

THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN



LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

*(In all matters pertaining to The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin, its' Constitution & Bylaws shall take preference.)
(This manual is updated annually and distributed to the DEC at the Post Convention DEC Meeting)*

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DUTIES OF A DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER

The Bylaws of the Department Constitution, Article II, Section 2, outlines the primary duties of a Vice Commander as follows: *“The Department Vice Commanders shall be the representatives of the Department Commander on all matters referred to any of them, and shall, on request, preside over meetings of the Department Convention or Department Executive Committee, and perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.”*

Representing The Department Commander

The Department Commander will notify and authorize the Vice Commanders to represent them whenever the Commander deems it necessary. In addition, whenever the Commander desires a Vice Commander to preside at a Department Executive Committee, Department Convention, or other event, they will be notified by the Commander. Vice Commanders will keep in mind at all times their primary duty is to be of assistance to the Department Commander.

Membership

The Vice Commanders, by virtue of Department Constitution & Bylaws, are members of the Department Membership Committee. Whenever the Membership Committee meets, the Vice Commanders are automatically authorized to attend the Membership Committee meeting. Each year, the Commander designates a certain membership area for each Vice Commander including three (3) Districts, which is the area the Vice Commander is responsible for. Traditionally, the Vice Commanders make recommendations to the Commander based on their agreed upon preferences. A weekly membership report is prepared to include the membership in the Vice Commander’s respective area, weekly membership standings of the Districts and other pertinent information. This weekly report generally commences approximately ten days after the annual Convention.

Oratorical Contest

While the requirement for Department Vice Commanders to conduct the Regional Oratorical Contests has been eliminated it is highly recommended you attend the Department Oratorical Contest, traditionally held in Ripon, to show your support for the program.

Department Vice Commander’s Allowance

Pursuant to a standing Department Executive Committee mandate, Department Vice Commanders are allocated a certain allowance, as determined by the Finance Committee and approved by the Department Executive Committee, to be used for promotion of American Legion programs and membership. Primarily, of course, it is to assist you in the travel through the Department, District meetings, and whatever other expenses you may incur.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Auditors, which has been confirmed by the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee, you will receive a bi-monthly allowance check of equal amounts for your year as Department Vice Commander. You cannot exceed your allowance. Your travel to the Department Executive Committee meetings does not come under this allowance, but rather, under the Department Executive Committee budget.

Bi-monthly stipend checks will be processed as follows:

REPORT PERIODS

August – September
October – November
December – January
February – March
April – May
June – July

CHECKS CUT

October
December
February
April
June
August

Summary

A Department Vice Commander, as stated, is to be of assistance to the Department Commander. They should stay in close contact with the Department Commander and Department Headquarters.

A Department Vice Commanders’ primary responsibility is membership in the agreed upon Districts and they are expected to make visits to posts and county councils.

DISTRICT COMMANDER’S INFORMATION

The following information has been prepared in the hopes it will be of some assistance to District Commanders upon taking office at the close of the Department Convention. For a complete understanding of District duties, new District Commanders should get in touch with their Past District Commanders who will be happy to assist them.

District Commander’s Allowance

Pursuant to a standing Department Executive Committee mandate, District Commanders are allocated a certain allowance, as determined by the Finance Committee and approved by the Department Executive Committee, to be used for promotion of American Legion programs and membership. Primarily, of course, it is to assist you in the travel through the District, District meetings, and whatever other expenses you may incur. The amount varies according to the Districts. The Districts in Milwaukee and close to Milwaukee have a lesser amount, while the larger Districts, of course, receive an increased amount.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Auditors, which has been confirmed by the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee, you will receive a bi-monthly allowance check of equal amounts for your year as District Commander. You cannot exceed your District Commander’s allowance. Your travel to the Executive Committee meetings does not come under this allowance, but rather, under the Executive Committee budget. If you have any questions relative to your District Commander’s allowance, please get in touch with Department Headquarters.

Bi-monthly stipend checks will be processed as follows:

<u>REPORT PERIODS</u>	<u>CHECKS CUT</u>
August – September	October
October – November	December
December – January	February
February – March	April
April – May	June
June – July	August

District Commander’s Responsibility

As the District Commander, you are responsible for your District in that you are the head of the District. By virtue of your office, you represent the District on the Executive Committee. In the event at any time you are unable to attend an Executive Committee meeting, you should notify a Vice Commander who has the authority to represent you in your absence and thus ensure your District of proper representation. At the Department Convention, the District Commander conducts their Caucuses, and is customarily the Floor Leader for the District.

Per resolution passed at the 2021 Convention, six (6) District Commanders will be members of the Membership Committee. The odd numbered District Commanders will serve on the Membership Committee during the odd membership year, and the even numbered District Commanders will serve on the Membership Committee during the even membership year.

It is highly recommended that District Commanders attend the National Convention. Prior to your Spring Conference, you will receive a National Convention packet from Department with an informational letter, your estimated National Convention Delegate strength, National Convention Delegate Assignment Form and National Convention Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms form. It is important that these forms are returned to Department immediately following your Spring Conference to ensure communication with the Delegates and Alternates to National Convention.

District Officers

Each District varies as to the structure of their District since some operate with full slate of Officers, and some with a minimum of officers. Every District should have a Vice Commander who would be the logical one to represent the District in the absence of the District Commander. Some Districts elect other Vice Commanders and, in some instances, they are appointed. Each District should be supported by a District Adjutant, and such other officers as a District Commander may designate. **Please send the full list of your elective and appointed officers to our office 30 days before Convention for compilation of the annual Officers and Committee Roster and Official Directory.**

The officer's initial stipend will be withheld until a complete officer and committee roster is received by the Department Adjutant.

Membership

The new membership cards are distributed to all District Commanders before the Department Convention. A record of the cards issued to District Commanders is kept at Department Headquarters.

A Weekly Membership Report by District is issued which gives up-to-date information on District membership. District Commanders receive a complete breakdown of the District by Posts and Counties showing the membership data received at the time of the mailing of the weekly report.

Department Contact

Department Headquarters is happy to be of service to the District Commanders. It is the responsibility of the Department Headquarters Team to keep the District Commanders fully informed as to anything which may occur within their District that the Department becomes aware of.

Each year, it has been customary for the Department Vice Commanders to be assigned certain Districts as their respective area, all District Commanders are notified of these assignments.

All Department Executive Committee meetings are established according to the "Master Schedule of Department Committee Meetings" and are posted on the Department website wilegion.org. The first meeting of the year following the Department Convention is the Post-Convention DEC, which immediately follows the close of the convention. The next DEC meeting is at the Fall Meetings. The Official Call, together with event registration and hotel reservation information for Convention, Midwinter, Fall and Spring Meetings, will be mailed to you. To ensure you receive housing you must reply by indicated deadlines.

The Department Constitution and Bylaws allows for Electronic polling of the Department Executive Committee. It is vitally important that you monitor your email daily, and alert Department Headquarters if you will be away and are unable to do so.

It is highly suggested that District Vice Commanders attend meetings along with the District Commander to allow them to learn about the workings of the Department, and to step in if the Commander becomes ill or is called away.

If District Commanders have any questions in regards to their duties, or need any additional information, please contact Department Headquarters.

MASTER OUTLINE OF DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

Appointment of Committee Chairs

The following is an outline of the appointment of Committee Chairs. The same method also applies to a Committee Vice Chair. The tenure of a Chair and Vice Chair is one (1) year.

