The American Legion Leadership College Department of Virginia

Post Function, Organization & Operation
SUBJECTS

• Background
  • Incorporation
  • Constitution & Bylaws
  • Changes
• Post Officer Responsibilities
• Committees and Programs
• Post & Operations
  • Post Home; Post Operations
  • Executive Committee Social Activities
  • Calendar of Events Leadership Development
• Protocol
• Legion Uniform
• Appointments
• 21st Century Challenges
BACKGROUND

• The American Legion is a federally chartered corporation created by Act of Congress on September 16, 1919 as described in the United States Code Annotated, Title 36, Chapter 217, Sections 21701-21708.

• IAW Department of Virginia Constitution, in order for the post to be presented their permanent charters, the post MUST BE incorporated and have a post constitution and by-laws in place.
BACKGROUND

• Membership in The American Legion is membership in the National Organization of The American Legion by affiliation with Posts. The Post is the basis for all Membership in The American Legion. The Post is used for formal meetings and a coordination point for community service projects. A Post can host community events, holiday celebrations and be used by others community organizations in time of need.
BACKGROUND

The American Legion is incorporated by Act of Congress

• Chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veteran’s organization devoted to mutual helpfulness.

• Governed by Title 36, Subtitle II, Part B, Chapter 217, Sections 21701-21708
BACKGROUND

• Title 36 – Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations

• Subtitle II – Patriotic and National Organizations

• Part B – Organizations

• Chapter 217 – The American Legion
BACKGROUND

• Section 21701 – Organization – Our Federal Charter
• Section 21702 – Purpose – As called out in the Preamble to Our Constitution
• Section 21703 – Membership – The Rules for membership
• Section 21704 – Powers – Adopt constitution & bylaws; establish state and territorial post organizations; provide guidance and leadership to the organizations; publish magazine and other publications.
• Section 21705 – Exclusive right to name, emblems, and badges – protection for emblem and name
• Section 21706 – Political activities – nonpolitical and may not promote the candidacy of an individual seeking office
• Section 21707 – Service of process – Corporation requirements
• Section 21708 – Annual Report – Must submit, each year, a report to Congress on activities during the previous 12 months.
POST INCORPORATION

Per Department of Virginia Constitution, Article IX Section 2: “All Department of Virginia Posts, except 141, shall be incorporated under the Virginia State Corporation Commission and shall maintain that incorporation as long as the post charter is retained. Failure to do so will result in immediate and automatic suspension of the Post charter until incorporation is complete.” It goes on to say that “Copies of the Post incorporation documents and the Post EIN must be provided to the Department.”
POST INCORPORATION

• File with state corporation commission
• File under Charitable Organization
• Hold special meeting of corporation
• Elect officers
• File yearly with state corporation

• Virginia State Corporation Commission
  web page www.scc.virginia.gov
POST INCORPORATION

Incorporation helps protect individual members from liability and generally makes holding of real estate much easier.

• Articles of Incorporation - Virginia State Corporation Commission web page www.scc.virginia.gov

• Constitution & Bylaws - Post Officers Guide - National Web Site (www.legion.org)

• Modify as Required but verify compliance with Department and National Constitution & Bylaws

• Unsure – Check with other Post or Dept. Judge Advocate

• Provide Department Headquarters with a Copy and updated copy any time changes are made.

• Remember – a Post must adhere to National, State and Post Constitution and Bylaws and must obey all laws.
CHANGES

• With changes to your Post Operation comes the need to review your Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and House Rules.
• All changes need to be done with forethought
• Members must have chance to Review, Comment and Vote on changes
• Once approved, revised copy needs to be sent to Department
• When changes are made to the National or Department Constitution or Bylaws, Post documents need to be updated if only to add a notation that changes are made to remain in compliance to those documents.
The American Legion - Levels of Communications

- National Headquarters
- Department Headquarters
  - 55 Departments
- District and/or County
  - Approximately 800 Districts
  - Post Commander
    - Approximately 13,500 Posts
    - Post Adjutant
      - Other Elected Officers
        - Committees
          - (Next Slide)

Coordination & Information
Directive
Spokesperson

It is very important that all Elected Officers of a Post and all members understand that the Chief Spokesperson for The American Legion is the National Commander.

