committee

The national organization of the American Legion Auxiliary has a National Legislative Committee, which works closely with the National Legislative Commission of The American Legion. The American Legion Commission has offices in Washington, D.C. and continually promotes the passage of The American Legion sponsored legislation. Departments of The American Legion and Auxiliary also have Legislative Committees which function in a similar manner within the states.

## Unit Support in Legislative Work

When measures important to The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are before the lawmaking bodies for consideration, appeals go out for support on these measures. At such times the Unit members should contact their representatives urging them to take the action desired.

## How Legislative Policy is Formed

In all matters of legislation the American Legion Auxiliary follows the action of The American Legion, never endorsing any measure until The American Legion has first endorsed it and never following a policy, which does not coincide exactly with The American Legion's stand.

The Department Conventions formulate the legislative program for each Department and also follow the action of The American Legion Department Convention. They outline the policy to be followed in regard to measures to come before the legislatures of their states and also pass resolutions on national measures to be referred to the National Conventions.

## Legislative Work for the Unit

The legislative activities of the Unit may be handled by the Unit President, by a standing Unit committee, or by a special committee appointed to conduct the work in special emergencies. The legislative matters usually deal with some other phase of Auxiliary work, such as Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation - getting beneficial legislation for veterans; Children & Youth - securing legislation beneficial to children of veterans and children generally; National Security - securing national security measures; or Americanism - obtaining the passage of measures to promote better citizenship or to curb the activities of radicals. The arousing of public sentiment in support of such measures might well be left to the committee handling the activity under which they fall.

The American Legion Auxiliary offers a number of legislative resources via the national website at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

Also available is the *American Legion Auxiliary Legislative Advocacy*

*Guide*. Designed to aid members in building relationships with local and national legislators this tool provides a wealth of information. It covers many issues important to the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary including setting up visits with legislators, communicating with elected and appointed officials, examples of sample letters written to express ideas and/or opinions and advocating for veterans. Additionally it lists informative Websites and phone numbers.

All Unit Legislative Chairmen should subscribe to The American Legion's publication, *The Dispatch*. This publication describes current legislative issues and other news pertinent to The American Legion family. Subscription information is available at [www.legion.org/media/subscribe](http://www.legion.org/media/subscribe).

## Membership

The purpose of the Membership Committee is to promote the benefits of membership and to promote retaining and recruiting a diverse, active membership to carry out the American Legion Auxiliary mission and programs.

Membership is the foundation on which the program of the American Legion Auxiliary is built, and the success or failure of that program depends largely on how well that foundation is laid. With the start of each new Auxiliary year, we build that foundation even before we plan any of our other programs. No Unit can successfully carry out any large activity without the firm foundation of a strong membership. A Unit which fails to recruit and retain as many eligible women as possible to its ranks has not done its full share toward the success of its Department and the National Organization.

Dues of American Legion Auxiliary members shall be payable annually or for life. Units should make an effort to have their entire membership in good standing for the new year as soon as possible. Active membership campaigns should be planned. Early payment of dues by members is highly desirable in order to free the energies of the Unit for mission delivery.

### A Systematic Membership Effort

An enthusiastic, experienced chairman, with an able committee to aid her, should be placed in charge of the membership campaign. A definite plan for the campaign should be worked out well in advance by this committee in order that, when the campaign is once launched, it can move forward smoothly with no letup on the part of the workers. Hit-or-miss methods are apt to cause uncertainty and confusion, which may dull the enthusiasm of the workers. Careful organization is important and will insure a successful campaign.

A number of different organization plans have been used successfully by American Legion Auxiliary Units. The five things which are fundamental in the organization of the campaign are proper preparation, suitable grouping of members in working teams, good publicity, competition between teams and individuals, and active personal solicitation of prospective members.

### Preparing for the Campaign

The most important part of the advance work to be done in preparing for a membership campaign is the compiling of a list of prospective members to be given to the membership workers at the opening of the campaign. The list should include the names and addresses of all eligible women in the community. A master list should be compiled and an individual record card should be prepared for each prospective member. This system facilitates recording data about calls and other information.

To this list, compiled from the Post's membership roll, should be added the names of women who are eligible through deceased veterans, women who are eligible through their own service, and those who have eligibility through Legionnaires living in other communities. The names of men who died in service can be secured through city/county records, from the Post's records of veterans who have died since the war, and from personal knowledge of Unit members.

The plan for dividing the members into two competing teams usually brings results in a membership drive. Workers must be enthusiastic, have detailed plans carefully worked out, and a definite goal toward which to work. Assign definite territories, make an even distribution of responsibilities, and set a definite time limit for the completion of the drive. Enthusiastic leaders can originate many interesting plans.

### Membership Publicity and Solicitation

A campaign of newspaper publicity and talks before other women's organizations should be planned in advance of the solicitation of prospects and continue throughout the membership drive. The publicity should be of such a character that it will create in the minds of the prospective members a desire to belong to the American Legion Auxiliary. Letters explaining the aims and activities of the American Legion Auxiliary and inviting membership should go to all prospects before solicitation begins.

Membership solicitors should attend a class of instruction before the start of visits and should be prepared to answer, in a clear and definite manner, all questions concerning the American Legion Auxiliary, which may be asked of them. Personal solicitation is the best method of securing members. The success of the campaign depends upon the enthusiasm and skill of the workers.



## National Security

The purpose of the National Security Committee is to maintain and promote a strong national defense by providing the necessary means to strengthen our military families and prepare our citizenry for response to natural and man-made disasters.

### Unit Activities

While it is encouraged that each Unit have a National Security Chairman, many of the activities that support the mission of this program can be done in conjunction with other activities and programs.

Supporting a strong military means providing for their families on the home front. It is incumbent on each unit to identify these families in their local communities and ensure their day-to-day needs are met during and after deployment. Collaborate with the Legion Family and other organizations, businesses and agencies that sustain and care for military families. The local chapter of the USO, a National Guard Armory or an active military installation can be approached to participate in Welcome Home activities or Blue Star Banner programs. Another show of support for military families would be to fly a POW/MIA flag or conduct a POW/MIA ceremony at unit events.

Units are asked to pay special attention to the needs of military children by incorporating these kids in Junior and Children & Youth programming.

Your local American Legion Post Home is an ideal setting for hosting programs recommended by the Department of Homeland Security that assist members and communities in preparing for and/or responding to natural and man-made disasters.

The American Legion Auxiliary also provides an award program for ROTC/JROTC that compliments The American Legion program.

### National Awareness

The focus of the annual Washington DC Conference in Washington, D.C., is to provide information on National Security, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation and Legislation. Attendance is open to all American Legion Auxiliary members. The American Legion Auxiliary office in Washington, D.C., serves as the organization's representative on issues specific to National Security concerns.

## Past Presidents Parley

The purpose of the Past Presidents Parley Committee is to recognize and honor female veterans and to utilize the experience and knowledge of past Auxiliary leaders for the training and encouragement of future Auxiliary leaders.

Through the Past Presidents Parley Committee, the women who have served as Unit, Department, and National President can continue in active service in the Auxiliary. It has no special activities in its charge besides its objective, "The Care of the Disabled Female Veterans," unless so assigned by the Unit, Department, or National Organization, but gives its support to the entire American Legion Auxiliary program. The training and experience of Past Presidents can be highly useful in any activity needing special support or emphasis.

The Past Presidents Parley was considered a subsidiary organization of the American Legion Auxiliary until 1944, when its status was changed by National Executive Committee action to that of a national standing committee. Payment of Parley dues and election of Parley officers were discontinued. Past National Presidents are appointed to serve as Chairman of the National Past Presidents Parley Committee.

Rules pertaining to the Past Presidents Parley are as follows:

1. The Past Presidents Parley is a standing committee of the American Legion Auxiliary.
2. Its objective is the promotion of the activities of the Auxiliary, with special consideration given to female veterans.
3. Parleys may be organized at the Unit and Department level.
4. A member of the Past Presidents Parley must be a member in good standing in her own Unit.
5. Poppy funds may be allocated to the Committee if such funds are used solely for the direct welfare of ex-servicewomen.

### Nurses Scholarships

Units are urged to continue to provide scholarships for student nurses. Our efforts in this area are important and help to relieve the nursing shortage as well as improve the quality of health care.

### Auxiliary Unit Member of the Year

Units of the American Legion Auxiliary all have hard working, dedicated members who give of their time and talent to further the aims and purposes of our organization, but have no desire to serve beyond the Unit level. In order to recognize such dedicated service each Unit may select one candidate for Unit Member of the Year in its Department. Each Department will select the Unit Member of the Year for that Department who will be honored at the National Convention. Contact Department Headquarters for further information.

### Poppy

The purpose of the Poppy Committee is to educate our membership and the public concerning the Poppy's significance and the financial benefit realized by our nation's veterans as a result of its distribution.

The first step necessary to assure success of Poppy Day is the appointment of a capable, enthusiastic chairman and committee. In selecting a chairman, consideration should be given to her ability to organize the work within the Unit and also her ability to secure the greatest possible cooperation from the community as a whole.

Since the Unit's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation and Children & Youth funds are derived from the annual poppy distribution, it is essential that it be a success. Pin the first poppy on the Mayor and ask him to issue a proclamation setting aside a day as Poppy Day, with an appeal to all citizens to observe the day by wearing a poppy.

Promotional Poppy materials are available at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) and through American Legion Emblem Sales at [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org).

### Publicity for Poppy Days

Because our poppy is an emblem of sacrifice, those who love it must make every effort to teach the public the true meaning of the flower. The success of the poppy distribution depends upon the advance publicity. If, in the season of Memorial Day, the poppy can make the indifferent public recall the sacrifices, which have been made by the men, and women who gave their lives that our country might be saved, the first and greatest mission of the poppy has been fulfilled.

The second mission is to win the confidence of the public through knowledge of the purposes to which The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary expend the money derived from the poppy distribution. By means of publicity on the expenditure of the poppy proceeds, public confidence can be won. The public has the right to this information. Every Post and Unit should see that the poppy proceeds are so spent that publicity will bring honor and reward to our organization.

The public should also be reminded that the disabled men and women in hospitals, and their families are assisted by our poppy funds. The public will then know that The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary are continuing to keep faith with those who gave their all for our freedom.

### Suggested Activities

The following is a suggested outline of activities to precede Poppy Days: Start a campaign of newspaper publicity which will educate the public about the significance of the poppy and the purpose for which the money is spent; organize a Poppy Speakers Bureau through which speakers will be available for meetings of all community organizations to acquaint them with the value of the Poppy Program, both from the standpoint of therapeutic value to the maker of the poppy and to the community itself.

## Supplies for Poppy Days

Conduct a Poppy Poster Contest in the local schools and give attractive prizes to the winners. Feature a poppy window display. Many promotional poppy items can be purchased through The American Legion National Emblem Sales.

## Poppy Facts

(It is suggested that all poppy workers memorize these facts.)

- In the spring of 1919, amidst complete devastation, the poppies bloomed in abundance on the battlefields of France where so many of our men had fallen in battle, and that a replica of this poppy has become the Memorial Flower of the American Legion Auxiliary.
- The American Legion was the first national organization to adopt the poppy as its Memorial Flower, having taken this action at the National Convention in Cleveland, September 27-29, 1920.
- The American Legion Auxiliary adopted the poppy as its Memorial Flower at its organizing convention held in Kansas City in October 1921.
- At the time the American Legion Auxiliary adopted the poppy, it pledged 100% of the profits from the poppy distribution to welfare relief for servicemen and servicewomen and their families, thus fulfilling the true meaning of the poppy, an emblem of faith; faith which is being kept with all who died through service to the living.
- The American Legion Auxiliary, in order to protect the memorial poppy from the inroads of commercialism, adopted a national poppy program at the St. Paul Convention in 1924 which eliminated the commercial poppy.
- Through the American Legion Auxiliary Poppy Program, more than \$300,000 is paid annually to needy and disabled servicemen and servicewomen for making the poppies.
- Proceeds from the distribution of over 25,000,000 poppies annually under the guidance of the American Legion Auxiliary amount to more than \$2,000,000, every penny of which is devoted to Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation work by both The American Legion and Auxiliary, which includes aid to needy veterans and their families. The method of distribution varies in each Department, depending upon the nature of the demands for help. Each of our nearly 9,000 Units in communities scattered all over the United States, its territorial possessions, and in foreign countries where veterans reside, maintains a Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee working under a chairman,

and a Children & Youth Committee with its chairman. These Unit chairmen are assisted by Department chairmen of similar committees, who, in turn, work under the guidance of a National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman and a National Children & Youth Chairman.

- The public is given an opportunity each year to help in the significant work of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, as well as an opportunity to pay tribute to all who died in service, by wearing a poppy on Poppy Day.

## Uses of the Poppy Fund

Poppy funds CAN be used for:

- For the rehabilitation of veterans honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces after April 6, 1917.
- For the welfare of the families of veterans of the above named period.
- For the rehabilitation of hospitalized military service personnel returning home and awaiting discharge who require treatment in service hospitals.
- For the welfare of veterans, active military personnel, and the families of veterans and active military personnel of the above named period where financial and medical need is evident.
- For the purpose of poppy kits and supplies used to make symbolic poppies and poppy items that will be distributed for donations to the Poppy Fund.

Poppy funds CANNOT be used for:

1. Any general operating fund of a department, unit or post.
2. Any community service project that does not strictly benefit the welfare of an individual veteran/military servicemember or the welfare of his/her family.
3. General maintenance, beautification or improvement projects of American Legion or Auxiliary facilities, including adding ramp(s) to a post home.
4. Investments, even those that would bring profit to the unit or post.
5. POW/MIA programs.
6. Memberships, including other veteran support organizations such as Gold Star Mothers.
7. Contributions to, or payouts from, the Auxiliary Emergency Fund.
8. ALA Girls State/Girls Nation fees.
9. Flags or flagpoles.

10. Scholarships which do not restrict eligibility solely to military servicemembers or their children, or where the financial need is not evident.
11. Mileage, travel or lodging expenses; registration of conference fees; or costs incurred by a person – including ALA members, volunteers and staff -- to attend any meeting, conference or event about veterans.
12. Attire or uniforms used by volunteers or staff in promoting or conducting ALA program activity or business.

Use of Poppy funds is allowable for care packages only when it is for a welfare need, as opposed to a comfort need, such as first aid topical treatment or vital hygiene items and not comfort/ leisure items such as baked goods or books.

NOTE: Poppy funds collected after May 9, 2013, cannot be “co-mingled” with funds collected prior to that date. All funds collected prior to the passage of Resolution 20 must be used for veterans, in keeping with the intent and purpose of the previous Legion resolution. Only Poppy funds collected after May 9, 2013, may be used for the welfare of U.S. active-duty military personnel and their families, where financial and medical need is evident.

Please consult the Poppy Program webpage at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) for additional information about the American Legion Auxiliary’s Poppy Program.

## Public Relations

The purpose of the Public Relations Committee is to work collaboratively with all levels of the organization to create, implement and support a proactive communication network that advances the objectives and programs of the American Legion Auxiliary and positively projects our image and programs to the general public.

The success of our programs is due to the support and volunteerism of our members. To maintain this support and increase volunteer hours, we must keep members informed in a timely fashion. The Unit PR chairman should be included in the planning of all programs and kept informed of newsworthy activities at the unit and department levels. It is the goal of the PR chairmen and committees to utilize all forms of communication and media to educate and motivate Auxiliary members about opportunities available through new and existing programs.

Public Relations is simply a matter of establishing and maintaining goodwill. It covers every kind of communication from personal contact in casual conversation, to speakers, to carefully prepared news releases for the media. It is communicating to the general public the value the

American Legion Auxiliary provides to the community and to the country. While not a complicated job, it is vitally important and involves not only the Public Relations Committee, but also every member of the Auxiliary. Effective media relations require the PR chairman to establish a good relationship with area media. Appointing a committee to make personal contact with newspapers, radio, and television stations is a great first step toward building a bridge from the Unit to the media. Actively seeking to share interesting and relevant information with the public about the Auxiliary, its programs and its mission will increase the visibility and public awareness of the ALA.

### Community Programming

Another PR option to explore is that of community programming. Many radio and television stations provide airtime for public service announcements. Locally produced talk shows, spots on human-interest stories, community access television and community calendars are other possibilities for media exposure. The Unit chairman should meet with the staff of all available electronic and print media outlets to explain the Unit's objectives for its programs and ask for suggestions on how these programs can be promoted. Requesting the professional opinion and assistance of your media contacts as well as offering to provide information on veterans' affairs, community service and other matters can help to build rapport. The mission and story of the American Legion Auxiliary is a great value to American's communities. Using the right approach, knowing your programs and establishing goodwill with the local media will allow you to bring invaluable support to all of your program activities.

### *Auxiliary* magazine

The American Legion Auxiliary's *Auxiliary* magazine is the official publication of the organization and serves to promote the fulfillment of the Auxiliary's mission. It is published quarterly by National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Senior members receive a subscription as a benefit of joining the Auxiliary.

Contained within *Auxiliary* is a section called *National News*, which is a "best practice showcase," focused on information related to specific Auxiliary programs, Departments, Units and members. There is also a direct link between the member and the national organization through the letters to the editor, and articles by National Committee Chairmen.

### eNewsletters and the Internet

Units should actively move forward to develop their own websites and use them to showcase and promote ALA programs and the Unit's

involvement in and impact on their local communities.

The National ALA website at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) contains a wealth of information for Auxiliary members.

*ALA eNews/eBulletin* — This electronic newsletter is published monthly and focuses on programs, activities, and events. One-topic eblasts also are sent to announce special events or news. Contained within the monthly *eNews* is the *ALA In the Know eBulletin*, which updates Auxiliary members and leaders working ALA mission outreach and internal support programs. To subscribe, visit [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

### Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

The purpose of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee is to promote programs and services that assist and enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring restoration and/or transition to normally functioning lives.

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation work of the American Legion Auxiliary includes bringing physical comfort and mental cheer to veterans in hospitals, aiding the disabled to earn money for the support of themselves and their families, and helping them to reestablish themselves in life. The American Legion Auxiliary cooperates with The American Legion in ALL its endeavors on behalf of veterans.

To carry out the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation work effectively, a complete organization extending from the Unit to the National Organization is necessary. Years of experience in rehabilitation have brought about a systematizing of the activities, which has proven to be the most efficient way to aid the different classes of disabled veterans. Unit Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation workers should become familiar with the Department and National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation organizations and be able to use the services of these groups when necessary. Units should work closely with the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committees of their American Legion Posts and with other agencies in the community from which aid for the disabled is available.

### **The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee**

The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee shall contact the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairmen in carrying out a uniform program in the various Departments. The National Chairman is assisted by a Vice Chairman, two committee members, a liaison from National Headquarters Staff and five Divisional Chairmen who are appointed each year by the National President. The National Organization requires an annual report form to be sent out



from the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee to the Departments covering Unit, Department, and National programs. Information is to be furnished to the Department by Units and returned to the National Chairman. Educational information regarding the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee is disseminated through *Auxiliary* magazine, email newsletters, and the website. Every Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman should become thoroughly familiar with the program of the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.

### Purpose and Use of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Funds

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Fund in the Unit, Department, and National organizations must be used for this work only, and should be kept in a separate fund. Since the public has usually contributed generously to this fund because of the nature of its use, we are obligated to keep faith with the public in the expenditure of this money. The special National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Fund is created from annual contributions of fifteen cents per Senior member. A part of this fund is donated to The American Legion to assist in the work of The American Legion's National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission in Washington, D.C., and the balance is used as Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation and Children & Youth budgets of the American Legion Auxiliary.

#### Suggestions for Unit Workers

1. Units should contact the well-established and recognized social agencies whenever possible in dealing with issues related to assistance to veterans.
2. Units should recognize the efficient structure established by the National American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, and the capability of its Service Officers in various states. Questions regarding the rights of the veterans, compensation, insurance, and other questions of a technical nature should be referred to The American Legion for advice and guidance.
3. Units wishing information about special projects such as orientation for Hospital Volunteers, work shops, Gift Shops, sale of veteran-made goods, operation of exchanges, or any other special activity conducted through the rehabilitation program, can secure definite information by writing to the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman through Department Headquarters.

### Guide for Volunteers

The *Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers*

publication contains rules, regulations, and duties for all volunteer groups in rehabilitation, and may be obtained through your Department Headquarters. Every volunteer should have a copy available to her.

### Hospital Volunteer Orientation

Unit Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairmen should be aware of the need for a Medical Center Volunteers' Orientation if there is a VA Medical Center in the community or adjacent area. Under the Department Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman and/or the Director of Hospital Volunteers, awards and recognitions are outlined in the *Guide for Volunteers* publication. After satisfactory completion of the prescribed training courses, the Hospital Volunteers of the American Legion Auxiliary will be qualified to serve and aid the Medical Center Staff in caring for the hospitalized veteran.

### VAVS Representative

The National Organization has a VAVS representative and two deputies as liaison from the organization to the VA and serving on the National VAVS level. Information from this representative is sent to all Departments periodically.

### State Veterans Home Volunteers

In 2001, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs gave VAVS the authority to recognize the service of volunteers in State Veterans Homes. Please refer to the *Guide for Volunteers* for detailed information on this program.

### Hospital Volunteer Uniforms

National will not advise the wearing of a volunteer uniform at VA hospitals. Each Department will work with their VA hospital(s) to determine what, if any, uniform should be worn.

### Field Service Program

One of the programs of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation is that of Field Service; a volunteer program similar to that of the Hospital Volunteer program, but conducted in community nursing homes and non-VA facilities. There are both National and State Directors for the Field Service program, and there are identification pins and hour bars for the volunteers, which are similar to that of the Hospital Volunteer Program. Please refer to the *Guide for Volunteers* for detailed information on this program.

### Home Service

In 1974, a new method of reporting the number of volunteers, hours, and the cost of materials and supplies was initiated to record service

for the veterans provided by our volunteers in their own homes. Home Service completes a true record of service given by all American Legion Auxiliary volunteers for reporting to the Congress of the United States, and also recognizes all volunteer hours of service by our National Organization.

Home Service hours include time spent sewing, knitting, cooking, shopping for materials and supplies, and other services performed by the volunteer IN HER OWN HOME. Hospital Gift Shop items, made at home, are classified as Home Service.

Home Service pins and hour bars are available for the Volunteers. Please refer to the *Guide for Volunteers* publication for detailed information on this program.

