



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS PROGRAM GUIDE 2026-2027

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Units are separate entities that operate independently as affiliates of the American Legion Auxiliary National organization. Units are governed by their own Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. The Unit's governing documents should make provisions for the governance of the Unit which are not already determined by the Department and National Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules.

The Constitution & Bylaws program informs and educates members of the American Legion Auxiliary on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies and procedures at all levels. Constitution & Bylaws and Standing Rules are the basis for governance of your Department, District, and Unit. Other governing documents include your Articles of Incorporation (if incorporated) and Policies (e.g., Financial, Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Youth Protection and Whistleblower). The more we commit to writing, the less questions and misunderstandings will develop later.

Preparing and adhering to updated Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules will ensure a more successful organizational process and provide the structures to follow at all levels of our organization. It is the responsibility of each Unit and District to review their governing documents, determine if all sections still reflect the needs and wishes of your members. Pay special attention to the sections involving your finances. If you find changes are needed- update them.

Districts should have Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. District Constitution and Bylaws can be based on the Uniform Unit and/or Department Constitution and Bylaws but adapted to fit the District. Each District will organize and adopt Bylaws that are in conformity with the Department and National Constitution and Bylaws, the fundamental law of the American Legion Auxiliary. Feel free to add other, seldom changed items, to the District Bylaws if they are needed. If there are any items in the Bylaws that might need to be changed frequently, please move those items to the Standing Rules. Standing Rules are easier to amend when circumstances dictate. These fundamental rules of the organization state how the membership agrees to govern itself, how it chooses its leaders, holds its meetings and the policies of the administration of the

organization. The importance of having governing documents in place to allow operations to continue in an emergency have also become absolutely vital.

Units in Michigan are now allowed to write Unit specific Constitution and Bylaws in addition to Unit Standing Rules. They may still write Standing Rules only and adopt the Uniform Unit Constitution and Bylaws as provided by the Department of Michigan. When adopting the Uniform documents please preface Unit Standing Rules with the following statement:

“The (Name of Unit) Unit # of the _District, of the American Legion Auxiliary, hereby adopts the Uniform Unit Constitution and Bylaws as provided by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Michigan.”

“This Unit/District shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, in all questions not governed by articles of the National, Department and Unit/District Constitution and Bylaws.”

The Uniform Constitution and Bylaws was first adopted in 1925 and has been amended throughout the years. The documents have been regularly updated as required. The Department Constitution, Bylaws, Standing Rules and the Uniform Unit Constitution and By-Laws are available online at www.michalaux.org.

The National Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules are available online at www.alaforveterans.org, member resources. The current printed edition is dated, June 2026.

At the National Convention 2021, it was stated by the National Constitution and Bylaws Chairman, Trish Ward, that Departments may continue to require Districts and Units to submit their governing documents to the Department for review and approval in spite of the recommendation in the August 2021 National Magazine article. The Departments are free to determine their own rules and regulations and National will not interfere as long as those rules and regulation are not in opposition to the National Governing Documents. Requiring such review is not in violation of National documents.

The Constitution and Bylaws (Department and District) should only be changed at your **annual** meeting, with advanced notice that amendments will be on the agenda for a vote. It is best practice to include a copy of the proposed amendments with the notice so the members can review them in advance of the meeting. Standing Rules (District and Unit) may be amended at any regular meeting, with advanced notice.

Standing rules are related to the details of the administration of your Unit rather than parliamentary procedure. There are policies that outline the customs or wishes of your members and are easily adopted or changed as the need arises. When writing Standing Rules, do not duplicate what is in your Bylaws. Standing Rules should be reviewed annually and changes made as necessary to ensure smooth operation. These rules need to be updated, a minimum of **every three (3) years and sent to the Department Chair for approval**. If there are no changes, please submit the attached form to indicate the Standing Rules have been reviewed and are up to

date. The Standing Rules need to be adopted at a regular meeting. *After adoption, be sure they are dated and signed by the Constitution and Bylaws Chair and at least one other member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or Officer, usually either the President or Secretary.* Two different signatures are required. Please send three (3) copies along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Department Chair for approval or corrections. This Chair will accept submission via email. However, **they still need to be signed and dated.** My email address is sharonschulte_sharon_7@msn.com. If a correction is needed, copies will be returned to you, with a letter stating the correction that is required. If approved, one signed copy will be returned to, one copy to Department Headquarters and one copy is kept in the Chairman's file.

