

American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida Unit President's Guide



“We’re All In”

for our Veterans, Military Families,
Community, and Children & Youth!

Michele DeGennaro
Department President
2018 – 2019

Dear Unit Presidents:

You have been elected to the highest office of the Unit and with that I offer you Congratulations! With this honor comes a great responsibility 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.

Our theme for the 2018-2019 year is **We're "All In"!**

We're "All In" can mean many things to our organization. **We're "All In"** taking care of our veterans, military, their children, and our communities. **We're "All In"**, with The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion and Riders of the American Legion to work as a family. **We're "All In"** to ourselves that we may be the best example of members that we can be and **We're "All In"** to our organization so we may continue the great work of the past 99 years well into the future.

By going **"All In"** and working together for the success of our programs, growing our membership, and celebrating and recognizing our Unit members, we **Will** have a successful year!

Please remember that a little recognition, presentation or simple "thank you" could make the difference between someone coming back, or leaving the organization. We need each of you to focus on the reason you became a member and thank your eligibility for their service by moving our organization into the next 100 years.

This Unit President's book has been compiled to help you fulfill the duties of your office and to answer many questions you may have. It is important for you to know that additional information and assistance is always available to you from the District President, Department Officers, Chairmen, and staff.

It is our vision that you will indeed enrich the quality of life of those we serve and our fellow members through your volunteer work as Unit President.

Once again, congratulations, have a wonderful year and thank you for going “**All in**” with me!

Michele DeGennaro

Department President

2018-2019

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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.

Unity and Loyalty are represented by the unbroken circle of blue.

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."

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.

THE PURPOSE OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The American Legion Auxiliary has one great purpose – “to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion.” Except for the addition of those words, the Preamble to its National Constitution is exactly the same as that of The American Legion.

The American Legion Auxiliary does not establish any policy that conflicts with those of The American Legion. Its activities are designed to enhance The American Legion’s programs.

The American Legion Auxiliary was formed to aid The American Legion in carrying out the great program of peacetime service to America to which the American Legion is

dedicated. All of its activities are designed to promote the work of The American Legion and to help The American Legion reach its objective. Although often working independently on projects of its own, the Auxiliary has no purposes which are apart from the aims of The American Legion. It is in every sense an “Auxiliary” to The American Legion, and its members serve side by side with the members of The American Legion in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the well being of the American republic.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

In the American Legion Auxiliary there is the National Organization, Department, District, and Unit.

NATIONAL

National officers are elected and installed at the National Convention. The National President appoints Chairmen for each of the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. The National Organization publishes many books, pamphlets, and brochures in the various programs. It also sets the policies and procedures for the organization. The National Organization has its own Constitution & ByLaws, which governs its operation.

The National Chairmen set the policies in each of the programs and produces the National Program Action Plan, which is then distributed to each Department. In 2017, National produced a 5-year Program Action Plan. Only a supplemental document will be distributed on a yearly basis.

DEPARTMENT

Our Department Officers are elected and installed at our Department Convention. This includes the District Presidents, who are Department Officers and a part of the Department Executive Committee. Department Chairmen are appointed by the Department President and ratified by the Executive Committee at Department Convention. The Department has its own Constitution & ByLaws and Standing Rules which governs its operation.

The Department Chairmen write their Program Action Plan, using the National Program Action Plan as a guideline. The Department Program Action Plan is then distributed to the Districts and Units.

DISTRICT

The District President is elected at the District Constitutional Conference and installed at the Department Convention. The District staff is appointed by the District President. The Department Officers and Chairmen depend upon the District staff to bring information to all of the Units and to organize certain events.

UNIT

Each Unit operates as its own entity and has its own Constitution, ByLaws, and Standing Rules. The President and officers are elected (or appointed, depending upon the Unit's Constitution & ByLaws), not more than 90 days nor less than 15 days prior to Department Convention.

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND STANDING RULES

The Constitution explains the structure of the organization: to include the Preamble, name, and purpose of our organization; membership eligibility; elected and appointed officers; executive committee and defines the procedure to amend the document. This is the organization's incorporation statement, the reason the American Legion Auxiliary exists. It should rarely change, if ever.

The ByLaws governs us and deals with issues. It defines the procedures to elect officers, the duties of the officers; it defines the standing committees, the frequency of Unit meetings, discipline; and the procedure to amend. It should only change when critical to continue the purpose of the organization.

The Standing Rules relates to the administration and operation of the Unit. It outlines the customs and wishes of the Unit. Standing Rules can be adopted by a majority vote of the members present without previous notice. Examples of Standing Rules: Sets the specific amount of dues; the date and time of Unit meetings; defines who is in charge of membership, who signs checks, and addresses any other issues unique to the Unit.

The Constitution, ByLaws, and Standing Rules of any Unit CANNOT be in conflict with National Constitution, ByLaws, and Standing Rules, nor with Department Constitution, ByLaws, and Standing Rules. When there is any question, we must abide by the ruling of the National Judge Advocate of The American Legion.

If there is an issue that is not addressed in our rules, we follow the rules of The American Legion.

Every Unit must have a Constitution & ByLaws and they must be approved by the members of the Unit (not the Executive Committee).

Further, the parliamentary authority, "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised", shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the Constitution and Bylaws or any special rules of order adopted by our organization.

The Constitution and Bylaws MUST be updated every 10 years. However, if any changes are made prior to that, then the Constitution and Bylaws must be changed at that time. They should be reviewed, but not changed, every year.

Standing Rules should be reviewed often, and may be changed as often as necessary. Standing Rules must be updated as soon as possible after any changes are made. After updating Standing Rules, include a copy of the Constitution & Bylaws when submitting to the Department Chairman, stating changes to Standing Rules only.

The procedure is to mail two (2) original, signed copies to the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chairman for approval. Include the date of the meeting that your Unit approved the change; have them signed by the Unit President, and either Constitution and Bylaws Chairman or Unit Secretary or all three and date it. Provide a space (name and date) for the Department approval.

Once changes are made, two signed copies of the ENTIRE DOCUMENT (Constitution, Bylaws & Standing Rules) are to be sent to the Department Constitution & Bylaws Chairman (Name and address in the current Unit Guide).

Once they are approved, the Chairman will mail a signed copy to the Unit and the other signed copy to be placed on file at Department. The final approved documents will be scanned and placed on the Department web site.

All members of the Unit are entitled to and should be given copies of the Unit's Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules.

HOW TO CONDUCT A MEETING

CALL TO ORDER - Rap gavel once

MEMBERSHIP TO RISE - Rap gavel three times

SEAT MEMBERSHIP - Rap gavel once

ROLL CALL - Roll call of officers and chairmen is taken by the Secretary. It is important to establish that a quorum has been met and it should be stated for the minutes. Remember a quorum is total number of members required to have a legal meeting. There is no requirement of number of officers or chairman. A sign-in book is an excellent way to record the attendance at all meetings.

MINUTES - Essentials of minutes: Remember minutes are a record of what is done, not everything that is said. Minutes need no descriptive adjectives, they are a legal record. It takes a 2/3 vote to amend old minutes. Therefore, the time to correct minutes is prior to the approval of same. After minutes are read and approved, the President should sign them. Copies should be given to the President, Treasurer, and Historian.