## CHAPTER IX

### La Boutique des Huit Chapeaux et Quarante Femmes

#### The Eight and Forty

La Boutique des Huit Chapeaux et Quarante Femmes, the Eight & Forty, is a separately incorporated not-for-profit organization whose membership – its partners – are also members of the American Legion Auxiliary. The Eight & Forty, as they report to the IRS, is a separate 501(c) (3) corporation that raises money for causes such as child welfare, cystic fibrosis, tuberculosis education and prevention, organizations caring for children with lung and respiratory diseases, nursing scholarships, and other health related projects including donations to hospitals.

With the advent of the new IRS reporting requirements and other legal considerations that did not exist when the organization was incorporated in 1926, the Eight & Forty consulted with counsel in 2010 and voted to separate its legal relationship with the American Legion Auxiliary, similar to actions taken by the male counterpart 40 & 8 in ending its legal relationship with The American Legion in 1960. Actions that the Auxiliary will need to take to comply with their decision occurred at the 2010 American Legion Auxiliary National Convention. The change in legal status of the organization does not change the Eight & Forty's mission nor the longstanding fondness and respect that the American Legion Auxiliary has for this organization, sentiments which will continue as both organizations adapt to changing legal landscapes.

# CHAPTER X

## Procedure for the Expulsion or Suspension of a Member of the American Legion Auxiliary

### Process

The first step in the process of all actions of expulsion or suspension against a member of the American Legion Auxiliary in good standing shall be the filing with the Secretary of the Unit written charges, in triplicate, properly verified by the affidavit of the accuser or accusers. It shall then be the duty of the Unit to employ legal counsel, preferably a practicing member of the Bar in the state in which the Unit is located.

### Notice and Copies of Charges to Accused

The Secretary shall deliver to the accused member, by registered mail or in person, one copy of the charges and a written notice to appear at a specific time and place to show cause why she, the accused, should not be suspended or expelled. These items shall be delivered to the accused at least fifteen days in advance of the scheduled appearance. The Secretary shall cause note to be made of the delivery of the charges and notice. Whenever the accused cannot be found, subsequent copies of the charges and notice may be served.

### Charges

The accuser or accusers must be members of the same Unit as the accused, and she/they shall set forth the charges of disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty, or conduct unbecoming a member of the American Legion Auxiliary in terms of simplicity and understanding in order that the accused may properly prepare a defense.

### Appearance

Before the accused member defends herself in person or by counsel, she shall enter her defense by filing an answer to said charges on or before the date on which she has been summoned to appear.

### Failure to Answer

If the accused member fails to answer the charges in the manner and form as herein set forth, the charges and matters therein stated shall be taken as confessed, and the prayer for expulsion or suspension granted.

### Continuance

Either party may apply for a continuance before the day set for trial.

However, it shall be accompanied by a written motion and supported by affidavit of the party so applying. Good and substantial cause must exist before said motion is granted. It shall be the duty of Unit counsel to pass upon said motion and determine from the pleadings whether or not sufficient cause exists for continuance.

### Trial

The Unit Counsel shall preside at the trial, shall have the power and authority to pass upon the materiality and relevancy of all evidence presented, and shall have general power to prescribe necessary rules and regulations for the orderly procedure of said trial, except that no rule or regulation in violation of these rules shall be permitted.

### Unit Members to Act as Jurors

Members of the Unit shall act as jurors under the guidance of the Unit Counsel to ascertain the truth of the charges preferred. Their province is strictly limited to questions of fact, and within the province they are still further restricted to the exclusive consideration of matters that have been proven by the evidence introduced in the course of the trial.

At the conclusion of the evidence, the members of the Unit in attendance so acting as jurors shall determine by ballot (two-thirds vote) whether or not the accused is guilty as charged, and shall produce their decision in writing, signed by one of their number as chairman, and return same to the Unit Secretary who shall enter same in the Unit records.

### Challenge

If either party shall make affidavit that a certain member of the Unit cannot fairly and impartially try the case and render a fair and impartial verdict, and the Unit Counsel shall be satisfied as to the truth of such statement, said member or members shall be challenged for cause and dismissed from service as jurors, but in no event shall the number present for trial be reduced below a majority of the members present for the hearing.

Neither the accused or the accuser, nor their counsel, shall be permitted to sit as jurors.

### Amendments

At any time before the final decision is made by the members sitting as a jury, amendments to the pleading may be allowed by the Unit Counsel, such terms as are just and reasonable.

## Appeal

Any member who has been suspended or expelled has the right of appeal to her Department Executive Committee provided that said appeal must be taken by the preparation of a transcript of the proceedings within forty days after a judgment of expulsion or suspension, such transcript shall contain a copy of the charges, the notices to the accused, and a record and copies of all other actions or pleadings introduced, together with a statement of the evidence in substance to be prepared by the party appealing. The Unit Counsel shall be the judge of the correctness of the statement of evidence.

As an alternative, either party may demand a stenographic report, providing that timely request before trial is made, and provided further that the party requesting the stenographic report shall pay for same. The Unit Counsel shall determine the correctness of said stenographic report.

## Notice by Department Secretary

When an appeal is taken, as herein provided, to the Department, it shall be the duty of the Department Secretary to notify all parties of the date, exact time, and place of the next Department Executive Committee meeting, provided at least ten days' notice shall be given. The Department Executive Committee shall hear the appeal.

Evidence may not be introduced before the Department Executive Committee, though arguments may be heard, and the evidence as shown by the transcript shall be the only evidence considered by the Executive Committee.

The Department Counsel shall preside at the trial, shall have power and authority to grant continuance to either party upon just cause being shown, and shall have power to make all necessary and reasonable rules and regulations for the orderly procedure of said trial.

## No Further Appeal

The decision of the Department Executive Committee shall be final.

## Effect of Decision

Where an appeal is taken by the accused and the Department Executive Committee or Department Convention sustains the appeal, the expelled member automatically becomes a member in good standing of said Unit, and it is mandatory that the Secretary reinstate said member upon the Unit Membership Roll.

After completing the "Procedure for the Expulsion or Suspension of a Member of the American Legion Auxiliary"; as set forth on this

handbook, National Headquarters will require the guidelines listed below to be followed:

1. All Department requests to National Headquarters for canceling a member must come in writing from the Department Secretary. In the event the member being cancelled is the Department Secretary, the request must come from the Department President.
2. The written request must contain the following:
  - Name and membership ID number of person being cancelled
  - Reason for cancellation
  - Effective date of cancellation
  - A clear statement that all procedures outlined in the Auxiliary Unit Guide Book have been followed and that the Department has written copies of all documentation regarding the expulsion in their files.
3. Departments are not required to submit documentation to National unless requested by the National Secretary or the Membership Coordinator.

All written requests should be sent to:  
American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters  
Attn: Membership Coordinator  
8945 N. Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46260



# CHAPTER XI

## Uniform Code of Procedure for the Revocation, Cancellation or Suspension of Unit Charters

### Charges

Section 1. Any intermediate body between the Unit and the Department may initiate a charge that any Unit should, for any good and sufficient cause, have its charter cancelled, suspended or revoked, or by any three Units of the Department in which the Unit accused is located. A charge may be withdrawn only with the consent of the Department President.

Section 2. Such charge shall be filed with the Department President at Department Headquarters.

Section 3. Such charge shall be in writing, and signed by the respective Presidents and Secretaries of the intermediate bodies or Units, as the case may be, and sworn to before any officer authorized to administer oaths.

Section 4. Three additional copies of such charge shall be filed with the original. The Department President shall forthwith cause one copy of such charge to be served on the defendant Unit by delivering a true copy thereof to the Secretary of said Unit, as hereinafter provided.

Section 5. Such charge shall include the following:

- a. A certified or attested copy of the resolution authorizing the filing of such charge.
- b. The full name and address of the Unit against which the charge is made, as well as the full name and address of the President and Secretary of such Unit.
- c. A clear, concise and detailed statement of the facts upon which the charge is based.
- d. The section or sections of the National and Department Constitutions and Bylaws alleged to have been violated.
- e. Affidavits or documents substantiating the charge may be attached.

Section 6. After a charge has been filed, the Department President shall forthwith cause a full investigation of the facts to be made. After such investigation, the Department President shall file a report and recommendation with the Department Executive Committee for its action thereon at its next meeting.

Section 7. Proceedings relating to the cancellation, suspension or revocation of a Unit charter may also originate with either the Department President or the Department Executive Committee.

Section 8. The action of the Department Executive Committee in rejecting any charge or charges against a Unit shall be final.

## Resolutions of Department Executive Committee

Section 1. Should the Department Executive Committee determine by a majority vote that the Unit should surrender its charter, said Department Executive Committee shall direct the defendant Unit to surrender its charter for cancellation, and shall pass a resolution that unless the charter is so surrendered, prior to the date therein specified, a hearing and trial be held to determine whether the Unit charter should be cancelled, suspended or revoked, and said resolution shall include the following:

- a. A statement that the Department Executive Committee has determined that a hearing and trial is warranted.
- b. Authorization and direction to the Department President and Department Secretary to sign a formal complaint.
- c. The names and addresses of the members of the sub-committee before which the hearing and the trial is to be held.
- d. The name and address of counsel who is to assist the committee.
- e. Authorization to the sub-committee to hire such stenographic or other help as may be necessary and to incur such expense as may be necessary. Said expense, including the cost of stenographic report of the trial when ordered to be transcribed by the sub-committee or the Department Executive Committee, shall be taxed as costs against the Department complainants or defendant Unit in such manner and amount as the Department Executive Committee shall prescribe.
- f. That the sub-committee shall report its written findings of fact and recommendation to the Department Executive Committee at its next meeting, provided, however, that if the hearing or trial is not completed, a partial report shall be made.

## Complaint

Section 1. In all cases a formal complaint, in triplicate, shall be drawn and signed by the American Legion Auxiliary through its Department President and Department Secretary setting forth the following:

- a. A clear and concise statement of the facts upon which the charges are predicted.
- b. The origin of the charges.
- c. A copy of the resolution of the Department Executive Committee appointing the sub-committee and its assistants.
- d. A copy of the Uniform Code of Procedure for the revocation, cancellation, or suspension of Unit charters.
- e. The time within which an appearance or answer shall be filed by the Unit, which shall be not less than 20 nor more than 60 days from the date of the service of a copy of the complaint.

- f. The time and place for the hearing and trial, which shall not be more than 30 days after the date of the expiration of the time for the filing of the answer.

Section 2. Any such complaint may be amended by the subcommittee of the Department Executive Committee in its discretion at any time upon such terms as may be deemed just in the opinion of the said subcommittee.

### Service

Section 1. The sub-committee shall cause a true copy of the complaint to be served on the defendant Unit.

Section 2. All complaints, orders and other process and papers of the sub-committee or the Department organization of the American Legion Auxiliary may be served personally, or by registered mail, or by leaving a copy thereof at the principal office or headquarters of the intermediate body or Unit, or place of residence of the person or officer to be served. The verified return by the individual serving the same showing service thereof in the manner herein provided, or the registry return receipt shall be proof of service.

Section 3. All notices, order, papers or other process which are to be served on the Department Headquarters of the American Legion Auxiliary, or the sub-committee appointed to conduct the trial, shall be deemed served if they are served on the Department Secretary at Department Headquarters, said service to be made as hereinabove provided.

Section 4. Witnesses may be summoned by a notice signed by either the special counsel or by a member of the sub-committee.

### Answer

Section 1. The defendant Unit shall file an answer to said complaint with the Department Secretary at Department Headquarters within the time specified in the complaint. The answer shall contain a clear and concise statement of the facts, which constitute its defense. Any charge or specification in the complaint, which is not expressly denied or explained in the answer, shall be deemed to be admitted.

Section 2. In the event that the complaint is amended during the course of the hearing or trial, the defendant shall be furnished with a copy of such amendment, and may file an amended answer to the said amended complaint within five days thereafter.

### Sub-committee

Section 1. The sub-committee to hear and try and make written findings of fact and recommendations with reference to the matter of

the cancellation, suspension or revocation of the Unit charter shall be appointed by the Department Executive Committee and shall consist of not less than three (3) members of the Department Executive Committee. No member of the Unit under investigation shall be a member of such sub-committee.

Section 2. Should no member of the sub-committee be a lawyer, opinions on questions of law may be obtained from counsel named by Department.

Section 3. A majority of the members of the sub-committee shall constitute a quorum. If for any reason there is less than a quorum, the hearing shall be adjourned until a quorum is present.

Section 4. The duties of the Department counsel shall be to see that the trial is prompt, complete and thorough, make all arrangements for the hearings, the summoning of all witnesses and the production of all papers. He/She shall see that all the orders of the sub-committee shall be carried out. He/She shall examine and cross-examine all witnesses.

### Hearing and Trial

Section 1. The rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law and equity shall not be controlling. The sub-committee shall decide all questions arising as to the relevancy of the evidence and the regularity of the proceedings.

Section 2. The sub-committee may hold its hearings in closed sessions or may open them to the public. The sub-committee shall hear witnesses on oath or affirmation.

Section 3. Any party to the proceeding shall have the right to appear at such hearing in person, by counsel or otherwise, subject to such reasonable restrictions as may be placed on this right by the sub-committee, and to examine and cross-examine witnesses and to introduce documentary or other evidence.

Section 4. Stipulations of fact may be introduced in evidence with respect to any issues.

Section 5. Objection to the conduct of the hearing shall be stated orally together with a short statement of the grounds of such objection and included in the stenographic report of the hearing.

Section 6. Any party to the proceedings shall be entitled to a reasonable period at the close of the hearing for oral argument, which shall not be included in the stenographic report of the hearing. The parties may file briefs within the time fixed by the sub-committee.

Section 7. In the discretion of the sub-committee, the hearings may be continued from day to day, or adjourned to a later date, or to a different place by announcement thereof at the hearing by the chairman or vice-chairman of the sub-committee or by other appropriate notices.

Section 8. A stenographic report of the trial shall be made.

## Report of Sub-committee

Section 1. The sub-committee, after it has completed its hearings, shall file the complete report of the proceedings of the trial, together with its written findings of fact and recommendations with reference thereto with the Department Secretary not less than five (5) days before the next meeting of the Department Executive Committee, all of which shall be open to the inspection of all members of the Department Executive Committee as well as representative or representatives of the defendant Unit.

Section 2. The Department Executive Committee shall consider said report and act thereon.

Section 3. At the Department Executive Committee meeting at which the report of the said sub-committee is to be considered, one representative of the defendant Unit may, within the discretion of the Department Executive Committee, be given the privilege of the floor for not more than one hour.

Section 4. Should the sub-committee's report be a partial report, the Department Executive Committee may continue the committee and authorize it to hold further hearing and present its final report at the next meeting of the Department Executive Committee.

# CHAPTER XII

## National Divisions

The Departments of the American Legion Auxiliary are grouped into five Divisions: Central, Eastern, Northwestern, Southern, and Western. One Divisional National Vice President is elected from each Division every year. The Division groupings follow:

### Central Division

Illinois	Kansas	Ohio
Indiana	Michigan	West Virginia
Iowa	Missouri	Wisconsin

### Eastern Division

Connecticut	Maryland	New York
Delaware	Massachusetts	Pennsylvania
District of Columbia	New Hampshire	Rhode Island
Maine	New Jersey	Vermont

### Northwestern Division

Colorado	Nebraska	South Dakota
Minnesota	North Dakota	Wyoming
Montana		

### Southern Division

Alabama	Louisiana	South Carolina
Arkansas	Mississippi	Tennessee
Florida	North Carolina	Texas
Georgia	Oklahoma	Virginia
Kentucky	Puerto Rico	

### Western Division

Alaska	Idaho	Utah
Arizona	Nevada	Washington
California	New Mexico	
Hawaii	Oregon	

## CHAPTER XIII

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Gold Star

Q. What does the Gold Star signify?

- A. That the blue star has turned gold by the death of the relative for whom the blue star was worn while in service in either of the World Wars, the Korean or Vietnam Wars, or in conflict in either Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, or the Gulf War/War on Terrorism. "Death while in service" means there is no delineation between "killed in combat" and "dying" so long as death is not caused by the individual's own willful misconduct.

#### Gold Star Mother and Member Defined

Q. What are the definitions of a Gold Star Mother and Gold Star Member?

- A. By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 3-4, 1967, (and as subsequently amended) the definition of Gold Star Mother and Member be stated as follows:

Gold Star Mother shall mean the mother of one who was regularly enlisted, drafted, inducted, or commissioned and who was accepted for and assigned to active duty in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975, August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984, December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990, August 2, 1990, to and including the date which the United States shall determine to be the end of hostilities, all dates inclusive, or who, being a citizen of the United States at the time of his entry therein, served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of said wars or hostilities; who did not refuse on conscientious, political, or other grounds to subject him/herself to military discipline or unqualified service; or who was separated from service under circumstances amounting to dishonorable discharge, which has been subsequently restored to an honorable status, and who died during such service, or who died prior to July 2, 1921 (the legal termination of the war), with reference to service in World War I, or prior to April 28, 1952, the formal declaration of peace by the United States Government with reference to service in World War II, or on or before January 31, 1955 (the date set by the Government of the United States as the

termination of hostilities for compensation purposes), with reference to service during the war which commenced June 25, 1950, or on or before May 7, 1975 (the date set by the Government of the United States in Public Law 93-52 for the termination of combat activities), with reference to service during the hostilities which commenced February 28, 1961, or on or before July 31, 1984 (the date set by the Government of the United States for the termination of combat activities), with reference to service during the hostilities which commenced August 24, 1982, or on or before January 31, 1990 (the date set by the Government of the United States for the termination of combat activities), with reference to service during the hostilities which commenced December 20, 1989, with reference to service during the hostilities which commenced August 2, 1990, through and including the date set by the United States Government to be the end of hostilities, his/her death having been attributed to his/her service. Gold Star Member means the widow, sister, or daughter of one who died under conditions set forth in the definition of Gold Star Mother.

Q. Would a woman whose son or daughter served in a period of eligibility but was killed after term of eligibility be defined as a Gold Star Mother?

A. No, his death must have been attributed to his service during his eligibility period.

Q. For Gold Star status, must the relative have been “killed in action?”

A. No - The death must occur within the defined periods and the relative need not have been “killed in combat” so long as death is not caused by the individual’s own willful misconduct.

#### **Gold Star Sister**

Q. Would a sister of a servicemember who was killed in action while serving with the English forces be classified as a Gold Star Member?

A. Yes, if the brother was a United States citizen at the time of service.

#### **Gold Star Stepmother**

Q. Is a stepmother recognized as a Gold Star Mother?

A. The stepmother of a man or woman who died while serving in World Wars I or II, The Korean or Vietnam Wars, or conflict in either Grenada, Lebanon, Panama or the Gulf War/War on Terrorism would be a Gold Star Stepmother.



## Juniors

### Transition from Junior to Senior Member

- Q. If there is a difference in Unit dues for Juniors and Seniors, must that difference be paid for the current year by a Junior member (whose dues have already been paid) when she becomes eligible for Senior membership?
- A. When a Junior member pays her dues for the current year, no further dues are payable until the next dues year, even if she becomes eligible for Senior membership during the current year. Please note: The Auxiliary membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Any member who is 18 or older on January 1 of the membership year is considered a senior member and must pay senior dues for that membership year regardless of when dues are collected. For example, Sally's 18th birthday is November 20, 2013. For the 2013 membership year, Sally is considered a Junior. Because Sally will be 18 on January 1, 2014, she is considered a senior member beginning with the 2014 membership year. Consequently, she must pay senior dues for 2014 even if she pays those (2014) dues in October 2013.

## Delegation Representation

In determining delegation representation, Senior and Junior memberships are treated without distinction. All are counted in Department membership. For further information, refer to the Constitution and Bylaws.

## Past President Designate

- Q. If a member is elected, yet never serves in the office due to an unforeseen emergency, etc., is she considered for the honor due that office?
- A. Yes. The Counsel General has ruled that once a person is elected to a position, she is considered as having held that office. An officer elect takes possession of the office immediately upon the election becoming final unless the Bylaws or other rules specify a later time. For example, if she was elected as President of the Unit, she would be considered for all honors bestowed to a Past President of the Unit even though she never served.

## Holding Political Office

- Q. Can an Auxiliary member hold a political office and an office in the American Legion Auxiliary simultaneously?
- A. While a member of the Auxiliary can hold a political office, it is important to remember this member cannot use her Auxiliary membership as a "stepping stone," i.e., to advance her political

goals. No wearing apparel to signify Auxiliary membership, such as the Auxiliary hat, should be worn to political rallies. The two must be completely divorced.

### Requirement for Holding Office

- Q. Can a Unit require meeting attendance or membership for a specified length of time before a member is eligible to run for office?
- A. No. The Counsel General has stated there cannot be any condition precedent attached to the right to aspire to and hold office. Once a member has been accepted for membership, that individual becomes a member in good standing with all the rights and privileges concomitant with that membership, not the least of which is the right to aspire to and hold office.

### Requirement for Voting

- Q. Can a Unit require that a member attend a certain number of meetings in order to vote?
- A. No. The Counsel General has ruled that the right to vote and the right to hold office are clear privileges of membership. Hence, the attempt to place restrictions on such privileges of membership by the Unit is contrary to the provisions of the National Constitution and is thus null and void.

### Installations

- Q. Who is supposed to be the installing officer for an American Legion Auxiliary installation?
- A. Any member in good standing may be the installing officer. The choice of an installing officer is an honor conferred by the Unit at its discretion.

### Holding Membership Dues

- Q. What can be done about a Unit officer who holds back collected membership dues?
- A. Article IX, Section 1 of the National Bylaws states, "...The annual dues shall be collected by each Unit and transmitted through the Department to the National Treasurer." Article IX, Section 3 of the National Bylaws of the American Legion Auxiliary states, "...Each Department shall remit the National per capita dues promptly to the National Treasurer at least once each month."

Thus, since the Unit transmits through the Department, reading these two sections together, it is clear that the Unit must forward dues at least once per month. An attempt to hold back dues money raises serious

legal questions of the rights of members who do not receive their membership benefits. Likewise, if the money is lost, serious legal issues arise involving care and custody of the funds and issues of bonding of individuals who hold the funds. An individual who withholds money that should be forwarded most likely is in violation of the terms of the bond.



# APPENDIX





MANUAL OF CEREMONIES  
OF THE  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Revised 2009

## Foreword

This manual provides examples of suggested ceremonies for Unit meetings and special occasions. The use of ceremonies in the form presented here is not required by any official action of the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization.

Ceremonies may be altered in accordance with the occasion; however, great care should be taken to insure that no ceremony is objectionable to persons of any religious denomination.