Please remember to send a copy of your approved Governing Documents to your District Constitution and Bylaws Chair. The Department does not send them a copy. This is just for their records and reference. The District does not approve or disapprove the contents.

All members have the right to suggest amendments and revisions to your governing documents, not just the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or the Executive Committee. It is best practice to send your members copies of the changes the Committee is recommending and ask for additional changes that may be needed. Since all members are obligated to obey the governing documents, they have the right to contribute input. All amendments presented should receive a thorough explanation and discussion opportunity before the vote is taken. If you have additions questions or need further clarification, please contact me.

The objective of this committee is to assist in updating all levels of governing documents, have the most current copies on file and serve as a resource as requested. The Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules (all levels) are critical in that they govern the operations of this organization. These documents should be considered working tools along with the Unit Guidebook and other Guides issued by National.

The Unit Guidebook (last Revised April 2024) is a comprehensive source of information on the American Legion Auxiliary and its programs, Unit operations and procedures, but it is not a governing document. The Guidebook no longer has the Manual of Ceremonies included. The Manual of Ceremonies may be downloaded from the National website (www.alaforveterans.org).

Along with the Unit Guidebook, additional information will be found in the National, Department and Unit Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. These explain the structure of the organization; the topics unique to issues such as: Election of officers; duties and powers of those officers; frequency of meetings; discipline; quorum, etc.; and other rules which are related to the details of the administration of the organization's specific level.

It is each member's responsibility to have a copy of the Unit's Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules and to learn the rules governing your Unit. New members should be given a copy along with their membership card, so they have the material to study and become interested, productive members. Please remember that **you are a Unit and not a Post**. I have had Unit Standing Rules state they are Post number (???) of the American Legion. We are a separate organization and are considered a Unit of the American Legion Auxiliary. Please refer to our

organization in that manner. The legal name of your Unit is in the following format: “American Legion Auxiliary Harry Ollrich (must match the Post name exactly) Unit #4, Mt. Clemens (same as Post), Michigan”. Always refer to it in this manner.

The Presiding Officer should always have, at hand, the Unit Guidebook, National, Department and Unit Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules and the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (12th Edition). Questions that are not covered under the Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules, are governed by Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (12th Edition). The Twelfth (12th) Edition supersedes all previous editions and is intended, automatically, to become the parliamentary authority in organizations whose bylaws prescribe “Robert’s Rules of Order,” “Robert’s Rules of Order Revised,” and “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised,” or “the current edition of” any of these titles, or the like, without specifying a particular edition. If the bylaws specifically identify one of the eleven previous editions of the work as parliamentary authority, the bylaws should be amended to prescribe “the current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.” Your Unit/District governing documents will generally supersede Robert’s Rules.

Think about spending at least a few minutes at each meeting reviewing and discussing a section of your governing documents to make everyone more aware of the proper way for your Unit and District to conduct business. It will also bring to light any misunderstanding your members may have about the documents and their content.

On the Department level, amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws are proposed through the Resolution process. **There are deadlines for submission of amendments to our governing documents as follows:**

The Department Constitution- Article VIII Amendments Section 4: “Triplicate copies of the amendments shall be in Department Headquarters not later than **sixty (60) days** prior to the opening of Department Convention.” **Also Section 1:** “This Constitution may be amended at any Department Convention by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the delegates present and voting, provided the proposed amendments be written in Resolution form and shall have been submitted through the Department Secretary-Treasurer to the Units and members of the Department Executive Committee by mailing same at least forty-five (45) days prior to the convening of the next Department Convention; and provided further, that all proposed resolutions shall be read at a regular meeting of the Convention.” **As well as Section 2:** Necessary amendments proposed after distribution or revision as shown in Section 1, may be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting, provided they have been read at one (1) meeting of the session prior to taking the vote.”