TREASURER'S REPORT - (Financial Statement) Have a form to make the report on. Provide three (3) copies: President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Auditor's report should be read and adopted, but the Treasurer's report is filed for audit.

CORRESPONDENCE - NOT REQUIRING ACTION - Secretary reads to members. The President should share correspondence from her District or Department President as well as any bulletin material received from Department Headquarters. The Chaplain should read any thank you notes and acknowledgments received.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES - Minutes of Executive Committee meeting are

not read, but a report of results or recommendations must be read.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - Call on the Chairmen to report at each meeting. Don't simply comment "Are there any reports?" Reports should be what the Committee has done including any recommendations, expenditures etc. A file should be maintained by each Chairman, with copies to President.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - The President and Secretary should be aware of any items of unfinished business. Past minutes should be checked by the Secretary to see if there was any unfinished business to be acted upon and a list given to the President.

NEW BUSINESS - Correspondence requiring action - Prior to meeting, the Secretary summarizes lengthy correspondence. At the meetings the Secretary states who signed the communication, presents essentials of the correspondence, and may move any necessary action or motion.

Bills - Treasurer explains bills received; she may make necessary motions for payment. If the budget has been approved, and the bill has been approved in the budget, than a motion is not necessary.

Is there any other business coming from the general membership?

FURTHER BUSINESS - Any business not already covered during this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Next regular meeting, Executive Committee Meeting, Special Events within the Post, Auxiliary, District, or Department

ADJOURNMENT - No need for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

ON THE AGENDA, ELECTIONS COME AFTER NEW BUSINESS

ELECTIONS - The Nominating Committee is an elected committee. The current President cannot be a member of this committee. Unit Bylaws should state this information and also the number to be elected to the Nominating Committee.

TELLERS - Each Candidate should choose a teller and the Chair should choose a teller. The full Teller's Report of the election results should be written in the minutes. See the Chapter on Elections.

NOTE: If you record the meeting, it must be voted on and approved by the body to do so. If it is in the Unit's Standing Rules to record the meeting, it must be announced at the beginning of the meeting that it is being recorded.

Meetings can only be recorded for the purpose of accurate minutes. Once minutes are approved, the recordings should be erased or recorded over.

SUGGESTED AGENDA

ORDER OF BUSINESS

(One rap of gavel)

Call to order "The meeting will come to order"

(Three raps of gavel for membership to rise)

- "Color Bearers will advance the Colors" or "The colors are already in Place"
- "The Chaplain will offer prayer"
- "In memory of our dead, let us share a moment of silent prayer.....Amen"
- "Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag"
- "We will sing the National Anthem" (Optional)
- "We will recite the Preamble to The American Legion Auxiliary"

(One rap of gavel seats the membership)

- "I now declare _____ Unit # ___, Department of Florida, regularly convened."
- Welcome and introduce any guests present or members attending their first meeting.
- **Order of Business**

Reading of minutes of previous meeting

Treasurer's Report
Correspondence (not requiring action)
Executive Committee recommendations or actions
Committee Reports
Unfinished Business
New Business
Other Business
Elections when needed

➤ **Announcements**

- "Is there any further business to come before this meeting? If not, the Chaplain will lead us in prayer for peace."

(Three raps of gavel for membership to stand)

- "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 be ever watchful of our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of justice, freedom, and democracy."
- "The color bearers will retire the flags."
- "I now declare this meeting of _____ Unit # ____, American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Florida adjourned."

(One rap of gavel for dismissal)

BASIC SEATING

The Presiding Officer is ALWAYS seated in the center.

The Distinguished Guest is ALWAYS on her right, regardless of who else is present.

The highest ranking group of guests may be seated to the right of the Presiding Officer, the lesser ranking to the left. However, it is usually the practice of seating right-left-right-left of the Presiding Officer alternating as to rank.

At a business meeting, no matter who is thrown out of line, the Parliamentarian should ALWAYS be seated to the right of the President during the business part of the meeting. She may move to a seat provided nearby immediately after the business part of the meeting is finished.

PROPER ADVANCEMENT OF THE COLORS

- The Flag of the United States is ALWAYS carried on the RIGHT.
- The left hand is on the staff, not on the flag.
- The right hand is firmly on staff and resting on right hip. (A good hint is to have the staff on the flag riding firmly against your right hip when advancing or retiring the colors.)
- The eagle faces (flies) forward.
- The United States Flag is always carried slightly higher than any other banner.
- The flags cross directly in front of the podium; the Flag of the United States crosses between the Auxiliary banner and podium.
- The Flag of the United States is posted first.
- The Auxiliary Banner is immediately posted after the United States Flag is posted.
- The eagle faces the audience - flies toward the audience.
- The flag carriers do not touch the Flag or the Banner after they are posted. Let them hang free.
- The flag carriers take one step back from the Flag and the Banner; perform a hand salute, turn and retreat.
- It is perfectly acceptable to Pre-post the flags before the meeting begins. Some Units have a table set of flags on the head table.

HALLOWED GROUND

Why you don't walk between the colors

**Between these flags that proudly fly
let no man dare to stand,
For here our fallen Comrades lie,
We call it Hallowed Ground.
A symbol, yes, but mark it well;
Here let us ever humbly pause
In memory of the lad who fell
In fighting for our sacred cause.**

**On sea or land these buddies died.
Some lie beneath a foreign sod
In graves caressed by winds and tide,
In spots unknown to all but God.
And so, this place is Hallowed Ground.
And it shall be forever blest
As though it were a grassy mound
Beneath which gallant heroes rest.**

**Be ever watchful, Legionnaire,
Of those two flags which signify
That we should guard this spot with care
Where our departed comrades lie.
And, if a man should dare to tread
This spot where lie our gallant brave.
He desecrates those noble dead
As though he walked upon their grave.**

"**Breaking the Colors**" is not a violation of the United States Flag Code. The American Legion Auxiliary in Florida has developed a tradition and meaningful custom in which one does not pass between the American Flag and the Auxiliary Banner. This custom of preserving "Hallowed Ground" shows honor and respect to our fallen veterans. This is strictly a tradition.

SALUTE TO COLORS

The American Legion National Headquarters has advised the following on this matter. The *Post Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies* ask that those Legionnaires who are entering or exiting a meeting salute the "station of the Commander." An acceptable protocol for those who approach the podium is to also properly salute the colors. The national organization appreciates the demonstration of patriotism and respect given the colors by our ALA members when they have stopped and saluted.

ESCORTING GUESTS TO THE PODIUM

When escorting a Legionnaire to the podium for the purpose of introduction, greeting, or an address, the correct procedure is for the ALA escort to take the Legionnaire's left arm, with the Legionnaire on the escort's right, thus freeing the Legionnaire's right hand for the purpose of saluting the colors prior to advancing on the dais. Be sure to pause before the colors to allow time for this salute.

This same escorting process is to be used when escorting other guests, (ladies and gentlemen) and ALA members, with the pause to salute the colors.

There are some ALA members who appropriately pause and place their hand over their hearts, rendering the civilian salute to the colors. Federal law allows veterans to render the military right hand salute, even dressed as a civilian. The key factor is not how the salute is rendered, but that an appropriate salute is rendered.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIT OFFICERS

It is the duty of all Officers to support the President and each other at all times during the term of office. It is also your duty to attend all meetings - Executive Committee and General.