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Selection of Chair</u>
Americanism	Department Commander
Camp American Legion	Department Commander
Children & Youth	Department Commander
Convention & Activities.....	Department Commander
Finance	Department Commander
Fundraising.....	Department Commander
Hospital	Department Commander
Legislative	Department Commander
Marketing & Communications.....	Department Commander
Membership.....	Department Commander
National and Homeland Security.....	Department Commander
Policy.....	Committee Members
Religious Emphasis	Department Commander
Sons of The American Legion.....	Department Commander
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.....	Department Commander

Explanation of Committee Titles

Ex-Officio: The Department Commander shall be an Ex-Officio member to all committees with **voice and vote**. Any past National Commander who served in that capacity while a member of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin shall be an Ex-Officio member of the Policy Committee with voice and vote.

Consultant: The Department Adjutant shall serve as a consultant to all Department Committees. The Adjutant and all others listed as a “Consultant” have a **voice but cannot make a motion or vote**.

Liaison: Members that are appointed to a Committee as a liaison by the Department Commander have a **voice but cannot make a motion or vote**. Typically, the District Commanders are appointed as Liaison to standing committees. This allows the District Commanders to gain experience about the committee workings and helps the Executive Committee meeting go smoother.

Voting members of the DEC should not be members of the standing committees, with the exception of the Membership Committee, as this could allow them to have undue influence over committee decisions.

AMERICANISM COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To develop the spirit of Americanism among The American Legion and citizens and residents of the State of Wisconsin; to put into effect Americanism policies and programs of The American Legion; to coordinate any overlapping of programs dealing with Americanism. To oversee and report on programs that relate to Americanism and many youth programs.

Composition of the Committee

The Americanism Committee is made up of thirteen (13) members, all of which are a 1-year appointment. There are three (3) at large members which are appointed by the Department Commander. By virtue of positions held, the other ten (10) Americanism Committee members are Chairs of Americanism Programs as follows; Americanism & Government Test Program, Scouting, County Youth Government Day, Education & Scholarship, Oratorical, Shooting Sports and Sons of The American Legion. In addition, a Legionnaire representative as determined by each of the following; Badger Boys State, Inc., the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association and American Legion Riders Association of Wisconsin. Committee members and program chairs each have voice and a vote at Americanism Committee meetings. The Americanism Committee meetings are established according to the “Master Schedule of Department Committee Meetings” or at the discretion of the Department Commander.

Members of the Americanism Committee meet prior to the Department Convention to judge competition for the Cooper Trophy, McCoy Americanism Trophy, O.W. Rolfe Americanism Trophy, Pendill Trophy, Harvey B. Higley Trophy, Spalding Victory Trophy, Jessel S. Whyte Memorial Trophy, National Americanism awards, Gung-Ho Americanism Award, and the Educator of the Year Award.

Outline of the Committee

Member	Chair
Member	Vice Chair
Member	
Program Chair	American Legion Baseball Program
Program Chair	A&G Testing Program
Program Chair	Badger Boys State Program
Program Chair	Scouting Program
Program Chair	County Youth Government Program
Program Chair	Education & Scholarship Program
Program Chair	Oratorical Program
Program Chair	Shooting Sports Program
Program Chair	Sons of The American Legion
Program Chair	Wisconsin American Legion Law Enforcement Academy (WALLECA)
Program Chair	American Legion Riders
Liaison	DEC Member
Ex-Officio	Department Commander
Consultant	Department Adjutant

AMERICANISM PROGRAMS

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL PROGRAM

American Legion Baseball is a program of The American Legion. Rules and Bylaws for the baseball program are established by the WI American Legion Baseball Association. The association enforces all rules, oversees and manages the baseball program. The Baseball Association manages expenditures, income and finances of the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Program. They establish a budget for approval by the Finance Committee and any surplus income remains in the Baseball Program. The program is headed by the State Baseball Commissioner and a President who are selected by the Directors of the Baseball Association. The Board of Directors consists of Eight (8) Regional Directors who manage The American Legion Baseball program in their respective regions. The Directors schedule games in their

respective Regions. The association sets dates and sites for state tournament games, secures umpires, establishes a schedule and makes all necessary arrangements.

Regional Directors make recommendations of players from their district to participate in the annual American Legion All-Star game at American Family Field in Milwaukee. The association makes the final selection of Forty-Eight (48) graduating seniors from across the state to participate and also arranges details with the Milwaukee Brewers for the selling of tickets and playing of the All-Star game.

American Legion Baseball is a summer program for youth 13-19 years old. Posts sponsor and financially support over 200 Wisconsin American Legion Baseball teams. All teams have to play at least ten (10) games against Legion Baseball teams to compete in regional play. There are seven (7) Regional tournaments played in each class statewide.

An annual scholarship is awarded by the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association to a graduating senior who demonstrates outstanding leadership, scholarship, character, citizenship and who has a demonstrated need for funding to continue their education. Players are nominated by their respective team managers in June, and the winner is selected by the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association each June.

The following are important deadlines in regards to the Baseball Program:

- All teams must register, buy insurance and pay fees through National's electronic registration system at www.legion.org/baseball prior to May 15th.
- A hard copy of the Player Agreement (form 2) must be completed and signed prior to the team's first scheduled game.
- On-line team roster (form 1) must be completed on or before June 25th at www.legion.org/baseball.
- All-Star Nomination forms must be returned to the respective regional director prior to June 25th.
- All-Star Game at American Family Field held in August. Tickets can be purchased through Department Headquarters.

Code of Sportsmanship

I will: Keep the rules;
Keep faith with my teammates;
Keep my temper;
Keep myself fit;
Keep a stout heart in defeat;
Keep my pride under in victory;
Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body.

AMERICANISM & GOVERNMENT TESTING PROGRAM

This is an Americanism Scholarship program that fosters interest in all levels of government, citizenship and provides students with the opportunity to receive recognition and scholarship awards. The program has been endorsed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and is open to any student in the 10th, 11th or 12th grade in any public, private, parochial and home school within the State. The test is administered annual online, with date to be determined by the Americanism Committee at the Department Fall Meetings. There are fifty (50) choice questions, plus a weighted essay question testing a student's knowledge of U.S. Government & History, County Government, Wisconsin Government & History and Flag Etiquette.

The choice questions are scored by the software. Then the Americanism and Government Testing Program Chair, along with their chosen committee, will select the scholarship winners for each age group based on essay question responses.

There are thirty-three (33) winners selected as follows:

- 11 - \$250 scholarships for Grade 10
- 11 - \$300 scholarships for Grade 11
- 11 - \$750 scholarships for Grade 12

For more information on the Americanism & Government Testing Program go to <https://wilegion.org/oratorical-scholarships/>.

BADGER BOYS STATE PROGRAM

Badger Boys State is a separate corporate entity with a Board of Directors which administers the Boys State program for the Department. The BBS Board of Directors appoints a Director that is a member of, and reports to, and votes on the Department Americanism Committee.

The program brings together over 850 young men who have just completed their junior year of high school to form a 51st State, called Badger Boys State. For seven (7) days, the citizens of this new state carry out all the functions of local, county and state government including elections, drafting and passing ordinances and laws and have law enforcement officials to carry out the laws.

Any American Legion Post in the state of Wisconsin, patriotic, fraternal, civic and religious organization or an individual through a local American Legion Post can sponsor a Badger Boys State participant. If you wish to sponsor a participant, wait until the latter part of December, prior to the upcoming session, and contact the BBS Program Coordinator at Department Headquarters to request information.

For more information on the Badger Boys State Program visit <https://badgerboysstate.org/about>.

COUNTY YOUTH GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

The American Legion County Youth Government Program gives students an opportunity to experience hands on the workings of the County Government. The Department County Youth Government Chair is a member of the Americanism Committee and shall promote the program throughout the year and will assume responsibility for the ultimate success of the program.