The Department Bylaws-Article IX Amendments Section 2: “Triplicate copies of proposed amendments pertaining to the Bylaws shall be in Department Headquarters not later than **sixty (60) days** prior to the opening of Department Convention for circulation to the Units.” **Also, Section 1:** These Bylaws may be amended at a Department Convention by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of authorized delegates or alternates present and voting, provided the proposed amendments be written in Resolution form and have been read in the Convention at a previous meeting or have been distributed to all Units in printed form at least forty-five (45) days before the annual Department Convention.” **The Department Standing Rules- Preface Paragraph 2:** A Standing

Rule may be amended or rescinded by a two-third (2/3) vote, or if notice has been given, by majority vote. **Please Note- the Standing Rules do not mandate specific length of time for advance notice to be given. It also does not mandate that amendments to Standing Rules need to be in Resolution form.**

The deadline dates prior to the 2027 Department Convention in Battle Creek are:

Sixty (60) days - April 25, 2027

Forty-five (45) days - May 10, 2027

Thirty (30) days - May 25, 2027

Resolutions that do not directly affect our governing documents should be in the Department office, in triplicate, not less than 30 days prior to the start of our Annual Convention.

With the rules set forth by National, Department and Unit, your Unit should run smoothly and efficiently. If this committee can assist you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am here to serve and assist you and your Unit and District in any manner that I can.

Attachments

Guidelines for Units, Districts

Ideas- Member and Unit

Constitution and Bylaw

Reporting

How to Write Constitution

How to Write Bylaws

How to Write Standing Rule

Guide for Writing Standing

Rules

How to Write a Resolution

Resolution Form

Rules Governing Resolutions

How to be an Effective Parliamentarian

Additional Resources

No Change Form

Constitution and Bylaws Department Guide Attachments

What can you do?

The following is provided as a guideline to help review your Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules. *Please remember that Department, District, and Unit Constitutions, Bylaws and Standing Rules cannot be in conflict with National governing documents.*

Guidelines for Units and Districts

Constitution & Bylaws: Written by the Department, Districts and Units (if Uniform documents not adopted)

are the foundation of the organization
contain the most essential provisions relating to the organization, its name, purpose, membership, officers, meetings, governing board, committees, parliamentary authority and amendments to prescribe structure changes
are the law of the organization
should be reviewed, but not changed unnecessarily, every year
have direct bearing on the rights of members
should have a standard form and content
define the primary characteristics of the organization
prescribe how the organization is structured and functions
include all rules that are so important that they cannot be changed without prior notice.
the Department of Michigan prescribes a Uniform Constitution and Bylaws for all Units within its jurisdiction (See Department Bylaws Article VI Unit Organization, Section 5)

Standing Rules: Written by the Department, Districts and Units
Relate to the details of administration for the organization
May be adopted by a majority vote
may be amended or rescinded at any regularly scheduled meeting: with prior notification, by a majority vote, unless the bylaws or standing rules stipulate otherwise, without prior notification by a two-third vote.

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, or any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

Definitions

Resolution: An elaborate, formally written motion. A resolution may contain a preamble that lists the reasons 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. It is also used to modify a motion under consideration.

Ideas

Member

Volunteer to create a game of Constitution & Bylaws questions for members to play at unit meetings; make Constitutions & Bylaws fun!

Volunteer to write a resolution or amendment to be brought before your unit.

Volunteer to help your Department, District and/or Unit to update governing documents to conform to the National organization's governing documents.

Become familiar with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*

Unit

Update Standing Rules, as well as policies and procedures, to conform to the National organization's most recent updates.

Plan a parliamentary procedure seminar at a Unit/District function.

Include your Juniors in these learning activities where appropriate

Constitution & Bylaws Reporting

There will be no Mid-year report required.

As part of your Report, please include answers to the following questions:

Have you done an annual review of your Constitution & Bylaws (for Districts) and Standing Rules (for Districts and Units)?

When was your District/ Unit Constitution & Bylaws (for Districts) and Standing Rules (for Districts and Units) last revised?

Does your District/Unit give copies of Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules to members?

Do you have a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly revised, 12th Edition available at all meetings?

How was your District/Unit inspired to review their governing documents, including the Uniform Unit Constitution and Bylaws?

