



**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Florida**

Sergeant-at-Arms

Jeanne Nadeau, Dept. Sergeant-at-Arms

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2021-2022

The Department of Florida President

Wanda Brandt

Purpose: To insure and promote proper flag etiquette and meeting decorum during Unit and District meetings and events.

Objective: To ensure 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 always kept.

II. 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, small post earrings, 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 enough 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 always be empty 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.
 - 1. No one is to be allowed to enter the meeting room during opening ceremonies.
 - 2. 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.
 1. Legionnaires, SAL members, active duty military and veterans are to be escorted to the American flag side.
 2. 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 way 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 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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Installation Ceremony Responsibilities

(DISTRICT ONLY)

- Place the Colors. These should include the American Flag and the District Auxiliary Banner. The flags should be placed in the following order:
 - District Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders Flags
 - If the Post wishes to utilize their Flags as well, they should be placed in the same order after the District Flags.
- Collect the Auxiliary Officers pins from the President. These will be passed out to the incoming Officers during the ceremony.
- Line up the Auxiliary Officers-Elect and explain the ceremony procedures. The line-up order is:
 - Outgoing President
 - Incoming President
 - 1st Vice President
 - 2nd Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Historian
 - Chaplain
 - Sergeant-at-Arms
 - Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms
 - Executive Committee Members at Large
- At the call of the District President or Installing Officer, escort the Officers-Elect to the podium. The District Sergeant-at-Arms leads the Officers-Elect so that they file in heading to the American Flag side and eventually the Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms will end up on the Banner side – or whatever that unit or districts tradition is.
- Once all the Officers-Elect are in place, ask them to hand salute the American Flag. Then state the following: “Madam President or Madam Installing Officer, I present to you the Officers-Elect of Unit 123 (and give full post name).”
- The District President or Installing Officer will then begin her portion of the ceremony by asking each of the Officers Elect to raise their right hand and repeat after her.
- Each individual Officer will be asked to step forward so that the District President or Installing Officer can read them their charges. Once completed, the individual will take one step backward and then you or the Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms will place the corresponding Auxiliary Officers pin in their hand.
- After each individual Officer has been recognized by the District President or Installing Officer, they will be asked to turn and face the audience for recognition. Once completed, they will be asked to turn back around.
- At the call of the District President or Installing Officer, escort the newly elected Unit President and Outgoing (Past Junior) President to the podium as the Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms escorts the remaining Officers to their seats.
- Once the remaining Officers have returned to their seats, both the Assistant and Sergeant-at-Arms should be positioned on the Banner side so they can escort the Unit Incoming and Outgoing President back to their seats when they have finished speaking.

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- At the call of the District President or Installing Officer, escort the next Installation team (usually the Riders Commander and Chaplain) to the podium.
- Once the Installation of Officers is over, retire the Colors. Properly fold and put away the colors. **Do not wrap** the flags around the flag staff but fold them against the staff and then use the chord to tie to the staff.

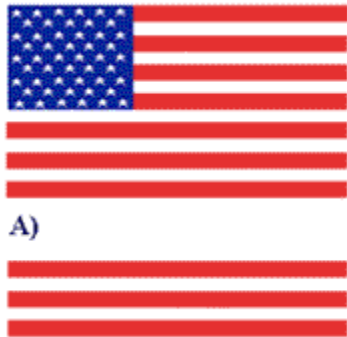
When having a joint function, such as installation, the person speaking from the podium addresses his or her Sergeant-at-Arms. Unit Presidents rely on their Unit Sergeant-at-Arms, District Presidents on the District Sergeant-at-Arms. The same applies for Department, Legion, S.A.L. and Riders.

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Flag Folding Procedure

The traditional method of folding the flag is as follows:

(A) Straighten out the flag to full length and fold lengthwise once.



(B) Fold it lengthwise a second time to meet the open edge, making sure that the union of stars on the blue field remains outward in full view. (A large flag may have to be folded lengthwise a third time.)



(C) A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.



(D) The outer point is then turned inward, parallel with the open edge, to form a second triangle.



(E) The diagonal or triangular folding is continued toward the blue union until the end is reached, with only the blue showing and the form being that of a cocked (three-corner) hat.





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 the Loyalty, Justice, Freedom and Democracy; dispelling the darkness of violence, strife and evil. The unbroken circle of blue represents Unity and Loyalty. 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.

History of The American Flag

The history of the flag goes all the way back to 1776. On New Year's Day of that year, George Washington commanded an army to retake Boston, which had been in control of the British Army. While Washington constructed his base at Prospect Hill, he ordered that the Grand Union Flag be raised. This flag resembled the flag that was about to come: 13 stripes that alternated red and white and a symbol in the upper left corner (this symbol just happen to be the British Union Jack).

In May of 1776, it is reported that Betsy Ross sewed the first American flag, which didn't become official until June, 1777. The Flag Act was passed that stated the flag would be 13 alternating red and white stripes and the Union will be represented by 13 stars (white stars over a blue background). This configuration of stars signified a Constellation.

Over the next 280 years, the flag changed as new states were added into the Union. In 1818, Congress passed an act that allowed a star to be added the following July 4th a new state was inducted into the United States. Only two Presidents significantly changed the arrangement of stars. President Taft did so in 1912 and called for six rows of eight stars. President Eisenhower changed the arrangement twice in one year: 1959. The first change was for seven rows of seven stars that staggered and the second time was additional stagger so when you counted across, there were 11 staggered columns and when you counted down, there were 10 staggered rows.

Symbolism

Everything on the flag symbolizes attitude and resolve in American history. The 13 stripes (seven red and six white) are for the original 13 colonies and the 50 stars represent all the states in the United States of America. The colors in the flag also mean something. Red is for Valor and Hardiness; white is for Innocence and Purity; and blue is for Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.

Hallowed Ground



This Is Hallowed Ground Why You Don't Walk Between The Colors

Between the flags that proudly fly
Let no one 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 ones 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 blessed,
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 tho he walked upon their grave.

— Nolle Deas
Past Florida Department Commander 1973-74

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American Flag Fun Facts

If you display an American flag or own one, there is proper etiquette you must undertake. Be aware of the following dos and don'ts.

Did You Know?

If the flag is flying upside down, this is a distress signal.

- When displaying a flag it should be lighted. Natural light like sunlight or another light source is acceptable.
- No other symbol or insignia should be on the flag.
- The flag is only to be flown in fair weather. Some flags are made for bad weather, and this is acceptable ONLY if the flag is made for it.
- Using the flag as a decoration is frowned upon. Instead, use a Bunting. The Blue stripe of the Bunting should be place on top.
- When the flag is taken down from the pole, no part of the flag should grace the ground. That's why you see personnel standing at the bottom of the pole, ready to take the flag and prepare it for proper folding.

Besides etiquette and history, there are a few pieces of conduct that are meticulously observed in regards to the American flag:

- Only State Governors and the President of the United States order when the flags on government buildings are to be set at half staff.
- The ONLY time you burn an American flag is when it can't be fixed or if it dirty beyond cleaning. The flag is burned in a dignified matter, as in a ceremony.
- The Flag Code allows any deceased to be allowed to have the flag adorning a coffin. Veterans are the most common people to have the flag on their coffin, but anyone is allowed to use the flag in this manner.

There is a difference!

Armed Forces Day

The third Saturday of each May – Honors those serving.

Memorial Day

The last Monday of each May – Remembers those who died while serving.

Veterans Day

The 11th day of each November – Honors those who served.

