



Department of Ohio Plan of Action



CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

CHAIRMAN

Paula Blosser
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Mid-Year Report Due: December 5, 2016

REPORT DUE : April 15, 2017

SEE BACK SIDE FOR REPORT FORM & NARRATIVE INFORMATION

Department of Ohio Plan of Action

2016 – 2017 Department Report Form

Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible. If the report shows all zero's or blank information this will not qualify as an actual report.

Please complete the following. Be sure to give the complete name of your Unit.

District # _____ Unit # _____ Membership Goal _____

Full Official Name _____

Unit President/Chairman (circle one) Name: _____

Phone Number: (____) _____ Email: _____ Member ID # _____

PROGRAM:

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

As part of your Narrative Report, please include answers to the following questions:

- Have you done an annual review of your Unit Constitution & Bylaws? _____
- When were your Unit Constitution & Bylaws last revised? _____
- How was your Unit inspired to review their governing documents? _____
- Has your unit sponsored any Constitution & Bylaws activities? _____
- If so, what were those activities? _____
- Did your unit participate in a web based Constitution & Bylaws activity? If so, was it helpful? _____

Program Summation:

Total Number of Volunteers	Total Number of Jr. Volunteers	Total Number of Volunteer Hours

Report Deadline: April 15, 2017

MAIL TO DEPARTMENT C&B CHAIRMAN

**Paula Blosser
6880 Phillipsburg-Union Rd.
Englewood, Ohio 45322-9793**

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The Constitution & Bylaws program informs and educates members of the American Legion Auxiliary on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies and procedures at all levels.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

What is this program and why do we have it?

The Constitution & Bylaws program informs and educates members of the American Legion Auxiliary on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies and procedures at all levels. Constitution & Bylaws are the basis for governance of your department, district, county and unit. Preparing and adhering to updated Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules will ensure a more successful organizational process, and provide the structures to follow at all levels of our organization.

What can you do?

The following is provided as a guideline to help facilitate reviews of your current Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. *Please remember that department, district, county and unit Constitutions, Bylaws and Standing Rules cannot be in conflict with national governing documents.*

Guidelines for Units

A. Constitution & Bylaws:

- a. are the foundation of the organization
- b. contain the most essential provisions relating to the organization, its name, purpose, membership, officers, meetings, governing board, committees, parliamentary authority and amendments to prescribe structure changes
- c. are the law of the organization
 - should be reviewed, but not changed, every year
 - have direct bearing on the rights of members
- d. should have a standard form and content
- e. define the primary characteristics of the organization
- f. prescribe how the organization is structured and functions
- g. include all rules that are so important that they cannot be changed without prior notice.

B. Standing Rules

- a. Relate to the details of administration for the organization.
- b. May be adopted by a majority vote.
 - may be amended or rescinded at any regularly scheduled meeting: with prior notification, by a majority vote, unless the bylaws stipulate otherwise, without prior notification by a two-thirds vote.

C. Parliamentary Authority – The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the constitution, the bylaws, or any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

D. Definitions

- a. Resolution: An elaborate, formally written motion. A resolution may contain a preamble that lists the reasons for adoption. Each reason is listed in a separate paragraph starting with the word “whereas.” A resolution must have at least one “resolved” clause that specifies the action or position being proposed.
- b. Amendment: Proposes a change to the Constitution, Bylaws, Special Rules of Order, or Standing Rules. It is also used to modify a motion under consideration.

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Ideas:

Member

- Volunteer to create a game of Constitution & Bylaws questions for members to play at unit meetings; make Constitutions & Bylaws fun!
- Volunteer to write a resolution or amendment to be brought before your unit.
- Volunteer to help your department, district and/or unit to update governing documents to conform to the national organization's governing documents.
- Become familiar with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*

Unit

- Update Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules, as well as policies and procedures, to conform to the national organization's recent update.
- Plan a parliamentary procedure seminar at a unit/district function.

Constitution & Bylaws Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Mid year reports reflect the program work of units. Each unit Constitution & Bylaws chairman is **required** to submit a narrative report by December 5, 2016, to Department Constitution & Bylaws Chairman at her address found on the front of this page.

Year-End Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of units. Each Unit Constitution & Bylaws chairman is **required** to submit a narrative report by, April 15, 2017 to Department Constitution & Bylaws Chairman at her address found on the front of this page.

Additional Resources You Can Use (available through Emblem Sales emblem.legion.org)

1. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules (also available for download at www.ALAforVeterans.org)
2. Policies and Procedures Manual
3. Unit Guide Book
4. Parliamentary Procedure
5. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*

C&B program page at www.ALAforVeterans.org

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY 2016-2017 PLAN OF ACTION HOW TO GUIDES Constitution & Bylaws HOW TO WRITE STANDING RULES

Committee: Constitution & Bylaws

Submitted by: National Constitution & Bylaws Committee

Contact Information for Questions:

constitution&bylaws@ALAforVeterans.org or your department Constitution & Bylaws chairman

Step-by-Step Instructions:

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Start with a specific need that relates to the administration of your department, district or unit (e.g., awards you present, budget for convention attendees, voting body).

Write the Standing Rule. See “Guidelines for Writing Standing Rules” on the next page.