If you would like to start a County Youth Government Program, the first step to take is to appoint a committee comprised of both Legionnaires and Auxiliary members. Contact school officials and county officials to ascertain their willingness to participate. Call a meeting of the three groups: The American Legion, School Officials and County Officials to coordinate the program. Each group has an appointed part in the program, and cooperation means success. The American Legion cannot turn over the materials to the schools and let them do it on their own, nor can they make demands on the various schools as to how they should operate their portion of the program.

To assist the schools, confer with school officials to select a date to hold The American Legion County Youth Government Day. Assist them in lining up officials and lawyers to assist in the advance instruction on County operation. Arrange with officials for the loan of voting booths and other equipment for the schools to use for an actual election. Start the program early in the year so school officials can include a period of instruction on election procedures as well as the powers and duties of public officials.

To assist the County Officials, clear the selected date with County Officials for use of the Courthouse and so that various County Officers will be available to the students elected to County offices. This date will vary by location; however, the entire program should wind up by early April. Coordinate local programs so the Sheriff and other County officers can come to the Courthouse on the same day.

More information on the County Youth Government Day Program can be found at <https://wilegion.org/county-youth-government-day/>.

EDUCATION & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Department Education and Scholarship Program Chair is a member of the Americanism Committee and is responsible for selecting a panel of five (5) judges for the selection of three (3) Schneider-Emmanuel Scholarship recipients of \$1,000 each. The judges will be comprised of two (2) qualified professional educators, the Department Education & Scholarship Program Chair, past Department Commander or their delegate and the Department Commander or their delegate.

The winners will be announced by the annual Department Spring Meetings and listed in the Badger Legionnaire.

Applications are to be completed and received at Department Headquarters no later than March 1st. Information can be found at <https://wilegion.org/oratorical-scholarships/>.

ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Oratorical Scholarship Program gives students the opportunity to prepare an oration on a phase of the Constitution of the United States and earn scholarships. The Department Oratorical Chair is a member of the Americanism Committee and responsible for overseeing the program to assure its success.

The Department Chair will make arrangements for contests leading to the Department finals and make sure that the Department Finals contest is held in conformance with National Contest procedures, rules and regulations. Failure to submit a Department winner by the date established by the National American Legion could result in disqualification of the Department winner.

Awards are as follows:

- Each District winner will receive an Oratory Medal.
- Each Regional participant will receive a \$600 scholarship
- The winner of each Regional contest will receive a \$1000 scholarship
- The Department finalist receive \$2000 for first, \$1500 for second, and \$1000 for third
- National finalist receives \$25,000 for first, \$22,500 for second, and \$20,000 for third
- Each Department (State) winner who is certified into, and participates in the national contest's 1st round receives a \$2,000 scholarship.
- Those who advance past the 1st round receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship.

The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

More information on the Oratorical program can be found in the Wisconsin Oratorical Contest Rules and "The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest Official Rules" and at <https://wilegion.org/oratorical-scholarships/>. (Assigned topics change annually, please make sure you have the current version)

SCOUTING PROGRAM

The American Legion is the single largest sponsor of Scouting programs. Numerous Posts throughout the state of Wisconsin sponsor Scouting Troops.

The Department Scouting Chair is responsible for promoting the program and reporting the programs activities to the Department Americanism Committee as a member of said committee. The Chair will make arrangements to judge applicants for the Eagle Scout of The Year and determine a Department winner. Applications must be received at Department Headquarters no later than March 1st. The Department winner will be forwarded on to National headquarters no later than April 1st. The National Americanism Commission's Youth Activities Subcommittee will review all Department nominations, and, in their judgment, select The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year to be announced in the National Americanism Commission Report to the NEC at the National Spring Meetings.

The National Eagle Scout of the Year winner will receive a \$10,000 scholarship and be invited to The American Legion National Convention. Three (3) runner-up scholarship awards will be granted in the amount of \$2,500 each. The application can be found at <https://www.legion.org/scouting/nominate>.

SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

The Shooting Sports Program provides an opportunity for students to compete in shooting contests sponsored by The American Legion and earn scholarships.

Participation certificates, Jr. Shooting Sport patches and trophies will be awarded in 3 individual age categories.

Three scholarships in the “sporter” Senior category (15-18 years old) will be awarded as follows: one \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to the highest individual match score; one \$750 scholarship to the 2nd highest individual match score and; one \$250 scholarship to the 3rd highest individual match score.

The Shooting Sports Program Chair is appointed by the Department Commander and is a member of the Americanism Committee. This is a one (1) year appointment, with the responsibility of promoting the Shooting Sports Program.

More information on the Shooting Sports Program can be found at <https://wilegion.org/shooting-sports/>.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin recognizes an organization known as, "SONS of THE AMERICAN LEGION".

The National Headquarters of The American Legion and the Department Executive Committee shall have jurisdiction over the Sons of The American Legion organized by any Post of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin.

The Department Commander shall annually appoint a Program Chair for the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin from the ranks of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin. The Program Chair for the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin shall serve as a member of the Department Americanism Committee. The minutes of all meetings, and the actions taken by the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin Executive Committee shall be incorporated in the Sons of The American Legion Program Chair report to the Department Americanism Committee at each regularly scheduled meeting thereof.

The legislative body of the Sons of The American Legion shall be the National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion and its acts must be ratified by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion. In the Department of Wisconsin, the legislative body of the Sons of The American Legion shall be the Detachment Convention of the Sons of The American Legion and its acts must be ratified by the Department Executive Committee of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin.

The Sons of The American Legion shall be organized as a "Squadron" under the jurisdiction of the local Post of The American Legion and shall bear the name of the Post as follows: "Sons of The American Legion", Squadron of _____ Post No. ____, Department of Wisconsin".

The Commander of the Post of The American Legion shall appoint a committee of three (3) or more members to supervise the activities of "Sons of The American Legion" Squadron.

All male descendants, adopted sons and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such descendants of male and female veterans who died in service during the World Wars, or who died subsequent to the honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the “Sons of The American Legion.”

There shall be no form or class of membership except an active member in the "Sons of The American Legion".

All proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Wisconsin shall not take effect until such time as they have been presented to the Department Americanism Committee, studied and reviewed by the Department Policy Committee and approved by the Department Executive Committee of the Department of Wisconsin.

WISCONSIN AMERICAN LEGION LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER ACADEMY (WALLECA)

The WALLECA Program provides first-hand experiences and insight into the operation of law enforcement agencies. The program is exclusively for current Juniors and Seniors in high school who are in good academic standing.

WALLECA offers physical fitness training coupled with classroom instruction and hands-on training. Topics of instruction include crime scene investigation, firearms training, de-escalation and arrest tactics, OWI enforcement, human trafficking, tactical response, ethics, and team building exercises.

The training is conducted at the Wisconsin State Patrol Training Academy in Fort McCoy. Dates are announced annually in the Fall once the State Patrol has their training schedule in place.

More information on the WALLECA Program can be found at <https://wilegion.org/walleca/>.

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To oversee and make recommendations on the operations of Camp American Legion, located in the town of Lake Tomahawk, Wisconsin, to the Department Executive Committee.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The Department Service Officer, Immediate Past Department Commander, Camp Director and VA&R Committee Chair are consultants to the Committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Consultant – Department Service Officer
Member (Vice Chair)	Consultant – Immediate Past Dept. Commander
Member	Consultant – VA&R Chair
Member	Consultant – Camp Director
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Liaison - DEC Member	

CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To ensure that any child of a veteran in need of care and protection shall receive proper and timely service and aid; to strengthen the family unit; extend support to sound organizations and facilities that provide

services for children and youth; and to maintain a well-rounded program that meets the needs of the young people in their respective communities.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee.

