

Constitution & Bylaws

2010-2011 National President's Theme: The Power of One
2010 -2011 Department President's Theme: It is Great to be an American

Purpose: To inform and educate members of the American Legion Auxiliary on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed and updated documents, policies and procedures at all levels.

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Constitution & Bylaws

Constitution & Bylaws are the basis for governance of your Unit. Preparing and adhering to an updated Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules will provide a more successful organizational process. The following is provided as a guideline to help facilitate reviews of your current Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. Please remember that Unit Constitutions, Bylaws, and Standing Rules cannot be in conflict with national or department governing documents.

Guidelines for Departments and Units

A. Constitution & Bylaws

- a. are the foundation of the organization
- b. contain the most essential provisions relating to:
 - name of the organization
 - its object
 - membership
 - officers
 - meetings
 - executive board
 - committees
 - parliamentary authority
 - amendment to prescribe procedure change
- c. are the law of the organization
 - should be reviewed every year
 - have direct bearing on the rights of members
- d. should have a standard form and content
- e. define the primary characteristics of the organization
- f. prescribe how the organization functions
- g. include all rules so important that they cannot be changed without previous notice

B. Standing Rules

- a. relate to the details of administration for the organization
- b. may be adopted by a majority vote
- c. may be amended or rescinded:
 - without prior notification by a two-thirds vote or a majority vote of the entire membership
 - with prior notification, by a majority vote.

- C. Parliamentary Authority – *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.

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D. Definitions

a. 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.

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

Resources Available through Emblem Sales <http://emblem.legion.org>

1. National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules (item 355.202)
 2. Policies and Procedures manual (item 355.204)
 3. Unit Handbook (item 355.200)
 4. Parliamentary Procedure (item 755.203)
 5. Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (item 855.300, item 855.301)
- See program page on www.legion-aux.org for additional resources.

NOTE TO DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI UNITS: All unit C & B’s must be sent to the Department Chairman, before it is finally approved by the unit and signed. She will review it and return it to you. After final approval by the unit, the signed copy must then be returned to the Department Chairman, so she can verify changes were made. She then forwards the document to the Department office for file.

Department Resources Available through the Department Secretary

1. Latest edition of the Department of Mississippi Constitution & Bylaws
2. Copies of a generic C & B to get you started
3. Access to your old C & B, if you have one on file

Awards:

The Department Chairman will give a Certificate of Participation/Appreciation to every Unit that sends a new or updated unit C & B to the Department during 2010-2011 administrative year.