Has your District/Unit sponsored any Constitution & Bylaws activities? If so, what were those activities?

Did your District/Unit participate in a web-based Constitution & Bylaws activity? If so, was it helpful?

Please include photos of your Constitution and Bylaw activities

Constitution and Bylaws of an organization are the documents that contain its own basic rules and the information required by State statute for a registered non-profit entity. They include all rules that the organization considers so important that they cannot be changed without previous notice to the members and the vote of a specified large majority (2/3) and cannot be suspended.

Updated documents allow questions about the Auxiliary, its governance, its programs, and eligibility to be answered easily-a benefit to all members. Unit/District members are entitled to a copy of the governing documents. A well-written constitution, bylaws and standing rules document ensures operating according to its agreed upon rules. Governing documents must be carefully developed, properly written and periodically reviewed and updated for an organization to carry out its goals and objectives. Everything done well, including serving the ALA's mission in communities across Michigan, requires written, reasonable parameters for conducting the mission.

HOW TO WRITE A CONSTITUTION

Step-by- Step Instructions

Create Constitution and Bylaws Committee of 3 or more members

Review the content of the National, Department and Michigan Uniform Constitutions

Preamble- Exactly as written by National

Name- Exactly as it appears on your Unit Charter (American Legion Auxiliary, (Post name) Unit No. (same as Post number), Department of Michigan

Nature- Exactly as written by National

Object- The object of the American Legion Auxiliary (Post name) Unit No. (same as Post number), Department of Michigan shall be as stated in the Preamble of this Constitution.

Eligibility- Exactly as written by National

Officers- What Officers will you have

Executive Committee- What members will constitute the Executive Committee

Amendments- Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a Unit/District meeting if the proposed amendments have been read at the previous meeting or distributed in advance. Section 2. This Constitution shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitution, Bylaws and Standing off the American Legion Auxiliary.

Determine what addition items (if any) to include in the Constitution opposed to the Bylaws

Once a draft document is prepared, copies should be distributed to the members for discussion, explanation and revision.

Upon completion of final revisions, copies of the final document to be voted on should be sent to the entire membership with the details of when and where the vote will take place.

Once the document has been approved by a two-thirds vote, send signed and dated copies to the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chair for review.

The date of the meeting at which the Constitution was approved **MUST** be shown. The signature of the Constitution & Bylaws Chair and a second member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or the President or the Secretary **MUST** appear on the bottom of the list.

HOW TO WRITE BYLAWS

Step-by-Step Instructions

Your Constitution and Bylaws Committee should review the National, Department and Michigan Uniform Bylaws for information and ideas for inclusion and formatting.

To be considered for inclusion-

Officers- What officers are elected, appointed, when do they take office

Election of Officers- Nominating procedures, balloting

Duties of Officers- Who is responsible for what

Duties and Authority of the Executive Committee

Meetings- When, where, regular, special, who can call or cancel a meeting; how to notify members

Finances- Fiscal year, dues, budget, bonding, fundraising

Convention/Conference Delegates

Committees

Discipline

Parliamentary Authority- Per national, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Current Edition

Amendments- Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a Unit/District meeting if the proposed amendments have been read at the previous meeting or distributed in advance. Section 2. These Bylaws shall be automatically amended to conform to the National and Department Constitution, Bylaws and Standing off the American

Legion Auxiliary.

Once a draft document is prepared, copies should be distributed to the members for discussion, explanation and revision.

Upon completion of final revisions, copies of the final document to be voted on should be sent to the entire membership with the details of when and where the vote will take place.

Once the document has been approved by a two-thirds vote, send signed and dated copies to the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chairman for review.

The date of the meeting at which these Bylaws were approved **MUST** be shown. The signature of the Constitution & Bylaws chairman and a second member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or the president or the secretary **MUST** appear on the bottom of the list.

HOW TO WRITE STANDING RULES

Standing Rules relate to the details of the administration of your Unit/District. Standing rules, unlike the Constitution or Bylaws, can be suspended by a majority vote. Examples of Standing Rules include wearing name or officer badges, signing a register at meetings, or the use of recording devices by the Secretary or the general membership.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Start with a specific need that relates to the administration of your Department, District or Unit (e.g., awards you present, budget for convention attendees, voting body).