Members of the Children & Youth Committee meet prior to the Department Convention to judge Children & Youth activities as reported on the Post Children & Youth reporting form due annually June 1st.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	
Member	
Member	

CONVENTION & ACTIVITIES COMMISSION

Duties of the Commission

This Commission shall be empowered to make the necessary investigation and recommendations for the holding of the annual Department Convention and shall make such further investigation and recommendations for such other annual events of the Department as requested by the Department Executive Committee, and shall make their recommendations after such investigation to the Department Executive Committee, which shall be empowered thereafter to select the time and place for such annual Conventions and events. Badger Boys State and the Wisconsin American Legion Baseball Association shall be exempt from this requirement.

Composition of the Commission

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee.

Outline of the Commission

Member (Chair)	Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To approve, budget and audit the expenditures of the Department, its decisions being final unless overruled by a majority of the members present at a regular or special meeting of the Department

Executive Committee. The Committee shall have the authority to engage the auditors for Department Funds. The Committee shall adopt its own rules regulating the approval, budgeting and auditing of the expenditures of the Department, subject to approval by the Department Executive Committee.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The chair of the Finance Committee shall serve as the Department Finance Officer.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair/Finance Officer)	Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	Consultant – Fundraising Chair

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

The Fundraising committee is responsible for overseeing fundraising activities and conducting events throughout the year that will raise capital to support Legion programs with the Department of Wisconsin as directed by the Department Executive Committee.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	

HOSPITAL COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To provide entertainment and recreational programs at Federal VA Hospitals and Wisconsin Veteran’s Homes, to work in close cooperation with the Department VA&R Committee and to assist existing hospital facilities to aid in making the Veteran’s stay in the hospital and residents in the Homes as pleasant as possible. The representatives will make a written report of all donations received to the Department Adjutant 30-days prior to Department Convention.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of two (2) members and in addition, the eight (8) representatives or their assistant representative, for each of the Veterans Hospitals and Homes as stated in the outline of the

committee for a term of one (1) year. The Department Service Officer shall be a consultant to the committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Representative – King
Member (Vice Chair)	Representative – Union Grove
Representative – Iron Mountain	Representative – Chippewa Falls
Representative – Zablocki	Liaison – DEC Member
Representative – Fort Snelling	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Representative – Tomah	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Representative – Madison	Consultant – Department Service Officer

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To represent The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin with the State Legislature and contact Congress on matters of interest to Wisconsin Veterans as long as contact does not conflict with National American Legion policy. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Department Convention and to the Department Executive Committee, and in general supervise the legislative program of the Department. The Committee has exclusive responsibility for petitioning the State Legislature on behalf of or in opposition to all legislation in which The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin is interested. The Committee shall select the Department Legislator of the Year.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The Department Judge Advocate shall be a consultant to the Committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	Consultant – Department Judge Advocate

Within the National “Outline of Authority” each Department will appoint one liaison from each U.S. Congressional District and a separate representative to serve in liaison with each United States Senator. These appointments are typically made in conjunction with the Department’s Vice Chair of the National Legislative Council.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

The Marketing & Communications Committee shall work with all Department Wisconsin American Legion commissions and committees to build awareness and support for the mission and programs of The American Legion. Promote the same to active-duty military, Guard and Reserve components, military veterans and retirees, and the general public; to strategize and execute the organization’s activities to promote

membership growth, strengthen the fundraising program, maximize merchandising opportunities, nurture corporate alliances and achieve greater brand awareness. The Committee serves as the voice of Veterans by enhancing public perceptions of The American Legion, America’s Veterans and their families. It is the responsibility of the committee to maintain the image of The American Legion and to communicate our various messages to the public promoting and publicizing projects, events, programs and accomplishments of The American Legion. The committee will be responsible for recommending policy changes in the publication of the official Department paper, “The Badger Legionnaire”.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The Department Historian will serve as consultant to the Committee, and there will be one (1) Auxiliary Liaison Member.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – Auxiliary Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	Consultant – Department Historian
Member	

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To promote an increase of membership in the Department, to ascertain the causes for failure of former members to renew their membership and to assist the Posts in a program working toward increasing the numerical strength of the Department. To recommend programs to Posts for the promotion of such activities as would stimulate interest in The American Legion and its programs in all communities.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The four (4) Department Vice Commanders are also members of the Committee, as well as the six (6) District Commanders. The odd numbered District Commanders will serve on the Membership Committee during the odd membership year, and the even numbered District Commanders will serve on the Membership Committee during the even membership year. All Department, District, County and Post leadership are encouraged to attend the Membership Committee meetings whether they are officially on the committee or not.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Member – Department Vice Commander
Member (Vice Chair)	Member – Department Vice Commander
Member	Member – Department Vice Commander
Member	Member – Department Vice Commander
Member	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member – 6 District Commanders	Consultant – Department Adjutant

NATIONAL AND HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To organize the membership in support of national or civilian defense projects in the communities. To organize the Department and to assist in organizing the communities for readiness to meet any emergency. Keep the rank and file of The American Legion informed of any actions that could have an effect on the security of the state and nation. Use sources available such as media and/or word of mouth to ensure that we are informed of threats to our foreign interests. The Committee will select the National Guard/Reservist of the Year, the Edward J. Ormsby Law and Order Award, the Outstanding Fire Fighter Award and the Emergency Medical Technician Award. The Committee will provide increased awareness of POW/MIA's within the Department and provide POW/MIA activities and education to the public.

This committee will review and approve the Department's Troop and Family Support Grant Program and encourage Posts, Counties and Districts to complete RE-Connect Forms to the Department when they interact with service members or their families.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3 year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The Blood Donor Chair shall be a member of the Committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member (Blood Donor Chair)	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member (POW/MIA Chair)	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	

BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM

The most important part about blood donating is to remember it is the blood on the shelf that saves lives. Waiting for an emergency to donate will not get the blood to the receiver on time. Wisconsin is served by both the American Red Cross and the Blood Center of Wisconsin. It does not matter where you donate, as long as you donate.

Blood donation information is collected on the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) which is due by June 1st of each year. The cumulative reported numbers are needed for a national report found in the Department Adjutant's Manual and due to The American Legion Office in Washington, DC by July 15 each year. Traditionally, Posts who participate in the blood donor program receive a Certificate of Participation signed by the Commander and the Blood Program Chair at the end of the year.

The Blood Donor Chair works with the Red Cross and the Department Headquarters Team to coordinate a blood drive during State Convention, the Midwinter Conference and Celebration of Freedom.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To study, recommend, and formulate policies that will be beneficial to the Department on all matters that will tend to increase the prestige of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin and to advance the best interests of The American Legion. No recommendation shall be considered as final unless approved by the Department Executive Committee or a Department Convention. The Committee will review all Convention Resolutions before they are presented to the Convention for action. The Committee will

determine if Convention Resolutions are properly written and /or germane to the policies and mandates of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. The Committee elects its own Chair and Vice Chair. Any Past National Commanders that were members of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin when elected will serve as Ex-Officio members of this committee and the Department Judge Advocate shall serve as consultant to this Committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Liaison – DEC Member
Member (Vice Chair)	Ex-Officio – Past National Commander
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	Consultant – Department Judge Advocate
Member	

RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To oversee the religious activities of the Department, plan the Department Convention Memorial Service, choose the Martha Marlowe Post Chaplain of the Year, provide Chaplain’s Training and any other religious activities that the Committee deems necessary.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of three (3) members, two (2) of which are the Immediate Past Department Chaplain and the Department Assistant Chaplain.

Outline of the Committee

Member – Immediate Past Department Chaplain	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member – Department Assistant Chaplain	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	
Liaison – Department Chaplain	

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

Duties of the Committee

To formulate policies in coordination with the Department Service Officer, subject to approval by the Department Executive Committee or a Department Convention, relating to all the different phases of the rehabilitation problems of veterans of all wartime conflicts as defined by U.S. Congress and their dependents.