The Department Commander has the same responsibility for issues within a Department.

Within a Post, the Commander and/or Media and Communications Chair can speak to issues regarding Post programs but should refer all questions on Legion Policy to the Department or National Organizations.
POST OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES
POST OFFICERS

The Duties of all officers are spelled out in the Constitution and further defined in the Bylaws. To a large degree Posts are autonomous, restricted by broad general guidelines in Department and National Constitutions.

- Commander
- 1st. Vice Commander
- 2nd. Vice Commander
- 3rd. Vice Commander
- Adjutant
- Finance Officer
- Chaplain
- Judge Advocate
- Historian
- Service Officer
- Sergeant-at-Arms
- Executive Committee
COMMANDER

• You are entrusted with very important duties – The Charge is broad

• Guided by Constitution and Bylaws – Need to know what is in them

• Motivate Post Officers – Members of the Post

• Responsible for teaching and protecting the cardinal principles of The American Legion – Policy – Tradition

• Loyalty to your post, its membership, the state and national organization

• Responsible for the programs, Community Projects, welcoming new members – keeping members informed what Post is doing in Community
COMMANDER

• Keep members informed and involved
• Encouraging team work with Auxiliary and SONS
• Conducting Post Meetings – Agenda, Events Calendar
• Plan Post operations for coming year
• Select and Recommend members for Committee Assignments
• Have good cross section of members in all Committees
• Make sure you have all the Committees needed
• Communicate to members and potential members
• Create a positive image of your Post
• Chair the Executive Committee
1st VICE COMMANDER

• Cooperation between yourself and the Commander
  • You are responsible for running the meeting in absence of Commander

• Membership Planning should answer the 4 W’s
  • Where do you want to go? What is the objective?
  • What steps are needed to achieve the objective?
  • Who is going to be involved and what will they do?
  • When does the work have to be done?

• Understand Ceremonial Protocol
1st VICE COMMANDER

- Safeguard Honor of Flag
- Teacher of Democracy
- Prepare and Study to become Commander
  - Constitution & Bylaws – know what is in them
  - Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremony
  - Membership Team Training Guide
  - Post Operations Manual / Post Adjutants Manual
- Member of the Executive Committee
2ND VICE COMMANDER

• Assist Commander in All Duties
• Patriotic Observances
  • Responsible for promoting formation of a color guard or honor guard
  • Establish and initiation team
• Justice in all Matters
  • Will be concerned with the welfare of all fellow veterans.
  • Will be interested in the work of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation committee.
2ND VICE COMMANDER

• Ways and Means Committee
  • Fundraising Efforts

• Begin Study to become Commander
  • Constitution & Bylaws – know what is in them
  • Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremony
  • Membership Team Training Guide
  • Post Operations Manual
  • Post Adjutants Manual

• Member of the Executive Committee
3rd VICE COMMANDER

• Optional Position – Larger Posts

• Responsible for the calendar
  • Planning several months in advance for activities
  • Americanism month; Children & Youth month; Community Service Month; Legion Birthday; Memorial Day; Veterans Day; Get out and Vote; American Education Week; etc.