PRESIDENT:

- Presides at all Unit meetings - Executive Committee, General and Special
- Appoints Committee Chairmen and Committee Members
- Appoints a Parliamentarian
- Actively participates and is involved in all activities of the Unit. Willing to work just as any other Unit member
- Keeps the members informed on all activities and news of the American Legion Auxiliary from Department and District (Monthly bulletins, District Newsletters, etc.)
- Represents the Unit at all District meetings and activities
- Represents the Unit at District Constitutional Conference and Department Convention. Encourages Unit members to attend these events
- Appoints an audit committee of at least three members to audit the books at the close of her year
- Is an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee
- Sets a budget committee to develop a budget at the beginning of each administrative year

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT:

- Attends all meetings of the Unit
- Has a thorough understanding of the duties of fellow officers and programs planned by the Unit committee chairman. Must be prepared to take over in the absence of the President

SECOND AND THIRD VICE PRESIDENTS:

Some Units elect Second and Third Vice Presidents and give them particular duties, such as Ways and Means, Poppy, Entertainment or Kitchen Chairman, etc. The responsibilities of these offices should be thoroughly detailed in the Unit Standing Rules.

SECRETARY:

- Attends all General and Executive Committee meetings, makes notes of all motions, recommendations and action taken by the body
- Keeps record of all Committee activities and reports
- Prepares minutes of all meetings with copies given to the President, Treasurer, and Historian. The minutes should be clear and concise, free from rambling remarks or opinions and should reflect new business as well as activity already completed
- Maintains for roll call at each meeting a list of names of all Officers and Committee Chairmen
- Replies promptly to correspondence as directed
- Sends certification of new Unit officers to Department Headquarters immediately after the annual election of officers. Notifies Department of any changes or corrections to the Officer's list for the Unit

CHAPLAIN:

- Gives the opening and closing prayers at meetings
- Reports on ill members. If it is in the Standing Rules, sends cards or flowers to ill or bereaved members.
- Drapes the Charter and conducts Memorial Services when needed
- Responsible for notifying the District and Department Chaplain of the names of Unit members deceased each year. This information is necessary for the Memorial Services at Conventions.
- Compiles a Book of Prayers, Devotional Thoughts and Inspirations to be presented to the Unit President. It may be entered in the Department Prayer Book Competition.

HISTORIAN:

- Keeps records for the written history of the year's activity within the Unit. This includes business, donations, activities such as pot luck dinners, garage sales, parties, holiday events, etc. This information comes from the Secretary's minutes of each meeting.
- This written history is entered in the Department History competition and then is presented to the Unit as a permanent record of the years activities.

TREASURER:

- Is bonded through Department
- Handles all funds of the Unit. Deposits of incoming funds should be banked promptly and regularly (at least weekly).
- Gives a financial report at each meeting
- Issues all checks from the Unit. All checks must be backed up with proper authorization; such as minutes, budget or standing rules. Receipts should be attached to the report.
- All checks should require 2 signatures. The Unit Standing Rules should state who and how many signatures are required on checks.
- At the beginning of each Auxiliary year the Unit is to pay \$6.00 to Department for the bonding fee. This amount is included in the annual invoice. Do not mail payment separately.
- Make sure the Membership Chairman is able to obtain a check to transmit membership at all times.
- Files a 990 form with the IRS 4 months and 15 days after close of books. All Unit's financial year is to be July 1 – June 30th. Your date to file would be November 15th each year.
- Renews the Corporation each year between January 1st and May 1st at Sunbiz.org
- Remember, all monies spent must be approved by a motion of the membership at general Unit meetings, if not covered in an approved budget or the Unit's Standing Rules. All expenditures must be accompanied by proper receipts.
- The books are open to the general membership for review or audit at any time. An internal audit committee is appointed by the President and the books are to have a thorough audit at the end of each term.

- Turns the checkbook over to the President (or other designated member) if she is going to be away or unavailable

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

- Arrives early to set-up the room
- Is responsible for advancing and retiring the Colors at each meeting or having them pre-posted.
- Informs the President of any guests at the meeting.
- Distributes materials and escorts guests/speakers to and from the podium.
- Keeps order at all meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT LARGE:

- Attends all meetings
- Is an active participating member weighing carefully each decision and making sure the wishes of the members whom you represent are the prime concern
- The number of Members-at-Large on the Executive Committee are outlined in the Units Constitution and Bylaws. A Past President is not automatically a member of the Executive Committee or automatically one of the Members-at-Large.

PARLIAMENTARIAN:

- Is appointed by the President, is never elected
- Always sits next to the President for consultation
- Never takes sides
- Does not vote on issues
- Speaks only upon request
- Consults with the presiding officer privately. Interprets parliamentary rules if asked
- The Parliamentarian does not rule. Upon being asked for an opinion the Chair may or may not (at her own discretion) abide by the opinion of the Parliamentarian
- Most Parliamentary procedure is just good common sense and good manners.

COMMITTEES AND PROGRAMS

The Auxiliary programs are the heartbeat of our organization. The way we participate in these activities will determine our success as a Unit and as an organization. You should first refer to your Auxiliary Handbook to learn what the program is to assist you in carrying out the activities to the best of the Unit's ability. Remember, the American Legion Auxiliary embraces no program unless that of The American Legion.

A good committee Chairman should make herself aware of all aspects of the activity program she is to chair. She should not expect to do all the work herself. She should enlist the aid of her committee and Unit.

Helpful hints for Committee Chairmen:

- Be innovative - develop new ideas and activities for your committee.
- Call each member of your committee as soon as possible after officers are installed. Establish a "team spirit" relationship early - have a committee planning meeting.
- Discuss possible activities for the year. Determine the approximate amount of money it will take for your committee
- If you will be raising the funds for your committee to carry out its assigned program, the how, what, when and where should be determined early, so that permission can be granted by the membership.
- Involve each member of your committee. Everyone should have a job to do.
- Keep all committee members informed at all times.
- Make copies of any correspondence you receive. Share copies with the members of your committee.
- Make timely reports of your committee activities during the Unit meetings. Keep a record of the hours spent completing the activities of your committee for all of the committee members. Document the monies earned and expenses related to carrying out your activities. This will enable you to complete your year-end reports in a more accurate and timely manner.

- Attend all meetings of the Unit. Continue to learn more about your program by attending District and Department meetings whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Helpful hints for Committee Members:

- Volunteer to do some of the tasks it will take to get the job done.
- Think innovatively - new ideas inspire enthusiasm.
- Cooperate with your chairmen and give her your support.
- Attend all meetings
- Dedicate yourself to learn more about the program by attending District and Department meetings whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Committee Functions

- Unless specified, the first-named member of the committee is the chairman.
- Research tasks should be divided among the members. Results should be pooled for discussion.
- Consider all possible solutions to any given problem

Unique Characteristics of Committee Work

- Committees ordinarily possess "recommending power" only. They report to the membership, who takes action. If appointed with "power" they may plan and follow through on the action
- Committee work is free, unlimited discussion. Under parliamentary rules, you may speak only twice on a motion.
- Committees can settle matters by the principle of general consent
- A chairman may speak on the subject, but must not infringe on the rights of other members to speak openly.
- The Unit President is an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- Motions do not require a second in committee
- A committee has no power to punish its members, only to report facts and recommendations to the membership.