Composition of the Committee

The Committee is composed of six (6) members who have been appointed by successive Department Commanders to staggered 3-year terms. Each newly elected Commander appoints two (2) members each year ensuring continuity on the committee. Also assigned to the Committee is an Employment Chair, Hospital Chair and Homeless Veterans Task Force Chair. Department Service Officer and the Department Camp Committee Chair are consultants to the Committee.

Outline of the Committee

Member (Chair)	Member (Hospital Chair)
Member (Vice Chair)	Member (Homeless Veterans Task Force Chair)
Member	Liaison – DEC Member
Member	Ex-Officio – Department Commander
Member	Consultant – Department Adjutant
Member	Consultant – Department Service Officer
Member (Employment Chair)	Consultant – Department Camp Committee Chair
Cremated Remains Chair	

MASTER SCHEDULE OF DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Pursuant to Department Executive Committee action, the following Master Schedule for all Department Committee meetings is in effect.

DEPARTMENT FALL MEETINGS – PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

2nd Weekend in October – Fall 2023 Dates: October 13-14, 2023

Americanism Committee	Marketing & Communications Committee
Camp American Legion Committee	Membership Committee
Convention and Activities Commission	National Security Committee
Executive Committee	Past Department Commanders
Finance Committee	Policy Committee
Fundraising Committee	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee
Legislative Committee	

MIDWINTER CONFERENCE – CONFERENCE CITY

2nd or 3rd Weekend in January – Midwinter 2023 Dates: January 18-21, 2024

Americanism Committee	Legislative Committee
Camp American Legion Committee	Marketing & Communications Committee
Children & Youth Committee	Membership Committee
Convention and Activities Commission	National Security Committee
Executive Committee	Past Department Commanders
Finance Committee	Policy Committee
Fundraising Committee	Religious Emphasis Committee
Hospital Committee	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee

DEPARTMENT SPRING MEETINGS – PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

2nd Weekend in May – Spring 2024 Dates: May 10-11, 2024

Camp American Legion Committee	Marketing & Communications Committee
Convention and Activities Commission	Membership Committee
Executive Committee	National & Homeland Security Committee
Finance Committee	Past Department Commanders
Fundraising Committee	*Policy Committee
Legislative Committee	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee
Pre- Convention Committees:	
a. Rules Committee	

- b. Credentials Committee
- c. Permanent Organization Committee

*The Policy Committee meets during the month of June within the prescribed Constitutional period of time to review resolutions, make recommendations and assign resolutions to Convention Committees. The Department Adjutant will prepare a brief on each resolution to be distributed to each Post prior to Convention.

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION MEETING – CONVENTION CITY

2nd or 3rd Weekend in July – Convention 2024 Dates: July 10-14, 2024

Americanism Committee	Marketing & Communications Committee
Children & Youth Committee	Membership Committee
Convention & Activities Commission	National & Homeland Security Committee
Executive Committee	Past Department Commanders
Finance Committee	Policy Committee
Fundraising Committee	Religious Emphasis Committee
Hospital Committee	Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee
Legislative Committee	*Credentials Committee

*Per the Department Constitution Article V, Section 4, “There shall be a Credentials Committee consisting of three delegates to be appointed by the Department Executive Committee to sit the day before, and the first day of the Convention, to pass upon and decide eligibility of delegates and alternates.”

SPECIAL NOTE:

In addition to the listed meetings and in accordance with the Executive Committee mandate, the Finance Committee will meet between the four major meeting times at such time as determined by the members of the Finance Committee.

MASTER PROCEDURES

HOW THE AMERICAN LEGION SERVICE OFFICE OPERATES

The American Legion has developed a closely-knit organization to assist veterans in securing benefits they are entitled to under the law. The Department Service Office is the center of this organization. The Service Office personnel includes a Service Officer and Claims Representatives, all of whom are recognized by the Veterans Administration as accredited representatives and they are assisted by a staff. The services of our offices are available to all veterans and/or their dependents, whether they are members of The American Legion or not.

How To File A Claim

The backbone of the service program is the Post and County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO). It is they who are aware of the needs of the veterans in their own community. It is also extremely important that the Post Service Officer discuss with the Department Service Officer the Department’s guidelines regarding their assistance to veterans and their dependents.

In general, the Post Service Officer’s (PSO) primary responsibility is to help the Department Service Officer (DSO) protect a claimant’s interests. This means doing nothing that could have an adverse effect on their claim, including providing information or advice that may not be accurate or proper.

The Post Service Officer should work with and through The American Legion Department Service Officer and the staff of Legion accredited representatives located at the VA Regional Office in the filing of any claim or evidence in support of a claim or appeal. Similarly, the PSO should strongly advise claimants that it is to their advantage to cooperate with and work through the DSO. Only the DSO’s and

their staff have direct access to a claimant's VA claims folder called a (C-file) and can take official action on the claimant's behalf.

What Happens To Your Claim

When a claim for benefits of any kind is received at the Department Service Office, the staff goes over it to determine if all the necessary information has been included. In most cases it is forwarded to the proper section in the Regional Office. From this point on, it is the responsibility of the Service Officer and their staff to see to it that the claim follows an orderly routing through the appropriate sections with no undue delay. All rating action is reviewed by the Service Office as soon as the rating board has made a decision. At this point, as an accredited representative, the Service Office staff may discuss the case with the Adjudication Officer or his staff, and voice an opinion as to the soundness of the decision.

What Happens If The Veterans Administration Decision Is Not Satisfactory

If a reasonable decision cannot be arrived at in the Regional Office, your Department Service Office has at its disposal the professional services of the National Rehabilitation Commission for administrative review, medical opinions, or appeal to the Administrator of Veterans Affairs. The Service Office will guide the veteran through the appeals process to assure accuracy and timeliness.

Who Sees You In The Hospital

In addition to the Claims Service, there has been established with the Department Service Office a Contact Service in all of the Veterans Administration Hospitals within our jurisdiction. The Contact Representative will call on all veterans who, upon admission, make known that they are members of The American Legion. Their first duty is to notify the Post Service Officer that a member of his Post has been admitted. Next, it is their duty to assist this member to secure any of the rights and benefits provided by the laws covering veterans and their basic rights as such.

Who To Write To For Information

All inquiries regarding veteran's benefits should be sent to:

American Legion Service Office
VA Regional Office
5400 W. National Ave, # 164
Milwaukee, WI 53214-3461
Phone: (414) 902-5722
Fax: (414) 902-9401

The Service Office will do everything they can to assist you. The office is your friend and, upon request, can act as your Power of Attorney (advocate) in all your relations with the Veterans Administration.

HOW TO SUBMIT NEWS ITEMS FOR THE BADGER LEGIONNAIRE

Where To Submit News Items

All articles and/or photos (in jpg format) to appear in the Badger Legionnaire are to be submitted by email to badger@wilegion.org. Those that do not make it in the printed version, will be put in the online supplement posted on wilegion.org each month.