• Assist as needed within organization
  • Contact/coordinate with other Veteran and Civic Groups for special programs and observance of patriotic holidays.
3rd Vice Commander

- Assist on special projects

- Begin Study to become Commander
  - Constitution & Bylaws – know what is in them
  - Officer’s Guide and Manual of Ceremony
  - Membership Team Training Guide
  - Post Operations Manual
  - Post Adjutants Manual
ADJUTANT

• Post Administration
  • “First Sergeant” or “Secretary”
  • Records/Post Meetings – Minutes
  • Membership – prompting remitting – mylegion.org
  • Correspondence

• Annual Reports
  • Consolidated Post Report
  • Other Department Reports as required
  • Coordinate with Finance Officer with Tax Forms, Corporation Report
ADJUTANT

- Bonding
  - Coordinate on all Insurance and Bonding of Officers and Employees
- Continuity Person
- Secretary of the Executive Committee
FINANCE OFFICER

• Keeper of the Money
  • Payment of Obligations
  • Remitting National, Department Dues
  • Investments

• Budget
  • Chair Finance Committee
  • Financial Policy

• IRS Report
  • 990-N (post card) – file on time
  • Yearly filing of bingo and pull tabs
  • Schedule yearly audit
FINANCE OFFICER

• Proven integrity and experience in handling financial affairs
• Recommend two signature checks
• Member of the Executive Committee
CHAPLAIN

• Mission is twofold
  • Help Legionnaires and others grow with God and one another
  • Minister to people wherever there is a need

• Spiritual Leader of Post
  • Attend all Post Meetings
  • Take part in Initiation of New Members
  • Dedication/Ceremonies/Funeral Services
  • Legion Ritual
  • Post VAVS
  • Moral Leader
  • Sick visited
CHAPLAIN

• Candidates should have strong desire to help others
  • Have Positive Attitude
  • Value Confidentiality
• Seek to be neutral when helping settle disputes
• Seek to be a model in moral and ethical matters
JUDGE ADVOCATE

• Guardian of the Constitutional form of Government
• Interpreter of Constitution & Bylaws
  • Rules on Legality of Actions
  • Protect Integrity of Organization
  • Parliamentarian/Roberts Rules of Order
  • Auditing Post Finance Account
• Member of the Executive Committee
SERVICE OFFICER

• Looking out for Welfare of All Concerned
  • Assist Veterans with Fully Developed Claims
  • Assist Families with Claims
  • Sick/Relief
• Assist with completing Temporary Financial Assistance Claims
• Inform all veteran and dependents of rights and benefits granted by law
• Post Service Officer Guide/Service Officer Training
• Utilize expert services
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

- Sentinel—Tyler—Outer Guard of Post
- Introduce to Commander Guest and Visitors
- Greeter - No strangers among Members – Important
- Check membership cards when appropriate
- Charge of Colors
- Escort
- Welcoming Committee
- How to arrange meeting hall
HISTORIAN

• Preserving & Compiling Records of Post
  • Future Judge by the Past
  • History
  • Growing in importance
  • Work is cumulative
  • Annual report to Department Historian
  • Copies
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

• What is the function of Media & Communications
  • Relating to or communicating with the “public”
  • Image building

• Internal Communications
  • General Membership Meetings
  • Meetings that include Auxiliary and SONS

• Social Media
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • Web Page
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

• Newsletters
• Activities
  • Photos with copies to Historian
  • Inform membership or community
• Noteworthy news articles for newspapers
Committees & Programs
COMMITTEES & PROGRAMS

• What Programs should your Post Sponsor? What is needed in your Community?
• Do your members attend meetings of other civic organizations? Chamber of Commerce meetings, Church Meetings, other community meetings that discuss issues in the Community.
• The following will provide a brief overview of many Programs and Committees in The American Legion at the National and Department levels. Your Post can choose the ones that best work in your Community.
COMMITTEES & PROGRAMS

• All Department Committee chairs report the actions and activities of their Committee to the Department Executive Committee at all Department Conferences and Conventions.

• All Legionnaires attending Department Conferences and Conventions are encouraged to attend the Department Executive Committee meetings.
COMMITTEES & PROGRAMS

Americanism
Children & Youth
Economic
Finance
House
JROTC
Junior Shooting Sports
Legislative
Membership
Oratorical
Post Activities
Media & Communications
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
Security
Graves Registration
Sons of The American Legion
Legion Riders
AMERICANISM

• Programs to promote understanding and appreciation for the American Government and activities in the American way of life through youth activities, community service, instruction of perspective citizens and immigrants, education and educational facilities, and to combat subversive activities.

