

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Florida
Department Chairman's Guide



Bells in S.E.R.V.I.C.E.
for our Veterans, Military families,
Community and Children & Youth!

Dee Bell
Department President

Welcome to the 2023-2024 American legion Auxiliary year. The theme this year is **“Bells in S.E.R.V.I.C.E. for our Veterans, Military families, Community and Children & Youth.”**

Thank You for your membership and your service to our amazing organization. Because of your knowledge, commitment, and passion for our organization you have been appointed a Department Chairman. Congratulations and Thank You for making the commitment and accepting the responsibilities to the Department of Florida.

With the 4 pillars in mind, (VA&R, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth), I encourage you to pledge yourself to our Mission of “Service not Self.” The principles, ideals and values of the American Legion Auxiliary should be included in the development and promotion of your program. Remember, it is your program that will inspire, energize, and motivate Unit members to Bethe One to make a difference in the lives of our veterans, military families, communities, and our children.

The ringing of bells has been a symbol and used for centuries in celebration, announcement, triumph, and joy. The SERVICE of our members to those we serve will be inspired by you and your program and heard throughout Florida with the Ringing of Bells.

#ringyourbell

This hashtag is about the members, units, the programs, the accomplishments, the events, the volunteering, the fundraisers and the S.E.R.V.I.C.E. Speaking of service, General Peggy Combs, the National American Legion Auxiliary Woman of the year recipient, explained it like this.

S-Selflessness
E-Expectations
R-Respect
V-Values
I-Ideals
C-Commitment
E-Excellence

The Department Chairman’s Guide has been compiled to help you fulfill the duties of your position and lead to the success of your program. You are an amazing leader and valuable member of the Department of Florida team. Congratulations again, have Fun and Ring Your Bell!

Thank You for your SERVICE!

Dee Bell

Department President 2023-2024

NEW THIS YEAR

It is said, "What's old is new again"! Therefore, as we enter a new year let us begin by getting back to basics. For the last 100 years, the Auxiliary Mission has been emphasized through our programs and will continue this year. We will emphasize the Selflessness, Expectations, Respect, Ideals, Commitment, and Excellence of each member and Thank them for it. My special focus this year will be our auxiliary members. Each of us has personally known or knows someone that has been devastated by a disaster. Our members will be "**saved by the bell**" as we increase the awareness and raise funds for the Department of Florida, Auxiliary Emergency Fund Disaster Relief with "**Bells in Service.**"

The Membership theme is "Ringing in Membership" Each District is a different bell. The Department Chairmen are "Action Bells" because you will be using your Program Action Plans to motivate, inspire and energize the members (clappers) to ring it loud and proud about how they fulfill the Mission.

Our 2023-2024 National President Lisa Williamson is from Alaska, the 49th state to join the Union. Her special focus will be to increase awareness about the veteran and military suicide epidemic while embracing The American Legions' Be the One! Initiative. It is as clear as a **bell**, If we can each save one life, it will be worth it.

DRESS CODE

The does not have an official uniform; however, it is American legion Auxiliary important to look your very best when representing our organization. Workshop, Fall Conference and Convention are official meeting of the Department of Florida, not social gatherings. Make-up and clothes should be conservative and good taste. Business attire is expected at all meetings. Jeans, shorts, or capris are not business attire.

PROGRAM

Start with the idea that your program will be outstanding under your guidance. Seek out advice from past chairmen, past department presidents and mentors. In all programs, Unit participation is the key to success. We have found that the membership responds well to a call for an item that they can purchase and/or collect and bring to an event or meeting. If you wish to put out a call for something, you must get the approval of the Department President. We cannot have too many requests at one time so plan early. You are **encouraged** to travel to promote your Chairmanship and attend School of Instruction, Homecoming, Banquets, and Constitutional Conference. You should speak on any new information and materials you receive from the National Chairman. Throughout the year you will be asked questions, some of which you may not be able to answer. Be confident in your answers. If in doubt, do not hesitate to admit it. We do not have all the answers, but we do know where we can find out the answer. Please reply as soon as possible with the answer.

When attending events and you have been asked to speak, please express the Department Presidents sincere appreciation for the members and their membership and Thank them for their SERVICE!

EXPENSES

As a Department Chairman you will receive compensation for some expenses. The Department Finance Committee will make recommendations to the membership for approval in the annual budget. Check the budget to see what is allowed for your Chairmanship. All programs have an allocation for program expenses, awards and some have allocation for travel. The form for awards reimbursement is in your Chairman's book. Mail your request for reimbursement together with all receipts, to the Department Treasurer as early as possible. No request for reimbursement will be accepted after June 30th, per Finance Rules listed in the Unit Guide. If you have any questions about expenses, check with the Department Treasurer.

When authorized by the Department president to attend a meeting (a call in) you will need to go to www.alafl.org under forms and resources and complete a reimbursement worksheet to be sent to the Department Treasurer along with hotel receipt in your name and proof of mileage from a printed map source, you do not need the entire map.

