

**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Florida
District President's Guide**



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Department President
2025 – 2026**

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Dear Friends:

You are in possession of this book because you are attending the District President's Break-out Session, Thursday, June 12, 2025!

This book has been compiled to help you fulfill your duties as a district president. It, by no means, contains the answers to all of your questions. Be sure to keep your Unit Guide, "Poppy" book, and Roberts Rules of Order on hand. They are also available to view on the department website at www.alafl.org. And, as always, your Leadership team and Past Department Presidents are available to guide you through this year. Contact me and I will be happy to help you select a mentor.

You have been elected to an especially prominent position in the American Legion Auxiliary. You are now a member of the Department Executive Committee and will be asked to vote on very important issues affecting our department's operations and membership.

Your main task is to help promote the principles and ideals of the American Legion Auxiliary and encourage our units to volunteer, increase membership, raise donations, assist with the Legion, Sons, and Riders as a family, and show your enthusiasm for our mission!

The Auxiliary has been in existence for over 100 years! Our efforts this year shall support our organization to thrive and survive for another 100 years.

The color this year is **RED!!!!** It was the obvious choice to augment our theme this year:

A PASSION FOR VETERANS!

Just think of the excitement and enthusiasm **RED** is going to inject into our programs and projects helping our Veterans, caregivers, children and our communities! Our membership team has great plans that they will share with everyone at Workshop! All department committee chairmen are working diligently on their programs, and I am excited for them to share those plans with you at Workshop. Our national president, Pam Ray's theme is "MISSION DRIVEN, FAMILY FOCUSED"! This fits like a glove with our theme!

Your year will only be as successful as the efforts that you exert. So please, plan your year, include your chairmen in your travels and events and PLEASE interact with the members as often as you can!

Robin

DRESS CODE:

Although we do not have an official uniform, it is suggested that your staff wear white shirts, dark pants, heels or closed shoes to all District Installations and meetings.

As President, I lean towards California business: Tank top or shirt, dark jeans or pants, jacket and some bling!

If you decide your meetings shall be more casual, dark pants and the Department shirt is acceptable. Dark jeans are acceptable as long as they are not faded, bleached or torn.

Leggings of any kind, torn or faded garments, moomoos or other untailored clothing are not acceptable. Non-compliance will result in you not having access to the meeting room until you change into acceptable clothing. And please, hem your sleeves or pants if needed.

When in doubt, rely on “conservative and tasteful”.

Your officer’s sash is only worn while presiding in your official capacity as district president or for the formal procession at convention. If you do not have a sash, check with the secretary for availability. They are available from EMBLEM SALES. Just make sure you select the correct designation. They are listed with pictures of the sashes.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Create a group email address containing all of your unit presidents. Create another one for your staff and committee chairmen. Encourage your chairmen to also create a group email for their unit chairmen/presidents so information can flow quickly and effortlessly.

Consider holding bi-monthly or quarterly meetings. Be sure to take pictures and write narratives about the district programs and projects, not only for your district newsletter if you chose to have one but also send them to the Department newsletter site.

Be sure to clear your calendar for the department president’s scheduled ZOOM MEETINGS. You will be given ample time to prepare.

Encourage your chairmen to take part in their department chairman’s scheduled ZOOM meetings.

NO DISTRICT FUND RAISING:

As NO district is incorporated, you cannot open a checking account in the name of the district, nor can the district initiate fund-raisers. You will have to rely on a unit to raise the money on your behalf.

You may request a special approval from the department president to fund-raise for your committee efforts. This must be pre-approved and the proceeds must be provided to the department treasurer within 48 hours of the event.

YOUR TEAM:

Before your election, I am sure you put some thought as to who you wanted for your staff and committee chairmen. You should not make these decisions lightly. They will be relaying our message to the units, and you should have confidence that the job is going to get done!

The last person you should give an appointment to is one who says, "If you can't find anyone to take it, I'll do it." Wrong, THEY WILL NOT DO IT! They will just wear a badge for the term. Look for people who have given great reports over the years, and those you have confidence that they will show up and do the job.

Do not appoint your chairmen all from the same unit. This smacks of favoritism and the participation in your events in the district will suffer.