• Our programs build Character, further a Strong Sense of Patriotism and Citizenship, and loyalty.
AMERICANISM

• Programs

• Operation Comfort Warrior; American Legion Baseball, Boy Scouts; Youth Cadet Law Enforcement; Junior Shooting Sports; American Legion Boys State and Boys Nation; High School Oratorical Scholarship Program; Flag Education Program; Veterans in the Classroom; Legacy Scholarship Fund; Get Out the Vote; Other school related programs.
AMERICANISM PROGRAMS

Operation Comfort Warrior

Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) provides aid to our recovering wounded, injured or ill military personnel by providing them with comfort items not usually supplied by the government. OCW also host events, including dinners and picnics, for service members and family members who are recovering from wounds.

Veterans in the Classroom

Veterans in the Classroom gives students an opportunity to learn about life in the military, the rigors of war, and how the service of America’s veterans affected their lives and the lives of others. Students also gain a greater respect for and understanding of the veterans’ sacrifices and commitment to service.
AMERICANISM PROGRAMS

American Legion Baseball

• Since 1925 to teach youth good sportsmanship, loyalty, respect for rules and decision rendered, physical fitness, fair play, courage and citizenship.

• Two divisions,
  • Seniors (18 and 19 year old)
  • Juniors (17 and younger)

Boy Scouts

• Recognized as a positive youth program at the first national convention in 1919.

• American Legion sponsors nearly 2500 Scout Troops

• Eagle Scout of the Year receives a $10,000 scholarship

• Three runner up Eagle Scouts each receive a $2,500 scholarship
Boys State

• A week-long program where participants learn first-hand how their state and federal governments function as well as the rights, privileges and responsibilities of franchised citizens. The training is objective and centers on the structure of city, county and state governments. Activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, law-enforcement presentations, assemblies, bands, choruses and recreational programs.

Oratorical

• The Oratorical Scholarship Program helps high school students develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution, teaches the importance of leadership, and provides participants with an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>AMERICANISM PROGRAMS</strong></th>
<th><strong>The American Legion Youth Cadet Program</strong></th>
<th><strong>The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports</strong></th>
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<td>**The American Legion</td>
<td>The American Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program, is an intensive five-day session in which young men and women are exposed to almost every facet of law enforcement. During the instruction at the academy, the students will receive orientation to criminal investigation, patrol techniques, accident investigation, firearms safety, use of radar and VASCAR, and marksmanship. The cadets will also learn about the history of policing, the drug problems facing all Virginians today, and the State Police recruitment process.</td>
<td>The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports program teaches students under 18 years old (or high school seniors no older than 20) gun safety and marksmanship while fostering healthy competition. Shooters are trained to use a .177 air rifle and skill levels vary from beginners learning safety basics to regional champs competing shoulder-to-shoulder in the Legion’s 3-Position Air Rifle National Championship, which is held at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.</td>
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The American Legion believes that child safety is everybody’s business. Prevention through education remains the best way to keep children safe. There are several useful brochures, designed to educate children and parents, which you can download from the National Web Site.

GATEWAY DRUGS - to educate parents and children about the danger of gateway drugs which can include alcohol, tobacco, inhalants and marijuana. So-called because the use often leads to drug abuse.

WARNING SIGNS – recognizes the serious problem of youth suicide. Developed to help readers learn the warning signs of youth suicide.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY – to help children and parents know how to make this observance as safe as possible.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH – April is the perfect time for the Post to host a child or youth-themed community event and recognize school programs, students, and other activities, collaborating with schools on a local project or other youth activities underway.
The American Legion is as focused on the welfare of our country’s children and the issues facing young people.