How Committees report to the Membership

- Committee reports should give members an understanding of the subject dealt with and the action that is desired. The reports consist of the material that has been agreed upon by the committee.
- The chairman of the committee presents the report. A copy should be given to the secretary of the Unit.
- If the report contains recommendations of action to be taken, the chairman should move the adoption of the recommendations. The members of the committee know about the recommendations and should stand behind their report; therefore, a second is not needed for this motion. The Unit may adopt, reject or amend the recommendations or refer them back to the committee for further study. Each recommendation may be adopted separately.

How to get people to serve on a Committee

Try the following suggestions the next time you are faced with the job of appointing committee members.

- Always use a positive approach. "I want you to work on this committee because your experience will be valuable to all the members."
- Make it personal. A personal visit is better than a phone call and a phone call is better than a letter. Say, "I've noticed in our meetings that you are always interested in our youth projects. We you like to work with the children & youth program this year?"
- Be specific about the job to be done. The prospective member has no real basis for accepting the assignment unless she thoroughly understands what is expected of her and the committee.
- Be honest about the time demands that will be made of her. Never say, "Oh, you'll probably have to meet once or twice," when you know there are many meetings and hours of work ahead for the committee.
- Make the person believe that she is needed as an individual. Convince the prospective member that no one else can make the same contribution. Be sincere in your remarks. Let the person know they are needed as a part of the team.

PROGRAMS

Please refer to your American Legion Auxiliary Unit Guidebook (available through National) for detailed definitions of the activity committees. The information contained in this section is to help the Unit broaden its knowledge of each activity.

AMERICANISM

To inspire, recognize, and perpetuate responsible citizenship through education and acts of patriotism, in order to raise awareness and increase appreciation of the price paid for our fundamental freedoms. All matters pertaining to the flag or patriotic education are rightly classified as Americanism activities. Each time you pledge to the flag you are participating in this program. If your Unit provides patriotic materials to your schools, libraries or anyone else in the community, you are participating in Americanism. Possible activities may be to provide new flags for local schools, scout troops, community buildings; promote Americanism month in February by getting the community involved in flying their flags; set up a booth in local malls, stores, libraries, etc., distributing literature about flag etiquette and proper care of the flag. Lead the way in patriotic promotion in your community. Provide local schools with information on the Americanism Essay contest

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency help to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have suffered a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis. These funds are provided through the Department and National Organization from monies donated by the Units. Self-explanatory applications are available from Department Headquarters. Various activities such as yard sales, bake sales, and many other types of activities can be held to raise funds for this committee.

Applications for both Department and National AEF are on the Department web site at www.alafl.org.

CAVALCADE OF MEMORIES

The Cavalcade of Memories captures the milestones, moments, and lifetime of our organization from trophies, plaques, and pictures to restored artifacts and priceless keepsakes. Each Unit should strive to preserve its past. Items contributed by charter members, past Unit Presidents and others will help to preserve your Unit's history. The Department of Florida has a Cavalcade at Department Headquarters and there is a National Cavalcade in National Headquarters.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

The main purpose of this program is to assure the care and protection for children of veterans and to improve conditions for all children. The principles of the Children & Youth Program are:

- To improve the integrity of the family home.
- To maintain a "whole" child program with due regard for all needs of **children** to include their physical, spiritual, emotional, and educational well-being.
- To cooperate with and strengthen other sound organizations and agencies for children, avoiding the duplication or establishment of competitive American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary facilities.

Units should strive to provide meaningful activities for the children in your community. Assist other groups and facilities whose main purpose is to provide care and well being for our youth. Units should support and/ or sponsor activities for children who are physically or mentally deprived. Many such programs are already in place, waiting for your assistance. Sponsor special parties for the children in your community on Halloween, Christmas, Easter, and other occasions unique to your Unit and community. Provide assistance through your schools for pencils, paper, notebooks, shoes, and other supplies for children of families that may be monetarily unable to do so.

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES – an activity under the Children & Youth Program

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.” Junior members are included in your total membership count. They are a very important part of the American Legion Auxiliary and should be included in as many activities as possible by the Unit. Special emphasis should be placed in encouraging members of the Auxiliary to include their daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters in the membership of the Unit. This is an excellent opportunity to provide a basis of patriotism and love of country in our youth.

The Junior Advisor should promote and encourage leadership within the Juniors and coordinate their activities with the work of the Seniors.

Juniors do not have their own bank account; remember they are part of your Unit. And their funds are commingled with the Unit's funds and are part of the Unit's funds. But a separate accounting of Junior Funds is kept.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service is a vast and varies committee. Each Unit is expected to carry out or cooperate in at least one project for community betterment each year. The National Chairman will provide the areas of special emphasis to your Unit; however each Unit can seek out numerous activities to expand this program. The aid of other local organizations should be sought to make the activity a true community effort. Some ideas that could be implemented are care and concern in local nursing homes; participating in established community activities; volunteering in your local library; planting trees; beautification projects; clean up/fix-up for senior citizens homes; and participation in the National Community Service "Make A Difference Day" Project.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Updating Constitution and Bylaws should be an annual process in each Unit. Although you may not have changes, it gives you an opportunity to study the Constitution and Bylaws and make you more familiar with their contents. All changes in Department and

National Constitution and Bylaws should be brought to the attention of Unit members and appropriate changes should then be made in the Unit Constitution and Bylaws as necessary. Every Unit member is entitled to a copy of the Unit Constitution and Bylaws.

A sample Constitution & Bylaws and copies of all Unit Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules are located on the Department web site www.alaf1.org.

EDUCATION

The objectives of this committee are to help make it possible for any student to receive the education they desire and to encourage the members 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. We should strive to encourage students to select careers where personnel shortages exist. Scholarships can be provided from monies earned through various activities sponsored by the Unit and Post. Become familiar with the local School Board and school activities. Strive to encourage and assist students to further their education.

Applications for all available scholarships are on the Department web site.

FINANCE

The matter of Finance is of great importance to the Unit. 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 assures monies earmarked for all purposes necessary for participation in the various Auxiliary programs throughout the year. A close check should be made each month to make sure the operating expenses are kept within the budget.

GIRLS STATE

Girls State is a practical application of Americanism and good citizenship. The entire program is a non-partisan, non-political attempt to teach and inculcate in the youth of

America a love of God and Country.

High school female students who have completed their junior year are competitively selected to participate in a seven-day mock government program where they learn about civics and American government in a fast-paced, interactive program of campaigning, debating, voting, and electing mock local and state leaders.

Refer to the Girls State Chairman's Guide for more information.

LEADERSHIP

The American Legion Auxiliary is an organization that provides women of all ages, Junior and adult members, the opportunity to develop and hone their leadership skills. Our organization depends upon an ever-emerging stream of competent new leaders, trained and guided by experienced ones, to assume leadership within the Auxiliary and advance its mission long into the future.

The Auxiliary offers a variety of opportunities for members to serve in leadership roles, from chairing a short-term community service project at the unit level to running for a national office.