## Unit Meeting

### Opening Ceremony

Auxiliary meetings shall be opened in the following manner:

The Unit President shall seat the members with one rap of the gavel, officers shall take their stations and the doors of the meeting hall shall be closed by the Sergeant at Arms.

*Unit President:* “The meeting will now come to order.”

*The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel and the members shall rise.*

*Unit President:* “The color bearers will advance the colors.”

***Note:** Optional; a set of miniature flags may be used for the pledge, but they are never advanced or retired.*

*In place of the following prayer, the Chaplain may substitute one of the same length and general tenor:*

*Chaplain:* “God of our faiths, we pray that You to guide our work in this meeting and in all our days. Send your peace to our nation and to all nations. Speed the fulfillment of your promise of peace that shall have no end.

We pray for all those who serve the people and guard the public welfare. By Your blessing help them to discharge their duties honestly and well. We pray for our members. Help them to observe the strictest justice; keep alight the fires of freedom, strive earnestly for the spirit of democracy, and preserve untarnished our loyalty to our country and to you.

We especially ask your blessing and comfort for all those who are suffering from the ravages of war. May our duty to them be ever alive in our minds. Finally, we remember lovingly before you our departed heroes. May their splendid example guide us, now and forever. Amen.”

### Alternative Prayer #1

“Lord, we come together looking toward the future of our organization. Be with us as we express our varying opinions and help us to have uppermost in our mind the needs of those whom we serve as we look toward a new direction for the American Legion Auxiliary.

As we discuss areas of change, allow us to illuminate, and to be open to, the vision of others. Help us find greater clarity and purpose for our organization, a renewed commitment and a deeper appreciation of each



other's diversity and its importance to our overall mission. Help us to remember that it is in working together as one, and with Your help, we can accomplish great things. Amen."

#### Alternative Prayer #2

"Lord, with open minds and hearts, we come together for the betterment of the American Legion Auxiliary. We remember the experiences and knowledge from the past, with gratitude for Your leadership and guidance. Help us to remember that in striving to help others: we work best as a team—not as individuals. Guide and direct us to do that which is right for our community, state and nation. Keep us committed to the overall mission of our organization. Help us to not only use what we have gained from the past, but to plan and prepare boldly for tomorrow. We move confidently into the future with you by our side. Amen"

***Note:** Additional prayers may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

*Unit President:* "In memory of our dead let us stand in silence."

*Soft music will add to the solemnity of the occasion. Taps. The members shall salute the flag of our country as it is advanced and placed in position.*

*Unit President:* "You will join me in pledging allegiance to the flag."  
"We shall sing one stanza of our National Anthem, 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'"

"You will join me in repeating the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary."

"For God and Country

We associate ourselves together For the following purposes: To uphold and defend

The Constitution of the United States of America;

To Maintain law and order; To foster and perpetuate

A one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents

Of our associations during the Great Wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation

To the community, state, and nation;

To combat the autocracy

Of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and good will on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity

The principles of Justice, Freedom, and Democracy;  
To participate in and contribute To the accomplishment Of the  
aims and purposes Of The American Legion;  
To consecrate and sanctify our association  
By our devotion to mutual helpfulness.”

*One rap of the gavel by the Unit President shall seat the  
members.*

*Unit President:* “I now declare \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department  
of \_\_\_\_\_ regularly convened.”

### Suggested Order of Business

The Unit President should be very familiar with the Unit Guide  
Book.

1. Call to order
2. Advancement of the colors
3. Prayer
4. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag
5. National Anthem
6. Preamble
7. Roll call of officers and members
8. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
9. Treasurer’s Financial report
10. Initiation of candidates (quarterly, biannually, or annually, as  
is the Unit custom)
11. Reports of:
  - President
  - Secretary
  - Executive Committee
  - Membership Committee
  - Standing committees
  - Special committees
12. Reading of communications, including those from National,  
Department and District officers
13. Unfinished business
14. New business
15. Election and installation of officers
16. Announcements
17. Program - educational and entertaining (optional)
18. Adjournment of business meeting
19. Retirement of colors (optional)

## Closing Ceremony

Auxiliary meetings shall be closed in the following manner:

*Unit President:* “Is there any further business to come before the meeting? If not, the Chaplain will lead us in prayer.”

*The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel, and the membership shall rise, and stand in silence.*

*Chaplain:* “O God from whom all holy desires, all right counsels and all just works do proceed, give to Your servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be disposed to obey Your commandments. With the fear of enemies being removed, may our times, by Your protection, be peaceful.

O God, who protects the nations who believe in You from being overwhelmed by any peril; allow others to accept the offerings of we, Your servants, that in Your mercy You may grant peace to all people and make them secure against all their enemies.

O God, the author and lover of peace, to know whom is to live, to serve whom is to reign; shield Your people from all assaults, so that we who trust in Your protection may fear no foe. We ask this through God’s Name. Amen.”

### Alternative Benediction #1

“Gracious God, as we go our separate ways, keep us mindful that we are still together in spirit and in purpose. Through we may differ among ourselves, help us to demonstrate our unity about that which is most important to our organization. To this end, help us to commit our energies and talents. Dismiss us now with Your blessing. Amen.”

### Alternative Benediction #2

“As we depart, we thank you for the opportunity to renew our pledge of service to You, our nation and to our great organization. May we continue to make a difference in our communities through our dedication toward others.

Grant us the necessary strength, wisdom and courage to continue our efforts with renewed enthusiasm and determination. Remind us that our duty to others does not end as we depart, but continues throughout our daily lives. Bless us and keep us until we meet again. Amen.”

### Alternative Benediction #3

“God, we ask that you give us pure hearts that we may see you, humble hearts that we may hear you and hearts of love that we may serve you.

God, as we depart, allow kindness to rule in our hearts and compassion

in our lives. In our journeys to and from--direct us; in our happiness and pleasure--bless us; in care, anxiety or trouble--sustain us; in peril and danger--protect us. Go now with us, in peace. Amen.”

*Note: Additional prayers may be found in the Appendix under prayers.*

*The first stanza of “America” may be sung by the membership.*

*Unit President:* “Till we meet again let us remember that our obligation to our Country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members. Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy. The color bearers will retire the colors.” (optional)

*Members shall salute the flag of our country as it is retired.*

*Unit President:* “I now declare the meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ adjourned.”

*The Unit President gives one rap of the gavel.*

### Initiation Ceremony for American Legion Auxiliary Units – Long Form

Initiation of candidates is an important function of the officers of each Unit. As important as the initiation is to impress the member of responsibility, it is NOT mandatory for membership.

*Properties:* To make the setting more effective, an appropriate covering should be used on the Unit President’s table. Four candles in uniform holders should represent the four great principles of The American Legion and Auxiliary. A bowl of poppies, one for each candidate, should be on the table, with sufficient copies of the Auxiliary Constitutions, Flag Codes, membership, information brochures, small American flags, Auxiliary pins and other desired materials. An emblem light, if available and gavel add to the effectiveness.

It is recommended that Units purchase all props to be used in the initiation ceremony.

*Setting:* Chairs should be placed in the front row for the candidates. If there are more candidates than can be seated in the front row on both sides of the center aisle, enough room should be left between rows so

that the Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms can present materials to each candidate at the appropriate time during the initiation.

Any officer or member other than those designated may be assigned to parts in the initiation ceremony.

*Dress:* No formal attire or uniforms are necessary.

*Procedure:* Before the meeting begins, the Sergeant at Arms should have a list of candidates' names. She should line up the candidates for the processional, instructing them that she will request their entrance at the appropriate time in the initiation ceremony.

When the Unit President has asked that the candidates for membership be presented, the Sergeant at Arms and Assistant Sergeant at Arms will lead the procession of candidates with the Sergeant at Arms on the left and the Assistant Sergeant at Arms on the right.

Candidates will be conducted to reserved seats in the front row(s) on the right and left.

Candidates should be informed that the ceremony of initiation is of a serious nature. Any light or humorous aspects of the Unit's initiation tradition shall be kept separate and apart from the formal initiation. Candidates should be told to remain standing during the initiation until they are told to be seated by the Unit President.

Soft music may be played during the initiation.

*Unit President:* "We shall now proceed to the initiation of new members. In order that we may impress upon the candidates the serious and sacred obligations of Auxiliary membership, all present will conduct them selves in a manner befitting such ceremony. The Sergeant at Arms shall ascertain if any candidates for initiation are present."

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the anteroom. Returning, she stands just within the door and addresses the Unit President:*

*Sergeant at Arms:* "Madam President, there are (number of candidates) who are qualified for membership in the American Legion Auxiliary, and are waiting to be presented."

*Unit President:* "You will conduct them into the meeting hall and place them properly before the flag of our country."

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the anteroom to call for the candidates. With the Assistant Sergeant at Arms, the candidates are conducted to the seats reserved in the front of the room where they remain standing. When*

*the candidates are in place facing the Unit President, the Sergeant at Arms faces the Unit President.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam President, I present these candidates for initiation into the American Legion Auxiliary.” The Unit President gives three raps of the gavel.

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*The Chaplain leaves her station and approaches the Flag of our Country, standing beside the Flag and facing the candidates.*

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. Father of our Faiths, as we participate in this initiation service, we express our pride and satisfaction in welcoming these new members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Help us to be a good example of the principles of our organization so that they may learn, and to make them a valued part of our service to others, so that Your Name may be glorified. May the full significance of the emblem of our organization, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty, be exemplified through our service to our country and to You.

Bless The American Legion as it charts our course and the American Legion Auxiliary as we carry out our program of service. Grant that all of us may seek Your guidance throughout our lives. Amen.”

*The Chaplain returns to her position. The membership is seated by one rap of the gavel and the Unit President then addresses the candidates.*

*Unit President:* “We are indeed pleased to receive you into the American Legion Auxiliary. Your desire to associate with us is a source of satisfaction to the members of this Unit. Your membership will represent additional strength to sustain the principles for which we are organized. We shall now travel spiritually with you as the officers explain the philosophy of life that unites us. The American Legion Auxiliary cherishes four great principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Before you are asked to assume the obligations which they entail, you will hear them explained. Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the first Vice President who will instruct them in Justice.”

*On desk or table have a bowl of poppies and sufficient copies of the Constitution for each candidate. Copies of the Constitution may be procured from Department Headquarters at a nominal cost, if Unit Constitution is not available.*

*The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the First Vice President. The First Vice President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Vice President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Justice.”

*First Vice President:* “Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice makes no distinction of persons. Justice recognizes neither rich nor poor, the classes nor the masses. Justice transcends all boundaries of race and creed. Justice is not weak but merciful. Justice views all sides impartially, without anger, without malice. Foster with all your energy a spirit of Justice, for Justice is the guiding star of life and upon it rests the future of our nation.

These poppies are the official flower of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. They are in memory of those who gave their all that Justice might be supreme. Never forget their sacrifice. May your actions forever bring credit to our organization, which is a living memorial to the veterans who fought in order that Justice, the divine right of man, might ever endure.

I give you a copy of our Constitution, in which you will find a practical application of the ideals of Justice.

*Sergeant at Arms,* conduct the candidates to the Second Vice President, who will instruct them in Freedom.”

*Have on desk or table the gavel, bell and sufficient flags for each candidate. The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the Second Vice President. The Second Vice President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Vice President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Freedom.”

*Second Vice President:* “Freedom is, among all the rights of mankind, the one held most dear. Freedom is an ideal of surpassing strength for which men throughout the ages have willingly fought and died. Freedom is the power of self-determination.

In the War of the Revolution, Freedom was won for the people of the United States; as in all wars. Freedom was the torch that led our men through the darkness of the conflicts; and again, Freedom will be the torch which will lead us to victory.

You must guard well the Freedom of this Unit. You must keep the American Legion Auxiliary, a free organization of free women, faithful

to the ideals that made it possible. Above all, you must prevent anything being done to prejudice the people of the United States, whose foundation is the rock of liberty.

This bell, a reproduction of the Liberty Bell, which in bold and clarion tone rang out the Freedom of a new nation, is to remind you that you must never forget that America is the cradle of Freedom.

I give you the American Flag, the emblem of Freedom.

Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the Junior Past President who will instruct them in Democracy.”

*Have, on desk or table, sufficient American Legion Auxiliary pins for each candidate. The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated positions in front of the Junior Past President. The Junior Past President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Past President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Democracy.”

*Junior Past President:* “Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Democracy is American in principle and universal in appeal. Democracy offers a voice in government to every citizen, and in its benefits every citizen may share.

To the American Legion Auxiliary, Democracy is concrete and actual. We express it in our meeting halls where distinction of rank is banished, and all are equal in a common service. Permit every member a free voice, but not a voice so free as to transcend the limits of liberty. Ever remember, Democracy can exist only where each one knows and accepts the responsibility of service to community, state, and nation. In all our undertakings, seek to prove that all are born equal, with certain natural rights, and that a nation dedicated and true to this principle shall endure forever.

I give you the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary, which is also an emblem of Democracy.

Sergeant at Arms, conduct the candidates to the President who will instruct them in Loyalty.”

*The Sergeant at Arms conducts the candidates to the designated position in front of the Unit President. The Unit President rises.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam President, I present these candidates to you for instruction in Loyalty.”

*Unit President:* “Loyalty is the cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary, since it is one of the first virtues of a soldier. Loyalty is as dear



as Justice is desirable, as Freedom is glorious, as Democracy is practical. Loyalty is one of the first requirements of a citizen. In the American Legion Auxiliary, Loyalty will lead us to defend our organization in all that is right, and to do our utmost to keep it in the right. Loyalty to country and self is the basis of true Americanism. You must ever see that the officers of this Unit are loyal to their duties; that the members of this Unit are loyal to The American Legion; that the American Legion Auxiliary is loyal to its principles; and that this land of ours is loyal to itself.

By this time you understand that the American Legion Auxiliary is a united organization. Composed, as it is, of members of every race, religion, occupation, and political conviction, it is obligated to strict neutrality on all questions concerning religion, politics, and industrial strife. You have heard its four great principles, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty explained.

Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary? If so, you will each answer 'I am.'"

*Candidates:* "I am."

*All candidates must answer and signify, they are willing to assume the obligation. The Unit President shall give three raps of the gavel and members shall rise while candidates repeat the obligation to the Auxiliary.*

*The Unit President will step to the right, immediately next to the American Flag and will raise her right hand and address the Candidates.*

*Unit President:* "You will raise your right hand and repeat after me:

"I, (here give your name)

Do solemnly pledge

To uphold and defend the Constitution

Of the United States of America:

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents

Of our associations during the Great Wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy

Of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;  
To promote peace and good will on earth;  
To safeguard and transmit to posterity  
The principles of Justice, Freedom, and Democracy;  
To participate in and contribute  
To the accomplishment  
Of the aims and purposes  
Of The American Legion;  
To consecrate and sanctify our association  
By our devotion to mutual helpfulness  
To all of which I pledge myself  
For God and Country.  
I am not a member and do not subscribe  
To the principles of any group  
Opposed to our form of government.”

*At the conclusion of the obligation, the Unit President will resume her station and seat the membership with one rap of the gavel. The Unit Chaplain rises and stands at some convenient location close to the emblem and calls the attention of the candidates to the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary. All lights, except those of the four candles shall be extinguished. Silence shall be observed for ten seconds - soft music shall be played. Using an emblem light, if available, or the banner, a pin or picture of the emblem, the Unit Chaplain should say:*

*Chaplain:* “The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is your badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and country, and the highest rights of mankind. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary; Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy, dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

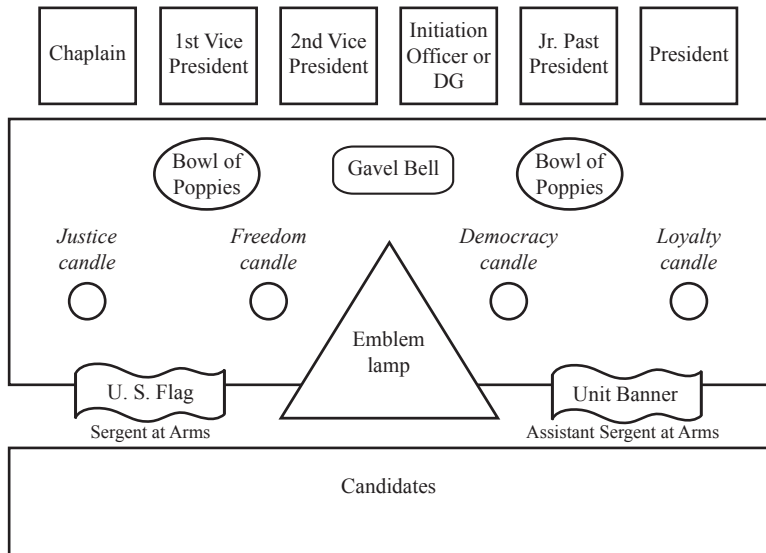
The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. Americanism is unity of love, singleness of allegiance, practicality of purpose, care of the distressed, and the education of children, all directed to the promotion of a common good. As members of this organization, we must preach and teach the principles of Americanism. Let us not forget that to each generation comes its patriotic duty and that upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure as those before you have sacrificed and endured, rests the hope of the nation.”

*Lights are turned on and one rap of the gavel seats membership.*

*Unit President:* “On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of I welcome you to membership in this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*(Music) The Unit President introduces each newly obligated member to the membership and requests the Sergeant at Arms to seat them with the members in the chairs reserved in front of the room.*

**Initiation Ceremony Diagram**



*This simplified basic Initiation ceremony may be elaborated upon if the Unit so desires. Soft music may be played during the ceremony.*

**Initiation Ceremony for American Legion Auxiliary Units - Short Form**

The props, setting, participants and procedures for the short form of the Initiation Ceremony are much the same as that of the long form. However, the number of participants are not the same, and the ceremony is not as detailed.

*Initiation Officer:* “We shall now proceed with the Initiation. You are requested to remain in silence. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the candidates for initiation.”

*The Sergeant at Arms proceeds to the rear or anteroom, ascertains if the Assistant has the lines ready and then addresses the Initiation Officer.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Initiation Officer, I present the following

candidates: (Reads their names.)”

*Initiation Officer:* “You will conduct the candidates to the front and place them properly before the flag of our country.”

*(Music) Sergeant at Arms and Assistant shall escort the candidates to the front.*

*Initiation Officer:* “Your desire to associate with us is a source of satisfaction to the members of this Unit. Your membership will represent additional strength to sustain the principles for which we are organized.”

*Three raps of the gavel for membership to stand.*

*Initiation Officer:* “The Chaplain shall offer prayer.”

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. Father of all, we come to ask your blessing upon us. We thank you for your guidance and tender love in times of need. Keep us steadfast, O God, in the cause of human rights, liberty, and true Americanism. Help us to remember that in days of peace as well as in times of war, there is need for unselfish service in the interest of these principles. With our thanks, may the memories of those who have died in service remind us of all they have done and inspire in us a renewed patriotism. Amen.”

*One rap of the gavel to seat membership.*

*Initiation Officer:* “The American Legion Auxiliary cherishes four great principles: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Before you are asked to assume the obligation you will hear them explained.”

*Have sufficient copies of the Constitution and a poppy for each candidate. Copies of the Constitution may be procured from your Department Headquarters at a nominal cost.*

*First Vice President:* (Rises) “I light the candle of Justice. Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice makes no distinction of persons and transcends all boundaries of race and creed. Justice views all sides impartially, without anger, without malice. We should all foster a true spirit of Justice, for it is the guiding Star of Life and upon it rests the future of all Nations.

These poppies are the official flower of The American Legion and the

American Legion Auxiliary. They are in memory of those who gave their all that Justice might be supreme. May your actions forever bring credit to our organization, which is a living memorial to the heroes of the World Wars, who fought in order that Justice, the divine right of man, might ever endure.

I give you a copy of our Constitution, in which you will find a practical application of the ideals of Justice.”

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall distribute a poppy and a copy of the Constitution to each candidate.*

*Second Vice President:* (Rises) “From the candle of Justice, I light the candle of Freedom. Freedom is among all the rights of mankind the one held most dear. In the war of the Revolution, Freedom was won for the people of the United States; in the World Wars, Freedom was the torch that led the men through the darkness of conflict. You must help us keep the American Legion Auxiliary, a free organization of free women, faithful to the ideals upon which it was founded. This bell is a reproduction of the Liberty Bell which rang out the freedom of a new nation, and may it ever remind you that America is the cradle of freedom.

The flag of the United States is the emblem of Freedom.”

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall give each candidate a small flag and a copy of the Flag code.*

*Junior Past President:* (Rises) “From the candle of Freedom I light the candle of Democracy. Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people. American democracy offers a voice in government to every citizen so that all may share in its benefits. Democracy can exist only where each knows and accepts his responsibility of service to his community, state and nation.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Democracy.”

*Sergeant at Arms and the assistant shall distribute informational materials on the Auxiliary.*

*Initiation Officer will quietly move the Freedom candle toward the Junior Past President’s station so that it is easily accessible for her part in the ceremony.*

*Unit President:* (Rises) “From the candle of Democracy I light the candle of Loyalty. Loyalty is one of the first requirements of a citizen and is the cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary. Loyalty will lead us to defend our organization in all that is right. May the officers of this

Unit be loyal to their duties and all the members be loyal to the principles of The American Legion. Loyalty to God, to country and to self is the basis of true Americanism.

You have heard explained the four great principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Are you now ready and willing to obligate yourself to these principles?"

*Candidates:* "I am."

*All candidates shall signify verbally their willingness to take the obligation. Three raps of the gavel and the members shall stand.*

*Unit President:* "You will raise your right hand and repeat after me: 'I do solemnly pledge to be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary. To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to all of which I pledge myself to God and country! I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.'"

*At the conclusion of the obligation, all lights, except those of the four candles shall be extinguished. Silence shall be observed for ten seconds, soft music shall be played, and without a cue the Chaplain shall call attention to the emblem. This may be an emblem light, the banner; a pin, or a picture of the emblem.*

*Chaplain:* "The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is your badge of distinction and honor. It stands for God and country and the highest rights of mankind. It consists of several parts and each part has a meaning. The rays of the sun that form the background stand for the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary; Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy; dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The star of blue is the emblem of service in war; it is no less the emblem of service in time of peace.

The emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary is the emblem of Americanism. Americanism is the unity of love, singleness of allegiance, practicality of purpose, care of the distressed, and the education of children, all directed to the promotion of a common good. As members of this organization we must preach and teach the principles of Americanism. Let us not forget that to each generation comes its patriotic duty and that upon your willingness to sacrifice and endure, as those before you have sacrificed and endured, rests the hope of the nation."