If you do not reach out and fill all of the positions, you will be responsible for the communication and reporting for that chairmanship until you appoint a replacement.

Just because someone has not held a position before is not a reason to discount them from being a chairman or staff member. Consider the following:

- Do they have a sunny disposition?
- Are they punctual and attend most events?
- Do they "report" when asked to?
- Do they participate in District functions?
- Can they speak to a group?
- Do they volunteer?
- Do they know the basics of our organization?

These all reflect exceptional qualities that you need from a staff member or chairman. If you select wisely, you cannot go wrong. However, you appointed them! You can unappoint them if you are not getting results.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE: Program Engagement Plans - PEP

Following Bootcamp, PEP are posted on the Department website – www.alafll.org. These are our marching orders from national. This information will assist ALL chairmen, committee members, and members with educating themselves about our mission! Each committee has its own PEP to guide you through our national organization's vision for enhancing our projects, programs and volunteer efforts. Please instruct your staff, chairmen and unit chairmen, in particular, to refer to the PEPS frequently!

QUARTERLY REPORTING AND EXPENSE REPORT:

As you begin traveling to your installations and visit the units in your district, you are required to submit a quarterly expense report to department by going to the department website at www.alafll.org under QuickLinks/Forms and Resources/District forms you will find District President Quarterly Expense Reimbursement online submission. Fill out this form online and submit it. Attach the Mapquest or Google Maps for your mileage. You are also required to attach your district quarterly report. Your quarterly report will include what you have accomplished in these reports, not the district achievements. Purchase a carry-along calendar so you can keep track of all of your visits and business in the district.

If you do not know how to do this, ASK! Thorough instruction for preparing this report will be given at BOOTCAMP. We will do a dry-run report at Bootcamp for everyone to see the process.

The quarterly allowance is up to 700 miles @ 0.25 per mile. This is to record mileage in your District, visiting your units ONLY.

The due dates for your quarterly expense reports are:

Sept 1st, Dec 1st, March 1st, and June 1st

These reports are mandatory and there is no leniency on the due dates. So please, mark your calendars.

DISTRICT DUES:

According to the Standing Rules VII, 5, District dues are not to exceed \$30.00 per Unit. I highly recommend that you encourage the Units to step up and support their district by paying their dues. This money will cover your cost of paper, printing, toner, postage and awards. Everything is more expensive these days. You should not have to shoulder this expense on your own. Each Unit shall make their check out to you.

At your DCC 2026, you are required to give a full accounting of what you have spent. Any left-over monies shall be remitted to the incoming district president immediately after DCC.

EVENTS:

As the newly elected and installed District President, there are events that you are expected to attend. Now matter where you are, what the event is, always inject “MEMBERSHIP” into your speech. We have strong goals that we can achieve, but we need the district and units to always keep the PASSION for membership in the forefront!

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION – June 12th – 15th, 2025

You will get a bird’s-eye view of what is expected of you for next year’s convention. In particular, note the year-end report given by your predecessor. This report will be the culmination of the year-end unit president’s reports that shall be sent to you, by April 1st, 2026. No exceptions.

On Sunday, you will take your Oath of Office at the installation. Dress appropriately. Traditionally, your out-going District President is your escort to the front of the convention hall, where you will be installed.

After Department Installation, there will be a short Post-Convention Executive meeting. This is a closed meeting, meaning only the voting members are in attendance. You will be asked to vote on various positions and issues affecting the new term. This is when your duties as district president begin!

During the year, you may be asked to vote on issues for the executive committee, of which you will be informed/instructed by the department secretary.

During Convention you will be instructed where and when you can pick up your tote filled with unit awards, membership cards, and other various items, if applicable, which you will give out at the unit installations.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION – June 12th – 15th, 2025 - Continued

Be sure to complete the officers and chairmen's list and send them to the department membership at membership@alafl.org as soon as possible. Remember, if you do not fill a slot, you are the chairman and are responsible for the reporting of said committee(s).

UNIT INSTALLATIONS:

You are required to install the officers of each of the units in your district.