Present it at a unit meeting.

A standing rule can be adopted with majority vote at any regular meeting with advance notice, unless otherwise stipulated in the bylaws. Without advance notice, a standing rule requires a 2/3 vote for adoption.

The Standing Rules document should be kept up-to-date, and each new Standing Rule should record the date it was adopted.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING STANDING RULES

Standing Rules are those rules and regulations, which relate to the details of the administration of an organization for the guidance of an assembly. Standing Rules are usually adopted in the form of a resolution, and require a majority vote to pass with previous notice at any regularly scheduled meeting, and a 2/3 vote in the affirmative to pass without prior notice.

The following points are intended to be a helpful guide for writing or updating Standing Rules. Not every topic or item will apply in every instance, and some things may not be listed. The (NAME AND NUMBER) of the _____ District, American Legion Auxiliary, hereby adopts the Constitution & Bylaws as prescribed by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of _____.

The most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, in all questions not governed by articles of the National, (department/district/unit) Constitution & Bylaws, shall govern this (department/district/unit).

1. State time (day and hour) of meeting, place of meeting and information on notification of meeting. Are you meeting all twelve (12) months?
2. Dues – Senior, Junior, Gold Star Mothers, Life Members.
3. Process for selecting Life Members.
4. Election
 - a. When will election be held?
 - b. Secretary and/or Treasurer – elected or appointed?
 - c. A nominating committee – yes or no? Elected per the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
5. Election of delegates for department convention, fall conference, district meetings –When and how selected.
6. Installation of officers – when, where, who is in charge.
7. Equipment – rules for loaning, maintenance, etc.
8. Finances
 - a. Rent
 - b. Utilities
 - c. Working funds for officers, chairmen, poppy purchases, ALA Girls State, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, etc.
 - d. Annual gifts for district president’s visit, retiring officers, etc.
 - e. Flowers and/or gifts for illness, death, etc.
 - f. Expenses for delegates to department convention, fall conference, district meetings, etc. (registration fee, mileage, per diem)
 - g. How bills are paid and who signs the checks
 - h. Contest prizes – how much for poppy, essay contests, etc.
 - i. Department and district mandatory funds
 - j. Arrangements for special dinners – funerals, etc.

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k. Annual donations to special programs or charities

9. The fiscal year of this department/district/unit will be _____.

10. Audit – when and by whom.

11. This paragraph should appear at the end of your Standing Rules: “Standing Rules are adopted by a majority vote and may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote at any meeting, or if notice has been given, by a majority vote.” Standing Rules are usually adopted from time to time, as they are needed, in the form of resolutions.

12. The date of the meeting at which these Standing Rules were approved MUST be shown. ALSO – The signature of the Constitution & Bylaws chairman and president or Secretary MUST appear on the bottom of the list.

Date Approved

President or Secretary

Constitution & Bylaws Chairman

Constitution & Bylaws HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- A resolution is a written, formal motion. Resolutions are used because the motion may be presented in written form with some of the reasons included in the document. If written well, the resolution makes it easier for members to consider the proposal. Importance, length and complexity of the motion, and size and formality of the assembly are major considerations in using resolutions.
 - A resolution has two sections - the resolving clauses and the reasons. Resolving clauses tell the specifics of the proposal. The main reasons a motion should be adopted are included in the "Whereas" clauses. Neither section should include more clauses than are absolutely necessary. Simple, but specific is best.
 - When developing a written motion or resolution, consult with members who can be of assistance to improve the wording and whose support will assist in its adoption.
 - The two sections of a resolution can be written in either order, but many believe it is better to write the main motion first and then write the reasons it should be adopted. This way, you first determine what is to be done. Focus on the most crucial specifics essential in the motion. Say it in one or two sentences. A third sentence could include who is responsible and a timeline.
 - Once the main motion is determined, develop three to five statements to support the adoption of it. These are worded as "Whereas" clauses. These points should be the most important and least controversial arguments for the motion. Less than three points may not make the case depending on the motion, and more than five may get too complicated and confuse the issue. Again, it is important to stay focused on the points that are strictly necessary. Leave other points for the discussion.
 - When the resolution is finally written, it begins with the "Whereas" clauses and ends with the resolved clauses. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised prescribes the proper format, capitalization and punctuation. Again, it is a good idea to consult with members who can be of assistance, as well as the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, to ensure your resolution is correctly formatted.
- See the sample resolution in Support Tools at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

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SAMPLE Resolution

For consideration at the district convention

Submitted by: *Sample Unit in the District*

Subject *Adopt a Service Member's Family*

Date: *May 1, 2014*

Whereas, Part of the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to "honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad," and our national president has asked members to focus on that mission in our units this year; and

Whereas, The families of our military service personnel also sacrifice much, and they have special needs that can and should be assisted with by members of The American Legion Family; and

Whereas, Military families can be found in all our communities; now be it,

Resolved, *That the units in our district will adopt at least one family of a veteran or currently serving military person and work this year to help that family in any way the unit is capable; and be it further*

Resolved, *that the units will report their activities at the next district meeting.*

Convention Action: (circle one) *Approved* *Rejected*

Signature _____ Date _____