*Lights are turned on and one rap of the gavel seats membership.*

*Initiation Officer:* “On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I welcome you to membership in this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Music*

*Initiation Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, you will conduct these new members to their chairs.”

*Sufficient chairs shall be reserved in the front of the room.*

### Installation of Officers - Short Form

Unit officers shall be installed immediately following their election or as soon thereafter as possible.

The Installing Officer for a Unit installation shall be a past Unit President, past or present District President, past or present Department or National officer or any person designated by the Unit.

A list of the Unit officers-elect should be prepared in advance for the Sergeant at Arms and all officers-elect should be seated in a reserved section, preferably near the front of the room.

In this simplified ceremony only the Installing Officer, Unit President and Sergeant at Arms officiate, but an Installation team, stations for each officer, obligations given by outgoing officers, pins, badges and ribbons may be used to make the ceremony as elaborate as the Unit desires.

*Unit President:* “We shall now proceed with the installation of officers. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the Installing Officer.”  
Sergeant at Arms conducts the Installing Officer to the platform. Unit President makes a short introduction as to the name, office and past services to the Auxiliary of the distinguished guest.

*Installing Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, you will call the roll of officers-elect of this Unit.”

*They, as their names are called, in order of rank, beginning with the president-elect, will either line up in the rear of the room or step forward forming a line before the Installing Officer. If the Unit desires to use a processional, the pianist will play appropriate music for marching.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Installing Officer, I present to you the officers-elect of this Unit.”

*Installing Officer:* “You have been chosen to fill the various offices of this Unit. You will familiarize yourself with the duties of your respective

offices as given in the Unit Guide Book. Always remember that the welfare and success of this Unit depend upon you. Therefore, I would remind you of the obligation which every American Legion Auxiliary member assumes the obligation of preserving the integrity of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, contributing to the aims and purposes of our organization, the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. You will now raise your right hand and repeat after me: "I promise to perform faithfully all the duties of the office I am about to assume: and I further pledge that I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government."

Sergeant at arms, you are responsible for order at all Unit meetings; for the advancement and retirement of the colors and for their proper care; for courtesies to guests and such other duties as may be assigned to you; for regular attendance at meetings and cooperation with the President.

Chaplain, you are the spiritual leader of this Unit. Your words and actions will represent our founding principles of service to God and Country. You will be responsible for the observance of all religious ceremonies. It is expected that you will so dignify your office that all fellow members will follow your example.

Historian, you are responsible for the compiling and preserving of the records of this Unit. The lamp of recorded experience will do much to guide the footsteps of those who follow.

Treasurer, your office is one of trust. You are responsible for this year's budget and for payment of all authorized obligations. Guard well your trust!

Secretary, your duties are those of administrative and the promptness and discretion with which you meet your responsibilities will contribute to the success of this Unit.

Second Vice President, into your helpful hands is placed the responsibility of assisting the Vice President and President in all their duties. You will always be alert to apply the teachings of freedom to the proceedings of this Unit.

Vice President, to you is given the active cooperation with the President for the development of the Unit program. In the absence of the President you will be prepared to assume the duties of her office. Your office carries with it the teachings of Justice. Always remember that Justice is the guiding Star of Life.

President, great trust has been placed in you by your election to the highest office within this Unit. And as you assume the duties of the President of \_\_\_ Unit of the American Legion Auxiliary, I charge you to carry constantly in your mind the obligation which is yours, that of upholding the four great principles expressed in the Preamble to the



Constitution: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty.

Executive Committee Members-at- Large, you with the other members of the Executive Committee have been entrusted with the responsibility to manage and govern this Unit between meetings at the call of the President. All action shall be approved by the Unit membership. Use this trust wisely.”

*Installing Officer requests the new officers and Executive Committee-at-large to turn and face the audience. Three raps of the gavel for members to stand.*

*Installing Officer:* “I congratulate this Unit upon the officers you have chosen. I have charged them with a serious responsibility and in turn, I charge you likewise. Will every member of this Unit please raise her right hand and repeat after me?

‘I solemnly promise to renew my pledge of service to the American Legion Auxiliary and to give wholehearted support to these Unit Officers.’”

*Chaplain, please refer to the suggested prayers on page 156 for an alternative prayer.*

*Chaplain:* “Father of our Faiths, we seek Your presence at this installation of our newly elected officers. May we ask Your blessing on them and Your guidance during the coming year. Make them aware of their responsibilities, both to You and to our country. Create in them a desire to foster the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty so that the American Legion Auxiliary may accomplish its share of building toward a better world. This we ask in Your name. Amen.”

*One rap of gavel to seat members.*

*Installing Officers:* “Will the Sergeant at Arms please escort the President and Junior Past President to the podium and the other officers to their seats?

Junior Past President, you have come to the close of your administration. You have been loyal to this Unit and led it courageously. As you retire from this office, be assured that you take with you the respect and appreciation of the members. I pin over your heart the insignia of Past President. May you always wear it with pride and happy memories of your service as Unit President.

To you, as the new President of Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I present to you this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it with

discretion in the best interests of this Unit.”

### Installation of Officers - Long Form

All officers shall, after their election and at the earliest opportunity thereafter, be installed in the following manner:

The Installing Officer for a Unit installation shall be a past Unit President, past or present District President, Department or National officer or any person designated by the Unit.

A list of the Unit officers-elect should be prepared in advance for the Sergeant at Arms. All members of the Installation team should be in their respective stations as shown in the manual of Ceremonies, and each officer shall be given a card on which should be copied her “charge” to the newly elected officer. Pins, badges and ribbons may be used to make the ceremony as elaborate as the Unit desires.

*Unit President:* “We shall now proceed with the installation of officers. The Sergeant at Arms shall present the Installing Officer.”

*Sergeant at Arms conducts the Installing Officer to the platform. Unit President makes a short introduction as to the name, office and past services of the distinguished guest.*

*Installing Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, please present the officers-elect of the Unit.”

*They, as their names are called, in order of rank, i.e., President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, Historian, Executive Committee Member-at large and Sergeant at Arms will form a line facing the Installing Officer. If the Unit desires to use a processional, the pianist will play appropriate music for marching.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam Installing Officer, I present to you the officers-elect of this Unit.”

*Installing Officer:* “You have been chosen to fill the various offices of this Unit. You will, I know, vindicate the trust that has been reposed in you, and fulfill in every way the obligations which that trust entails. You will familiarize yourselves with the duties your respective offices carry with them. Ever remember that the welfare and success of this Unit depend upon you; and upon your shoulders rest the burden of preserving the integrity of the American Legion Auxiliary. You must protect its good name before the people of the United States, and at all times endeavor to have them understand its policy and its purpose. Always remember the

tolerant spirit of the American Legion Auxiliary. Allow no distinction of class or creed to appear among its members. There is no rank among us, for each serves as the equal of her fellow member, and all strive toward the same goal, which is the realization in the life of the Republic of the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. You will now raise your right hand and repeat after me, giving your name.

‘I, do solemnly pledge to perform faithfully all the duties of the office I am about to assume; and I further pledge that I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.’”

*After the obligation of the new officers, the Installing Officer shall address the Sergeant at Arms.*

*Installing Officer:* “Sergeant at Arms, conduct the new officers to their respective stations.”

*The Acting or Retiring Sergeant at Arms escorts each officer elect to her respective station, starting with the elected Sergeant at Arms and ending with the Unit President. The Sergeant at Arms will conduct the Sergeant at Arms-elect to the station of the Sergeant at Arms and when arrived at that station will address the elected Sergeant at Arms as follows:*

*Acting Sergeant at Arms:* “You are responsible for order at all Unit meetings; for the advancement and retirement of colors; for the proper care of all Unit materials; for courtesies to guests and such other duties as may be assigned to you; for regular attendance at meetings, for loyalty to, and cooperation with, the President.”

*The Sergeant at Arms next escorts the Historian to her station.*

*The Acting Historian then charges her.*

*Acting Historian:* “Your office is an important one. To you is given the responsibility of preserving and compiling the records of this Unit. The future can only be judged by the past. Be mindful that the lamp of recorded experience may do much in guiding the footsteps of those who follow.”

*The Sergeant at Arms then escorts the Chaplain to the right of the Unit President.*

*The Acting Chaplain then charges her.*

*Acting Chaplain:* “Recognizing our diversity, to you is given the spiritual leadership of this Unit. You will, I know, lend dignity and respect to your office. By your words and actions, you will represent our founding principles of service to God and Country. You are responsible for pronouncing the invocation and benediction at all Unit meetings, and for participating in other ceremonial occasions. You should remain in close confidence with the President and the other officers, and should attend all Unit Meetings. Into your keeping we place the spirit of cooperation within this Unit.”

*The Sergeant at Arms then escorts the Treasurer to the left of the Unit President’s station.*

*Acting Treasurer:* “You are the keeper of all funds and, with you, rests the financial policy of this Unit. You are responsible for the year’s budget, and the payment of all obligations when correct authorization has been given for such payment. Your election to this office signifies that the members of this Unit have reposed in your implicit trust.”

*Sergeant at Arms please escort the Secretary to her desk and the Acting Secretary charges her as follows:*

*Acting Secretary:* “To you is given the greatest number of duties of any officer of this Unit. Your duties are administrative. You occupy an important position around which all the activities of the Unit revolve. Your cooperation with the President will determine a large measure the success of her administration.”

*If your Unit prescribes for a Corresponding Secretary you shall use the following:*

*Sergeant at Arms please escort the Corresponding Secretary to the right of the Secretary or Recording Secretary.*

*Acting Corresponding Secretary:* “The character and policy of the Unit is given great opportunity for expression from your mind and hand. The promptness and discretion with which you meet your responsibilities will reflect the efficiency of your office. Promptness will tend to establish efficiency. Discretion will make and retain friends for the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Sergeant at Arms escorts the Second Vice President to her station.*

*Acting Second Vice President:* “Your office carries with it the teachings of Freedom. In the War of the Revolution, as in all wars, Freedom was

won for people of the United States; in the World Wars, Freedom was the torch that led our men through the darkness of the conflict; and again Freedom will be the torch which will lead us to victory. You will be ever alert to apply the principles of Freedom in the proceedings of this Unit.”

*Sergeant at Arms next escorts the First Vice President to her station.*

*Acting First Vice President:* “To you is given the co-responsibility with the President for the complete development of your Unit Program. You should attend all meetings, and in the absence of the President be prepared to assume the duties of her office. Your office carries with it the responsibility of expounding the principles of Justice. True Justice makes no distinction of persons. Justice recognizes neither rich nor poor, the classes nor the masses. Justice is the guiding star of life, and upon it rests the future of our nation.”

*Sergeant at Arms escorts the President to her station.*

*Acting President:* “Great trust has been placed in you by your election to the highest office this Unit can bestow. To you is entrusted the supervision of the duties of all officers. To you is entrusted the responsibility for the success of this year’s program. To you is entrusted the sacred duty of upholding the four great principles expressed in the Preamble to our Constitution: Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty. Ever remember that Loyalty is one of the first virtues of a soldier, and Loyalty to country and self is the basis of true Americanism. (I place this ribbon over your shoulder) optional. I pin over your heart the insignia of President, and place in your possession the Constitution and Bylaws, Unit Guide Book and Manual of Ceremonies of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Charge to all members of the Executive Committee.*

“Executive Committee, as officers and members-at-large you have been entrusted with the responsibility to manage and govern this Unit between meetings or, at the call of the President, all action shall be approved by the Unit membership. Use this trust wisely.”

*Sergeant at Arms conducts the retiring President to her station.*

*Retiring Junior Past President:* “You have come to the close of your administration. It has been a rewarding adventure for you and a glorious one for this Unit. You have led us fearlessly, courageously, and nobly. As you retire from this office be assured you take with you the respect and

appreciation of the members. I pin over your heart the insignia of Past President. May you always wear it with pride and happy memories of your service as Unit President.”

*Installing Officer requests the new officers to stand as she addresses the members. Three raps of the gavel for members to stand.*

*Installing Officer:* “I congratulate this Unit upon the officers you have chosen. I have charged them with a serious responsibility and in turn, I charge you likewise. Will every member of this Unit please raise her right hand and repeat after me?”

“I solemnly promise to renew my pledge of service to the American Legion Auxiliary and to give wholehearted support to these Unit Officers.”

*Chaplain:* “O Lord, we ask that You will give wisdom and understanding to these newly elected officers of the American Legion Auxiliary. Bless and encourage them in Your own special way. Guide them as they lead us in our paths of service. May they assume their offices with loyal hearts, determined to fulfill their obligations to our organization.

We pray that the American Legion Auxiliary may be worthy of being used by You in giving moral and spiritual leadership to the great enterprise of building an organization that has for its purpose service to mankind and to You. We ask this in your name. Amen.”

*One rap of gavel to seat members. Installing Officer presents gavel to Unit President, and says:*

*Installing Officer:* “To you, as the new President of Unit \_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_ I present this gavel, your symbol of authority. May you use it wisely and in the best interest of the membership.”

*She hands the gavel to the new Unit President and the Installing Officer takes a seat.*

**Note:** *Alternative prayers for Installation may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

## Graduation Ceremony for Juniors Reaching the Age of 18 Years

*The table should be set such as in the Initiation ceremony plan - short form.*

*Unit President:* “Will the Sergeant at Arms and the Junior Activities Chairman please escort the Junior member(s) that are eligible for Senior membership to the front of the room.”

*The members will stand in front of table facing the officers. The Sergeant at Arms and Junior Activities Chairman step back a few paces.*

*Unit President:* “In the Junior Activities program you have been given the opportunity to learn the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of the American Legion Auxiliary in order that you may understand and participate in the functioning of the Unit when you become Senior members. May you always be a loyal and faithful Unit member, helping to carry out the four great principles for which we are organized. As you are now eligible to join the ranks of the Senior members of our great organization, may you always be ready to use your ability in leadership, one of the highest gifts from God, to help carry our unselfish program of service to our communities, our hospitals, to our veterans and their children.”

*First Vice President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Justice. Justice is the highest code by which humanity is governed. True Justice is the guiding Star of Life, and upon it rests the future of our nation.”

*Second Vice President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Freedom. Freedom is among all of the rights of man and the one held most dear. You must help keep America a free country, faithful to the ideals upon which it was founded.”

*Junior Past President:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Democracy. Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people. Our American Democracy can continue to exist only if our citizens know and accept their responsibilities to their community, state and nation.”

*Secretary or Treasurer:* (Rises and lights candle) “I light the candle of Loyalty. Loyalty is one of the most important requirements of a citizen. Loyalty to God, to Country and to self is the basis of true Americanism.”

*Unit President:* “Will the Junior Activities Chairman please present the names of the Junior members who are eligible for Senior membership.”

*Junior Activities Chairman:* “Madam President, I have the honor of presenting (give each member’s name). These members have served as Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Unit \_\_\_\_\_ the Department of \_\_\_\_\_ and have attained the required age of eighteen. They are now eligible for Senior membership.”

*Unit President:* “Your presence here indicates the trust our Unit has placed in you as Junior members. Your membership as a Senior will represent additional strength to sustain our Unit and the Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I now declare you a Senior member of the American Legion Auxiliary and take pride in presenting each of you with this certificate.”  
*(The Unit President walks around the table and hands each a certificate. The Sergeant at Arms presents the Unit Guide Book, and a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Unit. The Junior Activities Chairman pins a Poppy Corsage on the left shoulder of each girl and also presents each with an Auxiliary pin if none had been presented during the time they were Juniors or if it had been lost.)*

*Unit President gives three raps of the gavel.*

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. O God, as we participate in this Graduation Ceremony for these Juniors, we express our pride and satisfaction in having them as Senior members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Help us to guide them so that Your Name may be glorified and that the full significance of the emblem of our organization, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and Loyalty may be exemplified through service to our Country and to You.

Bless The American Legion as it charts our course and the American Legion Auxiliary as we carry on our program of service to mankind. Grant that all of us may seek Your guidance throughout our lives. We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.”

*Note: Alternative prayers for Installation may be found in the Appendix under Prayers.*

*Unit President seats the members with one rap of the gavel.*



*Unit President:* “On behalf of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of \_\_\_\_\_ I welcome you as Senior members of this Unit. May you enjoy your association with us and always be a loyal member of the American Legion Auxiliary.”

*Music*

*Unit President:* “Sergeant at Arms, will you conduct these Senior members to their chairs.”

*Sufficient chairs should be reserved in the front of the room if this ceremony takes place before a Unit meeting or any other gathering.*

### Ceremony for Permanent Retirement for Unserviceable Flags

It is assumed that prior to this ceremony new National Colors and Unit Standard have been appropriately dedicated.

The Unit meeting is opened in the usual manner. The one exception is that Color Bearers will stand beside Color Stands holding Colors at “carry” instead of placing them in Color Stands.

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam President, I wish to present our unserviceable flags for inspection and permanent retirement.”

*Unit President:* “Sergeant at Arms, select a detail from among our members present and advance with the flags to be retired.”

*Sergeant at Arms selects two members who take National Colors and Unit Standard to be retired - and with the Sergeant at Arms on the right, advance to the Unit President’s position.*

*Unit President:* “Madam Second Vice President, will you inspect these flags?”

*Second Vice President:* “Is the present condition of these flags the result of their usual service as the emblem of our Country and of our Unit?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “These flags have become faded and worn in the service of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary. Department of \_\_\_\_\_.”

*Second Vice President retires.*

*Unit President:* “Madam First Vice President, will you inspect these flags?”

*First Vice President:* “How did these flags come to their present condition?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “In the service of memory and tribute to our honored dead of all wars.”

*First Vice President:* “Present them to our Unit President for final inspection and fitting retirement.”

*The Sergeant at Arms commands the detail “about face” so that they face the Unit President.*

*Sergeant at Arms:* “Madam President, we have the honor to present for inspection and proper retirement our unserviceable flags.”

*Unit President:* “Have these flags been inspected by the First and Second Vice Presidents?”

*Sergeant at Arms:* “They have.”

*President:* “Madam Second Vice President, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?”

*Second Vice President:* “Madam President, these flags have become unserviceable in a worthy cause. They have served our beloved Unit well. I recommend that they be honorably retired from further service.”

### Retirement of Colors

*President:* “Madam First Vice President, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?”

*First Vice President:* “Madam President, these flags have become faded and worn in a service of tribute and love. I recommend that they be permanently retired and eventually destroyed.”

*Unit President:* “My fellow members -- we have presented here the flag of our Country and the standard of our Unit which have been inspected and condemned as unserviceable. They have reached their present state in a proper service of tribute, memory and love. Let these flags - faded though they be, but so rich in memories and traditions be permanently retired and destroyed with respectful and honorable rites.

“Comrades two, tried and true, peace to you.  
May your ashes rest where our heroes are,  
And your memory shine like the morning star.  
Comrades two, tried and true, farewell.”

*Unit President:* “Sergeant at Arms, retire the flags!”

*Sergeant at Arms gives the command “About face.”*

*Unit President:* “Unit Salute!”

*At the command salute, Sergeant at Arms orders “forward march!” Color Bearers --National Colors remain erect at the “carry.” Unit standard is dipped in salute as retiring Colors are marched to rear of the hall. Unit Color Bearers then insert their flags in the flag stands and take their places among the Unit members.*

## **Dedication of American Legion Auxiliary Halls, Colors and Memorials**

The members of the Unit shall assemble at the designated place. The President, Chaplain, and the member assigned to receive the gift shall take their places on the platform with the public officials and other guests. The Unit members shall assemble with the general public.

Following the program as outlined by the committee, the President, when called upon, shall address the assemblage as follows:

*Unit President:* “Members of Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, and friends:

We are gathered today for a grateful and patriotic duty, to dedicate this hall as headquarters for the American Legion Auxiliary, or (these colors, the emblem of the United States, and the emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary) or (this monument, a perpetual memorial to our heroes who died in their country’s service). May we again dedicate our organization and ourselves to the sacred ideals which are here represented, ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary’s principal service is for God and country.”

*Some other phrase designating the purpose of the gathering may be substituted for hall, colors or monument.*

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will ask the blessing of God upon these ceremonies.”

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. Father of our Faiths, we stand before You today as loyal citizens of our country, grateful for its splendid heritage. We ask Your blessing upon our great republic. May America ever remain free, mighty, and true to our ideals. Bless the President of the United States and all public servants, that they may walk in justice before You, and that all their acts may contribute to the greater welfare of our people.

We pray for Your blessings upon our Flag, the emblem of heroes. May Your merciful blessing rest upon them, and upon those for whom the war is not over. Teach us to honor them by ever cherishing the ideals for which they fought and died. Inspire us by their example to live that we may die worthy of their sacrifice.

We ask Your blessing upon this service. May it uplift us all to constant devotion to Your teachings, and to the welfare of our country. Amen.”

*Unit President:* “Let us stand in silence with bowed heads for thirty seconds in memory of those who have made the supreme sacrifice and who have answered the call of the Great Commander of all Divisions.”

*Soft music will add to the solemnity of the occasion.*

*The President shall introduce the donor, or member of the Unit designated to present the hall, colors, or memorial. Presentation Address. The President shall introduce the Past President, or member of Unit designated to accept the hall, colors, or memorial. Acceptance Address. At the conclusion of the program as outlined by the committee, the President shall proceed to dedicate the hall, colors or memorial.*

### Dedication of Hall

*Unit President:* “In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate this hall, embodiment of the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy for which the American Legion Auxiliary exists. As in time of war we served our country, so in time of peace may we serve our republic fearlessly and well. May we ever remember the heroes who have gone before and may their memory dwell within this hall and be a constant blessing among us. I dedicate this hall to the objectives of our Unit, and with it I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our nation, and to the memory of our heroic dead.”

### Dedication of Colors

*Unit President:* “Sergeant at Arms, you will display the flags.”

*The assemblage shall rise.*

“In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate these colors. May they fly permanently as the emblem of freedom. Here is the Flag of our country; safe within its folds is the freedom and loyalty of our nation. Beside it is the banner of the American Legion Auxiliary; on its expanse is the emblem of our organization, the star of service.

I dedicate these colors to the objective of our Unit, community, state and nation; and with them I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our nation.

You will join me in the salute to the Flag of our country.”

*Salute to Flag.*

### Dedication of a Memorial

*Unit President:* “In the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary, I now dedicate this memorial. It is dedicated to the memory of those who fell in the service of their country on land and sea. It is dedicated in the name of those who offered their

lives that Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive. The lives of those who have made the supreme sacrifice are glorious before us, and their deeds are an inspiration. As they served America in time of war, yielding their last full measure of devotion, may we serve America in time of peace.

I dedicate this memorial to them, and with it I dedicate our Unit to the faithful service of our country and to the preservation of the memory of those who died that Liberty might live.”