Programs and activities are designed to:
- Assure care and protection for the children of veterans;
- To promote and advocate the Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance Program.
- Improve conditions for all children and youth, with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home;
- Prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible;
- Maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs.

Take Part in Community Impact Programs
Temporary Financial Assistance

Established as a form of direct aid to children in 1925, a post can call upon the national organization for cash assistance to help maintain the basic needs of veterans’ children. Funds are granted to eligible families when it has been determined that all other resources have been exhausted or are not available to meet the costs of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses when parents are unable to do so.

Family Support Network

With the help of the Family Support Network, families of deployed and activated military personnel can connect with the American Legion Family members at their local post who then provide assistance such as performing minor household chores and repairs, assist with completing a Temporary Financial Assistance application or connecting the family with local programs.
The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation’s purpose: contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of children and youth by awarding grants to nonprofit youth-serving organizations for disseminating knowledge about new and innovative organizations and their programs. And, to make wider, more effective use of the knowledge already possessed by well-established organizations to the end that such information will benefit youth and be more adequately used by society.

The American Legion Endowment Fund provides funds for the operation of the Temporary Financial Assistance program, provided from a share of the earnings of the Endowment Fund.
The Post Service Officer (PSO) is often the initial contact between The American Legion and the veteran. The PSO, in most instances, is not a professional service officer, nor is he or she an “accredited” representative of The American Legion. It isn’t necessary for the PSO to be an expert in veterans’ law or benefits. What is important is for the PSO to have a strong desire to assist veterans.

- Assist Veteran in Need
- Hospitalization/Claims/Rights & Benefits
  - Fully developed claims can be done by Department Service Officers
- Visit Sick & Disable/Family Members/Visits to VA Hospital
- Knowledge of veterans benefits
  - (Download copy of Post Service Officers Guide)
- Training and Job Opportunities for Veterans
- Familiarize yourself with procedures/ policies in VA hospitals and state veterans homes
- Service Officer Training & Accreditation
The American Legion’s legislative policy is determined by elected delegates to national conventions and duly elected members of the National Executive Committee. A resolution outlining the need for legislation is presented to the national convention. If approved by a majority of delegates, it becomes a legislative mandate of the National Legislative Commission. The Department is also very active in Legislative matters concerning Veterans in the Commonwealth.

What can you do as a Legionnaire:

- Promote Legion Objectives
  - Letter/Visits/Testifying
  - State Legislature – Day on the Hill
  - Washington Conference – National Commanders Testimony
  - Non-Political – address issue’s – no partisan principle
  - Stay Current of State and Federal votes and Position on issues
  - Meet the candidate – equal time
- Download Legislative Agenda and Legislative Handbook
There are a number of Committees at the National Level that fall under the National Security umbrella to include Aerospace, Conventional Armed Forces, Foreign Relations, Law and Order & Homeland Security, Military Benefits & Quality of Life, National Guard & Reserve Forces, and Unconventional Forces & Intelligence. These are not all Committees at a Department nor at a Post.

The focus of National Security is broad and includes having an understanding of the federal budget process and the budget of the Department of Defense, State and Homeland Security. Members also monitor hearings of these oversight committees and stay knowledgeable about security threats to the U.S.

Committee members recommend items to be included in The American Legion Legislative agenda.
NATIONAL SECURITY

• The easiest place to find out where a program fits is looking at the Consolidated Post Report. At the Department Level, there are a number of sub-committees that fall under National Security.
  • Foreign Relations
  • Blood Donor Program
  • Law & Order / Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program
  • POW/MIA

• Recognition for the following also falls under National Security
  • Members or units of the National Guard
  • Police, Fire Fighters and EMT’s in you area
MEMBERSHIP & POST ACTIVITY

• You have heard the term that “membership is the lifeblood of The American Legion.” Why?
  • Without members, there would be no Legion programs
  • Without members, we would not have a voice on Capitol Hill
  • Without members, we would not be able to assist and support our Veterans, their families or the community