Present it at a Department, District or Unit meeting as appropriate.

A standing rule can be adopted with majority vote at any regular meeting with advance notice, unless otherwise stipulated in the bylaws. Without advance notice, a standing rule requires a 2/3 vote for adoption.

The Standing Rules document should be kept up-to-date, and each new Standing Rule should record the date it was adopted.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING STANDING

The following points are intended to be a helpful guide for writing or updating Standing Rules. Not every topic or item will apply in every instance, and some things may not be listed.

The _____ (Unit name and number) of the __ District, American Legion Auxiliary, hereby adopts the Uniform Unit Constitution & Bylaws as prescribed by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Michigan. (If adopting the Uniform Unit documents, if writing Unit specific Constitution and Bylaws, omit) *This does not appear on District Standing Rules as each District should write their own Constitution and Bylaws.* (See Department Standing Rules, District Organization and Bylaws, paragraph 2)

This Unit/District shall be governed by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, in all questions not governed by articles of the National, Department and Unit Constitution and Bylaws.

State time (day and hour) of meeting, place of meeting and information on notification of meeting. Are you meeting all twelve (12) months? (See Unit Bylaws, Article VI-Meetings)

Authority for electronic or hybrid meetings and procedures to ensure real time participation

Dues – Senior, Junior, Gold Star Mothers, Life Members.

Process for selecting Life Members.

Election (See Unit Bylaws, Article I and II)

When will election be held?

Secretary and/or Treasurer – elected or appointed?

A nominating committee – yes, or no? Elected per the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Election of delegates for Department Convention, District meetings, representatives for Fall Conference and Winter Meeting – when and how selected. (Unit Bylaws, Article 1, Section 2)

Installation of officers – when, where, who is in charge. (Unit Bylaws, Article 1, Section 2).

Remember Officers take office at the close of Department Convention.

Equipment – rules for loaning, maintenance, etc.

Finances

Rent

Utilities

Working funds for officers, chairmen, poppy purchases, ALA Girls State, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, etc.

Annual gifts for district president's visit, retiring officers, etc.

Flowers and/or gifts for illness, death, etc.

Expenses for delegates to Department Convention, District meetings, representatives to Fall Conference and Winter Meeting etc. (registration fee, mileage, per diem)

How bills are paid and who signs the checks

Contest prizes – how much for poppy, essay contests, etc.

Department and District mandatory funds

Arrangements for special dinners – funerals, etc.

Annual donations to special programs or charities

Filing of 990 Form with IRS – who files and when

The fiscal year of this department/district/unit will be July 1st through June 30th inclusive. (See Unit Bylaws, Article III)

Audit – when and by whom. (Unit Bylaws, Article X, Section 4.

Authorization for and procedures related to regular or emergency electronic meetings and communications.

This paragraph should appear at the end of your Standing Rules: "Standing Rules are adopted by a majority vote and may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote at any meeting, or if notice has been given, by a majority vote." Standing Rules are usually adopted from time to time, as they are needed, in the form of resolutions.

The date of the meeting at which these Standing Rules were approved MUST be shown. The signature of the Constitution & Bylaws chairman and a second member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or the president or the secretary MUST appear on the bottom of the list.

Date Approved

Unit/District Constitution and Bylaws Chair

Unit/District (Second, different signature)

Mail three (3) copies of your Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules to the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chair. An email copy will also be accepted, but it also must have the required signatures. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of your approved copy. If received via email, it will be returned that way. One copy will be for the Department File and one for the Department Chair File. (It is important that we have the name, address and phone number or email address of a person to contact in the unit for any questions.)

HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

Step-by-Step Instructions

A resolution is a written, formal motion. Resolutions are used because the motion may be presented in written form with some of the reasons included in the document. If written well, the resolution makes it easier for members to consider the proposal. Importance, length and complexity of the motion, and size and formality of the assembly are major considerations in using resolutions.

A resolution has two sections - the resolving clauses and the reasons. Resolving clauses tell the specifics of the proposal. The main reasons a motion should be adopted are included in the "Whereas" clauses. Neither section should include more clauses than are absolutely necessary. Simple, but specific is best.