*At the conclusion of all dedications, benediction shall be given by the Chaplain, followed by the retirement of colors.*

## Services for the Deceased

### Funeral Service

The American Legion Auxiliary service is non-sectarian. Therefore, it may be varied in accordance with the religious belief of the deceased. The wish of the family of the deceased, and of the officiating pastor, should be respected.

### *Music*

*Unit President:* “Death has entered our ranks and members of (name of Unit) of the American Legion Auxiliary are here to pay tribute to one who has been called to the High Command.”

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. God of infinite Love and Mercy, draw near to us in this hour of grief. Open our hearts to Your comforting presence and our eyes to the realities of Eternal Life. May the darkness of death be replaced by the dawn of eternity, and the present pangs of separation to the joys of future reunion.

Grant us, O Father, that our present sorrow may bring us closer to You, and that our hearts may be cleansed and purified by Your grace. We thank You for the understanding that death does not really separate us from the departed. Help us to look beyond the grave and see the glories of that new Life. Help us to know that our loved ones who have passed on are not dead, but are living and enjoying Your Grace and Love more than when here upon earth.

O Father, we earnestly pray for our departed member, that she may enter into all the joys of the life beyond. We pray that by cherishing her memory and by cultivating Your presence, we, too, may grow up into that more perfect Life in which death has no power and sin no part. Amen.”

Or This:

“Let us pray. Lord of all life, who ever lives again. You have taught us the measure of our days. We are strangers with You and sojourners, as our fathers were. Our days are as a shadow and there is none abiding. But you abide. Your years fail not. You never change. A thousand years in Your sight is but as yesterday when it has passed. The grass withers, the flowers fade, but Your word endures forever. And therein is our help and hope.

You heal the broken hearted and bind up the wounds. Comfort Your people, in their sorrow. May there be no bitterness, no doubt of Your eternal goodness. Have them know that You have not mocked us with this stubborn hope of life eternal; that having created and cared for us

You will not desert us to the dust; that You hold us with a love unfailing; that our dead are in Your keeping; and that You are able to do for them above all that we ask or think.

Until for us also the daybreak and shadows flee away, grant us to so live that our lives may honor the members who have gone before us. Thus together may we come to that City which You have prepared for them that love You and keep Your commandments. For Your own name's sake we pray. Amen."

*Music*

*Unit President:* "Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord."

*Chaplain:* "And let perpetual light shine upon her."

*Unit President:* "May she rest in peace."

*Chaplain:* "Amen."

*Unit President:* "May her soul and the souls of all faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace."

*Chaplain:* "Amen."

*Prayer*

*Chaplain:* "Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, who ushered Your children into life and recalls the soul to Yourself in Your own good time, we thank You for the sweet memory of those dear to us who have been gathered to their fathers. We praise You for all the hallowed influences of our lives and for the rest and peace which they have found with You. May they still be a joy and an inspiration to us; may they quicken us to a more useful life, to higher hopes and greater contentment of spirit, so that in our departure we, too, may leave a memory and example that shall serve as a hope and inspiration to those who follow us.

Send Your consolation, we pray You, to those who today recall the loss of loved ones. Speak peace to hearts that are wounded by recent bereavement. Comfort them with the thought of Your wisdom and justice, which You in Your fatherly love grants to Your trusting children.

In final submission to Your will and in joyous hope of life everlasting, we praise You in whose hands are the souls of all creatures and the spirits of all flesh."



Unit President: “Extolled and hallowed by the name of God throughout the world which He has created, and which He governs according to His righteous will. Just is He in all His ways, and wise are all His decrees.

May His kingdom come, and His will be done in all the earth.”

Chaplain: “Praised be the Lord of life, the righteous Judge forevermore. Amen.”

*(Music if desired.) Scripture. Appropriate portion, such as the 90th, 103rd or 130th Psalms - Donay version, 89th, 102nd, or 129th; Jewish Publication Society version. Psalms 15th, 23rd, or 91st.*

*Unit President:* “This final moment of visible presence with the one who has left us, is sacred. Let us not remember her in anguish, for she would not have it so. Tears or words of sympathy cannot bring back the comfort of those loving hands, or the music of the voice that is stilled. Only solemn pride in her service is theirs who live to remember.

To those who are left behind, we realize how futile are mere words to express our deep and abiding sympathy in their loss. May they feel that she is at rest and in endless peace.

Surely there is an after-life for all who have been loyal and true: a life to which light and peace shall come, where the burden shall be lifted and the heartache shall cease, where the love, the hope, and the fulfillment that escapes us here shall be given to us to be ours forever.”

*When there is a service at the home, the President and members may at this point place a poppy or carnation within or upon the coffin.*

*Benediction by Chaplain (if desired).*

*Unit President:*

“Goodbye, till morning come again,  
We part, if part we must, with pain,  
But night is short, and hope is sweet,  
Faith fills our hearts, and wings our feet  
And so we sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again,

Goodbye, till morning come again,  
The thought of death brings weight of pain  
But could we know how short the night  
That falls, and hides them from our sight,  
Our hearts would sing the old refrain,  
Goodbye, till morning come again.”

### At The Graveside

*(If no previous American Legion Auxiliary service has been held, the service for church chapel or home may be read at the grave, prior to the following committal.)*

*Unit President:* “Forasmuch as it has pleased God to take unto Himself the soul of our departed member (name), we therefore place these poppies, the memorial flower of the American Legion Auxiliary, in her memory.”

*Chaplain places poppies on casket or in some designated place.*

*Chaplain:* “The Lord bless and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen.”

### Memorial Service - Taps

Any officer or member other than those designated may be assigned to parts in the memorial service.

*Unit President:* “We have come to that time set aside in our program, to pay tribute to the memory of those members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have answered the call of the Supreme Commander during the past year. The rich blessings of their lives of Service to God and Country inspire us to rededicate ourselves anew in their memory.”

*Chaplain:* “Many years ago a group of women had a dream. They envisioned the formation of an organization that could render service to others - an organization to give a hand of love and comfort to the wife, the mother or the orphan of our deceased veterans, and to those in sickness. Those valiant women, with the true spirit and ambition of pioneers, surged forward to great heights and their dreams became a reality, The American Legion Auxiliary. This organization is founded on the sacred principles that there is no rank among us; no distinction as to color, race or creed, but rather the wish, the desire and the firm determination to be of service to others. As we observe a quiet moment to pay tribute, by word and song, to the memory of those beloved members whom Our Heavenly Father, in His Infinite wisdom hath called Home; those whose lives have reflected much glory for us; we believe it is a time for rededicating our services and ourselves for ‘God and Country.’ It is time for remembering that death is not the end, rather it is the beginning of a new life to be lived in the presence of our Lord.

“As we assume the unfinished tasks of these departed members, may we consecrate that task as a living memorial within ourselves; a firm determination to so live our lives that our priceless heritage, won for us at so great a cost, shall be ours to uphold, to defend, and to pass along to those who shall follow in our footsteps.”

*Memorial Chairman:*

“There comes a time for all of us, when we must say goodbye,  
But faith and hope and love and trust can never, never die;  
Although the curtain falls at last, is that a cause to grieve?  
The future’s fairer than the past if only we believe  
And trust in God’s eternal care. So when the Master calls,  
Let’s say that life is still more fair, although the curtain falls.”

*Solo (“You’ll Never Walk Alone,” or an appropriate piano solo is suggested.)*

*Chaplain:*

“A child or loved one to us loaned  
Was ever by the Father owned.  
Allotted time they’re ours to keep  
When God reclaims, we’ll trust, not weep.

Deep within our hearts will remain the sainted memory of those members whose names shall be engraved on the pages of our Book of Memories, as we honor them today.”

*Unit Chaplain reads the names of all deceased Unit Members. Deposits white and colored flowers in their memory.*

*Gold Star Mothers:*

“I place this flower in honor of those members whose lives had been saddened by the sacrifice of War, but whose Loyalty and Devotion to the American Legion Auxiliary, in order that they might be of service to others, has ever been an inspiration, a guiding light to all. We pay homage to their memory. May they live together in Faith and Love and with the Hope of Divine Blessing, which is immortality.”

*Place flowers for deceased Gold Star Mothers.*

*Junior Members:*

“She is not dead—the child of our affection  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection.

But day after day we think of what she's doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year, her meager steps pursuing,  
Behold Her, grown more fair.

To those Junior members, Our Seeds of Destiny, whom we have loved and lost so soon, and who hold in their hands the future of the American Legion Auxiliary, we lovingly place these flowers.”

*To Our Membership:*

“To the memory of those members, numbering including our Past Unit Presidents who have been mourned by the Unit this year, we bow in tribute. To those members unrecorded but who leave a vacant chair at their family fireside and whose passing is known to God, we reverently add these flowers.”

*Chaplain:*

“God’s beautiful handiwork, the blossoms of Youth and Life are so closely associated with our organization and with our membership, that we leave these flowers, knowing that they too, as all material things do, shall wither and die but their fragrance shall linger forever in our memory.”

*They Softly Walk*

by Hugh Robert Orr

They are not gone who pass  
Beyond the clasp of hand,  
Out from the strong embrace.  
They are but come so close  
We need not grope with hands,  
Nor look to see, nor try  
To catch the sound of feet.  
They have put off their shoes  
Softly to walk by day  
Within our thoughts, to tread  
At night our dream-led paths  
Of sleep.

They are not lost who find  
The sunset gate, the goal  
Of all their faithful years.  
Not lost are they who reach  
The summit of their climb,

The peak above the clouds  
And storms. They are not lost  
Who find the light of sun  
And stars and God.

They are not dead who live  
In hearts they leave behind.  
In those whom they have blessed  
They live a life again,  
And shall live through the years  
Eternal life, and grow  
Each day more beautiful  
As time declares their good,  
Forgets the rest, and proves  
Their immortality.

*Solo (“The Lord’s Prayer” or any appropriate solo is suggested.)*

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*The President shall give three raps of the gavel and the members shall rise.*

*Chaplain:* “Now that they have gone, we can well believe that a voice is saying:

‘Well done Thou good and Faithful Servant, Enter Thou into the Joy of Thy Lord.’ To all of these members whose well won right to stand among that valiant company of women, who by their courage, their unselfishness and their vision have helped so largely down through the years to make America great, we solemnly bow our heads in Prayer.

O Gracious Father, we lift our voice to You, to thank You for continuing to watch over us in our hour of trial, ever ready to direct and guide our faltering steps. We thank You for the rich experiences and for the many friendships enjoyed by Your children here. We Thank You for the knowledge that in their passing they do not tread the Valley of Shadow alone, that always that Giver of Gifts, the Great Comforter is present as they enter that Eternal Haven of Rest.

Grant, O Lord, continued Peace to the souls of our departed members and give us understanding and appreciative hearts. Help us to bequeath added blessings to the generations yet to be. Lead us and guide us evermore by the teachings of Your goodness. As we witness Your handiwork in the heavens and the beauties about us, we feel Your presence ever near. Grant that Your spirit may continue to dwell in the hearts of the American

Legion Auxiliary. Let us not fail those whom we honor by ceasing to do good, or to turn from Your guiding hand.  
We know, O Lord, Your will be done. Amen.”

*Taps, followed by Echo of Taps.*

*One rap of the gavel and the members shall be seated.*

### Memorial Service for Auxiliary Members - Short Form

*Music (To be selected)*

*Prayer by Chaplain*

*Unit President:* “Death has entered our ranks and we pause to pay tribute to those of our members who have passed to the Great Beyond during the past year.

We shall keep in hallowed memory the lives of these members whom we have loved and ‘lost awhile.’ We shall strive to pattern our lives after their zeal for patriotism and their devotion to duty, as we rededicate ourselves to the unfinished work which their hands began.”

*As each name is called, a candle is lighted or a white flower placed in a low bowl while soft music is played.*

Memorial Chairman:

“In God’s great garden of our lives,  
Some rain is sure to fall,  
But after that He sends the sun  
To triumph over all  
And so when sorrow comes to us  
And teardrops cloud our day  
He sends us strength to bear our load  
And light to guide our way.”

*Unit President:* “The Chaplain will offer prayer.”

*Three raps of the gavel for membership to stand.*

*Chaplain, please refer to the suggested prayer on page 156 for an alternative prayer.*

*Chaplain:* “Let us pray. We give thanks for the good examples of all those Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, do now

rest from their labors. Have us to know that we shall be remembered for what we have done for others, not what others have done for us. Each one of us exerts an influence upon those with whom we come in contact. As we go along the years, a single act of advice, encouragement, or caution, may decide a question of usefulness and happiness for another. O God, whose presence is everywhere and whose mercy never fails, we magnify You for Your gifts, especially for the promise of the peace which passes all understanding. We commit ourselves to You, Amen.”

*Taps or Solo*

*One rap of the gavel for members to be seated.*

## Commemorative Services

### Draping the Charter

When a Unit is deprived of one of its members by death, it is customary to drape the Unit charter with black crepe during the period of mourning. The following ceremony is suggested for the draping of the charter.

Unit President: “We have assembled here at the call of our Maker who has taken from us one of our beloved leaders. We have come to give, by simple token, official expression of the grief of the Unit of \_\_\_\_\_. Let us first bow our heads in prayer.”

*Chaplain:* (Brief prayer) “Almighty God, who has dominion over life and death, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our valiant and honored departed Member (Members). Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us, and make us ready for that last hour. Strengthen and console those in sorrow and bestow upon us Your everlasting blessing. Amen.”

*Unit President:* “We stand before the document which gives our Unit life and being. Under its authority years of devoted service were given by \_\_\_\_\_.

She contributed greatly to its significance. Her service is ended by the results of her loyal efforts will go on and on for our American Legion Auxiliary and for God and the country which the Auxiliary serves.

It is therefore fitting that about our charter we should drape this crepe of black, an expression of the sorrow that is in our hearts and of the mourning of the Unit of over its great loss.”

*(Drapes the charter)*

“Now we will ask God’s blessing for our departed friend and co-worker, then go silently to carry forward the task to which she was giving so much when called away.”

*Chaplain:* (Brief concluding prayer)

### POW/MIA Remembrance Service

(The following is a “suggested” service to be used at American Legion Auxiliary meetings, banquets, luncheons, or memorial gatherings in conjunction with the POW/MIA flag draped over an empty chair...this service can be adopted as is, or modified to whatever is appropriate for your own preferred use.)



“Those who have served and those currently serving in the uniformed services of the United States, are ever mindful that the sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by the bitterness of personal sacrifice. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are others who have endured and my still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation and imprisonment.

Before we begin our activities, we pause to recognize our POWs and MIAs.

We call your attention to the small table, which occupies a place of dignity and honor. It is set for one symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued absence.

The table is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors.

The table cloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country’s call to arms.

The single rose in the vase, signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.

A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait.

The glass is inverted, they cannot toast with us at this time.

The chair is empty. They are NOT here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope, which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to open arms of a grateful nation.

The American Flag reminds us that many of them may never return - and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom.

Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks.

Let us remember—and never forget their sacrifice.

May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.”

Prayer. “Our Heavenly Father, we deem this a fitting time to pay our respects to our departed comrades. As we stand with bowed heads in reverence to them, let us remember the good deeds they accomplished. Let us revere them, as good soldiers who fought the good fight in a just cause, let us silently pray for peace, the peace that passes all understanding. And let us in mind and soul consecrate our hearts and lives to the real America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, the America worth fighting for. As we stand in silence to our departed comrades, may we sincerely say, ‘May their souls rest in peace.’ Let us also remember the POWs and MIAs still unaccounted for from the Wars and Conflicts. Amen.”

#### Alternative Prayer

“O Lord, God, we pray for our prisoners of war. Comfort them, we pray, in their isolation from their homes and loved ones; supply their needs and protect them from want and deprivation; strengthen and sustain them day after day that they may face discouragement with courage and hardship with resolution. Grant that they may find patience to endure and peace in the knowledge of Your continuing presence.

Most importantly, O Lord, we earnestly plead for their release and safe return. And grant to us the wisdom and the restraint to treat such prisoners as we may now detain in the manner in which we hope and pray our military men and women are being held in foreign lands. This we pray in Your name. Amen.”

## **Prayers for Special Occasions**

### Grace at Meals

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the food given us this day, and we pray that it may strengthen and sustain us in body and mind to serve Thee by doing our daily tasks faithfully and well. Grant that we may be ever grateful for all Thy blessings to us. Amen.

Accept our thanks, O Heavenly Father, for all the expressions of Thy goodness and mercy toward us. We thank Thee for this food received from Thy bounty. May Thy protecting care and watchfulness be over each of us as we carry on for God and country. Amen.

Heavenly Father, bless we pray, this food which Thou hast provided for us. Remember with Thy blessing all who are dear to us by the ties of kinship and friendship. We commend to Thy tender care our loved ones far away. Teach us ever to be thankful to Thee for health and strength, for life, for home and its comforts, and for our opportunities for service to others. Forgive us our wrongs and watch over us. Amen.

Give us grace to be grateful for the blessings, which Thou hast so bountifully spread before us this day. Amen.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this food and all the blessings so generously provided. Amen.

### Veterans Day/Thanksgiving

Lord, thank you for your everyday gifts to us. We have so much to be thankful for, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but each new day that you give us. We give you our thanks, Lord.

Our prayers of Thanksgiving join those of our forefathers. God, you know the words we so often speak; but more than that, you know the secrets of our hearts. We thank you for this day.

Lord, we pray for peace in the world. We thank you for people who stand for truth and that which is right. Give your blessing, Lord, to our veterans who have given so much for our freedom. Remember those who have given the supreme sacrifice for we pray they will never be forgotten.

Be with us, we pray. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father we thank Thee for this day with its opportunities for service. We thank Thee for sustenance and Thy guiding hand - for friends, companions and loved ones. Send Thy blessing upon our dear ones wherever they may be. To those in sorrow, reveal unto them the comfort and humaneness of Thy tender mercy. Help us all to be more constant in our praise and obedience to Thee. Amen.

We acknowledge our gratitude to Thee, Our Father, for all good gifts. May we prove by our use of them that Thy trust has been well bestowed. May we be ever constant and faithful in our service of mercy, comfort and cheer to those veterans whose bodies and minds have been maimed in battle, to the needy families, the widows and orphans, and all who in anyway have suffered or are now suffering from the horrors of war. May our ministrations to them and our activities in their behalf always be pleasing to Thee and be guided by Thy holy will. Amen.

### Christmas

Our Heavenly Father, on this holy Christmas Day, our hearts are filled with solemn joy and gratitude for the gift of the Savior, Christ the Lord. For the fullness of His grace, and for His redeeming love, we humbly join in ceaseless praise and thanksgiving.

In Thy infinite mercy, Our Father, grant to us and to all others, the spirit of kindness, goodwill and charity. Hasten the day when men shall again hear the angel chorus paying homage to Thee, the Prince of Peace, singing again the glad tidings “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will.” Amen.

We beseech Thee, O God, that we, who rejoice in celebrating the nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, may never cease to be grateful to Thee for Thy divine gift. May our actions at all times be directed toward good works and helpful ministrations which are pleasing to Thee.

Bless us all, we earnestly pray; gladden our hearts anew with the joyful tidings of this holy day. Let the day soon dawn when men shall permit Thy love to right every wrong, and when truth and justice and love shall overrule all the affairs of men, that here and every where there shall prevail the glorious message of the first Christmas morning “Peace on earth to men of good will” through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### The New Year

Lord, as we begin a new year, let us resolve to keep a promise, seek out a forgotten friend, listen, laugh, brighten the heart of a child, encourage the young, appreciate our elders, express our gratitude, take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of life, and speak your love to others.

God, guide us in the new year to grow closer together in our families, in our Units, in our world. Let us always strive to bring peace to the world. Let us live each day to the fullest.

For all the blessings of the year, we give you thanks, God. Amen.

## Easter

We thank Thee, O God, for the day in which life and immortality were brought to light through the resurrection of our blessed Lord from the dead. Evermore in heart and mind we shall sing praises of joy to Him and we shall show our love for Him by our thoughts, words and deeds, our helpful service to others, and faithful performance of all our obligations.

We earnestly ask Thee to bless and preserve all whom we love; comfort and aid all in trouble and distress. We offer our thanksgiving for all graces and favors we have received in the name of Him Who rose triumphant from the dead. Amen.

On this glorious day, O Lord, our hearts are raised to Thee in joy and gladness as we celebrate the resurrection of Thy Son from the dead. May His loving kindness and His blessings rest on us and on our dear ones. Grant us, O Lord, that our devotion to Thee may reflect our happiness at this glorious season, and may we all enjoy sweet fulfillment of the promise of this day. We pray that love of Christ, the Risen King, may abide in our hearts forevermore and fill us with the joyousness and peace of Eastertide. Amen.

## Memorial Service Prayer

Almighty God, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence our dear departed members. Grant peace and eternal rest to those who have gone before us. We ask for consolation for those who sorrow, and that you bestow upon us your everlasting blessing.

We are thankful for the lives whom we have remembered here today. May their memory serve as an inspiration to us.

Be with us and bless us, we pray. Amen.

## Memorial Day

Dear God, as we approach Memorial Day, may we honor and remember those who died that we might live in freedom. We remember our departed loved ones gone on before. Those that we honor will be a part of our lives forever.

O God, we are mindful of your great love for us. We are thankful for that love. We praise you for the blessings of love and friendship for our families and our homes. Amen.

God, be with us and be our guide in time of need. We ask your support in all we do. Help us to reach out to one another, to communicate and show real care for others. Help us to be open to new experiences of personal growth and challenge. May we be alert to the opportunities before us each day.

Accept our thanks, God, for the leaders of our Auxiliary for their work this year, and for their leadership. As they have worked for God and Country we give them our grateful thanks. Amen.

Accept, our Heavenly Father, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and the faithfulness of your love.

May you, our members, bring joy and happiness to others through your smile, a warm hand clasp and kindly deeds. Be with us today and give us hope. Amen.

#### Fourth of July

O God, we remember the courage and determination of our founding fathers. We remember the brave patriotic men and women who gave so much for us. We thank them that we are a free nation and a free people. It is through them that we carry forward the ideals of Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

We pray for our elected officials; for sound government and just laws. Lord, make us ever proud to be Americans.

We ask that you would rekindle the flame of compassion within us so that we might show real care for our fellowman. Teach us to be sensitive to the needs of others. Grant that as Americans and as Legion Family, we may continue to help our veterans and those in need.

Be with us and guide us, we pray. Amen.