• Goal Setting
  • Be Realistic – not impossible or unchallenging need to be SMART
    S – Specific Goals – why did we choose that number? How will it benefit the Post?
    M – Measurable – Two targets – New members and Retention
    A – Attainable – High enough to require effort – not so high to discourage
    R – Realistic – Constraints / Time available / People available
    T – Time Sensitive – Need to meet target dates. When are they?
MEMBERSHIP & POST ACTIVITY

- All of the dates are found in the Post Membership Awards manual – which can be downloaded from Department at www.valegion.org under Forms and Downloads
- There are three elements to a Post Membership Team
  - Contact Team
  - New Member Team
  - Retention Team
- Membership is a constant effort throughout the year
  - The Key is to Obtain New Member/Retain Current Members
  - Reinstatement of Past Members/ Transfer DMS Members
- 1st Vice Commander Normally Chairs
- Details on Membership, including Post Development and Revitalization will be covered in the Membership Class.
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

• Who is your Post Media & Communications Chairman?

• What is the purpose of Media & Communications
  • Relating to or communicating with the “public”
  • Image building – Invite media to special events – recognize them.

• Promote Public Support for Legion Programs
  • Develop relationship with news media to include Newspapers, Radio, Television, Local area Bulletins
  • Use Social Media
    • Facebook, Twitter, Web Page, Electronic Newsletters

• Publicize Activities
  • Inform membership or community
  • Remember Politicians, Appointed Officials, Clergy, Local Business

• Noteworthy news articles for newspapers
  • What is noteworthy or newsworthy? Ask the News Director, Editor or Reporter responsible for veteran and military issues. They decide what is Newsworthy.
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

• Media & Communications includes Internal Communications
  • Communications is essential to be successful
  • Keeping Members informed of what the Post is doing
  • Need to keep all members, including Auxiliary, SONS and Riders informed
  • Solicit input from members – what do they want the Post to do

• Communications must include but not be restricted to
  • Post Meetings – Do you invite the Auxiliary or the SONS
  • Bulletin Boards – Including Church Bulletins
  • Phone Rosters
  • Personal Visits
  • Letters - Newsletters
  • Advertising – Welcome packets in your community?
  • Press Releases – Paid Advertising
  • Suggestion Boxes
FINANCE

• Responsible for developing yearly budget proposal for presentation to the Executive Committee and General Membership for approval.
• Responsible for handling funds under the approved budget.
• Develop financial policy and put forth for approval and inclusion in the Post Bylaws.
• Responsible for ensuring Income Tax filed on time.
• A well balanced budget and spending plan helps a Post enjoy more success.
• Members of the Finance Committee should also be involved in fundraising.
• Chaired by Post Finance Officer
• Depending on your Post you might have a House and a Building and Grounds Committee, or they can be combined, it is the choice of the Post.

• These committees have responsibility for the oversight of building repairs and upgrades; equipment purchase and repairs; operation of the Social Quarters or Club facility if your Post has one; and other duties as designated by the Bylaws.

• A House Committee can be responsible for the general rules applicable to the conduct of members while on the Post’s premises. Decisions and recommendations are then brought forward by the Chairman to the Executive Committee.

• A House Committee can be responsible for hiring and firing employees and administration of the Social Quarters.
ECONOMIC

• The Economic committee assists veterans in meeting and overcoming problems such as employment, veterans preference, housing, civil service appeals, and employment of handicapped and older workers.