Study of the American Legion Auxiliary Guidebook, Constitution and Bylaws and the various manuals provided by National and Department can develop leadership qualities in any member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Encourage your members to attend a District or Department Leadership School which is now called ABC (Auxiliary Basic Concepts) School.

LEGISLATIVE

The purpose of the Legislative program is to train and inform our members to become grassroots advocates for veterans, service members and their families with local, state and national elected officials, supporting the Legislative agenda and initiatives of The American Legion.

The Auxiliary supports the legislative priorities adopted by The American Legion. The

American Legion's Legislative Division in Washington, D.C., keeps abreast of current legislation relating to veterans affairs, national security, education and Americanism.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is the foundation on which the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary are built, and the success or failure of those programs 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 expect to carry out any large activity with success without the firm foundation of a strong membership. A unit which fails to recruit as many eligible women as possible to its ranks has not done its full share toward the success of its Department.

It is critical that Units look at "quality versus quantity" in the recruitment of new members. We must also insure that our members are properly welcomed into our organization, and that the talents and skills a member may bring to the organization are so utilized as to benefit not only the Unit, but the community as well.

Dues of American Legion Auxiliary members shall be payable each calendar year and 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 is highly desirable in order to free the energies of the Unit for securing new members and other Auxiliary activities.

It is the Unit's responsibility to verify all elements of eligibility and see the documentation that proves the information provided on the application. This documentation could include; birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates, DD 214 or other discharge paperwork.

NATIONAL SECURITY

National defense strong enough to guarantee the security of America from any aggressor has always been urged by The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary.

Every Unit should endeavor to give the women of its community an understanding of the necessity of maintaining adequate national security. The Unit should be a community leader in its activities and should be able to mobilize the patriotic women of the community when Congress is considering national security problems. The Unit should acquaint all of its members with the existing situation in regard to national security by a study of the subject at Unit meetings.

Programs should be encouraged to display our gratitude and caring for our active duty military and their families.

PAST PRESIDENTS PARLEY

Members who have served the Auxiliary as Unit, District, Area, Department, and/or National Presidents are a valuable resource to the organization. As members of the Past Presidents Parley Committee, they put their leadership experience to good use, offering guidance and/or counsel on any activity or problem requiring special support or emphasis. Past Presidents Parley Committee recognizes and honors Woman Veterans, Woman currently serving in the military, and Outstanding Unit members who do the hard work of service. Committee members also maintain a scholarship fund for nurses.

POPPY

The poppy is the memorial flower of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. Poppy distributions usually are made in the fall around Veteran's Day or in the spring around Memorial Day.

The Units purchase the Poppies through Department Headquarters office only! The poppies are assembled by veterans in the V.A. Medical Center in Bay Pines, Florida and are distributed (never sold) to the public by the Units. Unit Chairmen and Committees may carry out this distribution in many different ways, but they should strive to make the public aware of the Poppy Story.

In accordance with The American Legion Poppy Program and Poppy Fund Rules, as revised in 2013 and 2014 by The American Legion National Executive Committee, Poppy Funds may only be used for:

- The rehabilitation of veterans honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces after April 6, 1917.
- The welfare of the families of veterans of the above named period.
- The rehabilitation of hospitalized military service personnel returning home and awaiting discharge who require treatment in service hospitals.
- 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.

All funds collected prior to the passage of this resolution must be solely used for the intent and purpose of prior resolutions and not for active-duty service members or families and new funds collected after approval of this resolution may be used for active-duty military and families as outlined. As mandated, the Funds collected from the distribution of Poppies MUST be reported separately from the General Fund.

The revenue for the distribution of poppies should be carried as a separate restricted fund in the Treasurer's book so that it can be used for its intended purposes ONLY.

Poppy order forms are located on Departments website under Forms and Resources.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The National News of the American Legion Auxiliary is the national publication of the Auxiliary issued bi-monthly from National Headquarters in Indianapolis. It contains official information regarding the current programs of the organization and news of the

Unit, Department, and National activities. The publication is sent to all senior members, the subscription charge being paid with annual dues.

The Communiqué is the official publication of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Florida. It contains official information regarding current programs and activities of the Department.

Each Unit is encouraged to provide some type of newsletter or correspondence to its members. This should be done preferably on a monthly basis. In addition, the Unit is encouraged to have strong contact with local newspapers, television and radio stations. You should let the public know about the various services we render to veterans and their families and to other community activities.

Both the National organization and the Department of Florida have websites. Make these known to your members and encourage them to visit these websites. The National website is www.legion-aux.org and the Department website is www.alafl.org.

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation means the complete restoration of the veteran and his family to normal function, and, physical, mental, social, and vocational adjustment for the fullest possible life compatible with his abilities or disabilities.

American Legion Auxiliary members are able to volunteer in many different ways in any of the various committees within the organization. VA&R governs two categories of ALA volunteers: VAVS volunteers and Service to Veterans volunteers. While the goal of both programs remains the same, there are many differences in how those goals are reached. The most significant difference between the two programs pertains to where the service takes place and how volunteers are recognized for their service.

All Units in the Department of Florida are requested to participate in and work with the programs in the Veterans Medical Centers through the American Legion Auxiliary assigned to that Medical Center. It is the responsibility of the Units to bring physical

comfort and mental cheer to the veterans in hospitals and nursing homes.

Hospital Volunteers are key people in the hospital voluntary service program. The purpose of this group is to supplement the care given to our ill and disabled veterans by members of the medical center staff.

Service to Veterans volunteers use their creative talents and personal time to care or make items used for the veteran. Anytime spent shopping for materials, sewing, knitting, cooking, or performing other services should be recorded diligently.

For a more complete explanation of volunteer programs, refer to the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation a "Guide for Volunteers" available from Department or National Headquarters.

UNIT COMMITTEES

Helpful Hints and Suggestions

- Standing committees are authorized in the bylaws of the organization and operate continuously. The chairman and members of a committee usually serve as long as the presiding officer. The name, membership, authority, and method of appointment of standing committees are defined in the standing rules or bylaws of the organization.

- Special committees are set up for special purpose. They serve until the work for which they were appointed is completed. Since a special committee does not have its purpose or membership defined in the bylaws, a motion to appoint the committee should state what it is to do, the number to be included on the committee and the method of appointment.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- The Executive Committee Report is handled in a different manner than the committee reports. It shall be done using the following method:
 - a. The report (not the minutes) should be read by the Secretary following the reading of the minutes of the last general Unit Meeting.
 - b. This report should consist of the recommendations that have been agreed upon by the Executive Committee.

- There are two ways in which recommendations may be presented:
 - a. Read each recommendation to be acted upon separately. When a recommendation has been acted upon, the next recommendation is read. This method is often preferred because it gives the members more time and opportunity to consider each recommendation.
 - b. Read all recommendations and then take action upon all the recommendations at one time.

- The motion to adopt the recommendation may be made by a member of the Executive Committee or by any member of the Unit. Members may adopt, reject, or amend the recommendations.

- Any action the Executive Committee takes must be approved by the membership. The Executive Committee is a leadership body, not a controlling body.