As we work in our great organization, help us look beyond the outward appearances to the person underneath. Teach us to love and accept them. Forgive our critical thoughts and harsh words; replace our impatience with your love and forgiveness.

Open our eyes to the needs of the world and fill our hearts with love. Make us sensitive to the issues of poverty; racial, sexual and age discrimination; war and peace; pollution and environment. O God, help us to recognize and grasp the opportunities for service that each one of us might make a difference.

Let us reach out and touch someone with a helping hand. Help us to never lose sight of your continual guidance in our lives as we work for our fellowman. Amen.

#### Prayer for Installation

O God, this is the beginning of a new year of work in our beloved American Legion Auxiliary. Let us speak words of encouragement to our newly elected officers. Be with them, God, as they work to lead us in working on all the good programs we hold so important.

Remember each one of our members, for they are needed in their own Units for the work in their communities. Let us all work for God and Country together in harmony and love.

Dear God, teach us to think in wisdom and act in love and caring for others. Amen.

### Gift Shop Opening

O God, we come with grateful thanks today for all those Unit members who are represented here in these lovely gifts for others. Our members have given their time and effort to provide this beautiful Christmas Gift Shop for our hospitalized veterans and their families. Love and care are exemplified by these members who serve so willingly to provide a happier Christmas for the veterans and their loved ones. We thank you, Father, for the joy they bring.

Let us remember the lonesome and often forgotten individuals and give them the joy of packages, visitors and carols.

O God, we wish that we could all keep the same joy of this day overflowing all year. Keep our hearts joyful, God, we pray. Amen.

### Benedictions

Dear Heavenly Father, send us away tonight in harmony, peace and good will to spread the spirit of our love for our country. Be with us and guide us in our labor for our fellowman. Amen.

God, we ask your presence with each of us as we begin our journeys to our homes, that we may have a safe return. Be with us until we meet again. Amen.

Accept our praise, O Lord, for the blessings of this day and hour. Give us, we pray, a willing attitude and grateful hearts. Amen.

Grant us that as Americans and Auxiliary members we may continue to help our veterans and those in need. We thank you for these people assembled here, and pray you will bless their many works. Be with us, we pray. Amen.

### Old Irish Verse

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind always be at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

And rains fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Amen.

### Gold Star Mothers or Members

*(Teas or social gatherings)*

Dear Heavenly Father, we are gathered here this day to honor the Gold Star Mothers (or members) of this community - women who have given a loved one in our country's defense. Their sacrifice has been great. Keep them always under Thy loving care and tender mercy. May their courageous spirit and unselfish patriotism inspire us to greater service for our beloved country and for Thee.

May the beauty and luster of the Gold Star which they so proudly wear ever remain a challenging symbol to us, and, as their loved ones gave their "last full measure of devotion" to preserve the ideals of free America, may we, in grateful remembrance, ever remain steadfast in our devotion to Thee, O Lord, and may the time be not far distant when, throughout the world, there may be righteousness and peace. Amen.

Our Father Who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the opportunity of meeting here this day, and especially that we may pay reverent tribute to these Gold Star mothers (or members) whose loved ones died for us in war's heavy toll. Let us always honor the memory of these brave men and all of our heroic dead, for their supreme service and their incomparable sacrifice.

Our Father, may we work side by side, serving constructively for the security and progress of America, with these valiant women over whose hearts the Gold Star gleams as an evidence of their own faith, their courage and their high spirit of patriotic devotion. Very earnestly do we pray for the hastening of the day when, among all peoples of the earth, Thy Kingdom will come, Thy will be done, and all the earth shall seek refuge in Thee. Amen.

### Junior Graduation

Our Heavenly Father, we ask Thy blessing on these Junior members who are now being received into our Senior group. May the high and lofty principles and ideals for which our organization stands inspire them and strengthen them to fulfill all their obligations and duties as loyal patriotic American citizens, obedient to Thy will at all times. May they be true leaders among their friends and associates and thus reflect the training and dignity which membership in our organization affords them. Receive them under Thy loving care and protection now and forevermore. Amen.

Almighty God, as these Junior girls assume the duties of Senior membership, may they have more firmly implanted in their minds and hearts the unselfish and courageous service and sacrifice of a loved one



in our country's defense which has earned for them this coveted privilege of membership in our organization. May they always remain loyal to God and country, and responsive to whatever obligations or duties may devolve upon them, at all times revealing by their thoughts, words and actions a constant devotion to Thy teachings as expressed in the Golden Rule. Amen.

### Executive Committee Meeting

Our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may rest upon us as we gather here for this meeting. May our deliberations have Thy divine guidance, and may we now and in the days to come rededicate our organization and ourselves to the advancement of our sacred ideals, ever remembering that the American Legion Auxiliary's principal service is for God and country. Direct us so that we may perform our duties faithfully and efficiently; and abundantly bless us all, forevermore. Amen.

We thank thee, O God, that we are privileged to come together for this Executive Committee meeting. Direct our thoughts and our deliberations so that we may exhibit fair judgment and understanding of the matters submitted and trials of a world at war, endow us with fortitude, courage and faith. Bless those gone away from our homes into the service of our country. Be their companion in danger, their solace in pain, and at death, grant them eternal rest in Thy heavenly Kingdom. Continue to surround us all with Thy loving care. Amen.

### Legion Birthday

*(for joint observance of Unit and Post)*

Heavenly Father, bless us as we are gathered here tonight to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of The American Legion, that great organization which has continued to serve America for the past years. We thank Thee for the opportunity which has been given to the American Legion Auxiliary to have a part in everything which The American Legion has done and in sharing its endeavors.

Grant that the patriotic enthusiasm which inspired these Legionnaires to serve our country in time of war may continue to guide their activities at all times, and that the principles of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy maybe preserved for a happy and secure America. Bless all of our effort for God and country, and may we continue to be mutually helpful to each other. Amen.

Almighty God, we thank Thee for permitting us to gather here for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of the founding of The American Legion. We thank Thee for granting to the mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of

these men and women the opportunity to share their unselfish program of service consecrated to God and country.

Deepen our earnestness and devotion to the high ideals for which our two organizations stand. May our numbers be increased and may we, as members of these two great patriotic organizations, with Thy help, rededicate ourselves anew to our work. Lead us fearlessly, courageously and nobly, increasing our usefulness and tempering our work with constant prayer for peace in our hearts. Amen.

### Dedication of Honor Roll

*(if Unit is asked to have a part in the ceremony)*

O God, bless those whose names appear upon this Honor Roll and all who have gone from our homes and hearts into the service of our country. Grant to them patience in the long wait, hope in the dark hours, steadiness in victory and loyalty in defeat. We thank Thee for the unselfish devotion of those who have sacrificed their lives that we might enjoy the liberties for which our forefathers fought.

Especially, God, let Thy blessing abide this day upon those of us whose lot it is to be at home in time of war. Teach all the ancient wisdom that, "They also serve who only stand and wait." Amen.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask that Thy blessing may be bestowed upon those whose names appear on this Honor Roll, who have relinquished home and happiness and all that they hold dear, and accepted the call to service so that Justice, Freedom and Democracy might survive, and so that the name and fame of this land we love may be kept unblemished. O God, keep them in Thy gracious care wherever they go and wherever duty calls them, and, if it be Thy will, bring them safely home. May Thy merciful blessing rest upon those departed heroes who have answered the last summons. Amen.

Strengthen our devotion to Thy teachings and make us worthy of the citizenship which these young people are fighting to maintain. Bless those in authority in our city, state and nation with wisdom to know and strength to do their duties honestly and well. Hear our prayer, Our Father, help us and bless us. Amen.

### The War Bereaved

Almighty God, sustain with Thy healing power all those whose loved ones have given their lives in the service of our country. Redeem, we pray Thee, the pain of their bereavement, that knowing their loss to be the price of our freedom, they may remember the gratitude of the nation for which they gave so costly a sacrifice. And grant that we may highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, and that out of the

agony of the present hour there may arise a new and better world in which Thy will shall rule. Amen.

#### Prayer in Wartime

O God, our refuge and our strength, we beseech Thee to guide and protect our nation in the fiery trial of war. Grant us true repentance, and take away the offenses of our people, that with clean hands and pure hearts we may go forward in Thy name. Save us from hatred, cruelty and malice. Imbue our leaders with courage and wisdom. Strengthen and protect our defenders by land, by sea, and by air, and suffer no dishonor to stain our arms. Safeguard and multiply the ministries of mercy; heal the wounded, receive the dying, comfort the bereaved. Less those who labor in field and factory, in office and home, for our country's welfare. Make a speedy end of tyrannies in the earth, and deliver the desolate and oppressed of all nations. Hasten the advent of a righteous peace, and with great might establish Thy Kingdom. Amen.

#### Prayer for Peace

God, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.



MANUAL FOR  
VETERANS AFFAIRS &  
REHABILITATION CHAIRMEN  
AND VOLUNTEERS

## **THE AMERICAN LEGION ORGANIZATION**

From its beginning, The American Legion has considered its “first duty” to be the care of the war-disabled, and of the widows and orphans of those who died as a result of service. When first applied by The American Legion, the term “rehabilitation” related to the organization’s efforts to secure for every veteran disabled in service the fullest measure of physical and mental rehabilitation that medical science could provide. The meaning of the term as used in veteran’s circles gradually broadened to include reference to all programs for the benefit of veterans; but, particularly, programs for their medical and vocational rehabilitation, for their social and economic readjustment and well-being, and for the support of their dependents and survivors.

The term “National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Program” designates that phase of The American Legion’s interests and activities which is concerned with the care of disabled veterans, and it is the means through which the organization has continued to discharge its obligation of service to those who served. The program is “national” in that it represents the will of National Conventions and the National Executive Committee. Its management is the responsibility of the National Organization of The American Legion.

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission is now composed of a chairman, a vice-chairman, an executive section, and such general members as may be appointed; provided, however, that the chairman may and vice-chairman shall be appointed from the members of the executive section. The executive section is composed of 21 members at large, including the chairman and vice chairman. The general members section has an authorized strength not to exceed one member from each Department. Appointment to the Commission is made by the National Executive Committee at its fall meeting upon nominations made by the National Commander.

The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division has its office at 1608 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. While the Commission and staff (division) operate as a team, an important distinction between the two must be noted. It is the function of the Commission to assist The American Legion to formulate its Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation policies and programs, whereas it is the function of the staff to implement approved policies and programs. The Director is responsible for the efficient and economical administration of the division. The staff is further composed of medical and legal advisors, field representatives, and other personnel engaged in the handling of all types of veterans’ claims and interests.

Close cooperation with the Departments is a fixed policy of The American Legion National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission.

Constant contact is maintained with the various Service officers and other Department officials engaged in Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation activities, and continuous effort is made to keep the Departments informed on matters of Department of Veterans Affairs policy, procedure, and administration, which might enable them to function more effectively within the states. The Washington office of the Commission deals directly with the central office of the Department of Veterans Affairs and is designed to be a clearinghouse for the Departments which avail themselves of this medium of contact in appeals, problem cases, and policy matters. The Departments, in turn, require the Post and County organizations to clear difficult cases which might require action in Washington through the respective Department Service Officers. There are exceptions in cases requiring emergency action.

Consult the Department Adjutant of The American Legion for the name and address of the Department or State Service Officer.

The American Legion Auxiliary's National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee works in close cooperation with the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission of The American Legion, bringing the American Legion Auxiliary's support to all phases of The American Legion's National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program, and, in addition, directing the American Legion Auxiliary's own work for the welfare of all veterans. The Committee is composed of a chairman and three members, with a Division Chairman for each of the five Divisions, all appointed by the National President, subject to ratification by the National Executive Committee. Regional conferences, in cooperation with The American Legion, are held yearly.

### **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)**

The VA, with its central office in Washington, has complete charge of all affairs relating to veterans of any war of the United States.

At least one VA regional office is located in each state, and the jurisdiction of each office is, generally speaking, the state in which it is located. Some of the larger states have two or more offices, and in a few instances the jurisdiction of a regional office includes counties of another state which are more accessible to it than to the office of the neighboring states.

Claims for disability, death, and other benefits from the Veterans Administration are handled in VA regional offices. Claims for insurance death benefits are handled in the VA centers in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Claims for compensation and similar benefits affecting the disabled are handled by the appropriate regional office, except in the case of veterans living in foreign countries and those with service prior to World War I,

those claims are handled by the Washington Regional Office located in Washington, D.C.

## **FEDERAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS**

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs, “VA” for short, offers benefits to U.S. veterans, service members and their families that fall into eight major categories:

1. Disability Benefits
2. Education & Training Benefits
3. Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
4. Home Loans
5. Burial Benefits
6. Dependents’ and Survivors’ Benefits
7. Life Insurance
8. Health Care

Each VA benefit has its own eligibility requirements. The Auxiliary recommends that you visit the nearest VA office to obtain information on specific benefits or call toll free at 1-800-827-1000.

A wealth of the most accurate information on each benefit program, including most forms, is available at the Veterans Benefits Administration website at [www.vba.va.gov](http://www.vba.va.gov).

Full-time representatives of The American Legion are available at each VA regional office and in Washington, D.C., for the purpose of representing claimants before the VA and other Federal agencies.

To assure that such representation is given, please be sure that The American Legion is designated on VA Form 21-22 for VA claims, and for claims with other Federal agencies and State Veterans Offices, on the forms required.

Applications for Compensation, Pension and Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits can be completed on line at the Veterans On Line Application (VONAPP) website located at [www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov](http://www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov).

**Disability Benefits** Disability benefits include both Disability Compensation and the Disability Pension. There is no deadline for applying for disability benefits.

**Education and Training Benefits** are paid to eligible veterans, dependents, reservists, and service members while they are in an approved training program. The major Education and Training programs include the Montgomery GI Bill, Veterans’ Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) and Survivors’ & Dependents’ Educational Assistance. Each program has specific service eligibility requirements. Generally, veterans have 10 years from the date they were last released from active duty to use their education benefits. Reservists generally have 10 years

from the date they became eligible for the program unless they leave the Selected Reserves before completing their obligation. Spouses generally have 10 years from the date they are first found to be eligible by VA. Children are generally eligible from age 18 until age 26. These time limits can sometimes be extended.

**Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment.** The VA assists veterans with service-connected disabilities with preparing for, finding and keeping suitable employment. For veterans with serious service-connected disabilities, VA also offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Some of the services provided include Job Search, Vocational Evaluation, Career Exploration, Vocational Training, Education Training, Rehabilitation Service. Veterans generally have 12 years from the date they are told in writing by the VA that they have at least a 10 percent rating for a service-connected disability.

**Home Loans.** The VA offers a number of home loan services to eligible veterans, some military personnel, and certain spouses. Included in the Home Loans program are Guaranteed Loans, Refinancing Loans and Special Grants to adapt or acquire housing suitable for the disabled veteran. There is no time limit for a VA home loan, except for eligible reservists.

**Burial Benefits.** VA benefits and services to honor our Nation's deceased veterans include Headstones and Markers, Presidential Memorial Certificates, Burial Flags, Reimbursement of Burial Expenses and Burial in a VA National Cemetery. There is no time limit for claiming reimbursement of burial expenses for a service related death. In other cases, claims must be filed within 2 years of the veteran's burial.

**Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits** Dependency and Indemnity Compensation is payable to certain survivors of service members who died on active duty, veterans who died from service related disabilities, and certain veterans who were being paid 100 percent VA disability compensation at time of death. Death Pension is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime veterans based on financial need. The VA Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA) shares the cost of medical services for eligible dependents and survivors of certain veterans. There are no time limits to apply for these benefits.

## **WHERE TO GO FOR ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE**

For information and assistance in filing for the foregoing benefits, veterans and their dependents and survivors should be directed to your Unit, to the Post Service Officer, to your Department Service Officer, or to the nearest VA office or Hospital.



As you know, full-time representatives of The American Legion are available at each VA regional office and in Washington, D.C., for the purpose of representing claimants before the VA and other Federal agencies.

To assure that such representation is given, you should see to it that The American Legion is designated on VA Form 21-22 for VA claims, and for those with other Federal agencies and state Veterans Office on the forms required.

### **PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS**

Personal and family papers and copies of public records are key factors in determination of entitlement to federal and state benefits. Because of the importance of the papers and documents, particularly in those cases where a claim may not be filed until many years after the veteran has left the military, naval, or air service, both the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary should constantly urge in their discussions of benefits, the creation of a personal record file. Such a file will save much searching as the years slip by, and will assure their orderly and safekeeping. Where possible, the file should be in a fireproof place or container.

The following important papers and copies of public documents should be preserved and protected:

- DD Form 214—Armed Forces of the United States Report of Transfer or Discharge
- Certificate of Discharge
- Papers associated with active duty, such as orders to and from active duty, vouchers, warrants, commissions, diplomas, citations, etc.
- Family records, such as marriage license, birth certificates, death certificates, divorce decree, guardianship or custody evidence, adoption papers, and other such documents that are permanent records, including a will
- Government and commercial insurance policies, together with premium payment records
- VA forms and correspondence, including certificate of eligibility for loans, “C” (file) number records, and other papers related to administration of benefits claimed

Veterans and their dependents or survivors should be cautioned to never give the original copy of a permanent personal or family record to another person, even in a business transaction. Certified copies have all of the legal status of originals and insure that when an original is needed again it will be available.

Veterans should be reminded at every opportunity to review their beneficiary designations and payment options selected on government and commercial life insurance.

### **THE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

Each year at Christmas (unless the Department chooses to observe another holiday), the American Legion Auxiliary gives a gift to every disabled veteran forced to spend the day in a hospital. This vast Christmas program has been perfected and systematized through the years of development. It has been added to the Personal Contact Service to give the veterans in the hospitals the comforting knowledge that their families at home are not being left in want. The program as outlined at the National Convention in St. Louis in 1935 follows:

- Each hospitalized veteran (man or woman) is to be remembered by the Department in which he/she is then located. This Department shall determine the gift and mode of presentation.
- The gifts shall be for all veterans. Others (who aren't veterans) in federal hospitals may share the entertainment, but gifts to them shall be entirely at the option of the Department.
- Each gift shall carry the greeting, "From Your American Legion Auxiliary."
- The cost of the Christmas program shall be assumed by the Department where it is carried on, if the Department is financially able to meet the expense.

### **THE CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP**

A valuable service extended to hospitalized veterans in many Department is carried out through The Christmas Gift Shop program. This program allows veteran the privilege of Christmas shopping for their families back home at the expense of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Large lobbies or rooms beautifully decorated with Christmas trees, greens, crepe paper and holly; tables filled with new gifts of all kinds for persons of all ages; and pretty gift tags, beautiful ribbons and the sounds of gifts being wrapped give the hospitalized veterans the wonderful feelings of the holiday spirit.

There should be plenty of chairs in the room so the veterans can relax while they are waiting for their turn to select gifts. Each patient should be greeted as he enters the Christmas Gift Shop by an American Legion Auxiliary member.

Gifts should be new, clean, attractive, and useful. Each gift should include an appropriate notation indicating that it was provided through the American Legion Auxiliary Christmas Gift Shop Program. The gift display should be set up so that there is plenty of room for the veterans to look at and select the gifts.

Wrapping and shipping the gifts is made much easier if the Units send the gifts already boxed. This also helps to keep the gift items in good condition. Also, displaying the gifts for boys, girls, men, women, and infants separately facilitates the selection.

Make cards available in a convenient location so the veterans can write personal notes to enclose with the gifts they have selected.

### **THE POPPY PROGRAM**

The idea of the poppy as a memorial flower to those who died in the first World War appeared as naturally as the little wild flowers that emerge from the soil and grow in the fields of France and Flanders. The flower was the one touch of beauty that survived amid the terrible destruction of war. The soldiers of all nations came to look upon the poppy as the living symbol of the sacrifices that had been made by their fellow soldiers who had died in the war.

Memories of the war dead always bring thoughts of those who did not die but who came back to years of hardship and suffering; a fate that seemed at times to be worse than death. The poppy provided a way to honor the dead soldiers by giving service to the living victims of the war. Wearing the little red poppy signifies honoring the dead and helping the living. The nationwide memorial poppy campaign was begun by The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary in 1921. Crepe paper was selected for the construction of the official poppy. And the production of the poppies has been made available to the veterans as a way for them to earn some income.

In 1924, The American Legion transferred the National Poppy Program to the American Legion Auxiliary. While in some areas poppy production continues throughout the year, the majority of production begins in late fall or early winter. Auxiliary members distribute poppies in their communities the Saturday before Memorial Day and in some areas of the country on Veterans Day, November 11th.

Making poppies is a blessing to the veterans because it enables them to earn money. It gives them something to do and think about. It helps to pass the time in a constructive and meaningful way.

From the distribution of the poppies, The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary receive a large portion of the funds needed for their Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation and Children & Youth programs. Volunteers distribute the poppies, and all of the donations received, are used to help the veterans and their dependents. There is not a price for the poppy; the donor determines the amount to be given. All donations are acceptable.

The success of the Poppy Program each year is dependent upon the activities of the local Auxiliary Units. The Units must order poppies,

and organize their workers from among members and other women in the communities into an efficient workforce, which can place a poppy on every person on Poppy Day. Prior to Poppy Day, they should create a means for making the public aware of the Poppy Program and who receives the benefits from it.

The Department Poppy Chairman should urge all Units to organize themselves well and early for a successful Poppy Day. The Department Public Relations Committee should be active in promoting Poppy Day by sending poppy-related stories to the media.

### **HISTORY OF THE VOLUNTEERS**

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary have been assisting in the VA program for veteran patients since World War I. This volunteer assistance, however, was largely uncoordinated, and the follow-through, the efforts to integrate the VA Medical Center into community life as part and parcel of the community thinking, planning, and action were not carried out on a nationwide basis.

During World War II, the vast potential of service available through a coordinated volunteer program was envisioned early and plans were developed which resulted in the establishment of coordinating agencies that would mold the activities of hundreds of service and welfare groups, fraternal and church groups, veterans and civic groups, local clubs, and individuals, into a smoothly operating volunteer program for members of the Armed Forces.

Since the focal point of interest of these volunteers during the war had been members of the Armed Forces, it was only natural that their leaders would see an excellent carry-over of their war effort to a peacetime activity for veteran patients.

Action on the matter was referred to the Assistant Administrator for Special Services, and on April 8, 1946, representatives of several voluntary service organizations (of which The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary were a part) met in Washington, D.C., with the Assistant Administrator for Special Services. This meeting resulted in the formulation by the VA of regulations and procedures for the use of volunteer assistance in the VA Special Services program for hospitalized veterans, and in the establishment of VAVS Advisory Committees.