• There are a number of reportable items for this committee
  • Does your Post participate in career fairs
  • Has your Post Service Officer been able to find a veteran a job
  • Does your Post recognize Employers of the disabled
  • Does your Post promote programs such as Employ Older Worker Week, and Employer of the Year
  • Does your Post have a Homeless Veterans Chairperson
  • Has your Post referred veterans to LVER or DVOP
  • Has your Post found job training for needy Veterans
OTHER COMMITTEES

• LEGION RIDERS SUB COMMITTEE
  • Legion member/org. is committee under the post
• GRAVES REGISTRATION & MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
  • Records/Marks/Graves/Service/Funeral Services
• SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
  • Supervise/Assist with Organization/ Activities/Education
• UNIFORMED GROUPS
  • Organizes, trains, promotes and supervises uniformed groups, such as burial details, or color and honor guards.
• VISITING VAVS
  • Members give comfort and assistance to members and their families during illness or bereavement, and visit hospitalized veterans. It is recommended that the Post Chaplain chair this committee
POST & OPERATIONS
POST HOME

• Posts do not have to be alike – we are all different

• Need to create a positive image – everyone wants to be part of a winning team

• What is your Post doing for our Veterans? The Children? The Community? Is your Post Community oriented? Is your Post involved in the Community?

• The Image of The American Legion is the reaction your community has of your Post. Do they see a bar or do they see an organization dedicated to Helping our Veterans, their Widows, and the Orphans?

• Are you doing all you can do so the Community knows what your Post is doing or do they say they do not know what The American Legion does?
POST OPERATIONS

• PLAN POST OPERATION
  • Are you going to have a social quarters?
  • Do you have all your permits, licenses, inspections?

• ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES
  • Do you have an active House and Building Committee?
  • Are the responsibilities all clear? Are they in the BYLAWS?

• BUDGET & FUND RAISING
  • Has your Finance Committee developed a budget
  • Dues/Administrative Cost/Rent/Post Home Payment
  • Soliciting of Funds – Only for Community Benefit such as Boys State, Legion Ball, Etc.

• BONDING OF OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR FUNDS
  • Certain Post Officers should be bonded – bonding based on amount of funds they have available to them.
  • If you have ABC Managers, they also need to be bonded.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

• Post Constitution & Bylaws designate who will make up the Executive Committee

• Responsibilities:
  • Govern & Management of Post
  • Meet on Call of Commander
  • Authorizing & Approving Expenditures
  • Authorize Hiring of Employees
  • Hearing of Reports of Committee Chairmen
  • Does not usurp power of Membership
  • Report of General Interest given at Post Meeting

• Intent
  • Allow dull, routine, operational affairs to be resolved without distraction from meeting
  • Keep Post meeting interesting – not just to those who are speaking
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

• Why did you join?
  • Because of expected comradeship, fun or social activity
  • Desire to serve our Veterans or the Community
  • Because you liked the Social Quarters
  • We all joined for different reasons.

• Does your Post have an active Social Quarters?
  • Weekly dinners
  • Monthly events and programs for fund raising

• Important to plan activity acceptable to community and eligible veteran

• Are you reaching out to the community to see what they would like to see your Post do?

• Does your Post plan ahead?
There are events that a Post can celebrate every month and reasons to invite members of the community out to take part and showcase your Post. Recognition of local officials, law enforcement and first responders, and outstanding youth in the community are just a few reasons to host a function. Other events can include but are not limited to:

• Fourth of July
• Veterans Day
• Memorial Day
• School related Programs & Events
• Membership Goal & Drives
• Legion Birthday
• District & Department Convention/ Conferences
• Legion College
• Flag Day
• Social Events
• Four Chaplains Service
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

• Provide Training
  • American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI) on-line training
  • Legion College
  • Attend District and Department Conferences and Conventions
  • National Legion College

• Experience and Exposure
  • Assign responsibility on a Post Committee
  • Encourage individual to attend events at District level
  • Rotate members through different Committees
  • Working through the Chairs / Officer Positions
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

• Committees/Convention/Conference
  • Attending meetings at the Department level that are appropriate for the Post Committee your are assigned
  • Talk with other Legionnaires who are working in the same area
  • Attending National Conventions

• Mentor
  • Working with someone who already served in the role you now have – they have experience, skills, and knowledge to share
PROTOCOL
PROTOCOL

• Simply stated, Protocol is doing what is Proper, Required and Expected. It is a code prescribing strict adherence to correct etiquette.