Compensation is based on mileage and lodging (if traveling from out of state your allowed mileage would be from your Post home location to the site of the meeting) as stated in the annual budget. If you do not drive to the site, you may not request travel reimbursement.

If you drive with another chairman, the chairman is to list you on their worksheet as a passenger. If the passenger in your car or roommate receives reimbursement from any Unit, Post or Squadron, Department or other you must disclose this on the form. **No Double Dipping!**

You must answer roll at all sessions and should be there to answer questions from the membership throughout the entire session.

BOOT CAMP

The first meeting for you will be Boot Camp. This is where you will receive valuable information what is expected of you as a chairman. This year's boot camp will be held July 6- 9, 2023 at the Hilton Orlando/ Altamonte Springs. The address is 350 S. Northlake Blvd. Altamonte Springs, 32701.

Boot Camp will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday night and should end around noon on Sunday. Your room will be paid for however the Department provides no meals or travel, due to budgetary restraints. The Department will make all reservations and all rooms will be booked double occupancy, non-smoking rooms.

Please bring a rough draft of your Program Action Plan on a flash/thumb drive. We encourage you to bring a laptop. Printers will be provided for your use during boot camp.

PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT PLAN

You are required to prepare a Program Engagement Plan. This plan consists of an outline of your program. Your responsibility is to research National's Plans and past Department chairmen plans and compile the information you would like to present to the Units. The outline is to include points of emphasis from National and Department and any topics **you** would like to highlight. Include pamphlets and any related material available, suggested contributions and hints on promoting the program.

Many of our program's crossover, sometimes so much that it is hard to distinguish between them. Talk with the other Chairmen and work together to form your Program Engagement Plan.

Try to incorporate the Department President's theme when planning your program. The awards page should include a list of all National awards and Department revolving trophies and any additional awards you wish to present. **The Department only provides the awards listed in the Unit Guide. All other awards are your responsibility.** All awards, before being announced, must be submitted to, and approved by the Department President.

When preparing your Program Engagement Plan, you are to use Times new Roman or Arial font, number eleven or twelve (11 or 12) with one-inch margins. You are to submit an electronic copy of your plan either by email or on a flash/thumb drive using Microsoft Word or Adobe pdf. **Headquarters staff are here to assist you, not to do your work for you.** You will find them extremely helpful, dedicated, and hardworking. Please respect them and always appreciate them.

Please review your program on the National website and make any appropriate changes to your Program Engagement Plan. Be sure the Department has your final print ready version to post on the website by the date determined at boot camp, remember to encourage Units to apply for Department and National awards. Before formulating your questions for the Year-End report and/or Narrative make sure the questions allow you to write your narrative answering Nationals questions.

A District Master Year-End Report and/or Narrative form must be prepared for the District Chairman. Simply revise the Unit Year-End Report form to enable the District Chairman to compile and summarize the Unit answers. The entire Program Action Plan, including the year-end reports forms, is to be included in your Program Engagement Plan and submitted to Department Headquarters.

WORKSHOP

The Department Workshop will be held at the Hilton Orlando/Altamonte Springs at 350 S. Northlake Blvd, Altamonte Springs 32701 on July 21-23, 2023. At the workshop, you will present your Program Engagement Plan for the year. Involve your committee members whenever possible. Presentation boards will be distributed at Boot Camp, visuals and charts may also be used. If your presentation requires audio/visual equipment other than power point, you must notify Department Headquarters at least fifteen (15) days prior to Workshop.

Please introduce the committee members at the beginning of the presentation. Committee members (**not my committee**) should be familiar with the program and try to involve them in your presentation. End your presentation by asking if there are any questions on the program. We encourage enthusiasm, new ideas, fresh approaches and thinking outside of the box.

When making your presentations, be knowledgeable about your program and its focus. Prepare sixteen (16) sets of your Program Action Plan for the District President to give to the District Chairman. The goal for Workshop is to prepare and train the District Chairmen to be able to put on the District School of Instruction.

FALL CONFERENCE

Not all programs are emphasized at Fall Conference. The Department President will notify you if your Chairmanship will be featured. Only those Chairman who will be platform or breakout session presenters will be allowed mileage and lodging reimbursement, upon completion of a worksheet as per the approved budget.

Reimbursements from Department are intended to cover expenses ONLY when member's expense has not been covered by a Unit or otherwise absorbed by The Sons of the American Legion or The American Legion (i.e., no double-dipping of any form). If 100% of roommate's hotel expense is covered by any other organization, or if the Unit reimburses any Executive Committee Member or Department Chairman, the reimbursement should be disclosed when making the reimbursement request.

If your Chairmanship is to be highlighted, you will be notified of the time limit. For the Conference to run smoothly, you must adhere to this limit. Make the presentation interesting, informative, and stimulating. There is no allowance in the budget for guest speakers or special equipment. The name and title of any guest speaker must be sent to Department Headquarters thirty (30) days in advance so the information can be included on the program. Contact the Department Secretary well in advance to see if the equipment needed is available. Use the committee members to greet and escort speakers, help with presentations, and distribute handouts.