REPORTING

Because the American Legion Auxiliary is a congressionally chartered organization, we are required to submit a report to them each year. If Units fail to send in a report, Department cannot render a complete report to National, which in turn, does not allow National to make a complete report to Congress.

Mid-Year and Year-end report forms for Units are prepared by Department Chairman for each Program/Committee. Units send these reports to the District Chairman and in turn the District Chairman will compile the reports and forward on to the Department Chairman. The report forms require an accurate and concise report of all Unit activities for the various committees. Remember to fill out a report form (top portion), even though the Unit has not taken part in the program.

SUGGESTED GUIDE FOR REPORTING

- The Unit President should inform each chairman of her obligation to report all related activities of her committee to the respective District Chairman. An information folder pertaining to her responsibilities should be given to the Unit Chairman.
- The Unit Secretary must distribute Department communications and other information to the program chairmen within three days of receipt.
- The information folder can be used to keep Department Communications, Unit programs and reports, and other information that can facilitate accurate reporting for the program.
- The Unit President should call for committee reports at each general meeting.
- The annual report form should be given to the Chairmen for completion. The report form is to be mailed to the District Chairman no later than the deadline outlined in the Program Action Plans.
- The Unit President gives her annual report at the District Constitutional Conference.
- It is recommended that the members have an opportunity to report any activity in the various programs at each Unit meeting. Perhaps a loose-leaf book with a page for each program can be passed around at each meeting. Waiting until the end of the year to

remember all activities is not recommended.

- Be sure to review all meeting minutes and Treasurer's reports when compiling information for your year-end reports.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

Invitations

- Write or call your guest or speaker, as soon as you have decided on your program. If you call, follow up with a written confirmation. Advise all invited guests of their particular function at the meeting. (If the Department President is your guest, she should be the one to make the principal address) Include a brief outline of the tentative program.
- Let the guest know the time allocated for their speech or remarks, the time the meeting will start, and the probable time of adjournment.
- Find out if your guest would like to be excused early. They may have other commitments and not wish to stay for the business or entertainment part of the meeting.
- Request confirmation and ask for material that may be used for advance publicity or for use in introducing them. Ask if they object to being interviewed by the press or photographed.
- Tell them whether or not a question and answer period is planned following their talk.
- Give your guest or speaker some idea of what you would like them to talk about.
- Let your guest know the type of meeting (dinner, luncheon, breakfast, etc) semiformal, formal or street clothes.
- Let them know in writing, the place of the meeting, including the address and directions on how to get to the meeting room.
- If the trip necessitates an overnight stay, suggest the type of accommodations available. If they inform you that they plan to spend the night, make the reservation for them. Determine if transportation will be needed for the guest and make the necessary arrangements to insure that this is provided.
- Let your guest know who will escort them and for whom to ask upon their arrival. If possible, tell them who will introduce them. Send them a copy of the program.
- A day or two before the meeting, call your guests to remind them of the upcoming

program.

- If tickets are needed for your guests, see that complimentary ones are provided, in advance. They should never be asked to pay a registration fee or asked to purchase a raffle ticket.

ESCORT PROCEDURES

- Guest of Honor is always escorted alone
- Assembly rises, at the direction of the presiding officer, for highest ranking distinguished guest (National President, Department President, or District President)
- Distinguished Guest Chairman presents each guest to the presiding officer separately, until all are presented
- Distinguished Guest Chairman, Sergeant-at-Arms, and others escorting retire to the rear of the room
- Presiding Officer then presents guests to the assembly:
 - ❖ If guests are to speak, start with the lowest ranking. The last words the assembly should hear are from the highest ranking.
 - ❖ If guests are not going to speak, present the highest ranking guest first

INTRODUCTIONS

- Introduce one not known to the assembly.
- Present one already known to the group.
- Introduction or presentation of honored guests should be gracious, but short. The higher the officer, the shorter the introduction.
- The President always introduces or presents Department or District Officers and Chairmen when they are visiting a meeting.
- The membership always rises in recognition of the Department or District Officers as introduced.
- When introducing or presenting a speaker, be sure you have the name and title correct. Identify the speaker; give qualifications through a brief history or biography; and last of all, give the speaker's complete name while facing the audience. Then turn to the

person being introduced and repeat the name only (this is the speaker's cue to rise).
You lead the applause, and then be seated.

- When the speaker concludes, you as host, rise and thank them. If a gift is to be presented, do it at this time

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Overview:

Most organizations make provisions for nominating and electing officers in their constitution and bylaws. The provisions ordinarily include such details as eligibility, time of nomination, time of the election, method of nominating and electing, and the time for taking office. If the constitution and bylaws do not make these provisions, they should be decided through formal action by the organization.

No provision may be placed in the bylaws which will prevent a member in good standing, no matter how short of time she has been a member, from running or being elected to an office. By accepting dues a Unit agrees to provide all rights and privileges of the organization, from the effective date of dues paid.

It is the responsibility of the President to conduct elections. However, she should have no more influence on the election than any other member.

Nominations:

- A nominating committee is elected by the membership and never appointed by the President. The President may not serve on the committee
- Nominating committees nominate only one candidate for each office
- Members of nominating committees remain eligible to become nominees for office
- Prior consent of individuals being nominated is highly recommended. If not, the nominated individual must present a willingness to serve prior to the election
- After the report of the nominating committee, the chair must call for further nominations from the floor

Elections

Some common methods of voting are by voice, by show of hands, by roll call, and by ballot. Ballots are generally preferred in large organizations.

Common rules for ballot votes:

- When the bylaws mandate a ballot vote, this requirement cannot be suspended, even by a unanimous vote
- In ballot votes, the President should always vote at the same time other members vote. In this case, the President loses her tie-breaking vote

Two common methods of election:

- By Majority. A candidate must receive a majority of the total votes cast for any candidate
- By Plurality. The largest number of votes to be given any candidate when there are three or more candidates. A plurality that is not a majority never elects anyone to office, except by virtue of a special rule, previously adopted and prescribed in the bylaws

Common rules for election by majority vote.

- Abstentions are never counted. Blank ballots are discarded and are not reported as part of the votes
- Illegal votes are reported as part of the vote, but may not be credited to any one candidate
- Under normal parliamentary rules, repeated balloting should be done until a candidate obtains a majority vote. Names of nominees should be kept on the ballot, unless bylaws provide some method for dropping the nominee receiving the lowest number of votes
- In the event of a ballot vote, as a result of more than one candidate running for an office, the chair shall appoint an election judge and request that each candidate name a teller. The judge and tellers shall cast their ballots and retire to an area of the meeting room that will enable them to count the ballots for the purpose of reporting the results to the body

Tellers' report should contain the following information:

- Number of votes cast, not counting blank ballots

- Number of votes necessary for election
- Number of votes received by each candidate
- Number of illegal votes, with reason given for the illegality

IMPORTANT MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Certification of Unit Officers:

Immediately following the Election of Unit Officers for the Unit, a Certification of Unit Officers Form must be sent to Department Headquarters. This must be completed and forwarded even if the same officers as the previous year are elected. Forms should be returned to Department immediately after your election or prior to convention. Note: Officers must be elected not more than ninety days nor less than fifteen days prior to Department Convention. Ensuing year Membership cards will NOT be given or sent to the Units until Department receives a Certification of Officers Form.