When To Send News Items:

Issue: August/September 2023
Copy due: July 24, 2023
Target Mail Date: August 17, 2023

Issue: October/November 2023
Copy due: September 18, 2023
Target Mail Date: October 12, 2023

Issue: December/January 2024
Copy due: November 11, 2023
Target Mail Date: December 7, 2023

Issue: February/March 2024
Copy due: January 22, 2024
Target Mail Date: February 15, 2024

Issue: April/May 2024
Copy due: March 18, 2024
Target Mail Date: April 11, 2024

Issue: June/July 2024
Copy due: May 13, 2024
Target Mail Date: June 7, 2024

How To Submit News Items

- Present a concise, clear-cut report of the happenings.
- Make sure the Post name, number and city is included.
- If it is a District or County story rather than a Post story, be sure to specify.
- Make certain all names are spelled correctly, along with proper titles.
- Furnish the following facts:
 - “What” the news is
 - “Where” it took place
 - “When” it happened
 - “Who” was involved
 - “Why” it took place
 - “How” it was handled

NOTE: News items and photographs submitted for publication are given every consideration, but in accordance with mandates of the Marketing & Communications Committee, the deciding factor as to how or when they appear must necessarily rest with the Editor.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Eligibility

Grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion, those who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the allowable eligibility periods determined by congress, and who died in the line of duty during such service or after receiving an Honorable Discharge, women who are eligible for membership in The American Legion in their own right and the spouses of an eligible veteran.

Eligibility Dates

Category I	April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918
Category II	December 7, 1941 to present

Application For Membership

Application for membership can be made to any Unit, not necessarily the Unit the relative belongs to. Applicant will be given an application form to be completed showing basis of eligibility, properly certified, together with other essential information.

Class Of Membership

The only form of membership authorized is active membership. There are two classes:

1. SENIOR MEMBERSHIP is the functioning (or active) group composed of members over the age of 18 years; provided, however, that a spouse under the age of 18 years who is eligible shall be classed as a senior member.
2. JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP shall consist of that group under the age of 18 years whose activities shall be supervised by the Senior membership.

Dues

Dues are paid annually and are determined by each Unit. Each Unit is required to send to Department Headquarters, Department and National per capita dues for Senior membership and Junior membership.

MAJOR EVENT INFORMATION

DISTRICT CONFERENCE DATES

Dates will be submitted to the Department Adjutant for publication to Candidates for higher office, all Department Officers and Past Department Commanders. The schedule will also be posted on the Department website.

DEPARTMENT EVENT SELECTION SCHEDULE

Listed below is the schedule of dates indicating at which meeting of the Department Convention and Activities Commission final consideration will be given to the event designated.

<u>Department Event</u>	<u>“Desired” Decision Date</u>	<u>“Final” Decision Date</u>
Department Convention	DEC at Department Convention	Fall Meeting
Midwinter Conference	Midwinter Conference	Spring Meeting

The above dates are flexible since many times events are scheduled by the Convention and Activities Commission several years in advance.

DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS TO THE DEPARTMENT AND NATIONAL CONVENTION

It is advised, due to Convention planning at Headquarters that you administer the following appointments and fill out the proper forms at your District Spring Conference. (Some of these forms are due at least forty-five (45) days prior to Department Convention.)

<u>Department Convention</u>	<u>National Convention</u>
Ballot Clerks	Assistant Sergeant At Arms
Assistant Sergeant At Arms	Delegate Assignment Form
Convention Committee Appointments	
Standing Committee Appointment Forms	
Standing Committee Applications	

The forms mentioned above will be mailed from Department Headquarters to the District Commanders and Adjutants the 1st week in April. Once National Delegate Assignment Form is received, those on the form will be mailed registration and housing information and forms.

GENERAL PROTOCOL GUIDELINES

Please keep in mind the following protocol recommendations when the Department Commander and/or other Officers are visiting your District, County or Post.

1. The Commander is given the privilege of selecting the time of their appearance.
2. No other Department Officers shall appear on the program before the Commander with the exception that at a District Conference, the Department Adjutant and/or the Department Service Officer may give a short report before the Commander.

The Department Commander, as titular head of the organization, outlines the programs which should be followed by the District, County or Post and by the various committee chairs. Consequently, the Commander is the keynote speaker and as such, sets the tone for the programs.

3. The Commander or guest should be met by a person charged with the responsibility of looking after their needs and comfort. This person should be conversant with the details of the function and not leave the Commander or guest by themselves.
4. Meals, registration fees and hotel accommodations for the guest(s), if it is necessary to stay overnight, will be paid for by the Post or District.
5. Those courtesies which are usually extended to a visitor in your home, must be accorded the Commander and guest, and the host organization must make every effort to see that such amenities are extended.
6. A "Request for a Visit by the Department Commander or Department Officer" form must be filled out and submitted to Department Headquarters as a proper invitation.
7. For more protocol recommendations, please see the Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies.

POST INFORMATION

ORGANIZATION OF A NEW AMERICAN LEGION POST

1. A Temporary Charter is issued to a Post when fifteen (15) veterans sign the application.
2. Applicants should not be members of any other Post at the time.
3. The original application form is in triplicate. The original copy should bear the signatures of the applicants, but the names must be typed on the other two copies.
4. Department Headquarters assigns a number to the Post. The new Post should adopt a name before mailing the blanks in triplicate to Department Headquarters. No Post should be named after any living person. These applications are then forwarded to the National Headquarters where a Temporary Charter is prepared.
5. A Post should designate a representative to sign the form at the bottom. This representative then becomes the individual with whom correspondence is carried on until the Post Officers are elected.
6. Department and National per capita dues total \$30.00 and should be submitted with the applications.

PROCEDURE ON STATEMENT OF INTENTION TO INCORPORATE

Under the Wisconsin Statutes, Section 188.08, a duly chartered Post of The American Legion may incorporate under the laws of Wisconsin.

The procedure for incorporation is as follows:

1. 3 sets (3 copies each) of incorporation papers are sent to the Post desiring to incorporate.

2. The Post, at a regular business meeting, will pass the resolution which is a part of the set of three papers.
3. After the Resolution of Incorporation is passed, all three sets (three copies each) must be filled out and all three sets sent to Department Headquarters.

Department Headquarters will process the request to incorporate and then forward the papers to the Secretary of State.

After the papers are returned from the Secretary of State, Headquarters will process the papers. The following will then be forwarded to the Post:

1. Certificate of Incorporation.
2. One set of original papers for Post file.
3. Procedure outline and papers for Supplemental Charter.

APPLICATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL CHARTER

After a Post has been duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Wisconsin, the Post should complete the procedure and obtain a Supplemental Post Charter. The procedure is as follows:

1. Three (3) copies of the Application for Supplemental Charter are sent to the Post.
2. The Post fills out the three copies, forwarding two (2) copies to Department Headquarters and retaining one (1) copy for the Post files.
3. Department Headquarters processes the application and forwards to the National Headquarters.
4. After the application has been duly recorded by the National Headquarters, a Supplemental Charter will be sent to the Department Headquarters.
5. Department Headquarters will process the Supplemental Charter and forward to the Post.

PROCEDURE ON APPLICATION FOR PERMANENT CHARTER

Send the Post requesting a Permanent Charter three (3) copies of National form, "Post Application for Permanent Charter."

Post returns two (2) completed copies to Department Headquarters, keeping one (1) copy for Post files.

Department will then endorse the copies, forwarding one copy to National Headquarters. Upon approval, National Headquarters will prepare a Permanent Charter and forward Charter to Department Headquarters, which will be signed by the Department Commander and Adjutant. The completed Charter will then be sent to the Post.

Posts, upon receipt of the Charter, should have all the Charter members sign the Charter Roll which will accompany the Charter, and then should:

1. Frame and display the Permanent Charter.
2. Frame and display the Charter Roll which carries the signatures of the Charter sights.

BONDING OF POST OFFICERS

Article VI, Section 1, of the National Bylaws provides as follows:

"All national employees and volunteers handling all American Legion monies and negotiable instruments shall be covered by fidelity/crime insurance in an adequate amount as desired by the Finance Commission and said fidelity/crime insurance policy(s) shall be approved by the National Treasurer, National Judge Advocate, and Finance Commission."