It soon became evident that volunteer aid could be used to an advantage to supplement the programs in other VA Medical Center services. On February 12, 1947, the scope of the VAVS plan was widened to include coordination of volunteer aid in all appropriate phases of the VA Medical Center program.

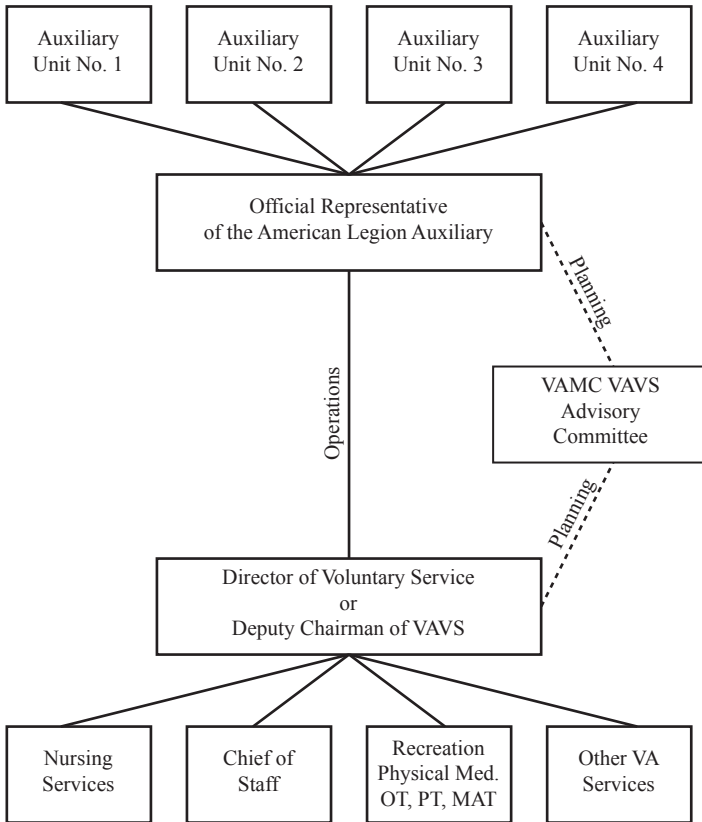
In 1950 came the United Nations stand against Communism in Korea, with the United States bearing the major part. The wounded began coming home, and hospital volunteers had veterans of three wars who needed their attention and care. In 1964, the crisis in Vietnam became acute and thousands of United States troops were sent there. Veterans of another war would soon be returning home, needing the care of our volunteers.

Also, in 1964, a new American Legion Auxiliary program, called Field Service Volunteers, was inaugurated. This program gave properly trained volunteers the opportunity for service in the local community where veterans still under the care of the VA Medical Centers were being placed in nursing homes or other types of institutions (“institution” as used here means nursing home, convalescent home, foster home, halfway house, etc.) for follow-up treatment and care. These veterans needed much the same type of service that had been given by Hospital Volunteers in the hospitals. As the program developed, Field Service began to mean care and assistance to all non-hospitalized veterans in a community in need of help. On January 15, 1966, the first complete “Outline for Field Service Volunteers” was made available to the membership.

In 1974, a new method of reporting the number of volunteers, hours and cost of material and supplies was initiated to record service for veterans by our volunteers in their own homes. Home Service completes a true record of service given by all American Legion Auxiliary volunteers for reporting to the Congress of the United States and also recognizes all volunteer hours of service by our National organization.

Home Service hours include time spent sewing, knitting, cooking, shopping for materials and supplies and other services performed by the volunteer in her own home.

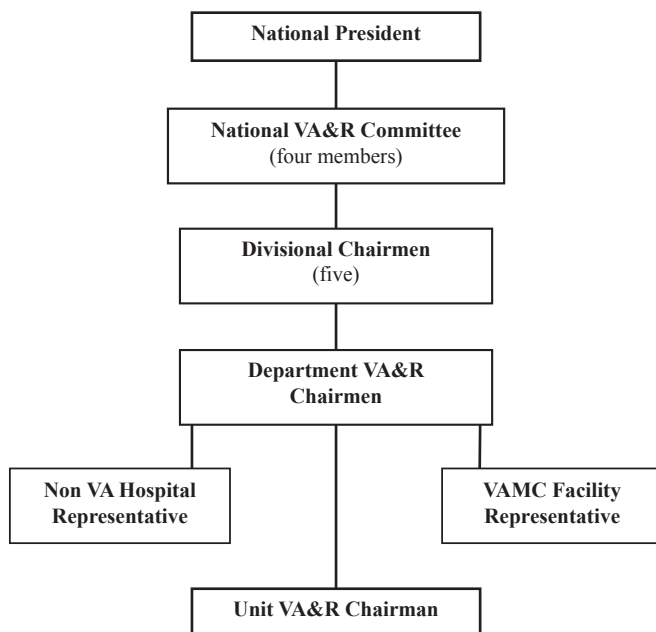
**Chart Showing Proper Channeling of  
American Legion Auxiliary Unit Activities  
in VA Medical Centers**



All contacts from the Auxiliary to the VAMC must be through the official Auxiliary Representative on the VAVS Advisory Committee to the Chief of Staff or Director of Voluntary Service.

All contacts from the VAMC to the organization must be through the Chief of Staff or Director of Voluntary Service to the certified Representative of the American Legion Auxiliary, and from the Representative to the various Auxiliary Units.

**Table of Organization  
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee  
American Legion Auxiliary**



**National Level Appointments**

The National President shall appoint a National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman, a Vice Chairman, two committee members and five Divisional Chairmen. From among these persons the National President shall designate the National VAVS Representative and two Deputy National VAVS Representatives.

After assignment of definite duties within the hospital, each individual volunteer will then report directly to her VA supervisor in the service where she is volunteering.

The official Representative of the American Legion Auxiliary is a member of the Hospital Voluntary Service Advisory Committee and, as such, has an important part in the overall planning of the voluntary service program in VA Medical Centers.

The official Representative of the American Legion Auxiliary on the Voluntary Service Hospital Advisory Committee is the channel through which all services and information from the Auxiliary to the hospital should flow. It is also the channel through which all requests and

information from the hospital to the organization should flow. When this simple rule is carefully followed, the services rendered to the hospital by the Auxiliary are of much greater value to the patient and there is increased efficiency of operation.

### **Additional Material Available to the Unit**

In addition to the information contained in here, material is available for each Unit President and Unit Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Chairman through your Department Headquarters.

The National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee provides a *Guide for Volunteers* for all volunteers. This valuable guide should be a part of your Unit materials. It is available without cost from your Department and a copy is available for free download from [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org). Of interest to you and your Unit are the sections of the guide which pertain to the classification of the volunteer, requirements of a VAMC volunteer (and Hospital Director); as well as sections concerning the Field Service, Home Service and VolunTeen volunteers and the Non ALA volunteers recruited by the American Legion Auxiliary. In addition to this valuable guide, there is available from your Department Headquarters pamphlets on the VAVS program. These also can be obtained without cost.

### **YOUR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY**

Contained in this manual are helpful suggestions and valuable information to assist the Unit Chairman, the Unit President and members of the Unit in the work of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program. Always remember that SERVICE is a hallmark of the American Legion Auxiliary and SERVICE TO THE VETERAN is a golden opportunity, which comes to each of us.







# PROPER PARLIAMENTARY POINTS

The information contained in  
PROPER PARLIAMENTARY POINTS  
is based on  
*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*  
Perseus Publishing  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

And

*Let's Be Proper*  
by Helen Lee Gilbert  
Past National President  
American Legion Auxiliary

Revision May 2008  
Barbara Kranig  
Past National President



## PROPER PARLIAMENTARY POINTS

Two American Legion Auxiliary documents, *Let's Be Proper* and *Parliamentary Points* have been combined here to provide basic information and confidence in the use of parliamentary procedures. *Let's be Proper* was originally prepared by Past National President Helen Lee Gilbert, and includes American Legion Auxiliary protocol. *Parliamentary Points* was compiled over time based on *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Parliamentary procedures apply certain established rules of parliamentary law and rules of common sense, courtesy and fairness. The four principles for use are:

1. Courtesy and justice to every member.
2. Act on one thing at a time.
3. Rule of the majority.
4. Right of the minority to be heard.

### Common Definitions

The Chair means the presiding officer, generally the President. In addressing the Chair, always use the term "Madam President", or "Madam Chairman." If the Vice President is presiding, she is addressed as Madam President or Madam Chairman, unless the president is also on the platform, in which case the presiding officer is addressed as Madam Vice-President to avoid confusion. Rules of Order may provide for other practices at a particular meeting or convention.

Quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present for the valid transaction of any business. The number required for a quorum should be stated in the Bylaws.

Division of the Question will allow a motion that is complex and has two or more parts, to be divided into sections and to vote on each in succession. The motion for a division of the question requires a second and is carried by majority vote.

Division of the Assembly, when the outcome of a vote is unclear, is used to call for a rising vote unless it is used as a delaying tactic. A call for a division of the assembly, however it is stated, requires an immediate call for a rising (standing) vote or, in small assemblies, a show of hands. No second or vote on the request is necessary.

Ex-Officio means “by virtue of Office.” The ex-officio member of a committee is designated as such by the Bylaws. The ex-officio member has the same rights as any other committee member, but is not obligated to attend committee meetings, nor is this member counted as part of the required quorum to transact the business of the committee.

### **Principal Motions**

Parliamentary motions fall into four groups. They include:

1. **Main motions**, which bring new propositions before the assembly, are open to debate and usually require a majority vote to carry them. A motion to rescind is a main motion requiring a 2/3 vote if previous notice has not been given.
2. **Subsidiary motions** are attached to other questions for one or more of three purposes: To modify (amend), to delay action, and to stop debate. It is important to know the order of precedence when dealing with subsidiary motions. (See diagram of parliamentary motions)
3. **Privileged motions** are so important that they may break in at almost any time. Three are quite commonly used: (1) To take a recess; (2) To adjourn; and (3) To fix a time and place to adjourn.
4. **Incidental motions** are used to keep the business of an organization moving properly should matters become too complex and confusing. Only two or three are commonly used.
  - a. Withdrawal of a motion may be asked for by the maker, and if no one objects, withdrawal is allowed. If anyone objects, it is necessary to make a motion to permit its withdrawal.
  - b. Point of Order is made to call attention to a parliamentary mistake.
  - c. Appeal from the decision of the Chair is made if a member disagrees with the presiding officer’s decision. The assembly then may vote either to sustain or overrule the Chair’s decision. An appeal is usually debatable.

### **Steps in a Main Motion**

1. Motion is made, preferable in positive form, by saying “I move that...”
2. Motion must be seconded to be considered. At least two people must wish to discuss a topic, therefore the “second” is the second person. If there is no second, the motion dies.

3. The Chair repeats the motion, which opens the motion for discussion.
4. Debate (discussion).
5. Chair repeats the motion when discussion ends, or time limits expire.
6. Chair calls for ayes and nays. Always call for the negative vote, even if it appears the vote is unanimous.
7. Chair announces the result of the vote.

## **Facts About Motions**

1. **Main Motion**  
 Made first, to introduce business before the assembly.  
 Lowest in rank, it is the basis for most other motions that have specific procedural steps. These are subsidiary motions, e.g. amendments, or privileged motions, e.g. to raise a question of privilege.  
 A motion once voted upon may again be brought before the meeting by proper method, i.e. reconsider (same day), a motion made by one who voted on the prevailing side; or rescind (requires 2/3 vote).
2. **To Amend**  
 A motion to amend the main motion is debatable only if the main motion is debatable and can be amended. However, an amendment to the amendment cannot be amended.  
 A motion to amend is a proposition to change the phraseology of a motion to which it applies and it should state by what method the change is to be made. A motion to amend is made by adding, deleting, inserting, or substituting. A motion to amend must be seconded, and must be acted on before the main motion to which attached. If the amendment passes, the chair will repeat the main motion “as amended” prior to the vote on the main motion.
3. **Refer or Commit**  
 This motion has a delaying action.  
 Is amendable.  
 Is debatable, but only as to the propriety of committing the main question to a special committee, to a standing committee, for information or for recommended action. Pending amendments go with the main motion to the committee.  
 If the committee to which the motion is committed is a “special one,” it is necessary to designate the number to serve on the committee and how it is to be appointed. It is also necessary to designate what action the committee is to take, i.e. information or action.

If more than a quarterly time interval will elapse between meetings, a question cannot be postponed beyond the end of the present session. A quarterly interval is considered to be any time during the calendar month three months from the month in which the first session was held.

4. **Postpone**

(to a definite time)

This motion has a delaying action. It allows limited debate. Debate must not go into the merits of the main motion. It is amendable as to time. The time must not be beyond the next regular session. It becomes the order of the day for the time to which it was postponed.

5. **Postpone**

(indefinitely)

A motion to postpone indefinitely cannot be amended but is debatable and opens the main question to debate. A negative vote cannot be reconsidered. If lost, the motion cannot be renewed. The object of this motion is not to postpone but to reject the main motion. If carried, the main motion is suppressed for the session. If an embarrassing main motion has been brought before the assembly, a member can propose a motion to dispose of the question by moving to postpone action indefinitely. A motion to postpone action is also proper in situations where a motion "to lay on the table" was previously used, that is, in situations where it is desired to dispose of a question without a direct vote, as this motion is debatable and therefore does not deny the rights of individual members. (See also No. 7, Lay on the Table.)

6. **Previous Question**

(Not debatable, not amendable.)

Takes two-thirds vote to carry. To make this motion, say "I move the previous question on (state the motion)." This motion means "I move that debate now cease and voting begins." Sometimes a member will simply say "question" but this implies a motion as stated here. When this motion is made, the presiding officer says, "The Chair would remind the members that it requires a two-thirds vote to carry the motion, and if carried, debate on the pending motion will cease."

7. **Lay on the Table**

(Not debatable, not amendable.)

The motion to "lay on the table" is proper only to set aside a pending question in order to take up something immediately

urgent, with the expectation of resuming the tabled matter at a more convenient time. Since such a motion is not debatable, and because it requires only a majority vote, it is considered a violation of the rights of individual members to use this motion for other than its stated purpose. Other motions that limit debate require a 2/3 vote. A motion to “take from the table” the item previously tabled can be done at a time immediately following the more urgent matter or at another time.

8. **Adjourn**

(Not debatable, not amendable.)

A motion to adjourn is always in order after the moment the meeting opens, even if there is business to be transacted. Therefore, the presiding officer should not say “A motion to adjourn is in order,” but rather, “If there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned.”

9. **Fix Time and Place**

(To which to adjourn)

This motion is not debatable but can be amended. At the time this meeting is held, it is an adjourned meeting of the first and is recorded as such, and would take up business where it was left off previously. Time must be before the next regularly called meeting.

10. **To Reconsider**

A motion to reconsider means, “I move to annul the vote and reconsider the motion.”

Must be made by one who voted on the prevailing side, unless the vote was taken by ballot; then any member may make the motion to reconsider.

Can be made only at the meeting at which the vote was taken unless special rules provide otherwise in the Bylaws.

Say, “I move to reconsider the vote on the motion relating to...” or “I move to reconsider the vote on the amendment striking out...and inserting...”

The presiding officer asks, “Did the member vote on the prevailing side?”

The following may not be reconsidered:

- a. Nominations.
- b. Fix time and place to adjourn
- c. To adjourn.
- d. Take from the table.
- e. Lay on the table.



11. **Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted**

Rescind is a motion to annul or strike out something previously adopted.

Amend something previously adopted is the motion that can be used if it is desired to change only a part of the text, or to substitute a different version. The motion is debatable. A majority vote is required if previous notice is given, or 2/3 vote is required if no previous notice was given.

12. **Withdrawal of a Motion**

A member may withdraw a motion without permission before the Chair states the motion placing it before the assembly. Once the motion is stated by the Chair, a request for permission to withdraw a motion can be made at any time before the vote is taken on the main motion. If there is an objection to permission being granted, another member can make a motion asking for permission of withdrawal. It does not need a second and the Chair may put it to a vote.

**Nominations and Elections**

The Bylaws should detail the procedures for nominations and elections. This should include nomination procedures, time of election, election procedures, elected officers, term of office, and filling vacancies.

If a nominating committee is provided for, the Bylaws should state the method for selection of such committee. The committee should be elected by the assembly or by the executive committee. The president is never a member of the nominating committee, ex-officio or otherwise. Members of the nominating committee may be nominated for any office without resigning from the nominating committee.

The nominating committee reports to the assembly and the Chair calls for additional nominations for each office. It is out of order to close nominations if there are members who wish to make further nominations. If no one wishes to nominate further, a motion to close nominations is unnecessary. The chair may simply state that nominations are closed. If a motion is made, it requires a 2/3 vote to close nominations.

A member nominated for an office may withdraw but she may not withdraw “in favor of another member.”

If the Bylaws require the election to be by ballot, this requirement cannot be suspended, even by unanimous vote. A ballot provides that any member may write in the name of an eligible member for any office, whether or not that member is nominated either by the nominating committee or from the floor. The Bylaws may also provide for voice vote when there is only one candidate for an office.

The right to vote is the privilege of every member, but a member is not compelled to vote.

In counting votes, the basis for election is the total number of votes cast and not the total voting strength. It is important to know the voting strength so that the total number of votes cast does not exceed the voting strength. The Chair must declare a member elected after the teller's report, or after voice vote, for each office.

All elected officers assume their duties as soon as elected, at the close of the meeting or convention at which elected, or as provided for in the Bylaws. Installation is not necessary to assume the duties of the office.

Upon entering office, each one should make herself acquainted with the duties entailed. Her plan of action and method of accomplishment should be clearly in mind.

When going out of office, the retiring officer should pass on to her successor her file of materials as promptly as possible.

### **Points for Presiding Officers**

1. Always begin the meeting on time. Keep business within time limit.
2. Do not enter into discussions; remain neutral.
3. Expedite the transaction of business by
  - a. Keeping order.
  - b. Saying what you mean, in the fewest words.
  - c. Planning in advance, and preparing an agenda.
4. State only those motions that are in order, or rule motion out of order.
  - a. State motion after it has been seconded.
  - b. Ask for discussion
  - c. Put motion to a vote
  - d. Declare the result of the vote.
5. Ask, "Is there a second to the motion?" if a motion is not seconded promptly. The Chair should not say, "Will someone second the motion?" which would imply that she wants the motion seconded.
6. Say, "The question is on the motion to amend..." not "The question is on the amendment."
7. Say, "Those in favor of the motion please say 'Aye,' those opposed say 'No.'" Do not say, "Those in favor 'indicate' or 'signify,' etc. 'Aye' should not be used as indicating opposition. 'No' should be used in voicing opposition.
8. Take the negative vote on every motion except courtesy resolutions. Say, "Those opposed say 'No'", not, "Those

contrary or contrary minded say ‘No.’” One may be opposed to a motion without being ‘contrary.’

9. Make a decision and declare the result of every vote. Announce the result to the assembly, not to the secretary.
10. Say, “The motion is carried;” not “The ayes have it.” Say, “The motion is lost;” not, “Those opposed have it.”
11. Chair does not forfeit the right to vote; however, it is not customary to do so unless the vote is by ballot or roll call.
12. Unless voting by ballot, the President may vote to break a tie or to create a tie. She may not vote twice to do so. Her vote in breaking a tie can either carry or lose the motion. By voting to create a tie, she can defeat a motion, since a tie vote is a lost vote.
13. If the President wishes to speak to a question in the process of debate, either in favor of or opposing, she should place in the Chair a Vice President, and speak to the question. The President may not resume the Chair until after the vote has been taken and declared, upon the question under discussion.
14. Use the expression, “The Chair” instead of “I”.
15. Know for yourself whether there is unfinished business. This is your business.
16. Have ballots collected in a receptacle when a vote is by ballot.
17. State, “The Vice President will assume the Chair.” You never turn the gavel over, or turn the meeting over, to anyone.
18. The President is ex-officio a member of all standing committees, but never of the nominating committee.
19. Preside according to the principles of fairness and justice if you do not know of any rule applicable to the decision you make.

### **Points for other officers**

#### **Parliamentarian**

1. Should be seen and not heard.
2. Should be familiar with current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, and the *Constitution and Bylaws*.
3. Need not be an elected officer, but is appointed by the President because of confidence and trust of members.

#### **Vice President**

1. Presides in the absence of the President, or whenever the President temporarily vacates the chair.
2. First Vice President becomes President in case of illness, resignation or death of the President, for the unexpired term, unless rules specify how vacancies shall be filled.

## **Secretary**

1. In the absence of the President and Vice President, calls the meeting to order and entertains a motion for temporary chairman. If the Secretary is absent, a Secretary Pro-Tem must be elected.
2. Writes minutes of the meeting, including kind of meeting (regular, special, etc.), place, date, hour, presiding officer, all motions and their disposal, names of makers of motions. Names of seconder not required.
3. Not included in minutes are discussions, opinion, Points of Order, or Questions of Privilege.
4. The Secretary should place corrections on the margin of the minutes. The minutes are never re-written after they are presented to the assembly and approved.

## **Treasurer**

1. Is custodian of funds of the organization; receives and disburses them upon authority from the organization.
2. Reports financial accounting to the assembly.
3. Reports are not adopted, but are placed on file for audit. The audit report is adopted.
4. The treasurer should be bonded.

## **Points for Members**

1. All members whose current membership dues are paid are members in good standing and are entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership, including those of aspiring to and holding office, and voting in the American Legion Auxiliary.
2. Rise and address the Chair if you want to discuss the motion under consideration or to offer another motion.
3. Wait to be recognized by the presiding officer before beginning to talk after addressing the Chair.
4. Say, "I move to..." or "I move that..."
5. Make a motion in an affirmative form, never in the negative.
6. Always address your remarks to the Chair, never to another member.
7. Speak of another member by some expression other than her name, such as, "the member on my left..." or "the member who moved..."
8. Remain silent if you are ready to vote and the presiding officer says, "Are you ready for the question?"
9. Assist the presiding officer promptly by giving your name. (In small groups she may know everyone, so this may not be necessary.)