The ceremony specifics are available in the Manual of Ceremonies. Refer to the instructional materials at the back of this manual for Introductions and other helpful information.

Your district installation schedule is set by your district commander and the host post commander. You may or may not be asked for input on the dates. The unit president shall confer with them so that you know as soon as possible what that schedule is.

A unit does not have to install WITH the post. Sometimes, the issue is lack of space. Many units do their Installation at a regularly scheduled meeting, followed by a cocktail hour or meal, which really adds to the celebratory nature of the installation. Whatever you do, have some fun!

You cannot employ a "stand-in" if you cannot attend. If you cannot officiate, the incoming unit president should be consulted as to the preference of an installing officer.

You will need to:

Procure a list of the officers and names from the Unit. Arrive early so you can peruse the room set-up. Have the secretary confirm that all the officers' dues are current. If they are not in good standing, they shall not be installed. (Paying dues early shows a commitment to their Unit.)

If the unit has officer pins, provide them to each officer so they can be pinned when they take their Oath of Office.

Refer to the instructional sheets at the back of this Guide for information on introducing and presenting speakers and guests along with basic seating protocol.

Communicate with the Unit President whether you are going to use the short or long version. The Unit President shall inform the attendees of proper attire for this event.

BOOTCAMP: July 11th – 12th

By the time you are reading this, you will have already gotten the flyer inviting you to BOOTCAMP! This is a mandatory attendance event.

You may have already begun your installations, but mentors will be providing you with additional information to help your term be successful. This will be an open forum, so there will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

We will set up my president's visit to your district at this time.

Your meals and room will be paid by the Department, per the flyer. There is no mileage paid for Bootcamp.

WORKSHOP: July 25th – 26th, 2025

This session is where your chairmen and officers will learn about what our national organization lays out as the plans and objectives for each committee, to prepare your chairmen for your School of Instruction. You will hear and see some highly creative instruction. You are expected to attend along with your officers and chairman. I'm sure you will enjoy it! You will receive travel and hotel allowance for this function.

SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION: Held within 30 days of Workshop

This event is planned by you. Unit officers, chairmen and members, should all attend. You will set the date with a hosting unit in your district. Select a facility that can hold a large crowd. There is a form provided on the website that you will need to fill out and send into department headquarters as soon as possible. Create and send a flyer to all of the units in your District, Unit Presidents, District Officers and Chairmen. If lunch is provided, check with the host to see if there will be a charge for it. You may invite Department Officers and chairmen, and certainly, Past Department Presidents.

The President of the host Unit shall give a welcome to the crowd. All of your officers and chairmen shall be prepared to give a 10-minute talk on their office or committee. It should be informative and exciting! They may use visual aids, power points, posters, anything that will enhance their speech. Consider door prizes!

If the department president attends and is going to speak, place her early on the agenda. She may have other places to be.

Be sure to thank everyone for a job well done and write a thank you note to the host unit.

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT’S VISIT TO YOUR DISTRICT

At Bootcamp, the department president will discuss her scheduled visit to your district. I will be driving my own vehicle.

These visits will take place over a weekend. The current president will travel on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. She will visit on Friday and Saturday. After breakfast on Sunday (at a Post), she will leave to return home.

Please schedule events based on the farthest point in your district you plan to visit first, and ending with a visit to the event nearest to my home. I would rather spend our time with Veterans and their families as opposed to riding in the car! Bring two or three units together so I can meet more members! Units can share any expenses for decorations, guest book, etc. If you are planning the visit with your own unit, you certainly can invite other units and ask them to share in the expenses. I am not expecting wining and dining. A hamburger is great for me! I have no food allergies. If you want to “comp” my husband’s meal, thank you!

This will be a “WORKING VISIT”. That means we are going to keep Veterans first and foremost our efforts:

Visit a nursing home and call Bingo or assist with other activities like arts & crafts, games, puzzles.

Give a caregiver a day off, take her for a manicure!

Help a Veterans with chores at his home: Painting, raking, planting some flowers.

Placing a wreath at special locales.

Be sure to invite “TAL” (The American Legion), Sons and Riders to the planned events.

We can do this! It will be fun, and we can all celebrate our achievements!