It is the position of the Post (such as Adjutant, Finance Officer, etc.) that is bonded rather than the individual person holding the office. **ANY POST WHOSE OFFICERS ARE NOT NOW BONDED SHOULD HAVE THEM COVERED.** A new position of office can be added to the bond at any time.

CHANGE OF POST NAME

The procedure for a Post to change the name of the Post is as follows:

1. At a regular Post meeting, pass the attached resolution.
2. After the resolution of name change is duly passed, fill out the three (3) copies of the resolution.
3. Forward two (2) copies to Department Headquarters and retain one (1) copy for the Post files.

Department Headquarters then forwards the resolution to National Headquarters.

After the change is recorded, a new Post Charter is sent to Department Headquarters.

After processing at Department Headquarters, the new Post Charter is sent to the Post and the change of name is official.

Note: A sample copy of the resolution to be submitted is attached. The resolution, in triplicate, is sent to the Post desiring to change its' name upon request.

(SAMPLE COPY OF RESOLUTION)

POST NO. _____

BE IT RESOLVED: That _____ Post No. _____,
The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin, located at _____, Wisconsin,
desires to change its name to _____, Post No. _____, The American
Legion, Department of Wisconsin.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

Yea's _____ Nay's _____

We certify that the above is a full, true, and correct copy of a resolution adopted by _____
_____ Post No. _____, located at _____
_____, Wisconsin, on the _____ day of _____, 20 _____,
and we further certify that the change includes the name of a deceased veteran, if applicable.

POST COMMANDER

POST ADJUTANT

Total Membership _____

Number Voting _____

Number in Favor _____

Number Opposed _____

CONSOLIDATION OF POSTS

Consolidation or merger takes place by mutual agreement between two or more Posts. When two Posts wish to consolidate, the following is the procedure for the merger:

Resolution “A”

The Post willing to have its Charter cancelled will adopt and pass Resolution “A” at a Post meeting.

Resolution “B”

The Post willing to complete the merger and agree to the transfer of the membership from the cancelled Post to its’ Post will adopt and pass Resolution “B”.

Both Posts will complete three (3) copies of their respective resolutions, forwarding two (2) copies to Department Headquarters, retaining one (1) copy for their Post files.

If, in the event there will be any change of name involved in the merger, the Post adopting Resolution “B” will also adopt and pass the Change-of-Name resolution at the meeting.

Upon receiving the Resolutions “A” and “B” and Change-of-Name (if such resolution is passed), Department Headquarters will process the resolutions as follows:

1. The Department Executive Committee will have to act on the resolutions.
2. When the Department Executive Committee approves the resolutions, their motion, together with copies of the resolutions, will be forwarded to the National Headquarters.

National Headquarters will record the cancellation and merger and, if necessary, issue a new Charter.

Upon receipt of notification of the change being recorded at the National Headquarters, the Department will process the notice and forward the new Charter, if necessary, to the Post which adopted Resolution “B”. Notice of this action will also be sent to the Post adopting Resolution “A”.

(SAMPLE RESOLUTION FOR CONSOLIDATION OF POSTS)

RESOLUTION "A"

WHEREAS: The members of the _____ American Legion Post No. _____ feel that the purpose of The American Legion could be best served by a larger Post, and,

WHEREAS: The _____ Post, No. _____, has had difficulty in maintaining attendance at meetings because many of its members have moved away or did not renew their membership, and now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That _____ Post No. _____ requests the Department Executive Committee of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin to accept the voluntary surrender of its Charter and approve transfer of its membership to the _____ Post, No. _____.

Resolution Adopted: _____
(Date)

Certified: _____
Post Commander Post Adjutant

RESOLUTION "B"

WHEREAS: The members of _____ American Legion Post No. _____ have expressed their desire to surrender their Post Charter, and petition the Department Executive Committee of The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin to give approval to a transfer of members to the _____ Post, No. _____, and

WHEREAS: _____ Post, No. _____, feels that this merger and consolidation would be to the best interests of all concerned, and now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That _____ Post No. _____ requests the Department Executive Committee to effect the consolidation and transfer of the members of the _____ Post No. _____, to the _____ Post, No. _____.

Resolution Adopted: _____
(Date)

Certified: _____
Post Commander Post Adjutant

IRS FILINGS AND TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

Required Tax Filings

Tax-exempt organizations must file a Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax every year. For American Legion posts, county councils, and districts, this will be the 990 Series of Forms. There are different versions Form 990 that organizations need to use, depending on their financial activity.

- **Form 990** must be filed if the organization has either: (1) gross receipts of \$200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand) or more, or (2) total assets of \$500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand).
- **Form 990-EZ** can be used if the organization has gross receipts less than \$200,000 and total assets of less than \$500,000.
- **Form 990-N** is the electronic version (no paper, it's done online). This can be used by an organization eligible to use a 990 or 990-EZ with gross receipts of \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand) or less.
- **Form 990-PF** is used by a private foundation exempt under section 501(c)(3).

More information about Form 990 and the different versions of it can be found on the IRS website at:

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i990.pdf>.

Failure to file the 990 eventually results in revocation of tax-exempt status.

Tax-Exempt Status Is Required

The American Legion is a federally chartered 501(c)(19) war veterans organization. It was created by a bill passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by the President. All of the other levels of the national organization ["National"] – post, county, district, department, and others, are bound by the federally chartered status of National and the National Constitution and By-Laws and all applicable resolutions of National.

Under federal law and state law, The American Legion is a corporation. All post, county, district and department organizations are corporations.

The Internal Revenue Services ["IRS"] issues every legal entity, such as corporations, partnerships, trusts, etc., an EIN. The American Legion (National) has an EIN, which is based on the tax-exempt status given to the entire organization in 1934. Because The American Legion is federally chartered, and has been given tax-exempt status by law, all of the levels are bound by National's tax-exempt status, and must be tax exempt. There is no choice.

As tax-exempt 501(c)(19) corporations, each post, county, district, department, etc., is required to file the appropriate Form 990 to maintain tax-exempt status. Any organization that fails to file an annual return or submit a notice as required for 3 consecutive years will have its tax-exempt status automatically revoked on and after the due date for filing its third annual return or notice.

Once an organization's tax-exempt status has been revoked, there are some problematic consequences:

- The organization is no longer a IRC § 501(c) tax-exempt organization.
- The organization is removed from the list of tax-exempt organizations by the IRS.
- The organization is now considered a "for-profit" organization.
- Unless exempt under IRC § 501, all corporations must file an income tax return whether or not they have taxable income. Every year. Domestic corporations need to file IRS Form 1120. Failure to file has legal consequences as well.
- All receipts from fundraising, dues, sales of beverages or food, rental of facilities, etc., are taxable. The organization may be liable for corporate income taxes. In addition, sales of beverages or food will be subject to sales tax.
- Donations to the organization are no longer tax-deductible to the donor.

- The organization, whether it's a post, county, district, or department, is no longer in good standing in The American Legion.

Perhaps most significantly, is that the organization that has lost its tax-exempt status, whether it's a post, county, district, or department, **is no longer in good standing**. An organization that is not in good standing risks having its charter (Constitution & By-laws) revoked.

Human beings aren't perfect. They make mistakes and forget to file the 990. Maybe they don't know it's supposed to be filed. However, once the officers of an organization knows that tax-exempt status has been lost, they begin taking steps to seek reinstatement.

Obviously, if the officers of an organization know that tax-exempt status has been lost and deliberately decide NOT to seek reinstatement additional problems are created, including Post Discipline, Member Discipline, and possibly other legal action.