10. Use the correct terminology. To approve means to ratify; to accept means to receive, such as reports; to adopt is to take affirmative action on motions.
11. State facts rather than what you think or believe.
12. Understand the types of votes:
  - a. Majority: the number greater than half the votes cast.
  - b. Plurality: issue or person receiving most votes, may be less than a majority, as in an election with three or more candidates.
  - c. Two-thirds vote: To determine a 2/3 vote quickly, double the negative votes cast, and if it is equal to or less than the affirmative votes cast, a 2/3 vote has been attained.
13. Members should speak up while a motion is pending, not after the vote has been taken or after the meeting is over.
14. Remain seated when motion to adjourn is offered and until the Chair declares the meeting adjourned.
15. Committees:
  - a. Members of committees have no authority except that which is granted by the Bylaws or by a vote of the assembly.
  - b. Unless otherwise provided, the member first named to a committee or the one receiving the largest number of votes is the chairman of the committee.
  - c. Members of committees should not conduct business of the committee without a quorum present. A majority of committee members constitutes a quorum unless the assembly orders otherwise.
  - d. Motions and resolutions originating in committees need no seconding. They already have been seconded by committee action.
16. Show loyalty to the elected officers, whether they are your personal choice or not.
17. Remember that all rules of parliamentary procedure are in harmony with good sense, courtesy and fairness.

### **Common Mistakes**

#### **1. Calling for acceptance of the address of the President.**

The address of the President is accepted by the presiding officer without vote, as a courtesy to the President. It is not put to a vote.

#### **2. Casting a unanimous vote or ballot by one person.**

That is out of order. If such a motion is made, the presiding officer says, "all in favor of electing (name) please say 'Aye,' those opposed say 'No'". The motion is carried and (name) is declared elected."

**3. Referring to the Constitution and Bylaws as one document if there are two.**

When amending or speaking of the Constitution and Bylaws, specify which document is meant. Under preferred practice today, the two documents are usually combined into one, unless the rules of the organization are very complex, such as the American Legion Auxiliary's national organization. Units may have simple rules that can be combined into one document, which would be called Bylaws.

**4. Bylaws contain the provisions that are expected to have stability from session to session.**

These rules, therefore, require both previous notice and a two-thirds vote for amendment. While Rules of Order require two-thirds vote for suspension, Bylaws cannot be suspended – ever!

**5. Putting two different and separate items in one motion.**

If this is done, a division of the question should be called for.

**6. Saying, “Are there any omissions, additions or corrections to the minutes?”**

Remember that an omission or addition is a correction. Ask only for corrections to the minutes.

**7. Omitting call for a negative vote.**

**8. Asking that the vote be “unanimous.” According to Webster, “unanimous” means “all of the same mind.”**

Americans are too individualistic to ever be that. Say instead, “The motion is carried without a dissenting vote.”

**9. Calling for minutes of the Executive Committee meeting.**

Minutes of an Executive Committee meeting are not read for approval of the assembly. Only those who help make the minutes can approve them. Recommendations that require approval by the assembly are read as new business, and acted on at that time.

**10. Always state the date of the previous meeting when calling for minutes to be read.**

**Note:** It is a mistake to think you can learn parliamentary law without investing time in and attention to the subject. Also required are continuous, persistent practice and the ability to see the difference between statements, which are similar. Parliamentary law works if it is used correctly, and if all members are familiar with the basic rules.

## **Procedure and Protocol**

1. Courtesy and honor to Past National Presidents and Past Department Presidents are always in order.
2. Start all events on time.
3. At some time during a program, credit and recognition should be given to the chairman and the committee responsible for the arrangements for the meeting or dinner.
4. Seating – The presiding officer is always at the center of the head table or right off-center first place. The guest of honor is always seated at the right of the presiding officer and takes precedence over any other dignitary. Other guests may be seated right, left, right, etc. of the presiding officer, according to rank; or all guests of honor may be seated to the right of the presiding officer, and other dignitaries to her left. If a special chairman is to present a program portion of the meeting, this person is usually seated at the left of the presiding officer when there is an honored guest at the presiding officer's right.
5. If the number of honored guests is a large one, it is often more graceful to arrange for two head tables. But, under all circumstances, the guest of honor should be kept at the presiding officer's right.
6. Corsages – corsages for women guests are a nice gesture, but if the treasury is low, forget them. If you do present them, do this before the meeting and designate one person to handle this. White is always acceptable in flowers, and it is well to present colored corsages only if you know that the color will harmonize. The presiding officer does not wear a corsage unless the guest of honor also wears one.
7. Introductions – When you introduce guests of honor and they rise and bow only, you introduce the highest-ranking guest first and go down the list. If your guests are each to say a few words of greeting or congratulations, then start with the guest of lowest rank and go up the list so that the last expression comes from the top-ranking officer or guest. **DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK ALL TO BE BRIEF**, but this should be done prior to the event.
8. Guests of honor are always introduced by the President, especially when they are National Officers.
9. In making introductions, generally, it is a good general rule to introduce elected officers before introducing appointed officers. In introducing the speaker, be brief, be factual, be gracious, give the full name and titles of the speaker, announce the subject and present the speaker. Every speaker should have advance information regarding time, place, type of meeting, manner of dress, and most important, the time limit for the speech.
10. Reception Line – the President or Chairman, usually preceded by

one hostess who announces each person, heads the reception line. The guest of honor is next to the President, at her left, with other guests following according to rank. A reception line should never be too long or progress will be delayed. Each person in a line repeats to the person next in line the name of the person just greeted. If this is not done, those going down the reception line give their name to each one in line, in turn.

### **The Emblem, Ribbons and Pins.**

1. The emblem should always be accorded the place of honor. It represents the organization.
2. Use of the emblem must receive the approval of the National Secretary.
3. The sash ribbon is worn by various officers on all levels, present and past.
4. The sash ribbon is worn on formal occasions – NEVER over a topcoat of any kind, but may be worn over a suit coat.
5. The ribbon is worn over the right shoulder, and under the left arm. No pins or decorations should be affixed to the ribbon. It should not be knotted at the left to fasten it, but should hang crossed and secured by an invisible fastening on the underside.
6. Members are encouraged to wear the pin of the current office in which they are serving or have just completed, or the highest office held by the member.
7. Corsages may be worn on the left side, over the Auxiliary pin, as a corsage is considered part of the dress once it is pinned in place.
8. If a flag pin is worn, the flag pin should be worn on the left side of the blouse and may be worn with the pin of the current Auxiliary office held by the member, with the flag pin above or even with, the pin denoting office held.







## THE FLAG CODE

## THE FLAG CODE

Title 4, United States Code, Chapter 1 As Adopted by the National Flag Conference, Washington, D.C., June 14-15, 1923, and Revised and Endorsed by the Second National Flag Conference, Washington, D.C., May 15, 1924. Revised and adopted at P.L. 623, 77th Congress, Second Session, June 22, 1942; as Amended by P.L. 829, 77th Congress, Second Session, December 22, 1942; P.L. 107 83rd Congress, 1st Session, July 9, 1953; P.L. 396, 83rd Congress, Second Session, June 14, 1954; P.L. 363, 90th Congress, Second Session, June 28, 1968; P.L. 344, 94th Congress, Second Session, July 7, 1976; P.L. 322, 103rd Congress, Second Session, September 13, 1994; P.L. 225, 105th Congress, Second Session, August 12, 1998; P.L. 80, 106th Congress, First Session, October 25, 1999; P.L. 110-41, 110th Congress, First Session, June 29, 2007; P.L. 110-181, 110th Congress, Second Session, January 28, 2008; and P.L. 110-417, 110th Congress, Second Session, October 14, 2008.

**§ 4. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag;** manner of delivery The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, “I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”, should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

**§ 5. Display and use of flag by civilians;** codification of rules and customs; definition The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America is established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States. The flag of the United States for the purpose of this chapter shall be defined according to sections 1 and 2 of this title and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

### **§ 6. Time and occasions for display**

(a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

- (c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.
- (d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the third Monday in January; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.
- (e) The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.
- (f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.
- (g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

#### **§ 7. Position and manner of display**

The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

- (a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i) of this section.
- (b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.
- (c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy. No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior

prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States or the death of a member of the Armed Forces from any State, territory, or possession who dies while serving on active duty, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff and the same authority is provided to the Mayor of the District of Columbia with respect to present or former officials of the District of Columbia and members of the Armed Forces from the District of Columbia. When the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia, issues a proclamation under the preceding sentence that the National flag be flown at half-staff in that State, territory, or possession or in the District of Columbia because of the death of a member of the Armed Forces, the National flag flown at any Federal installation or facility in the area covered by that proclamation shall be flown at half-staff consistent with that proclamation. The flag shall be flown at half-staff 30 days from the death of the President or a former President; 10 days from the day of death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. The flag shall be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day, unless that day is also Armed Forces Day. As used in this subsection -

(1) the term “half-staff” means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;

(2) the term “executive or military department” means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of title 5, United States Code; and

- (3) the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.
- (n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.
- (o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

### **§ 8. Respect for flag**

No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

- (a) The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
- (b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.
- (c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
- (d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.
- (e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.
- (f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.
- (g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.
- (h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.
- (i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as

cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

### **§ 9. Conduct during hoisting, lowering or passing of flag**

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, those present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

### **§ 10. Modification of rules and customs by President**

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

## **Title 36, Subtitle I, Part A section 301 United States Code**

### **National Anthem**

(a) Designation.— The composition consisting of the words and music known as the Star-Spangled Banner is the national anthem.

(b) Conduct During Playing.— During a rendition of the national anthem—

(1) when the flag is displayed—

(A) individuals in uniform should give the military salute at the first note of the anthem and maintain that position until the last note;



- (B) members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the manner provided for individuals in uniform; and
- (C) all other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, and men not in uniform, if applicable, should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart; and
- (2) when the flag is not displayed, all present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed.

### **Interpretations**

1. Q. Is it proper to fly the Flag of the United States at night?  
A. The Flag Code provides it is the universal custom to display the Flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. The Code provides further, however, that the Flag may be flown at night when a patriotic effect is desired provided the Flag is properly illuminated.
2. Q. Is it permissible to fly the Flag during inclement weather?  
A. The Flag should not be displayed during inclement weather unless an all-weather flag is displayed. (An all-weather flag is a non-absorbent material such as nylon.)
3. Q. Is it proper to carry the Flag with a band or other marching unit at night at an athletic event, and to display the Flag on a pole, with a spotlight or floodlights on it, during the event?  
A. Yes, it is entirely proper. The provisions of the Flag Code which prohibit the display of the Flag at night apply to the display of Flags on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs except as provided in Sec. 2(a) of the Flag Law.
4. Q. When the Flag is not flown from a staff how should it be displayed?  
A. It should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out, or so suspended that its folds fall as free as though the Flag were staffed. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the Flag's own right; that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window of a home or a place of business, the Flag should be displayed in the same way; that is, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.
5. Q. What is proper respect to the Flag during the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the Flag, or when the Flag is passing in a parade or in a review?

- A. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the Flag or when the Flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the Flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the Flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the Flag passes.
6. Q. In what manner should the Flag be displayed over the middle of a street?
    - A. When the Flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.
  7. Q. What should be the position of the Flag of the United States when displayed from a staff in a meeting place of an American Legion Post?
    - A. The National Colors and Post Flag, when in position, should be in position at either side and just in advance of the Commander's station; the National Colors on the right side of the Commander, the Post Colors on his left when facing the audience, even though the Commander is on a platform and the Flags (Colors) are posted on the ground level (National Executive Committee, The American Legion, May 5-7, 1947, Sec. 3(k) of the Flag Code).
  8. Q. What is the proper display of the Flag when suspended from a ceiling or displayed over the middle of a large room such as a public building, bank, railroad station, or other places through which many persons pass daily?
    - A. When the Flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the Flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the Flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.
  9. Q. What should be the position of the Flag when displayed from a staff in a public meeting place, whether indoors or outdoors, on platform, or on floor or ground level?
    - A. The policy of the National Americanism Commission, The American Legion, has been and is to pay honor and tribute to the

Flag of our Country by displaying it from a staff in the position of honor which is fixed by the position of the speaker at the right hand of the speaker as he faces the audience, whether on a platform, on the floor on the same level with the audience, or in the open on a platform or ground level. This position of honor is established by the time-honored and universal custom which fixes the position of honor at the right of a presiding officer in case of banquet, or at a dinner at the right of a host, regardless of whether he is on platform or on the floor level. [Section 3(K) Flag Code Revision 1976]

10. Q. Is it permissible to display another flag or pennant at the peak of a halyard above the Flag of the United States?
  - A. No, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, the church pennant may be flown above the Flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.
11. Q. When should the Flag be at half-staff?
  - A. (a) The Flag is half-staffed on Memorial Day, May 30th, from sunrise until noon; it is displayed at full-staff from noon until sunset.  
(b) Since the Flag symbolizes the nation, it should be half staffed only in cases where it is appropriate to indicate that the nation mourns and then customarily by proclamation of the President of the United States.  
When it is desired to show that a state, city, club, large industry, or a society mourns, then the state, city, club, industry, or society flag or banner should be half-staffed or dressed in crepe.
12. Q. When should small Flags displayed on graves on Memorial Day be removed?
  - A. The Flags should be removed, beginning the next day; however, if the staffs have been firmly inserted into the ground or securely fastened to the cross or tombstone, so that they will not fall on the ground or be displayed with the staff at an angle other than vertical, the Flags need not be removed for several days. To permit them to remain until they become soiled and torn shows flagrant disrespect to the Flag.
13. Q. What is the proper respect to be shown during the playing of the National Anthem?
  - A. During the rendition of the National Anthem when the Flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the Flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with the right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at

the first note of the Anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the Flag is not displayed, those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the Flag were displayed there.

14. Q. What should persons do when they are walking along the street and "The Star-Spangled Banner" is heard?
  - A. If the music is outdoors, near and quite audible, all persons should stop, uncover and stand at attention.
15. Q. Is it necessary for a person to stand and salute when the National Anthem is played over a loud-speaker arrangement, film track, radio, "juke box" or other type of a musical reproduction machine in a theater, restaurant or other public place?
  - A. No. It is recommended that persons pay respect only when the National Anthem is played by a band, orchestra or other musical instrument actually in the room. The office of the National Americanism Commission believes that when the National Anthem is played over a radio or in a restaurant from a "juke box" or some other type of musical reproduction machine, or in a theater over a film track, it would seem more or less forced and unnatural to pay special respect.
16. Q. Should the Flag ever be used for advertising purposes?
  - A. The Flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discarded. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the Flag is flown.
17. Q. Is it proper for policemen and firemen to salute the Flag with the hand salute or should they uncover?
  - A. The Fire Department regulations of many of our big cities prescribe that firemen in uniform shall salute the Flag with the hand salute, and Police Department regulations prescribe that policemen in uniform shall salute with the hand, unless the baton is drawn, in which case the baton salute shall be rendered. In view of the fact that policemen and firemen are members of uniformed municipal forces which, as regards discipline and other matters, are quasi-military in nature, it is considered perfectly proper for them to salute the Flag with the hand of baton.
18. Q. Can the Flag be washed or dry-cleaned?
  - A. Yes. It is permissible to wash, but preferable to dry-clean the Flag.

19. Q. Is it correct to sing the National Anthem while saluting the Flag?
- A. Yes. All present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the Flag with the right hand over the heart. Those in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the Anthem and retain this until the last note.
20. Q. Is it necessary for a person to stand and salute when a reproduction of the Flag of the United States of America is flashed on a motion picture screen.
- A. No. It is not necessary to salute reproductions or photographs of the Flag.
21. Q. What is the proper manner of pledging allegiance to the Flag of the United States?
- A. The Pledge is rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart (Sec. 7).
22. Q. Is it proper to stand when "America," "God Bless America," "The Red, White, and Blue" and other such patriotic songs are played?
- A. It is not required. However, on occasions when patriotic enthusiasm runs high, it is common practice.
23. Q. Is it necessary for a person to stand and salute when the National Anthem is sung?
- A. Yes. They should salute the Flag just the same as if they were singing the National Anthem.

### **Cautions**

Do not permit disrespect to be shown to the Flag of the United States of America.

1. Do not dip the Flag of the United State of America to any person or any thing. The regimental color, State flag, organization or institutional flag will render this honor.
2. Do not display the Flag with the union down except as a signal of distress.
3. Do not place any other flag or pennant above or, if on the same level, to the right of the Flag of the United States of America.
4. Do not let the Flag touch the ground or the floor, or trail in the water.
5. Do not place any object or emblem of any kind on or above the Flag of the United States of America.
6. Do not use the Flag as drapery in any form whatsoever. Use bunting of blue, white and red.
7. Do not fasten the Flag in such manner as will permit it to be easily torn.

8. Do not drape the Flag over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle, or of a railway train or boat. When the Flag is displayed on a motor car, the staff should be affixed firmly to the chassis, or clamped to the right fender.
9. Do not display the Flag on a float in a parade except from a staff.
10. Do not use the Flag as a covering for a ceiling.
11. Do not carry the Flag flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
12. Do not use the Flag as a portion of a costume or of an athletic uniform. Do not embroider it upon cushions or handkerchiefs nor print it on paper napkins or boxes.
13. Do not put lettering of any kind upon the Flag.
14. Do not use the Flag in any form of advertising nor fasten an advertising sign to a pole from which the Flag is flown.
15. Do not display, use or store the Flag in such a manner as will permit it to be easily soiled or damaged.

### **Salute the Flag**

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the Flag or when the Flag is passing in a parade or in a review, all persons present should face the Flag, stand at attention and salute. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove the headdress with the right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. Women should salute by placing the right hand over the heart. The salute to the Flag in the moving column is rendered at the moment the Flag passes.

### **Salute the National Anthem**

When the National Anthem is rendered and the Flag is not displayed, all present should stand and face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the Flag was displayed. When the Flag is displayed, the regular "Salute to the Flag" should be given.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

### **Proper Advancement of Colors**

- The Flag of the United States is carried on the RIGHT.
- The LEFT hand is placed up on the staff, not on the Flag.
- The RIGHT hand is held down straight at the side, with the hand firmly on the staff. (A good hint is to have the staff of the flag riding firmly against your right hip when advancing or retiring colors.)

- The eagle flies forward
- Cross directly in front of the President's station; the Flag of the United States closest to the President's station.
- The Colors may all be posted at the same time but if the Color Guard chooses to post each Color (Flag) separately, the United States Flag must be released LAST. (When retrieving the Colors the United States flag should be retrieved FIRST.)
- Eagle should face the audience – fly toward the audience.
- Do not touch the Colors (Flag or Banner) after they are posted. Let them hang free.
- Take one step back from the Colors (Flag or Banner). Face the Flag of the United States and salute.
- Return to your seats.

*LET'S BE RIGHT ON FLAG ETIQUETTE*

(American Legion publication -- questions and answers)

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EXPLANATION  
OF THE  
PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY



## **EXPLANATION OF THE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

When the American Legion Auxiliary was formed to aid in the peacetime service of The American Legion to the United States, it was natural and right that the purposes of the Auxiliary be expressed in the same words which set forth the purposes of the Legion. Therefore, the Preamble to the Constitution of the Auxiliary is nearly identical to that of the Legion's Preamble to the Constitution with the addition of the very significant phrase "to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion."

**For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:**

### **To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America...**

The first of the ten principles of The American Legion and Auxiliary is a sacred pledge of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. It is most appropriate that the first ideas presented in the Preamble be dedicated to the continued defense of our nation by those very persons who have either served in war-time or had a close relative who served. The pledge to uphold and defend the democracy of America is the first obligation of every Legionnaire and Auxiliary member.

### **To maintain law and order...**

Law and order must be maintained if freedom is to be maintained. Liberty is not a license. Good government means that all citizens are secure in their lives and property. To this, the Legion and Auxiliary are pledged by the second principle stated in the Preamble.

### **To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism...**

The term "Americanism" covers all of the things which have made the American nation great and the American people free. It implies qualities of character as well as principles of government. Under this Constitution's principles, the Legion and Auxiliary have worked, and are continuing to work, to defeat the attempts of subversive organizations to undermine our system, to build loyalty to and confidence in American ideals, and to develop an American citizenship capable of making America's free form of government a constantly greater success.

### **To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations during the Great Wars...**

Every member of the Auxiliary has close personal associations with the sacrifice of war, be it World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada/Lebanon, Panama, or the Persian Gulf War. The associations and

incidents of these struggles are to be remembered not only for their heroes, their victories for freedom, but also to remind us of the awful implications and the inevitable tragedies accompanying any war.

**To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation...**

The individual is the basis of the American nation. Unlike other ideals of government, the American ideal places the individual first. The nation belongs to the individual, not the individual to the nation. The government exists for the purpose of serving the individual, not the individual for the purpose of serving the nation. If this ideal is to survive, there must be a voluntary sense of obligation of the individual to the nation and its component parts, the community and state. The American citizen serves his community, state, and nation, not as a driven slave, but as a free man guided by his own sense of duty. To inculcate this feeling among all American is one of the great purposes of the Legion and Auxiliary.

**To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses...**

If America is to remain "the land of the free," the government must always be a government of all the people and for all the people. No classes are recognized in America. America must be kept the country of opportunity for all, where every citizen's first allegiance is to the nation, not to some social or economic class or mass. Dominance must not be gained by any such grouping of Americans. This is another basic pledge of the Legion and Auxiliary.

**To make right the master of might...**

The American form of government guarantees equal rights to all citizens\_ The American Legion Auxiliary, born from a struggle against ruthless might, pledges all their strength to a continued struggle to prevent invasion of the rights of any citizen by any force, no matter of what character.

**To promote peace and goodwill on earth...**

The men and women of the Legion and the women of the Auxiliary know well the ghastly futility of war. We know that war brings only misery to any nation which engages in it, to the victor as well as the vanquished. With the lessons of war constantly in mind, we pledge ourselves to promote peace and goodwill among nations. We have worked steadily in the cause in the face of forces which have sought to sow enmity and war throughout the world.

**To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy...**

These were the principles which inspired America's great war efforts over the decades, and the Legion and Auxiliary stand determined that these principles shall not be lost to America in time of peace. Following this pledge, the Legion and Auxiliary work to safeguard justice, freedom, and democracy against the dangers of indifferent citizenship and undermining by their enemies. It strives to give understanding of and devotion to these principles to the

younger generations of Americans so that they will endure for the future of the country.

**To participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion...**

Thus, the Auxiliary pledges its full strength to the support of The American Legion, and affirms its character as an auxiliary to the Legion. It has always been faithful to this pledge, never developing programs or policies of its own, but directing all of its activities toward the “accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.”

**To consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.**

In this final phrase of the Preamble is set forth the purpose which has guided the Legion and Auxiliary in all of their vast rehabilitation and youth work; in everything they have done to lighten the burden for those suffering from the results of wars; and to bring full justice to those paying the human price for America’s victory. In this work of mercy and relief, the Auxiliary has made great contributions toward the achievement of the Legion’s purpose.

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## NOTES

## NOTES



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