ALL Chairmen are required to submit a written report double-spaced to the Department Secretary. This report is **NOT** a copy of the presentation you make at the conference,

but an update on how you are promoting your program, any new materials from National and goals for the remainder of the year. If your Chairmanship is not being highlighted, you are still required to submit the written report.

All Chairmen are asked to prepare sixteen (16) District packets to include any changes or updates to their program. These packets will go to the District President for distribution to the District Chairmen. If you need assistance with printing contact Department headquarters thirty (30) days in advance. The cost of printing any material will be deducted from your designated Chairman budget.

BOOK OF REPORTS

You are required to submit a report for the Book of Reports at the end of the year. You will receive notice from the Department about what date this report is due. This report enables you to **ring your bell** and give a detailed report of activities and accomplishments of the Units throughout Florida, more than the 3-minute oral report given at Convention. Per Finance Rules, this report is required to receive reimbursement for attending the Convention.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Reports will be given on the Convention floor starting Friday. Following your narrative, you must submit a double-space typed report, including awards, to the Department Secretary. All awards will be presented with the assistance of the committee members immediately following your report. You are encouraged to **ring your bell** and recognize the Units and/or members who do exceptional work with at least a citation.

Certificates of participation will not be announced from the podium. If a resolution pertaining to your Chairmanship has been presented, the Resolutions Chairman will read it immediately after your awards have been presented. **Only the revolving trophy award plaques are purchased by Department Headquarters.** Please contact the Department Secretary thirty (30) days prior to the Department Convention with the names and Unit name and numbers of the award winners. These plaques will be on the podium for you to present at the time of your presentation.

You are required to return your chairman's binder along with the Department flash/thumb-drive given to you at the beginning of the year. Failure to do so will result in you not receiving reimbursement for attending the Convention.

NEWSLETTER

All newsletter articles must be submitted to the Department Office Manager (alafihq@alafi.org) no later than the 15th of the month prior to the month you are assigned. The articles will be published in the Department Newsletter and on the website. You are encouraged to submit an article each month on your program.

Please submit articles for the Newsletter via email to alafilnews@alafi.org under newsletter. All articles are to be in Microsoft Word only. Pictures should be in jpeg format and sent as a separate attachment from article. **Please do not send photos via USPS. Articles should be proofread and print ready!**

If you have a specific graphic you would like to appear on your page, send it to us, and room permitting, it will appear on your page. Please note the schedule of programs in the Unit Guide is for program planning purposes for the Units. Your article was placed in the newsletter earlier. Remember, you can submit articles for the newsletter more often than your assigned month. If it is not your month, and there is no room for your message it will be held until the following month. Department office staff do not oversee any formatting or make corrections to your article.

The Newsletter article schedule is included in your binder on a separate page for easy removal. Please place it where it will help you remember your assigned month. The programs are vital to the well-being of the organization so please **ring your bell** about your program.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE

After National Convention in August, the Southern Division Chairman, for your program will be contacting you. Tell her about your program plans for the year. Send her your Program Action Plan, updates, your bulletins, and outstanding activities reported by Units or Districts under your program. Please let me know if you have not heard from the chairman and I will be sure get you their information. The Southern Division Chairman will be holding Zoom meetings throughout the year. You will be notified and asked to register and receive a reminder of the meeting. You are required to attend or designate a committee member if you are unavailable.

YEAR-END REPORTS TO NATIONAL

We will make every effort for Florida to be **100% in YEAR-END REPORTS**. Call District Presidents, District Chairmen, Unit Presidents, and Unit Chairmen to receive reports. Try whatever it takes to obtain 100%. Remember, the District Chairmen receive two copies of the Unit report. The District Chairmen keeps one and sends the other to you, with the district report. It is important to review the Unit report for special projects or unique ideas that can be included in your Department or National report.

When the National report is complete, you are to send the Department President a copy. Please Indicate the date it was emailed to the National Chairman and the Southern Division Chairman as required. Make certain you are emailing it to the proper person and by the **due date**.

NATIONAL AWARDS

Please refer to the National webpage for specific criteria and requirements, such as photos, narrative length, submission deadline and point of contact. Include all this information in your Program Action Plan. Be sure all the appropriate forms are filled out completely and accurately by the Unit and by you the Department Chairman.

FUNDRAISERS

There shall be no fundraising, nor any project involving the raising of funds by any Department Chairman without prior approval of the Department President.

IN CLOSING

Thank you again for your membership, commitment, dedication, passion, and SERVICE to our great American Legion Auxiliary.

"The strength of a team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." Phil Jackson

THE LIBERTY BELL NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

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| August | Education Public Relations Leadership Membership |
| September | Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Constitution & Bylaws Children & Youth Membership |
| October | National Security Legislative Poppy Membership |
| November | Americanism Auxiliary Emergency Fund Past Presidents Parley Membership |
| December | Community Service Leadership Girls State Membership |
| January | Public Relations Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Junior Activities Membership |
| February | Children & Youth National Security Education Membership |
| March | Americanism Community Service Poppy Membership |
| April | Legislative Girls State Past Presidents Parley Membership |
| May | Junior Activities Auxiliary Emergency Fund Membership |

