

American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida
Sergeant-at-Arms
Program Action Plan
2018-2019

The Department President **Michele DeGennaro** Theme:
“We’re All In”

The National President **Kathy Dungan**’s Theme:
“Honoring Female Veterans with Special Interest on Female Homeless”

- I. **Purpose:** To insure and promote proper flag etiquette and meeting decorum during Unit and District meetings and events.
- II. **Objective:** To insure that:
 - a. The American Flag and American Legion Auxiliary Banner are displayed properly during all meetings and events where the American Legion Auxiliary is represented.
 - b. Order is kept at all times.
- III. **Action Steps:**
 - A. **Proper Dress**
 - a. The Sgt.-at-Arms should be properly attired at all Unit or District meetings and events. No jewelry is to be worn, except a watch, ring, and Auxiliary pin.
 - b. The Auxiliary or officer pin should be worn over the heart and beneath the American Flag pin.
 - c. **No other pins are to be worn on the left side.** At no time should the Auxiliary pin or the American Flag pin be used to fasten a scarf, tie, etc.
 - d. If a corsage is worn, it can be placed using the following two options:
 1. A corsage can be placed on the left hand side of the blouse above the Flag pin, as long as the Flag pin is **clearly visible**.
 2. A corsage may be worn, but should not cover the American Flag pin. If this is the case, the corsage should be moved to the other side of your blouse and be lower than the American Flag pin.
 - B. **Prior to Meeting**
 - a. The Sgt.-at-Arms and Asst. Sgt.-at-Arms should arrive at least Thirty (30) minutes prior to the meeting time.
 - b. It is their duty to see that all materials, i.e. gavel, bell, bible, table, flags, etc. are in their proper place.
 - c. They should prepare the flags for advancement or assure they are properly placed.
 - d. See that there is sufficient seating available both on the floor and podium.
 - e. Greet members and guest as they arrive.
 - f. Attend to the guest book/sign in sheet.
 - g. Introduce all guests to the President.
 - C. **Joint Functions**
 - a. When having a joint function, such as installation, the person speaking addresses his / her Sgt.-at-Arms. Unit will rely on Unit Sgt.-at-Arms and District will rely on District Sgt.-at-Arms.
 - b. Remind members that we are the American Legion Auxiliary and we NEVER cadence clap, even if the Legionnaires do so. As ladies, we clap or applaud as we would in any other situation.

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D. Advancement of Colors

- a. Looking from the podium, the American flag is on the left side and the banner is on the right.
- b. When advancing the colors the **Eagles are facing forward and the banner is dipped slightly.**
- c. The flags should be allowed to flow freely when being advanced.
- d. Hold the flags at an angle that does not permit them to touch the floor. The only time the flags should be held back is in a crowded room or aisle. **DO NOT WRAP THE FLAG AROUND THE STAFF – Hold it by the tip.**
- e. When you reach the end of the aisle, the person advancing the banner stops and the person advancing the American Flag **does not stop** but continues and crosses over in front of the banner and proceeds to the podium.
- f. Once the American flag has passed the banner, the person advancing the banner then crosses over to their right and continues up to the podium.

E. Posting the Colors

- a. The American flag and the banner should be posted simultaneously, being sure that the eagles are facing forward when the colors are posted.
- b. After posting the colors, the Sgt.-at-Arms and the Asst. Sgt.-at-Arms should then step back, face the American flag and render a right hand salute. Hands should be absolutely empty at all times when saluting the flag, palm flat and place hand over your heart.
- c. Eagles should be facing forward.
- d. American Flag should be slightly higher than the banner.
- e. Once posted, **NO ONE** should pass between the colors. All notes, etc. should be brought to the side of the podium.

F. Duties During The Meeting

- a. The Sgt.-at-Arms and the Asst. should remain at the doors(s) of the hall during the meetings and be ever alert to the needs of the presiding officer and members in attendance.
- b. It is a **MUST** that order be kept during the meeting. If there is excessive talking, **POLITELY** remind the offender that there is a meeting in progress.
- c. The meeting room doors should be closed during the meeting.
 - i. No one is to be allowed to enter the meeting room during opening ceremonies.
 - ii. During the meeting, late comers should be advised that there is a meeting in progress and allowed to enter **ONLY** after the speaker has finished. Either the Sgt.-at-Arms or the Asst. should be at the door and assist the late arrivals in locating a seat.
- d. Be ever alert to the call of the Presiding Officer when she asks for the Sgt.-at-Arms to return a guest to his/her seat.

G. Escorting Guests

- a. When escorting guest, offer your right arm and conduct them down the center aisle, advancing the guest to the podium either on the flag side or banner side.

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- iii. Legionnaires, SAL members, active duty military and veterans are to be escorted the American Flag side.
- iv. Auxiliary members and guests who have not served in the military are escorted to the banner side.
- b. Once escorted to the podium, wait for them to finish. Guest are returned to their seats in the same manner in which they were advanced. The Sgt.-at-Arms offers her right arm and returns them to their proper seat in the audience or to the exit, whichever is appropriate.
- c. It is not necessary, but is acceptable, for Auxiliary members to salute the flag, either on approaching or returning from the podium. She does this by placing her right hand palm flat, over her heart.

H. Retirement of Colors

- a. Sgt.-at-Arms and Asst. Sgt.-at-Arms should advance, stop, face the American flag and render a right hand salute.
- b. The American flag and banner should be retrieved simultaneously – the American flag is retrieved either directly from the front or from the left side.
- c. When retiring the flags, see that the eagles are facing forward and that the American flag is higher than the banner and allowed to flow freely.
- d. When the Sgt.-at-Arms and Asst. reach the rear of the meeting room, hold the colors erect and do not stand them on the floor until the meeting is declared adjourned.

I. Following The Close Of The Meeting

- a. The Sgt.-at-Arms and the Asst. should see that the colors are properly folded and put away. Do not wrap the flags around the flag staff, but fold them against the staff.
- b. Responsibility for the replacing of all materials, i.e. gavel, bell, bible (if one is used) etc. to their proper place.
- c. Return the order of the room to the way it was prior to the meeting.

REMINDERS: Please remember that we all make mistakes. If, during the course of the meeting, someone makes a mistake and does not salute the flag properly, passes something between the colors, etc., **DO NOT DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT AT THAT TIME TO EMBARRASS THEM.** When the meeting is over, politely inform them of their error and explain the correct procedure.

Ideas to Educate and Promote

- Wear an American Flag pin daily
- Participate in or organize an Auxiliary Color Guard
- Contact Commander and arrange to have the Auxiliary banner displayed in parades, dedications and ceremonies at the Post home and in the community
- Contact local schools to address a class on proper flag etiquette
- Demonstrate to the Unit or District the proper process to advance, post, retrieve, fold and care for your colors

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References and Educational Material

National Emblem Sales 1-888-4legion (1-888-453-4466)

- Our Country's flag comic book
- "Pledge of Allegiance" Banner
- Flag Education DVD
- Flag Code
- "Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette"
- Pledge of Allegiance comic book

| Sergeant-At-Arms | Asst. Sergeant-At-Arms |
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| Cheryl Adams 1971 Albany Drive Clearwater, FL 33763 (727) 748-5121 <i>Sergeant-at-arms@alafl.org</i> | Dee Touhey 1971 Albany Drive Clearwater, FL 33763 (727) 215-7119 <i>Asst.Sergeant-at-arms@alafl.org</i> |