Unit Information Form:

The Unit Information Form must be completed and forwarded to Department Headquarters each year. It is very important to return this form to Department Headquarters by the deadline, as they have a deadline to meet in sending information to National. This form establishes your Unit's dues amount and Unit address for renewal notices.

Monthly Bulletins:

Each month, bulletins are placed on the Department Web-site at www.alaf1.org.

- Unit Presidents - She should share this information with the members at the Unit meetings. She keeps her set of bulletins for reference

- Unit Secretaries - She should either print a copy for distribution, or verify the Unit officers and chairmen are able to print from web-site
- Any Unit or member that would like to receive printed Department Bulletins may subscribe to them from Department Headquarters for a small fee.

Important information to remember . . .

- The date, time and place of your Unit meetings are located in your Bylaws. Meetings cannot be changed without notification of ALL UNIT MEMBERS.
- Notice of nominations and elections must be given to all Unit members
- Meetings can be held anywhere; however, all members must be notified of a change of location. It is assumed they are held at the Post Home unless established elsewhere.
- A permanent change of date and time of Unit meetings requires a Constitution & Bylaws change.

MISCELLANEOUS FINANCE INFORMATION

Bonding Fee:

Standing Rule XII, Item 8 reads: "Bond \$6.00 to Department Office. No forms. Unit members bonded automatically." The above requirement is not a choice of the Unit. Every Unit in the Department must send in the bonding fee.

**COMMERCIAL BLANKET FIDELITY BOND 1JCB-1079622
OLD REPUBLIC SURETY COMPANY**

This will certify the above named Blanket Fidelity bond insures the National Headquarters of the American Legion Auxiliary and all State Departments and their subordinate local Units within the territorial limits of the policy. The original of this policy is retained in the office of the National Treasurer.

This bond covers loss through larceny, embezzlement, theft, forgery, misappropriation, willful misapplication any other act of fraud or dishonesty caused by any member or

employee of the American Legion Auxiliary if that person's manifest intent is to cause the Auxiliary to sustain a loss and to enrich herself or another person.

This bond does not cover loss, mysterious disappearance, or burglary. Limits of coverage are:

- On all officers, members, and employees of Units and/or Districts - \$10,000
- Proof of loss must be submitted within four months of discovery of such loss. A deductible of \$500.00 is in effect on all claims.

The following controls will not only help prevent losses in the units, but will provide more reliable financial data:

- Bylaws should provide for a regular monthly financial report from the treasurer
- Bylaws should provide for an annual audit and specify how such audit is to be made
- Receipts should be issued for all monies received
- Require countersignatures on all checks

Federal Tax Id # (Ein):

All Units are required to have a Federal Tax ID# called an EIN (Employer Identification Number). This is a unique number for your Unit. It appears on your bank account. It is like a Social Security Number, but for an organization instead of an individual. USE IRS form SS-4 to apply for this number. The application form can be found on the IRS Website, and is provided each newly chartered Unit.

990 Form Information:

Every Unit must file an annual report with the IRS. If your Units revenue from all sources is \$25,000 or more, the Unit is required to file a 990. If the Unit makes under \$25,000, the requirement is either a 990EZ or 990N (epostcard).

National Exemption:

Exemption from Federal Income Taxes is granted the American Legion Auxiliary National Organization and all Departments and Units under 501(c) (19). This was

confirmed in a letter from IRS dated 3/26/73. The Group Exemption Number (GEN) is 0964. This is the GEN for all Departments and Units. A copy of the IRS determination letter is included in the back of this book.

If Units are applying for special permits that require proof of tax exempt status, a copy of this ruling is needed. (A photocopy is sufficient)

Incorporation Papers:

All Units are required to incorporate with the State of Florida. Contact Department Headquarters for assistance with this. Renewals are done January 1st – May 1st each year. A copy of the renewal is to be sent to Department for the Unit's file.

Holding Of Reserve Funds:

In order to fulfill the purposes as listed in the definition of a 501 (c) (19) we cannot carry funds from year to year over a given year's budget. We have then lost the status as defined by 501 (c) (19). If a Unit is hoarding money from year to year they stand the chance of losing their status. The general rule of thumb is to hold in reserve approximately the amount of one year's budget. A little cushion over that amount is allowed.

Dept. Of Agriculture (Permission to Solicit Funds)

Any Unit that solicits funds from outside the organization must have a permit. This permit can be obtained from the Department of Agriculture. Also, check with your local town for their requirements. **Soliciting for new members would require a unit have this permit!**

Florida State Sales Tax Information

There are two different issues as regards Florida sales tax.

1. CONSUMERS CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION: DR-14

Exempts organization from the payment of Florida sales & use tax on purchases to be used in your Unit's non-profit activities. You must provide any vendor with a copy of this certificate.

2. COLLECTION & REMITTANCE OF SALES TAX

If your Unit has any activity where you are offering for sale any tangible item, you must collect and submit sales tax. This applies to meals as well. You must first apply for a Sales & Use Tax ID number. Application DR-1

For either of these applications, register on line at myflorida.com and go to Revenue.

Bingo Money:

Remember, by State Law, Bingo funds must be used for a charitable purpose. Be prepared to show that any funds generated from Bingo were used for that purpose. Remember, any of our sponsored programs will qualify as “charitable purposes” and bingo funds may be used.

IMPORTANT – Anyone receiving Bingo money must give you a copy of their IRS determination letter. If they are unable to provide this, you may not make a donation to them. This goes for any recipient of Bingo Funds. Therefore, you can never give Bingo funds to an individual.

Poppy Reminder:

If you have not paid your required % of distribution proceeds from the last poppy promotion, the Unit delegation will not be seated at Department Convention.

MATERIALS AND REFERENCES NECESSARY FOR EVERY UNIT

- National's Unit Guide Book
- Manual of Ceremonies (included in National's Unit Guide Book)
- Department Unit Guide
- Membership Applications
- Basic Parliamentary Procedure
- Flag Code
- Unit Constitution and Bylaws
- National Constitution and Bylaws
- National Policies and Procedures
- Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised
- Schedule of Unit Meetings
- List of Officers and Committee Members
- List of District Officers and Chairmen

INITIATION CEREMONY TEACHES THE PURPOSES OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The Initiation Ceremony is an important function to the preservation and perpetuation of the American Legion Auxiliary ideals and purposes. Most new members who take part in this ceremony will acquire a greater sense of belonging, will tend to become more active in the Unit and consequently, will be more apt to retain their membership.

The importance of the Initiation Ceremony cannot be overemphasized. Not only does it afford the long time Auxiliary member an opportunity to reaffirm her oath of obligation, but it also provides a method whereby the basic tenets of the American Legion Auxiliary are reinforced.

The Initiation Ceremony teaches the principles of Justice...Freedom...Democracy ...and Loyalty. It explains the symbolism of the Flag of the United States and the Emblem of the American Legion Auxiliary. The importance of these lessons is obvious. In order for each of us to instill a sense of individual obligation to the community in others that sense of obligation must first be instilled in our members.

At this Initiation Ceremony you can present to the participating members, an Auxiliary pin, a small Flag, and Flag Etiquette book, a Poppy, a copy of the Unit Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules. This will make them feel a part of the organization.