The host unit president presides for the function. She will do introductions and present the district president. The district president introduces the department president. After the department president speaks, a gift (not necessary) or guest book may be presented, then the closing prayer is given.

This is not a formal meeting of our regular meeting agenda.

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO YOUR DISTRICT - Continued

Please provide a written itinerary for the visit to the department president so she can plan her trip and accommodations. Include times for events and when you expect her to arrive. Let her know if there is any special attire that is needed for her visit.

Housing: It is customary for the department president to stay with the district president or a member of her staff or a committee chairman. I may be traveling with my husband, a Legion member. In this case, we will be staying at a hotel. The cost will not be your responsibility. Just let me know of some suggestions for when I arrive.

FALL CONFERENCE: November 20 – 23rd, 2025

Since you are required to give a mid-term report at this conference, you are expected to attend and will receive a “call-in” to attend.

The Department President will determine the number of days your call-in is for.

The report, no longer than 3 minutes, will be about what your units have accomplished. Highlight the new, exciting events and fund-raisers that they have held. Report on new volunteer activities that we all can do! When you mention units, please give their location and number so everyone knows where they are at.

Give copy of your oral report to the Secretary at the end of your remarks.

UNIT VISITS:

During the year, you are encouraged to visit the Units, at least twice, especially when they are hosting special events. Encourage them to write narratives and take pictures of these events for the Department communique. We love to showcase our units! Be sure to spread your visits around the entire district.

Let the unit president know you are coming in case she wants to plan refreshments for your visit. And, let her know how many people you are bringing with you.

Ask for a brief time to speak to the group, give information on what the district is accomplishing. Ask how you can be of assistance.

Units do not all do things exactly the same. But, if you have to address protocol or observe something improper occurring during the meeting, the best way to handle that is to speak with the president after the meeting, aside from the crowd.

UNIT VISITS - Continued

When you are visiting a unit, be sure to complete the District President Unit Visitation Form and District President Unit Compliance Form. Further information on where these are to be emailed will be provided at a later date. Units are required to email accepted IRS Form 990, current FL Incorporation, Dept. of Ag Solicitation license – required, and Sales Tax Exemption Certificate. Further information on where these are to be emailed will be provided at a later date. Units are responsible for insuring that Department has their current Constitution and Bylaws, and Standing Rules. These can be found on our website. If there are any changes email them to membership@alafl.org.

A Unit President may ask you about inviting the UD & R committee into the unit. The president should use the UD & R form from the website to formally ask for a visit. The UD & R chairman will consult with the department president before the visit is arranged. The three principal areas that usually need review are: Financial guidance, Constitution & Bylaws instruction, or conflict resolution. The UD & R chairman, Leadership chairman and department president will select the proper committee members to attend, based on their areas of expertise. After their visit, they will prepare a report with suggestions for improvements and FOLLOW-UP to ensure compliance.

DISTRICT CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE: Date TBD

The Constitutional Conference is the most important event of your term. Among other things, you will call for chairmen's reports, elect a new district president for the ensuing term, and elect a delegate and alternate for national convention. The chairmen may hand out awards at this time. It is also your time to praise the district chairmen, officers and unit members for a job well done!

Preparation is key to your success. In the addendum, you can find a DCC suggested agenda. It is comprehensive and will guide you through a successful conference.

1. Contact the district commander to plan and set up the conference. Department Standing Rules, Article VII, Section 10 discusses DCC. The conference shall be held no more than 60 days and no less than 10 days prior to the department convention. You may not be able to hold your DCC at the same time as the TAL (The American Legion) due to time constraints or lack of space. If you do not hold your conference in conjunction with TAL, then set your own date by coordinating with the host Unit selected for the conference. Consider the accommodations at that facility to make sure there is room for your meeting. Check out hotel accommodations for visitors and guests.