When developing a written motion or resolution, consult with members who can be of assistance to improve the wording and whose support will assist in its adoption.

The two sections of a resolution can be written in either order, but many believe it is better to write the main motion first and then write the reasons it should be adopted. This way, you first determine what is to be done. Focus on the most crucial specifics essential in the motion. Say it in one or two sentences. A third sentence could include who is responsible and a timeline.

Once the main motion is determined, develop three to five statements to support the adoption of it. These are worded as "Whereas" clauses. These points should be the most important and least controversial arguments for the motion. Less than three points may not make the case depending on the motion, and more than five may get too complicated and confuse the issue. Again, it is important to stay focused on the points that are strictly necessary. Leave other points for discussion.

When the resolution is finally written, it begins with the "Whereas" clauses and ends with the resolved clauses. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, prescribes the proper format, capitalization and punctuation. Again, it is a good idea to consult with members who can be of assistance, as well as the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, to ensure your resolution is correctly formatted.

See the sample resolution in Support Tools at www.ALAforVeterans.org

RESOLUTION

This form must be filled out in triplicate and signed by
two (2) qualified delegates or by vote of a Unit or District

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS, AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Date _____

The Unit/District of _____ submits the following
resolution for consideration by the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

SUBMITTED BY:

TITLE: _____

(ALL RESOLUTIONS ARE ROUTED TO THE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE)

Resolution number _____ Subject _____
(Do not fill in resolution number or subject)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS:

WHEREAS:

Now therefore be it
RESOLVED:

Adopted by _____ at meeting held _____ in _____
(Unit or District) (Date) (Place)

Signature

Signature

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE)

ROUTING (For use of Department Resolution Committee)

1. _____ Committee Reject _____ Approved _____
2. _____ Committee Reject _____ Approved _____

REVISION: If necessary, committee or Resolutions Committee will re-write and submit

CONVENTION ACTION:

Chairman or Secretary _____ Date _____

Rules Governing Resolutions

The following rules pertaining to resolutions are taken from the Department Convention Rules, as voted on at the last Department Convention.

Any resolution or recommendation involving the expenditure or appropriation of monies shall be referred to the Department pre-convention Finance Committee before being considered. The Department pre-convention Finance Committee shall act upon the resolution or recommendation and mark its action on the resolution. The Finance Chair will attest by signature. It shall then be returned to the Committee of origin for its consideration. This does not preclude consideration of any new business which may be brought up on the Convention floor.

Resolutions regarding action by The American Legion may be called for as directed by the Department President. Resolutions or recommendations in conflict with the policy of The American Legion shall not be considered.

All resolutions shall be presented by the Resolutions Committee and shall be voted upon individually as presented, except for courtesy resolutions.

Resolutions in writing signed by two duly qualified delegates may be presented from the floor when there is nothing before the Convention and shall at once be referred without discussion to the Resolutions Committee.

Resolutions acted upon by any Committee shall be presented in writing by that Committee Secretary to the Resolution Committee within one hour after adjournment of that Committee. Resolutions referred to each Committee by the Resolutions Committee shall be returned to the Resolutions Committee immediately after the Committee has acted upon them. They shall be marked with the action taken.

The Resolutions Committee shall give the proponent of a resolution the opportunity to explain said resolution. The Resolutions Committee shall report to the Convention all resolutions properly presented to them and accepted by a majority vote of the committee to which they were referred. Any committee may amend resolutions before favorably reporting same. All resolutions rejected by a committee shall be marked "Rejected" signed by the chairman and returned to the Resolutions Committee.

A resolution presented properly and rejected by a committee may be brought before the Convention by a majority vote of the Convention body. Also, any resolution adopted by a pre-convention committee and rejected by the Resolutions Committee shall be brought to the attention of the Convention for information and explanation.

Keep in mind, resolutions involving governing documents must be in the Department office 60 days prior to Convention. All other resolutions need to be in the Office 30 days prior to Convention.

