



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA 2023-2024 CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose of the Constitution, Bylaws & Standing Rules

The Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Unit are the basis of your governing documents and should **be as sound as a Bell**. They inform and educate unit members on the proper policies and procedures within the unit. The power and significance of properly prepared Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules safeguard a successful administrative process and provide structure to your Unit proceedings.

Unit Activity

It is vital that unit members understand the proper procedures for amending their governing documents. Your Unit Constitution & Bylaws should be reviewed yearly, but rarely change. They cannot conflict with National or Department Constitution & Bylaws. Standing rules should also be reviewed yearly and can be amended at any time according to the Bylaws. It is no longer necessary for the Department Chairman to approve your governing documents. This is the responsibility of your Unit members. The Department Chairman may review to ensure that they do not conflict. One copy of the entire document is mailed to Department Headquarters to be placed on file and on the website. When only changing Standing Rules, please mail entire document with a note stating **Standing Rules Changed**.

The Constitution & Bylaws Committee encourages every member to become familiar with and involved in the process to assure your documents are in compliance with key policies and procedures. Every member should understand the process to amend and the importance of up-to-date documents. Units are encouraged to utilize the easy-to-use amendment guidelines when amending your documents.

194 Units updated their Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules last year. The District Presidents have a list of Units in their District that have not revised their governing documents. These unit will be contacted by the District President.

Members are urged to obtain Department of Florida Constitution & Bylaws located in the 2023 Department of Florida "Bells in Service" Unit Guide. Updated in November 2022, National Constitutions & Bylaws are available at www.alaforveterans.org

Unit Constitution, Bylaws and Standing rules shall be automatically amended to conform to National and Department Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules of the American Legion Auxiliary.

It's as clear as a bell, your unit must incorporate and use your Constitution and Bylaws for an effective, successful, productive and organized Unit proceedings.

Have some fun, read your C&B while featuring your district bell in an exciting and interesting way. Take a picture and send to the Department Chairman.

GUIDELINE FOR UNITS

Constitution

- the foundation of the organization
- procedures relating to the organization, its name, purpose, membership eligibility, officers, meetings, governing board
- should be reviewed yearly, but rarely changed
- describes how the organization is structured and functions
- defines primary characteristics of the organization
- how to amend

Bylaws

- election of officers
- duties of officers
- committees
- parliamentary authority
- how to transfer
- discipline
- defines rights of members

Standing Rules

- day, date and time of meetings
- relates to the unique details of your Unit
- may be adopted by a majority vote
- may be amended or rescinded at any regularly scheduled meeting with prior notice, by a majority vote, without prior notice, by a 2/3 vote, unless otherwise stated in the bylaws
- amount of dues

Parliamentary Authority

The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern this organization in all cases that are not in conflict with state statute, the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Standing Rules, National, Department, any special rules adopted by the organization or The American Legion.

Definitions

Resolution: A formally written motion. A resolution may contain a preamble that lists the reason(s) and solution(s) for adoption. Each reason is listed in a separate paragraph starting with the word "whereas." A resolution must have at least one "resolved" clause that specifies the action or position being proposed.

Amendment: Proposes a change to the Constitution, Bylaws, Special Rules of Order, or Standing Rules. Amendments are also used to modify a motion under consideration.

REPORTING

The Unit and District report forms will be on the Department of Florida website.
Constitution and Bylaws Program Engagement Plan Page

End-of-Year Unit Report due to District Chairman by April 1st.
End-of-Year District Report due to Department Chairman by April 15th.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

All Amendments and Resolutions to the Department of Florida Constitution and Bylaws must be received by Department Headquarters at least six weeks, prior to Department Convention. Amendments must be submitted on the approved amendment form.

HELPFUL RESOURCES – BOOKS

National Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules

National Unit Guide

Department of Florida Unit Guide

Robert's Rules of Order newly Revised 12th Edition

Robert's Rules for Dummies

HELPFUL ELECTRONIC RESOURCES – WEBSITES

Department of Florida – Constitution and Bylaws Program Page:
www.alafl.org

National – Constitution and Bylaws Program Page: www.alaforveterans.org

Robert's Rules of Order: www.robertsrules.com

National Association of Parliamentarians: www.parliamentarians.org