The bottom line is that there is no option but to seek reinstatement. This is not something members vote on. It's unfortunate that it may cost money. However, it must be done. Remember - under federal law and state law, The American Legion is a corporation. All post, unit, squadron, county, district and department organizations are corporations. Corporations are either "for profit" or "tax exempt." There are no other options. Now, imagine if all of the Posts, Auxiliary Units, SAL Squadrons, County Councils, Districts, etc., in every state became "for-profit" corporations. How long will Congress allow The American Legion be a tax-exempt 501(c)(19) organization?

Once reinstated, it should be someone's responsibility to file the 990. It doesn't take long.

How To Get Reinstatement

If an organization's tax-exempt status has been automatically revoked, the organization must apply to have tax-exempt status reinstated. This will require you to file an IRS Form, pay a reinstatement fee, and submit additional information. You can find more information about reinstatement on the IRS website at: <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/automatic-revocation-how-to-have-your-tax-exempt-status-retroactively-reinstated>.

There are four ways to get reinstated, depending on when the revocation occurred:

1. Streamlined retroactive reinstatement
2. Retroactive reinstatement process (WITHIN 15 months)
3. Retroactive reinstatement process (AFTER 15 months)
4. Post-mark date reinstatement

1. Streamlined retroactive reinstatement

Organizations that were eligible to file Form 990-EZ or 990-N (ePostcard) for the three years that caused their revocation may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they:

- Have not previously had their tax-exempt status automatically revoked.
- Complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1023-EZ, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee not later than 15 months after the later of the date of the organization's Revocation Letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website.

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, "Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Streamlined Retroactive Reinstatement," and mail the application and user fee to:
Internal Revenue Service – P.O. Box 12192, Covington, KY 41012-0192

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure and files properly completed and executed paper Forms 990-EZ for all such taxable years. (For any year for which the organization was eligible to file a Form 990-N,

the organization is not required to file a prior year Form 990-N or Form 990-EZ to avoid penalties.) The organization should write “Retroactive Reinstatement” on the Forms 990-EZ and mail them to:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Ogden, UT 84201-0027

2. Retroactive reinstatement process (within 15 months)

Organizations that cannot use the Streamlined Retroactive Reinstatement Process (such as those that were required to file Form 990 or Form 990-PF for any of the three years that caused revocation or those that were previously auto-revoked) may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they:

- Complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee not later than 15 months after the later of the date on the organization’s revocation letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website.
- Include with the application a Reasonable Cause Statement that the organization had reasonable cause for its failure to file a required annual return for at least one of the three consecutive years in which it failed to file. There is more information about reasonable cause below.
- Include with the application a statement confirming that it has filed required returns for those three years and for any other taxable years after such period and before the post-mark date of the application for which required returns were due and not filed.
- File properly completed and executed paper annual returns for the three consecutive years that caused the revocation and any following years. The organization should write “Retroactive Reinstatement” on these returns and mail them to:

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service Center
Ogden, UT 84201-0027

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, “Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Retroactive Reinstatement,” and mail the application and user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 12192
Covington, KY 41012-0192

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure.

3. Retroactive reinstatement process (AFTER 15 months)

Organizations that apply for reinstatement more than 15 months after the later of the date on the organization’s revocation letter (CP-120A) or the date the organization appeared on the Revocation List on the IRS website may have their tax-exempt status retroactively reinstated to the date of revocation if they satisfy all of the requirements described under the “Retroactive reinstatement (within 15 months)” procedure EXCEPT that the Reasonable Cause Statement the organization includes with its application must establish reasonable cause for its failure to file a required annual return for **all three** consecutive years in which it failed to file.

In addition, the IRS will not impose the Section 6652(c) penalty for failure to file annual returns for the three consecutive taxable years that caused the organization to be revoked if the organization is retroactively reinstated under this procedure.

4. Post-mark date reinstatement

Organizations may apply for reinstatement effective from the post-mark date of their application if they complete and submit Form 1023, Form 1023-EZ, Form 1024 or Form 1024-A with the appropriate user fee.

These organizations should write on the top of the Form 1023 or Form 1024, "Revenue Procedure 2014-11, Reinstatement Post-Mark Date," and mail the application and user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service
P.O. Box 12192
Covington, KY 41012-0192

Reasonable Cause Statement

To establish reasonable cause, an organization must establish that it exercised ordinary business care and prudence in determining and attempting to comply with its reporting requirements under section 6033. In determining whether the organization establishes reasonable cause, the IRS will take into account all pertinent facts and circumstances.

The Reasonable Cause Statement must provide all of the facts that support a claim for reasonable cause for failing to file a required Annual Return or notice for the relevant tax year or period, including a detailed description of all the facts and circumstances that led to the failure, the discovery of the failure, and the steps that have been or will be taken to avoid or mitigate future failures.

The following factors would weigh in favor of finding reasonable cause (with no single factor being either necessary or determinative):

1. The organization's failure was due to its reasonable, good faith reliance on erroneous written information from the IRS, stating that the organization was not required to file a return or notice under section 6033, provided the IRS was made aware of all relevant facts;
2. The failure to file the return or notice arose from events beyond the organization's control ("impediment") that made it impossible for the organization to file a return or notice for the year;
3. The organization acted in a responsible manner by undertaking significant steps to avoid or mitigate the failure to file the required return or notice and to prevent similar failures in the future, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Attempting to prevent an impediment or a failure, if it was foreseeable;
 - (b) Acting as promptly as possible to remove an impediment or correct the cause of the reporting failure, once the failure was discovered;
 - (c) After the failure was discovered, implementing safeguards designed to ensure future compliance with the reporting requirements under section 6033;
4. The organization has an established history of complying with its reporting requirements (if any) under section 6033 and/or any other applicable reporting or other requirements under the Code.

The Reasonable Cause Statement must also include an original declaration, dated and signed under penalties of perjury by an officer, director, trustee, or other official who is authorized to sign for the organization in the following form:

Declaration

I, (Name), (Title) declare, under penalties of perjury, that I am authorized to sign this request for retroactive reinstatement on behalf of (Name of Organization), and I further declare that I have examined this request for retroactive reinstatement, including the written explanation of all the facts of the claim for reasonable cause, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this request is true, correct, and complete.

Date: _____

Signed: _____

AMERICAN LEGION SPECIAL CAP REGULATIONS

The following are the existing regulations with regard to American Legion Special Caps as listed below. The original National Executive Committee action on Special American Legion Caps was taken in May of 1937 and provides as follows:

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS: (All White Cap)

Department



This cap is to be worn only while serving in office. Upon retiring, you must revert to all blue Post Cap with proper title designation on right side.

DISTRICT OFFICERS: (Blue Cap with White Top)

District



This cap is to be worn only while serving in office. Upon retiring, you must revert to all blue Post Cap with proper title designation on right side.

COUNTY OFFICERS: (All Blue Cap, Piped in Silver, Lettered in White)

County



This cap is to be worn only while serving in office. Upon retiring, you must revert to all blue Post Cap with proper title designation on right side.

Please insure that all newly elected officers follow the procedure as established by our Headquarters. For your information, the following are the National regulations relative to the above officers:

“That Officers of the National Organization, Departments, Districts, and Counties of The American Legion, be authorized to wear Caps designating their office, be extended to mean ALL CONSTITUTIONAL Officers of such Organizations, whether elected or appointed.” The foregoing is, of course, governed by the Constitution of each Department.

No prior authorization for American Legion Caps for the above Officers is required by Department Headquarters. In order to expedite the ordering of these caps, it would be appreciated if you would follow the procedure listed below:

1. Additional guidance on caps can be found in the National Emblem Sales Catalog.
2. Select the cap of your choice and remit the necessary payments as instructed by National Emblem Sales.

Contact Emblem Sales at: www.emblem.legion.org or call 1-888-453-4466