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE PARLIAMENTARIAN

Step-by-Step Instructions

BE IMPARTIAL – The parliamentarian is much like an official in a game. They are to be impartial and make sure everyone plays by the rules. Similarly, as the official does not play the game, the parliamentarian does not exercise the same rights as a member. They do not make motions, debate, or vote, except by ballot.

KNOW THE RULES – Just as a referee must know the rules of the game, a parliamentarian must know the rules of the organization and of the parliamentary authority. As the size of the group increases, so must the depth of knowledge of the parliamentarian. A department parliamentarian must know and understand bylaws, standing rules, and parliamentary procedure much better than a unit parliamentarian.

PRESIDENT'S APPOINTMENT – The president appoints the parliamentarian for their knowledge and skills, not as an honor or special appointment for a friend. The parliamentarian should be someone reliable and trusted to provide accurate advice for everyone on both sides of an issue. The president and parliamentarian should have a good working relationship.

VARIED ROLES – The parliamentarian has a variety of duties before and during meetings with members, committees, officers, and boards. The goal is for the business to be handled properly and smoothly.

DUTIES BEFORE A MEETING – Review the agenda with the president to be familiar with the business and possible problems that may arise. Review the bylaws and standing rules of the organization. Work with any committee members who request assistance in preparing reports for the meeting.

DUTIES DURING A MEETING – Preparatory work before the meeting should reduce the work necessary during the meeting. The parliamentarian should arrive early to counsel as needed. Have a copy of the governing documents at the meeting. Keep track of the motions to assist the presiding officer. Be as inconspicuous as possible. Provide advice when requested and communicate with the president tactfully and discreetly. Remain impartial and be prepared to cite references if needed. Be available after the meeting for further counsel.

DUTIES FOR A CONVENTION – The duties of the parliamentarian for a convention include those listed for meetings. Also be prepared to advise convention committees such as resolutions, credentials, rules, and elections. Review the script with the presiding officer. Stay focused, steady, patient, and fair.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY – Any organization requires rules of operation. The most important should be the hardest to change. Typically, these include a Corporate Charter, Constitution and/or Bylaws, Rules of Order such as *Robert's Rules*, and Standing Rules. The Charter, Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules are written specifically for a given organization. Those rules take precedence in governance. On matters not specifically addressed in those documents, the Rules of Order specified in the Bylaws are the parliamentary authority. This is usually the most recent edition *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. A parliamentarian should

spend time studying these rules.

HELP MEMBERS LEARN – During your year of service as parliamentarian also consider working with members to educate them in parliamentary procedure. This can be as you counsel them in their roles or teach lessons to further develop their knowledge and skills.

DEVELOP YOUR KNOWLEDGE – Good parliamentarians are always learning their craft. Invest in your knowledge. Resources are available through Emblem Sales, through parliamentary associations, and online.

Resources Available through Emblem Sales at emblem.legion.org: National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules (available on the Auxiliary's website at www.ALAforVeterans.org) for download Summer, 2026

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (also available on the internet at <http://www.robertsrules.com/>) 12th Edition #855.312 \$19.99

Robert's Rules of Order, In Brief #855.303 \$9.99

Parliamentary Procedure Booklet #755.203 \$1.99

Unit Guidebook #355.200 \$9.99 (also available for download) April, 2024

Manual of Ceremonies (available online download only- www.alaforveterans.org) 2026

Department Constitution and Bylaws, Standing Rules are available at www.michalaux.org for download

Additional Resources

Department and District Constitution and Bylaws Chairman

National Association of Parliamentarians website: www.parliamentarians.org

ALA Academy: Specifically: "Establishing an ALA Culture of Goodwill"

"Compliance Matters" (Deals mostly with IRS Compliance)

Additional Compliance Courses are being developed- so watch for them.

See the Constitution & Bylaws page at www.ALAforVeterans.org for additional resources.



No Changes in Unit/District Standing Rules Form

Unit #_ of the _District has had no changes in their Unit/District Standing Rules.

Please file this as an attachment to the previous file.

President or Secretary
Constitution and Bylaws

Date

Please submit three (3) copies to the Department Constitution and Bylaws Chair along with a self-addressed stamped envelope. One copy will be returned to you for your files.

Approved Date: _____

Department Constitution and Bylaws Chair