The Initiation Ceremony is printed in its entirety in the Manual of Ceremonies in National's Unit Guide Book.

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

Subject: _____

Submitted By: _____ **(Unit Name)**

Voted on: _____ **(Date voted on)**

Whereas:
Exact wording of the Constitution, Bylaws or Standing Rule that you wish changed.

And

Whereas:
The new wording

Now

Therefore be it resolved;

That the Department of Florida in Convention assembled, in _____

**(location) on _____ (date) Voted this resolution to either
be adopted, rejected, amended or forwarded to the National American Legion
Auxiliary for further action.**

If adopted, this resolution shall become effective _____(date).

Signature Unit President

Signature Unit Secretary

Approved Rejected

Referred to Specific Committee _____

Submit to: Resolutions Chairman-- PO Box 547917, Orlando FL 32854

EXAMPLE OF A RESOLUTION

Subject: Unit Installations

Submitted By: Southfork Unit #999

Voted On: November 12, 2008

Whereas:

Bylaws, Article, Section 6 reads “All officers of the unit, with the exception of the secretary, who may be appointed by the President, shall be selected annually not more than ninety days nor less than fifteen days prior to the Department Convention, and said officers shall be certified to the Department Headquarters not less than ten days prior to the Department Convention, certification to be made on form furnished by Department Headquarters. Installation shall be a t a time coincident with The American Legion Post to which it is attached. In the event of a vacancy, caused by death, resignation or removal from office, the name and address of the successor shall be promptly reported to the Department Headquarters within one week of the vacancy;

And

Whereas:

Many Units choose to have installation at their Unit meeting or at a time more convenient;

Now

Therefore be it resolved;

The words “installation shall be a time coincident with The American Legion Post to which it is attached” be deleted in its entirety.

Signature, Unit President

Attest, Unit Secretary



HOW TO BE A GOOD LEADER

Committee:

Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:

leadership@ALAforVeterans.org

To some the title “leader” implies a domineering, take-charge, charismatic individual. Leadership isn’t an adjective. You don’t need to be an extrovert or charismatic to be a leader. Most members define leadership as the ability to achieve a position, not the ability to get followers.

Leadership is a mindset in action; it stems from social influence, not authority or power. Leadership has nothing to do with titles. You can be a leader in your workplace, your neighborhood, your family, and/or our organization, all without having a title.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

Be Knowledgeable – It is not necessary to be an expert on everything, but basic knowledge is essential. Where are your resources?

- Familiarize yourself with documents that govern the operation of your Unit or Committee
 - National Constitution and Bylaws (www.ALAforVeterans.org)
 - Department Constitution and Bylaws (contact your Department Headquarters or Department Chairman)
 - Sample Constitution and Bylaws (www.ALAforVeterans.org)
 - Unit Guide Book (sold through American Legion Emblem Sales at <http://emblem.legion.org>)
 - Parliamentary Procedure (sold through American Legion Emblem Sales at <http://emblem.legion.org>)
 - Local bookstores
 - Internet, etc.
- Possess a level of familiarity with programs of the American Legion Auxiliary
 - Finding program helpful hints: (www.ALAforVeterans.org) The following Committee tabs will provide additional information: Americanism, Children & Youth, Community Service, Education, ALA Girls Nation, Junior, Legislative, National Security, Poppy, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.
- Strengthen knowledge on Parliamentary Procedure
 - Parliamentary Procedure (“How to Run a Meeting”)
 - Unit Guide Book (How to be a Successful Unit Leader)
 - How to Sheets
- Know the process for the appropriation and control of money. Bad financial practices do not just hurt the organization; they can result in criminal investigations and prosecution.



- www.ALAforVeterans.org
- Finance: How to monitor finances

Be Passionate -A good leader exhibits excitement; and through demonstrated, unswerving commitment to our vision, instills hope and inspiration to other members. A good leader “walks the talk” and in doing so earns the right to lead.

Listen -If you exhibit a proper attitude in listening, really listening, to your members the potential for identifying new opportunities will emerge. Instill in yourself, and others, that listening is an opportunity to grow. In the end, your success as a leader will be predicated upon your ability to listen and understand the viewpoint of others.

Have a Positive Attitude-Leaders should have an upbeat, optimistic attitude that serves as a source of inspiration for others. If leaders seem discouraged or apathetic, members are likely to also become uninspired and demotivated.

- Be a cheerleader. Motivate others by your enthusiasm.
- Follow up with your members to ensure they are achieving the goals, objectives and milestones established.

Lead with Integrity - A good leader must possess unquestionable character and lead with integrity. Integrity gives you so much as a leader; credibility, trust, confidence, influence and more.

Lead by Example - Who says leadership is a one-way relationship? As you work toward developing leadership qualities in yourself, don't forget to look to your fellow members for feedback and inspiration.

- Pay attention to the things that have been effective in the past and always be on the lookout for new ways to inspire, motivate and reward your members.
- Be willing to delegate responsibility – use the talents of others!
- Always instill a climate of goodwill.
- Be respectful. Remember those all-important "shout outs" to deserving members and certainly the two most important words, Thank you.
- Do you care about your members and strive to help build leadership capacity in them?

Be Confident - Be aware of the way and manner which you present yourself. Bearing is everything! Be confident and decisive in your decision-making. Members will pick up on your approach to leadership and find reassurance, clear direction and security when a leader portrays confidence and positive demeanor.

Act Professionally - As a leader, you should be cordial to all of your members. You should also recognize the importance of dressing appropriately, showing up for meetings on time, and communicating in a professional manner. Your goals and expectations should be clear from the beginning. Members will be more motivated and less confused. Ask for input. Tell them that their perspective is crucial to your success.



HOW TO BE A MENTOR

Mentoring is an invaluable service we offer our new members and successors in the American Legion Auxiliary. Mentoring includes teaching, counseling, listening and advising in order to encourage the success of those members who are less experienced in the ways of the Auxiliary.

A mentor is a knowledgeable person who is willing to give her time to explain the policies and procedures of Auxiliary programs, provide encouragement and guidance and is enthusiastic about teaching others. She is patient and understands that a new member or a member taking on a new role may be hesitant and unsure about her role in the Auxiliary.

How do you mentor a new member or a member wishing to become active in the unit?

- Sit with the member during meetings, get to know her and explain acronyms as they are used during the meeting.
- Offer to carpool to meetings, if feasible.
- Introduce her to other members, particularly committee chairmen of any committees in which she has an interest.
- Encourage her participation in unit activities.



- Answer any questions she may have about procedures.
- Answer any questions she may have about programming.
- Follow up with a phone call or letter if she misses a meeting. Let her know that she was missed and send her any handouts or notes from the meeting.
- Stay in touch. Call her and send cards for occasions such as a birthday, get well, etc.
- Socialize with her.
- Invite her to attend district meetings and department workshops.

How do you mentor a member for a leadership position?

- Offer advice about the position and the things you wish you would have known as a beginner.
- Provide materials and resources that can help her transition into an officer role.
- Allow the member to take ownership of her position and use her own ideas.
- Support the decisions she makes as a leader.
- Assure her that she may call upon you for advice anytime.

**Above all, share what you know and be a resource to her.
You could be the reason she renews her membership!**