DISTRICT CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE: Date TBD - Continued

2. Complete the Conference form in the Addendum and send it to Department Headquarters immediately.
3. Communicate plans for the meeting EARLY! Produce a Call to Conference Date Form with: Date, time, place, menu and cost of lunch if you are holding one, and hotel accommodations in the area for guests and visitors. Send an invitation to any guests. Confirm if they want to speak early in the meeting. Prepare a printed program if you wish. Will you have door prizes? 50/50?
4. Notify unit presidents of their responsibility to showcase their unit's hard work over the past term, and the district chairmen shall summarize what the unit committees have achieved. Provide a time limit for giving remarks and reports.
5. Appoint the following committees:
 - a. Credentials committee – usually the secretary
 - b. Rules – Usually the Parliamentarian; Courtesy Resolutions – Sample of resolution is in the addendum; Special Guests – inform them of a time limit for their remarks; Welcome Remarks – Host Unit President Response – Your choice, but consider the President from the Unit with the highest membership percentage.
6. Ballots shall be created for the office of district president and also for delegate/alternate to national convention. (The member with the most votes will be delegate and the next highest vote winner will be the alternate.) If you do not elect a district president, you will be required to “CAUCUS” at Convention to elect a district president. Review the documents pertaining to caucus so you are familiar with the process, as you will preside over the caucus.
7. The **INCOMING PRESIDENT** shall send to Department Headquarters the new officer/chairmen list, 100% completed, immediately after DCC. If you do not have all of your appointments filled, YOU ARE THE CHAIRMAN and you will be responsible for all reporting for that committee(s).
8. If you receive invitations to other District Conferences, please try to attend. It will be enlightening to see how other Districts perform!

CONVENTION – June 2026

Now, it is the end of your term. Think about all of the accomplishments of your year! You will be required to give a 3-minute (max) report of what your District has accomplished over this past term. If possible, be sure to include ALL Units, but please showcase what is new, the successes and accomplishments.

You are required to present a copy of your remarks to the department secretary immediately after your speech.

I thank you in advance for your outstanding service to the district and department!

ORGANIZING A NEW UNIT:

To begin a new unit, the sponsoring TAL Post SHALL request it before any recruiting activities begin. Refer to the Unit Guide -> General Rules -> District Presidents VII -> Sections 13, 14, 15 for information on starting a new Unit.

SURRENDERING A CHARTER:

The loss of a charter is a profoundly serious matter. We want to increase our membership, not decrease it.

Any Unit with less than ten (10) senior members paid at Department “close of books” will automatically have their charter suspended at the Convention Executive Committee meeting. The Department will determine if a recommendation for revocation of the charter is in order. Or, a suggestion for a UD & R visit be made to revitalize the Unit.

As district president, you may receive a call from a unit that wants to surrender their charter due to poor attendance. If you receive such a call, notify the Department President immediately.

Every member must be notified in writing of a special meeting called specifically to decide the future of their unit. It requires a vote of the general membership to surrender their charter. Department representatives will attend this special meeting to determine if other options are available. Surrendering is the last resort. The department will make every effort to salvage the unit. If all else fails, as district president, you will recommend to the executive committee that we accept the charter. If voted in favor, you are required to visit the unit and collect all ALA materials: Flags, charter, checkbook and any materials containing the ALA emblem. Any remaining membership will be transferred to Unit 400.

EMBLEM USAGE:

The ALA NATIONAL organization holds the copyright and patent on the emblem.

Usage of the emblem by an individual member is limited to wearing the official insignia (the emblem) and possession of authorized jewelry or merchandise bearing the Insignia. These items are available at the department store and the Emblem Sales Catalog.

You may use the emblem or a reproduction thereof on stationery, Unit publications, notices, posters, place cards, business cards, program materials or items of similar character used in the routine conduct of legitimate unit business, without prior approval. Any other use of the emblem shall be subject to approval of the national secretary.

If you choose to use the national emblem, (i.e., on a shirt), you need to submit a complete drawing of such and:

1. Name and address of the person printing or embroidering the name and emblem.
2. Quantity requested (order sufficient so you do not have to go through this process again).
3. Submit the completed order form (found on the department website) and submit it with the sketch to the department secretary at: Secretary@alafl.org

From that point, the secretary will submit it to National for approval which may take a day or two, on average.

During your travels through the district, if you see the emblem on shirts, etc., please confirm that the unit has gone through the proper approval process. If not, please notify the department secretary as soon as possible.