• Department Commander Invitation
  • Letter to Department Adjutant stating: Time, Date, Place, Event, Speaker
  • Indicate if other VIP in attendance
  • Overnight/Motel if Post will pay
  • Greet/Escort/Introduce Prior to Formal Function
  • When Escorted – from back to front of meeting room – introduce-applaud/stand/ 3 bells to stand, 1 bell to sit

• Department or District Officer
  • Properly introduced, given chance to speak
PROTOCOL - DINNER EVENTS

• If using Head Table
  • Name cards at all seating position
  • Main speaker seated at right of Podium
  • Formal Opening – Salute Flag, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance
  • Presiding Officer stands at Center of Head Table
  • Introduction of Head Table after meal
  • Introductions begin at extreme Left continue to center; then extreme Right towards center
  • Guest of Honor introduced last
  • Finish program with Benediction from Chaplain

• If no Head Table – Guest of Honor and table fed first
  • Formal Opening
  • Introduce VIPs
  • Introduce Guest of Honor
PROTOCOL - DINNER EVENTS

• Main speaker – Always last person introduced

• No other speakers after main speaker

• American Legion Officers introduced in same manner as they would be installed – i.e. Sgt.-at-Arms on to Commander.

• Exception – Function with Auxiliary and SONS – Auxiliary Officer, Dignitaries, etc. Introduced first. NEC introduced just before Department Commander
FLAG PROTOCOL

• Meeting:
  • Salute when flag posted
  • Salute when flag retired

• Salute when entering or leaving meeting when meeting is in session

• When escorted to front before mounting stage – same when departing – walk behind flag

• Place flag – access to and departure from stage – walk behind flag
LEGION UNIFORM

• According to the Officers Guide “A Legionnaire is considered to be in Uniform if wearing an Official American Legion Cap.”

• When to wear your Legion Cap
  • Post meetings
  • Community Functions
  • Conferences and Conventions
  • Special Events

• Formal Events
  • Recommend Suit or Blue Blazer with Grey Trousers, Dark Shoes, White/Light Blue Shirt and Tie

• Special Uniforms
  • Color Guards
  • Honor Guards

• WEAR YOUR CAP WITH PRIDE AND HONOR
Appointments

• Those appointed to a District Committee are expected to return to their Post and share the information.

• Those appointed to a Department Committee are expected to return to their District and Posts in their District and share the information.

• All Department Committee chairs report the actions and activities of their Committee to the Department Executive Committee at all Department Conferences and Conventions.

• All members of a Department Committee should report back to the District and Posts in their District.
21st CENTURY KEY CHALLENGES

• Number one priority – Service to veteran, their family and community.

• Need to set goals – develop a mission statement – where does your Post want to be in three, five and seven years.

• Must remain aware of our image at all times – how is your Post perceived

• Elected officers must set an example for other members to follow

• Need strong partnership between Legion, Auxiliary and SONS

• Our service to Veterans is a “family affair”

• Need to develop a strong, consistent Media & Communications (Public Relations) program

• Community needs to know about our programs
21st CENTURY KEY CHALLENGES

• Need to ensure that all who hold office are trained – Legion College, Conferences, Conventions, Extension Institute, and Mentoring

• Mentoring should be tailored to accommodate learning – what do your members need to learn about programs

• Membership is a key – without members we will have no voice on Capitol Hill – will not be able to serve our Veterans and the Community

• Communications is the key – Facebook, Twitter, Web Pages, Newsletters

• SERVICE TO OUR VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES AND TO THEIR COMMUNITIES, STATES AND NATION is the essence of the Challenge
The American Legion Leadership College Department of Virginia

Post Function, Organization, Operation